

COLD CHEER AT CAMP MORTON.



I WAS captured by a squadron of Ohio cavalry on Walden's Ridge, near Chattanooga, October 5, 1863, and was exchanged in front of Richmond, Va., March 1, 1865. When made a prisoner I was a private soldier in Company I of the 4th Alabama Cavalry, known as "Russell's Regiment."

As soon as I was disarmed my captors proceeded to divest me of the slender stock of personal effects I possessed, such as knife, pocketbook, blanket, and oil-cloth. Two comrades taken at the same time were put through a similar process, but as they had surrendered without resistance, they escaped some forcible epithets which were addressed to me by one of our captors, a sergeant. Under the excitement of the moment I think he was excusable, for I had come within an ace of shooting him only a minute before. Nor was there any surprise at being deprived of one's effects, because at this period of the war it was a pretty general practice to consider everything your prisoner had as your property, even to an interchange of clothing when the best of the bargain was on the side of the captor.¹

On this occasion, however, we did not exchange clothing, but kept our slim and ragged wardrobe of jacket and trousers, and one change of undergarments. We marched under guard into Sequatchie Valley, where at dusk we were turned over to the 10th Illinois Infantry. By a coincidence, almost strange, the soldiers who stood guard over us this first night of our captivity belonged to a company of which my own cousin was commander — Captain Thomas Smith, of Jacksonville, Ill.

The men of this company treated us with great kindness. They were on very short rations, for we had destroyed their train only three days before, yet they cheerfully and generously divided their slender supply with us. An officer — I was informed that he was adjutant of this regiment — ordered us to be placed in a stable near by where we could be more

securely guarded. It was so very dirty that I objected to spending a night in such an atmosphere, and asked him to allow us to sleep in the open air, notwithstanding we were without blankets. My objection was overruled by an argument which was unanswerable. "Young man," he said, "Jesus Christ was born in a stable, and I guess you can stand it for one night." As soon as it was dark one of the three guards detailed to watch us said, "Boys, if you will give us your word of honor that you won't try to get away, you can come out and sit around the fire with us." We did this, and spent the night chatting with these true soldiers until, overcome with fatigue, we fell asleep. Several years after the war, in Jacksonville, Ill., I called upon one of these men to show my appreciation of his treatment of myself and comrades. They were then untried soldiers, having never been engaged in battle, but I was not surprised to hear of their splendid record achieved in the campaign from Missionary Ridge to Atlanta. It was the general verdict in prison that at the front, where the brave men were, a prisoner was treated with the consideration due one man from another. We did not often find such soldiers doing guard duty around a military prison.

On October 7 we started for Stevenson, Ala., going by wagon down Sequatchie Valley. For the greater part of this day we traveled over the road where we had the running fight four days before. For ten or fifteen miles the way, here and there, was obstructed by wagons partly burned, some of them still smoldering. In places detours had to be made to get at a respectful distance from ammunition wagons whose places were readily revealed by the occasional explosion of shells or cartridges. The air was full of the sickening smell of dead animals. With this train of more than two hundred wagons we had captured about one thousand mules and horses, and, not being able to carry them away, had, by orders of our commander, destroyed them.

On this day an amusing incident occurred.

¹ In one instance, which I shall never forget, this enforced swapping was carried to a cruel extreme. After one of our charges at the battle of Chickamauga, in which the Federal cavalry were driven from the field, a number of prisoners were taken, among these an officer who had on a splendid pair of Wellington boots. He had met with a double misfortune in being shot through the foot and captured by a man who had no

sympathy for a foe in distress. The Texan asserted his claim by saying, "Take off your boots." The prisoner took the boot from the sound foot and gave it to him, but requested that on account of the wound in the other foot his captor would split the leather so that it might be removed without pain. The only reply was, "I'll be — if I spoil that boot"; and he pulled it off *vi et armis*.



CAMP-FIRE PAROLE.

As our wagon stopped for the guard to speak with a group of Federal soldiers one of these addressed me, saying, "Hello, we've got *you* this time!" I recognized in him a man I had captured three or four days before, under the following circumstances. Having been dismounted in the fight of October 2, and cut off from my command by a squadron of Federal cavalry, which came upon us unexpectedly, I, with three comrades, escaped capture by scrambling up the cliffs of Walden's Ridge. Here we spent the remainder of that day and night, nearly famished for water, the desire for which was not made less extreme by hearing, every time we were awakened, the sound of water rushing over a mill-tail at the foot of the mountain. At daylight we concluded to descend to the mill to get water and try to find something to eat. From the mill I followed a footpath which led up to a double log cabin. It was near sunrise, and as I reached the open door a soldier in blue uniform appeared at another door opposite my position. Covering him with my army six-shooter I requested him to surrender, which he did, seeing he could not reach his gun, which was standing against the fireplace, at one end of the room. After I had secured his Springfield and cartridges, he asked me what I was going to do with him, and informed me that he had taken refuge in this house during the capture of the train. I told him he was free to go where he pleased, said good-by to him, and rejoined my comrades. On the day after this we were taken, and by

a strange coincidence my former prisoner and I again met.

