

writers of the history of the war when it comes to be made up. For my part, I would rather erase from my memory, if I could, the sad side of the story, and retain only that by which I was benefited, the traveling, changes of scene, and the acquaintance I made with the manners of the different people with whom I came in contact. And although I may frequently have to say that our men suffered, the wounded from lack of treatment and all from lack of food and exposure, yet I am almost ready to apologize for many of the shortcomings of the enemy in these regards, because in nearly every instance they treated their own forces no better than they did us, and this too for the very good reason that what they had not themselves could not very well be furnished to us.

Early on the morning of the 1st of January, 1863, I was awakened by being trampled upon by some of my mates in misfortune. It was a dismal change from the comparatively happy dreamy sleep I had been in, and which had been superinduced by the excitement and fatigue of the previous days, when I awoke on that New Year's morning. For nearly a week before, the tension on our spirits had been strained, until but little was wanting to break us down. The defeat and capture and that night's confinement in the filthy courtyard constituted the last straw, and a more broken-spirited lot of humanity than we were then it would be difficult to conceive of. It had rained all night, as it invariably did immediately after heavy firing, and now we were wet to the skin and chilled to our bones. Every joint in my body ached, and I was in great pain and torture. As soon as the

CHAPTER V.

CONTAINS A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MY SOJOURN IN THE SOUTH WHILE A PRISONER OF WAR IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY, AND THENCE ON UNTIL I ARRIVED AT BENTON BARRACKS, NEAR ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, WHERE I REPORTED TO COLONEL B. L. E. BONNEVILLE, U. S. A., ON THE 10TH DAY OF APRIL, 1863.

1. I HAVE on a previous occasion written a very full account of my stay in the South while a prisoner of war in the hands of the enemy, and because of that, and for the reason that it is my desire that my narrative may not appear to be drawn out too much, and become tedious because of its length, I have determined to give only a general account in this place of that period. Besides these, there is one other reason why I should not at this time particularly rehearse the sufferings and trials we underwent, and that is because many suffered to a greater extent by far than I did, and they have had their recorders by the score. The treatment which prisoners of war received during those unhappy times will be taken notice of by the

daylight began to appear we were roused somewhat and cheered by the sound of heavy cannonading and other noises of battle, and thereby we were assured that although the enemy (as they boasted) had captured so many of us (2,500), still our army was not destroyed by any means, but on the contrary was still engaging the enemy, and that too at no very great distance away. When we beheld the hurry and bustle among the Southern forces around us we even hoped for our speedy release by our army gaining an overwhelming victory. But alas! it was not to be gained in time to save us. Upon a full and fair consideration of the circumstances, and by virtue of my own experience, I feel confident in asserting, and I think all will agree with me, that there is no position a soldier can be made to occupy so conducive to a good, strong, healthy appetite for food as that in which he is placed when he realizes that he is a prisoner of war and out of immediate danger of being killed or wounded by purposely directed bullets or stray shots, bursting shells, or solid missiles. Hence I do not require then that I should argue the question, and it will be sufficient to say that I was very hungry, and immediately placed myself on the *qui vive* for something to eat. Early in the day an officer of the Southern forces, a sort of Commissary or Quartermaster, entered the yard of the courthouse in which I was confined and wanted labor to load wagons with provisions, as he said, for the "Yankee wounded." I instantly volunteered, and with some others went along with him. I was willing to go anywhere with anybody where provisions were to be seen, as it would be a hard matter, I thought, if

I could handle food and not get any for myself. I succeeded in getting possession of a sour ham and a quantity of flour and corn meal. With these I returned to the courthouse yard, but I found that my friends had been removed, and I had to follow them a long way through the slush and snow to a bivouac not far from the railroad station on the south side of the town; my note-book says it was near a jail, but I do not remember seeing it.

2. There was great activity in railroad matters; but we did not know that General Rosecrans was to gain such a splendid victory as he did on the Friday ensuing. We received in this place our first ration, and it consisted of a small quantity of sour, coarse, and dirty corn-meal. Brine scraped from the inside of empty pork and beef barrels was used in the place of salt, and the men cooked the corn-meal by first wetting it to about the consistency of plaster, and daubing old flour barrel-heads with the mixture; the preparation was then held against a smoky fire built upon the ground until it became dry. Early next morning we were marched out of the enclosure and taken nearer the railroad track, and after a couple of hours' shivering in the cold slush and snow we were driven into a train of cattle cars, seventy or more of us unfortunates in each car, and the whole train hurried away to the south as fast as the poor railroad facilities would permit. At Tullahoma we were delayed several hours in order to allow other trains to pass us on their way to Murfreesboro'. At this place we saw the marks of previously used defence-works, trenches, stockades, etc., which we were told had been erected by one of

our armies on its retreat the summer before. The country around Tullahoma looked miserable; the whole appeared to be covered with a dense growth of stunted pine or cedar, and the people who visited us on the railroad were just as poor looking; what with their ragged, dirty, homespun garments, and their universal, uncouth, half-starved looking countenances they were indeed a pitiful set. After a long and wearisome ride we finally reached Chattanooga. Our entry into this famous place was made some time during the night, and we were at once conducted to the west side of the town, through the cold rain and sleet, and thence to a deep hole in the mountains, in which we were interned without tents or other protection against the disagreeable weather. In the morning we partially discovered where we were. The southerly boundary of our prison was formed of the Tennessee river, and on all other sides were high mountains, not very much unlike the place we so successfully foraged near Nashville a month or so before. The wounded men suffered very much now; their neglected hurts had commenced to fester, and the torn flesh to rot. All of them were miserable, and not a few lost their senses from their pains and agonies. Those of us who were well enough to yell sought to find our acquaintances, and for an hour or so the prisoners tried to get together the men of each regiment by themselves, and during that time the shouts for the "Forty-second Indiana," and this regiment and that, gave considerable life to the hitherto dreary scene. Here, too, several of our men, who had provided themselves with enormous quantities of counterfeit

Confederate bills, and who had apparently allowed themselves to be captured on purpose, were arrested by the Southern authorities for using the commodity. They were taken away to prison, and, as we were told, received some very severe punishment. Every one of us had to produce our wallets for inspection. Many of us believed at the time that the whole was a pretended fear, and that the inspection was a ruse of the authorities to get a knowledge of our funds, because they did not appear to discriminate in their seizures of bills. One of the first things we did on being captured was to make the most we could out of our superior currency, and it was natural to suppose that the most honorable of us were liable to be imposed upon in the exchange. We now had our first picture of Southern life in war times; that is, life away from the field. We bought breakfast biscuits for two dollars (Confederate money) a dozen, milk at one dollar a quart, a tiny dried apple or dried peach pie for a dollar, and everything else there was to be had at the same high prices. The people seemed to have plenty of money, and even little boys sported pockets filled with "shimplasters." But it was "greenbacks" that all wanted, and a dollar of our money had from ten to twenty times the purchasing power of a "gray-back," as the Southern money was called. We received our second ration at Chattanooga, and it consisted of a small measure of corn-meal of nearly the same quality as the previous dole, and was cooked by the men in the same manner.

3. We remained in Chattanooga in all about twenty-four hours, at the expiration of which time we were

again put upon the filthy cattle cars, and conducted on a "strap-iron" railroad to Dalton Junction, Georgia. On our route we passed over and saw the grand mountains of that region, which have since then become so historical, but our spirits were anything else but conducive to our artistic appreciation of the scenes. Dalton is a station on the road to Atlanta, and where the railroad coming from East Tennessee joins the one going north and south. I think it was then called the "East Tennessee and Virginia" railroad. We were delayed here also, for a couple of hours, but there was nothing of interest to be seen. There was the same inanity prevailing as at the other places we had stopped at. Then we went on at a snail's pace to Atlanta, Georgia. On arriving at Atlanta we were at first conducted to a pine woods beyond the town, and although deep snow was on the ground, the place was welcome to us as offering some chance to straighten our limbs and stretch out at rest. During the night we were mustered under a strong militia guard, and by the light of blazing pine-knot torches we were brought through the sombre forest and across lots to an empty square about in the centre of the city. In the morning we were there exhibited to the wondering people of the place. Crowds of all kinds came to see us. There were throngs of young and old, white and black. It was said that there was cause for especial astonishment to many of the inhabitants for that whereas we were "Yankees," and no mistake, yet we had no tails as monkeys have, and as they had been assured the "Yankees" wore, and besides that, we had