We were confined at Stevenson, Ala., for several days, meeting with kind treatment; thence we were taken to Nashville, where we spent several very weary days in the State penitentiary, being forced to associate with a miserable lot of Union deserters, bounty-jumpers, and criminals of various sorts, most of whom had a ball and chain attached to the leg. I was confined in a narrow stone cell which was damp and chilly, and, being without blankets, bedding, or heat, was uncomfortable enough.

By way of Louisville we traveled to Indianapolis, arriving in the prison grounds at Camp Morton about ten o'clock at night, where, no provision having been made for us, we slept, or tried to sleep, through the cold night, in the open air and upon the ground.

During the night I was seized with a violent chill, which lasted for several hours, the prelude to an attack of pneumonia, from the effects of which I did not recover for many years. As soon as it was day a comrade begged the officer in charge that I be taken to the hospital, or given shelter. The few tents used as hospitals were all full, and the answer came back that there was no room, but that I should have the first vacancy. The vacancy occurred, as the hospital steward afterward informed me, at 2 P. M., and I was in the dead man's bed an hour later. I found myself in kind hands, and under the direction of a physician to whom I shall ever be grateful. During my prison life,



"HELLO, WE 'VE GOT YOU THIS TIME!"

broken down in health by exposure and hunger, and by this illness, I spent several months in the hospital at Camp Morton, and bear witness to the conscientious attention and kindly treatment accorded to myself and comrades by the physicians and hospital authorities.

It is true that in 1863, and as late as the summer of 1864, the facilities for treating the sick were wholly inadequate, and many deaths were doubtless due to this failure to provide the necessary quarters; but later on some wooden pavilions with plastered walls and ceilings were erected, and by the fall of 1864 these were increased to a number and capacity equal to all ordinary requirements.

Camp Morton, the military prison, was, in 1863, a plot of ground formerly used as a fair-ground, in shape a parallelogram, containing, as well as I could estimate, about twenty acres of land, inclosed by a plank wall about twenty feet high. In its long axis this plot was bisected by a little rivulet, which the prisoners christened the "Potomac." On each side of this branch the barracks were situated. These barracks had been erected as cattle sheds and stables: they were about twenty feet wide, in height ten feet to the eaves, fifteen feet to the middle of the roof, and eighty feet long. The sides were of weather-boards ten to twelve inches wide, set on end and presumably touching one another, and covered with strips when first put up. When they served as shelter for

us, however, the planks had shrunk, and many of the strips had disappeared, leaving wide cracks, through which the winds whistled and the rain and snow beat in upon us. I have often seen my top blanket white with snow when we were hustled out for morning roll-call. The roof was of shingles and did not leak. Along the comb an open space about a foot wide extended the entire length of the shed. The earth served as floor, and the entrance was through a large barn door at each end. Along each side of this shelter, extending seven feet towards the center, were constructed four tiers of bunks, the lowest about one foot from the ground, the second three feet above this, the third three feet higher, while the fourth tier was on a level with the eaves. Upon these long shelves, not partitioned off, the prisoners slept, or lay down, heads to the wall, feet towards the center or passageway. About two feet of space was allotted to each man, making about 320 men housed in each shed. As we had no straw for bedding, and as each man was allowed only one blanket, there was little comfort to be had in our bunks until our miseries were forgotten in sleep. The scarcity of blankets forced us to huddle together in cold weather, usually three in a group, with one blanket between us and the planks, and the other two to cover us with. The custom was to take turns in occupying the middle place; but, on account of my small stature and boyish appearance, I

was allowed to sleep in the middle all the time. The only attempt at heating this open shed (Barracks No. 4) was by means of four stoves placed at equal distances along the passageway, and only the strong man who could push or fight his way to the stove, and then have muscle enough to maintain his position, enjoyed the luxury of artificial warmth. Up to Christmas of 1864 I had not felt the heat from the stove. To men the greater number of whom had never been in a cold climate the suffering was intense when with such surroundings the mercury was near zero. A number were frozen to death, and many more perished from disease brought on by exposure, added to their condition of emaciation from lack of food. I counted eighteen bodies carried into the dead-house one morning after an intensely cold night. During these very cold spells it was our habit to sleep in larger groups or "squads," so that by combining blankets and body heat the cold could be better combated. Another practice was, just at sundown, when we were forced to "go to bed," to dip the top blanket in water, wring it out fairly dry, so that, being thus made more impermeable, it would retain the warmth generated by the body. Lots were drawn for position, and woe to the unfortunate end men, who, although captains of the squad for the night, paid dearly for their honors in having to shiver through the weary hours. And yet all this was not without a strong suggestion of the grotesque. The squad or file of men slept "spoon fashion."