feet very much like their own, and up to this time better clad. During the wintry day we received many marks of enmity from the populace, but I must not omit to say that I at least was treated kindly by a rebel soldier and also by a lady who lived on the easterly side of the square. The first divided his stock of provender with me and the latter sent her servant with a basket of provisions to the party in which I was. In the evening I slipped the guard, and went partially through the town. In one place I read a newspaper called the "Atlanta Confederacy." The editor of the sheet was present, and he was very jubilant and demonstrative. I also went into a store where a very long-tongued man was glibly crying goods off at auction. He had a very meagre stock, but the prices he got when compared with prices in the North were as dollars to cents or half-dimes. From Atlanta we went to West Point. West Point is on or near to a river that forms the western boundary of Georgia and the eastern line of Alabama. Before reaching West Point we stopped at one of the prettiest towns I ever saw. I think it was called La Grange. If it was not, it bore an equally pretty name. I went from the railroad some distance before entering the town. There was a large square surrounded by neat houses, and in the centre there was a fine well with an enormous but old-fashioned pump. On one side there were the post-office, a large, commodiously built structure, and an airily built hotel. But all was empty and silent. I walked along the corridors of the elegant looking hostelry, but no sound was heard save the echo of my own footfalls. I met no one to impede

me; there was actual desertion in the place. The stores too were closed and empty, and the whole place looked as if it was dead—as if it had been visited at midnight by the angel of death, and none left to bury the victims. The town had been drained of its willing fighting material, and the unwilling ones had taken to the wilds of the hills to escape conscription. I was told that each house was one of mourning. As I retraced my steps over the grass-grown street to the station, I felt it was a great pity that so fair a place should have to suffer so much. Near the depot I saw some of our men in the act of despoiling a house around which there were apparent some signs of life. After I had prevailed upon them to desist from unnecessary violence, I went into the house. Here I found Major Thomas J. Barry, of the Sixtieth Georgia regiment of infantry. He lay in his bed, where he had been for a long time suffering from wounds in both legs. He was very grateful for my interference, and he showed his gratitude by furnishing me with something to eat. Before I left him he talked with me very sensibly about the war, but of course from the standpoint of a Southern gentleman, and so for that reason it was impossible for us to agree. He told me that he had been educated at West Point Military Academy, and up to the breaking out of the war had been a Lieutenant in the regular army. Yet he refused to agree with me that that fact alone constituted a strong argument in favor of the General Government and against his native State holding the prior right to his personal services. From my experience with the people of the South (excluding, of

course, the blatant, loud-mouthed portion of it), I am led to conclude that the great power of the Confederacy was derived from a difference in the political education of the people North and South. They of the South recognized the National Government as a mere engine of convenience, having no supervisory powers over the several States, the latter being so many sovereign and independent republics—in fact, that our country was a mere confederacy. We of the North not only believed the contrary, but had been taught to look upon the Union of the States as a perpetual federation—that the Union was first, and States or communities at least second. If it had not been for this difference in training, I do not believe that the Southern Confederacy could have recruited a second army. At West Point Alfred Rogers and myself (for we had become almost inseparable companions) got our supper at the house of a Frenchman, who did not scruple in private to berate the South, its armies, president, and everything belonging to it, but told us that he hoped we had not been noticed as we entered his house. We slept that night under the platform of the depot, and had for our bed a lot of decaying cotton-seed. In the night it had rained in torrents, and when we awoke in the morning it was still falling heavily. There were fair promises made that we should get a ration of food, but as far as we were concerned we did not place much confidence in them, so that the first question that we propounded to ourselves was, "Where shall we get our breakfast?" In solving the problem we had to take into consideration the warning of the French gentleman, and according-

ly we headed our course in a direction different from that of his mansion. After a lively run through the pelting rain, and jumping numerous temporary water courses, and experiencing many rebuffs, we reached a neat-looking house, where we were taken in. The lady of the house informed us that her husband and two sons were members of the famous "Hampton Legion," and in treating us well she hoped that some one in the North would be led to do as much for her loved ones. Hers was a sad story. Her husband was far away in the East, confined in a hospital until his wounds were healed enough to enable him to travel, and when that time came he would return a cripple; one son had fallen on one of the battlefields of Virginia, and she said she had "some consolation in knowing that he was dead"; but her youngest son was she knew not where, as he had not been heard from for many months. Her recital, however, did not prevent our speedy entertainment; for, as soon as it was over, we were conducted to a dining-room, and there helped to a comparatively substantial breakfast. Nor did the sad bereavements of the family prevent the good lady's three daughters from being somewhat gay. After the meal was over we entered a neatly furnished parlor, and were treated to music and lively conversation. In due time we separated with mutual promises, names, and addresses; but I have forgotten what I received, and I doubt not that in the succeeding disastrous state of affairs in that country the memory of us soon faded from their minds as well. At a beautiful town called Opelika, in Alabama, we stopped, and found the same

scenes of destitution as we had at La Grange, in Georgia.

4. Up to this time we had good reasons for entertaining hopes of our speedy deliverance from captivity. As we understood it the programme was that we should be conducted to Vicksburg, Mississippi, that city being then a depot for the exchange of prisoners under the existing cartel; but after we had reached a point a short distance to the east of Montgomery, Alabama, we were chagrined on ascertaining that a serious hindrance to our delivery existed. I forget now exactly what it was, but I think General Grant had been making some grand movement, and that our forces had cut the communications. At any rate we were given to understand that we were to go no further that way, but retrace our steps to some point toward the Atlantic sea-board—some said Charleston, others Salisbury, North Carolina, and the rest Richmond, Virginia. While we were outside of Montgomery the men created quite a stir. They had taken the old advice about the early bird, etc., and at an early hour some of them went to the public market and bought nearly all the stuff there was to sell, and much of the money used had been counterfeit. When the citizens got up to make the usual purchases for the day they found they had been cornered. This caused a proclamation by the Mayor to be issued during the day, and we were thereby interdicted from all trade with the people. At Montgomery we received the only respectable issue of rations that we got during our entire captivity. It is deserving of commemoration because it consisted in part of roasted beef and fresh bread.

We were bivouacked along the railroad track to the east of the town, and were permitted to use some of the pine wood that was corded near by for fuel. The weather was quite chilly and cold, but it is doubtful from which we suffered most, the cold or the dense black smoke of the pine-wood fires. It was ordered that before the issuing of rations the men should form themselves into companies of about one hundred each, so as to expedite the work. Then four or five of them would get the food and make the subdivision. On this occasion there were eleven companies, but five or six men with whom I was proceeded to the place of distribution and demanded rations for the *twelfth* company, and got them. In this way we got considerable more than our share.

Our retrograde journey was not at first so lively in pleasant incidents as our forward movement had been. The wounded men began to fall off here and there, and many died in the cars. All of us were more or less in low spirits. On our journey hitherto the men had been somewhat gay even at times. The Germans were particularly so. They engaged in singing songs of different kinds, but all were alike in having uproarious choruses. It must have been startling to the people living along the road to hear in the middle of the night nearly a thousand men singing "Johnny Schmoker" and that other song with a chorus something like this:

Rituria, rituria, swilly willy wink um poop.

Now it was altogether changed, and but little ribaldry was heard. We were now told that we were to retrace our steps to Dalton, Georgia, and go thence on to