No one was allowed to rest flat on the back, for this took up too much room for the width of the blankets. The narrower the bulk to be covered, the thicker the blanket on top. At intervals all through these intensely cold nights, above the shivering groans of the unhappy prisoners could be heard the order of the end men, "Boys, spoon!" and, as if on parade, they would flop over upon the other side, to the gratification of one end man and the dis-

gust of the other, whose back by the change was once more turned on a cold world. Of course it was only in the winter months that we had such intense cold, but no one can imagine how long these days and nights seemed unless he has gone through this experience. The two winters I passed in Camp Morton were the worst I have experienced, although I had no means of recording the depths to which the mercury descended.

When the bugle sounded, between daylight and sunrise, we gladly tumbled out for roll-call, for we were tired of our hard berths, in which we were compelled to remain from sunset until daylight. Our toilet, which in winter consisted of putting on our hats (we slept in our shoes and clothes), was soon over, and we were in line to answer to our names. If all were "present, or accounted for," we were soon dismissed, and each man's first move was to get something to eat.

At no period of my imprisonment was the ration issued sufficient to satisfy hunger. It seemed strange that human beings were actually starving to death in a country rich in the necessaries of life, yet I was reduced to such straits that I gladly paid fifteen cents for a single ear of corn, and this in sight of fields of this grain, not worth, outside the prison walls, one dollar a bushel. During the first four or five months of our life at Camp Morton prisoners who could obtain money from friends outside were allowed to purchase certain arti-



SELLING BREAD.



A BREAK FOR LIBERTY.

cles from the prison sutler, tickets, worthless except with this man, being issued to the prisoners in return for greenbacks placed to their credit at headquarters. Although the prices paid were outrageously high, we never ceased to regret the order which closed this source of supply.

I know from personal observation that many of my comrades died from starvation. Day after day it was easy to observe the progress of emaciation, until they became so weak that when attacked with an illness which a well-nourished man would easily have resisted and recovered from they rapidly succumbed. One feature of this miserable process of starvation by degrees, far sadder than death itself, was the moral degradation to which many of the prisoners sank. Beings who had proved themselves men in the trials of battle, who had borne reputations for honesty and soldierly conduct, not only practised stealing from their comrades, but so far forgot their manhood as to feed like hogs upon the refuse material thrown into the swill-tubs from the hospital kitchen, and even went farther in degradation than I can describe on this page. I was an active member of a committee whose

duty it was forcibly to prevent these men from making hogs of themselves and bringing shame unjustly upon their comrades by such unmanly practices. We even went so far as to inflict bodily chastisement upon several who persisted in feeding on this filthy refuse, and on one occasion we ducked an offender head foremost in the swill-barrel.

The entire ration for one day was not enough for a single meal. The more provident devoured their scanty loaf of bread as soon as it was issued, and usually the bread came in first. I have often seen great crowds of prisoners watch-

ing for the opening of the gate and the arrival of the bread-wagon, shouting piteously, "Bread, bread!" and when it came their shouts would rend the air. The small piece of meat was in like manner eaten when received, and then there was nothing to do but suffer and wait until the next day. The more sensible men restrained their appetites until the entire ration was received, and then divided it into two portions, for a morning and an afternoon meal. The mess to which I belonged was composed of seven men. A ration of meat for the entire mess was received and divided into seven portions, so equally distributed that each member expressed himself as entirely satisfied before lots were drawn. Then, in order to prevent partiality, one member turned his back, and as the chief of the mess touched one portion with, "Who gets this?" the arbiter would call the name of the person to whom it was allotted. There was no appeal from this decision.

As a rule vegetables were not issued to the men directly, a pint of vegetable soup being given instead as soon as morning roll-call was over.

For the last year in Camp Morton, although

I could command all the money I wanted, I could not use it, since I was not allowed to purchase food; and when at last I was exchanged I was so broken down that I could walk only a short distance without resting, and so emaciated that I was not recognized by my mother and sisters when I reached them in their refugee home in Georgia in March, 1865.