Knoxville, Lynchburg, and so on to Richmond. As we travelled along we were greeted with the waving of flags from the houses near the road, the people evidently taking us for patriots of their own side—those of us who were able raising a derisive cheer in reply to such demonstrations. In this part of our journey we frequently saw negro women ploughing the lands for cotton planting. The ploughs were drawn by single mules, and the women sang mournful tunes as they followed after. In due time we reached Atlanta again, and furnished another spectacle for the populace. From there we proceeded to Dalton Junction, some thirty miles south of Chattanooga. Here we were ordered to halt and allow some more pressing freight to pass us. Up to this time we had been in ignorance of the state of affairs in our late army, but now we got an inkling of what had been going on, and exaggerated the news that was vouchsafed to us by our enemies. We were of course correspondingly elated. The switches near the depot at Dalton were well filled with loaded trains, and as we were not very efficiently guarded, it was not long before the men found out that the cars were loaded with provisions, such as rice, corn-meal, sugar, etc. The sugar was in large tierces and so was the rice. In the beginning a venturesome man broke through the corn-cob stopper of the bung-hole or inspection hole of a tierce, and scooped out the sugar or rice with an iron spoon, but they soon went further, and broke in the heads of the casks, and the plunder was then handed out by the tin cupful. In a short time the whole party was liberally supplied, and the guard too got all they wanted.

These men were not many degrees better provided with food than we were ourselves, and had in fact stood by and winked at our depredation.

5: Proceeding on our new route, we reached Knoxville, and realized that we were then in the heart of that country made so famous by its "Union men" and "Union women" during the whole war. That is what we called those loyal people. Down South they were designated as traitors, as we stigmatized the Southern sympathizers living in the North "Copperheads." We saw much that was gratifying to us in the conduct of the people thereabouts, and heard from them many saddening stories of the horrors of the war. After leaving Knoxville we passed through Jonesboro' and several other towns of lesser note, and as we approached the mountains, we came to a break in the railroad. The road ran over a tongue of land, formed by a river doubling in its course. A few days before our coming General Carter, of our troops, so we were informed, had made a raid through the mountains of southeastern Kentucky, and he and his troops had succeeded in destroying the railroad bridge at each place of crossing. Thus, when we arrived at the river, we were compelled to evacuate the cars, wade the river as best we could, and climb the high steep bank on the other side. When we had got over we found a man of a Michigan cavalry regiment in a hotel there. He had been wounded in the fight incident to the burning of the bridges. The wife of the raider General Carter was also there, as we were informed. If I am not mistaken, I think I was told that thereabouts was the

General's home. The men had to trudge the distance of seven or eight miles to the other break, and when they arrived they were all very tired and weary. All through this section there was deep feeling expressed; the neighboring woods and mountains were filled with men who had been outlawed by the Southern authorities. One old woman, while handing to us some dried meat, told us of her husband, who had but recently been hung; another, of her husband and son, and all because they had dared to be loyal to the Union. The children, ragged and dirty as they were, were as intensely loyal as their more Southern mates were in for the Southern Confederacy, and I never heard people "hurrah for Abe Lincoln" in the North more lustily than did those women of East Tennessee. What they brought to us out of their meagre stores they would accept no pay for. Once I succeeded in remunerating an enthusiastic lady for some kindness by handing to her a quantity of pins and needles out of a "housewife" that some kind friend had provided me with, and which up to this time had lain quietly uncalled for in the bottom of my coat pocket. It appears that even as early as that the whole country was in a woful state, when pins and needles were indeed worth more than their weight in gold. By-and-by, as we went along, we reached Bristol, on the boundary line between Virginia and Tennessee. At this place I perceived my strength giving way. I was very weak by reason of lack of proper food and rest, and sick from the constant exposure. In this condition I determined to desert the over large company I was in, and

with which I had hitherto kept myself, and so my special partner Rogers and I hid ourselves beneath the floor of the depot in the town, and there we remained until the main column had moved on. Early in the ensuing morning we had succeeded in breaking open a barrel and getting possession of a quantity of flour. Eluding the guards, we proceeded to a house not far away, and prevailed on the mistress of it so that she got her negro woman to cook a portion of it for us, while she retained the remainder for herself as recompense. I have to take our hostess as a specimen of the inhabitants of the country. She was very free in her manner, and amused us by telling a long story of herself. She was a tall, straight woman of about thirty-five years of age, of a dark, swarthy complexion, and she had black, piercing eyes, with suggestively pointed features. She told us the difference between *her* kind and the people through whose country we had just passed. *Her* kind were the real Virginians—the others were the “white trash.” She herself, according to her story, was a lineal descendant from the renowned Pocahontas. As she warmed up we were pathetically asked, “What did you-uns come down *South* to fight we-uns for, anyway?” We of course declined to enter into the obviously “irrepressible conflict” of opinions as to that, and by silence intimated to her that we had given up the conundrum. Our apparent defeat was as balm to her, and she enjoyed her victory in an ecstasy of triumph; but she magnanimously acknowledged that there was still no reason why “we-all and you-all” might not yet be friends. Bristol was at that time the headquarters of

some general, and I think his name was Humphrey Marshall. The town is situated amid some grand scenery. Hereabouts we saw on the one hand the range of high mountains called the Great Smoky mountains in western North Carolina, and on the other the wild, rugged eminences of the Cumberland range in southeastern Kentucky. After dark of that day my companion and I went by a roundabout way to the other end of the town, and led by a negro, we went to his master's house for supper. Here we were entertained very well, and when asked about payment the host said he would only take pay, if at all, in greenbacks, because one of his sons was engaged in smuggling medicines and other easily transported goods through the lines from Cincinnati, and could therefore use only our money. We were then told some of the secrets of the business, and were surprised to hear the extent to which it was carried on. We were told that there were many houses in our lines, and even commandants of posts, commissaries, etc., in Kentucky, who were in a sort of league with smugglers. As we returned to the depot we intended to keep as far as possible from the headquarters and other places where guards were, but as we went along, we came nearly stumbling over a man on sentry. We were at first somewhat shocked, but the guard reassured us when he saluted us by saying only, “It's a d—d dark night, isn't it?” I do not know what reply we made, but we hurried as fast as we could to the friendly shelter of the depot platform, and laid ourselves down to sleep there. When we had thought that our comrades on the cattle cars were far enough in advance

we came out of hiding and reported to the first officer we met. We were then placed upon the regular train bound east—into the first passenger coach I had been in since entering the service. At a place called Wytheville we mingled with the crowd of Confederate officers, and with them partook of the slender breakfast supplied by the hotel near the depot. We now entered a very wild and mountainous stretch of country. The cars in some places seemed to be winding up a serpentine road and running in an awful proximity to dreadful precipices. To render the situation more dangerous, it must be remembered that the rails, cars, and engine were sadly in need of repair. In at least one place I saw that the iron rails were loose. Most of the time, however, I took the sailor's advice, and kept my eyes aloft, gazing at the rugged mountain tops that seemed to penetrate above the clouds. Our train travelled so fast when compared with the regular prisoners' accommodations, that we reached Lynchburg, Virginia, just as our late comrades moved out toward Richmond, but too late to be forwarded with them.

6. The town of Lynchburg as a curiosity is probably well enough, but as a city it is much different from a Methodist's typical Zion. It is built upon the summit and sides of a high hill, and the streets are all terraces. The railroad depot was at a point at the foot of the hill upon which the town is built, and there we were caused to disembark from the train. We trudged up the steep street through the snow, nearly a foot deep, and still falling, and amid the jeers and ribald shouts of the urchins on the sides of it who were

as ragged as ourselves. I was now bareheaded and nearly barefooted. My stock of clothing had been reduced to a cloth shirt and a very thin blouse, with a pair of ragged trousers which failed completely to cover my limbs. In a meal-sack I carried what beggarly kit I was possessed of. We labored up that street until we reached another on which the Provost Marshal had his office. To that official we were reported, and I with a few others was immediately thrust into an upper room, where were already confined a number of Confederate soldiers of a low class, and who had committed various offences. The windows of the room had been boarded up so that but little light entered. The place smelled horribly, and the prisoners were wallowing in filth. Close to the wall on one side were ranged a lot of wooden pails, nearly all of which were filled with filth. I became sick immediately upon my entrance, and must have fainted, for I remember requesting to be taken out, and I was conducted, how, I do not know, to an area way far beneath the level of the street. Here water was poured over me, and when I came to myself I recognized a negro man as one whom I had seen before. I found that he also knew me, as did some others of the blacks. They had formerly been attached to some Massachusetts regiments, and had seen me at Darnestown and Poolesville early in the year before. These men took me into their quarters and cared for me. Most if not all of them had been captured during the seven days' fighting on the retreat of McClellan from the front of Richmond, Virginia. One had no scruples in boasting that he was captured while engaged in