Moreover we had no way of letting those ready and willing to send us food know of our wants. Every line written was scanned by the camp post-office department, and a letter containing any suggestion of lack of food, or of maltreatment, was destroyed. For a short time I acted as "camp messenger" at headquarters, and while there I witnessed the method of "going through the mail." The postman would come in from the prison barracks with a pile of unsealed letters collected from the various barracks. These would be placed upon a table in the headquarters building, and several attachés would immediately begin to search them. Many of the letters would contain little pieces of jewelry,—rings, breastpins, etc., made by the prisoners and sent by mail to friends,—and such of these as were suited to the tastes of the searchers were appropriated. On one occasion I saw a clerk take a ring from my own letter, addressed to my uncle, a major in the Union army.

Of course men in such wretched surroundings were always on the alert to escape, and many took desperate, and some fatal, chances to gain their liberty. The prison wall was so high, the sentries so close together, and the approach so well lighted, that an attempt to scale the parapet was virtually inviting death; and yet a number took this risk. In 1863 and early in 1864 there was no ditch between the prison yard and the wall. The wall was about twenty feet high and of smooth surface. The sentries were above and so concealed that only their heads and shoulders could be seen; and at night strong lights with reflectors were so placed that, while the yard was well illuminated, the sentries and walls could with difficulty be distinguished. Later on we were forced to dig a ditch sixteen feet wide and ten feet deep to prevent ourselves from escaping.

The first attempt at escape I witnessed was, I think, in January, 1864. A daring young Texan about twenty years of age, who was captured when I was and had been brought to prison with me, quietly remarked, one evening after we had gone to bed, "Boys, I am going to go over the fence, or die in the attempt. If I am killed, write to my folks and let them know how I died." He took down from his berth, where it had been concealed, a slender ladder, made by tying fragments of planks together with twine and twisted cloth-

ing, and started towards the door of the shanty. Despite the snow which was falling, he was able to observe the movements of the sentries just opposite his position, and only about seventy yards distant. As these two guards, having approached each other in their beat, turned their backs and marched away until they were about a hundred and fifty feet apart, he rushed to the wall, placed his ladder against it, and in another moment was over the fence and free. The sentries did not see him, and the ladder was not discovered until daylight. In a few weeks we had a letter which, although not signed by his real name, informed us that he was in Kentucky making his way to "Dixie."

Soon after, encouraged by this success, seven men, about nine o'clock at night, made a rush together to scale the wall. Two were killed, one wounded, and four captured. These four brave fellows were tied up, their backs to a tree, the rope lashed to the wrists and arms at full length above their heads, all through the remainder of the night. I saw them taken down the next morning in a most pitiable condition of exhaustion, their hands blue with stagnated blood, and showing deep furrows where the rope had buried itself in the skin of the arms and wrists.

But this disaster did not deter other efforts, even after the great ditch was made. One of the most daring and successful attempts followed. Between thirty and forty picked men quietly organized themselves, selected their leaders, and agreed upon a plan. Ladders were hastily constructed by splicing bits of plank, taken from the berths, with strips of blankets and clothing. Armed with stones, pieces of wood, and bottles filled with water, just as the bugle sounded to bed, and before the patrol had reached the prison yard, they rushed in a solid body towards the fence, overturned a privy-shed into the ditch, which filled it and served as a bridge, over which they swarmed, and placed their ladders against the fence, while some pelted the sentries with stones. One gun was fired without effect, and one cap exploded without igniting the charge. The guards ran away, and the entire assaulting party gained the outside. Some few were recaptured the next day, but the majority reached Canada or the South.

Other methods of running the gantlet were tried by the detail composed of prisoners selected to accompany the garbage wagons to some distant point outside the walls, where they were unloaded. On one of these occasions five prisoners, at a preconcerted signal, seized the two guards, disarmed them, and escaped. At another time one member of the detail broke away and was killed. On one occasion two men who did not attempt to escape were mortally wounded by a ball fired

by a guard from behind, the assassin doing his work so well that the same ball passed through both bodies. I staid by one of these men as he was dying and heard him solemnly assert, in the presence of death, that he had made no attempt to escape, and that he and his comrade had been deliberately murdered. On several occasions shots were fired into the barracks at night. In Barracks No. 7 a prisoner was severely wounded while asleep, and in the "Louisiana" barracks a Creole while sound asleep was shot through the pelvis. He died in the same ward in the hospital where I was ill. The depth of the ditch around the prison made tunneling exceedingly difficult and laborious. I think only one successful escape was made in this manner, and this was followed by a cowardly murder. On the night of its completion several prisoners escaped. The next night others, foolishly hoping the outlet had not been discovered, essayed the same route, and as the leader stuck his head out, the guard, standing at the hole, placed a gun against his head and blew the unfortunate man's brains out. Those behind him in the tunnel lost no time in crawfishing back into the prison.

I was interested in two tunnels, one of which had to be abandoned on account of filling with water. The other was completed, but on the day preceding the night we were to cut it through on the outside an informer laid our scheme open to the guards, and received the usual reward for such conduct in being taken within the protection of headquarters and receiving comfortable quarters and plenty of food.

During the summer of 1864 the barracks became so crowded by the influx of new prisoners ("fresh fish") that several rows of tents were placed between Barracks No. 4 and the fence. Our long tunnel was begun in one of these, about two hundred feet from the prison wall, the opening being covered over with blankets. There were sixteen men in the secret, and they worked in regular details. A shaft about ten feet deep was sunk, and two feet from the bottom of this the tunnel started, running level with the surface of the ground until the ditch was reached, where it dipped down to avoid opening into this. One man worked in the tunnel, cutting the loose earth with a case-knife and then using his hands to fill a sack at his side. This sack was attached to the middle of a cord, and when full a slight pull on the string was the signal for the man at the opening to haul the bag out. This was emptied, and the digger would pull in his end of the string until the sack was again at his side. On account of frequent inspection by the patrol, it was impossible to conceal any large quantity of fresh earth, and it became necessary to dispose of it every day. Whenever the

picket on duty signaled that the patrol was approaching, blankets were thrown over the loose earth and the orifice of the tunnel, and the men would lie down upon these, either feigning to be asleep or innocently playing cards. Towards sunset, and just before we were corraled for the night, the earth was disposed of in the following manner. Each man would tuck his trousers into the legs of his socks, then fill the trousers from above with as much loose earth as he could waddle with, button his breeches up, and make for the "Potomac." Across this useful little branch planks were placed, over which we passed, to visit the various barracks on the other side. When a dirt-carrier reached the middle of the plank unobserved he would give his trousers legs a sudden pull upwards, thus disengaging these from the stockings, allowing the dirt to dump itself into the little stream, the rapid current of which soon obliterated all traces of his offense. Of course this was slow work. We began in June and it was September before we were ready to cut through. On this day our Judas Iscariot was not wanting. Early in the morning we missed one of our party. Upon searching for him he was found within the guard lines at headquarters, where he remained to the end of the war. The experience of the other tunnel, which was so fatal to the poor fellow who tried to escape, was not forgotten, for we knew they were ready for us on the outside. Fortunately for us we were not punished.

But worse than death, or the dangers incurred by efforts at escape, or even than the slow process of starvation, from which we were suffering, were the unnecessary and cruel indignities to which prisoners were often subjected. I speak only of those acts of which I was personally cognizant, and of course these form but a small proportion.

The non-commissioned officers in charge of the prison patrol were chiefly to blame. I saw one Baker (every prisoner at Camp Morton, up to the time of this cruel man's death, will recall the name) shoot a prisoner for leaving the ranks—after roll-call was ended, but before "Break ranks" was commanded—to warm himself at a fire only a few feet distant from the line. He did not even order the man back to the ranks, but calmly drew his pistol, saying with profanity, "I 'll show you how to leave ranks before you are dismissed," and deliberately shot him.

For no offense, other than his handsome and soldierly bearing, a prisoner (Scott) of the famous Black Horse Cavalry was by this same Baker and his patrol brutally maltreated and beaten, his hair forcibly clipped off, the tail of his coat cut or torn away, his hands tied behind his back, and himself kept at "marking

time" for several hours to the great amusement of his tormentors. I knew Scott well, and witnessed this attempt at his humiliation.

On various occasions I saw prisoners beaten with sticks for no other provocation than that they would not move quickly to get out of the way, or cease talking when an officer or one of the patrol was passing. On one such occasion an officer seized a stick of fire-wood and knocked down two men, striking them on the head and leaving them unconscious.

At night, whether winter or summer, no prisoner, when obliged to go to the sink, which was more than one hundred yards distant, was permitted to wear a full suit of clothes. He must leave trousers or coat behind. Two men from my barracks on one intensely cold night infringed upon this rule, trying to protect themselves by putting on coat and trousers. They were detected, and while the patrol sheltered themselves by the barracks, these poor fellows were compelled to mark time in the deep snow for more than an hour. One of these men was frost-bitten, and lost both feet from gangrene as the result of this exposure. He was one of the first draft of five hundred invalids sent for exchange in February, 1865, and died from the effects of this inhuman punishment on the train just west of Cumberland, Maryland, on the way to Baltimore and Aiken's Landing. I helped to bury him at a point on the Baltimore and Ohio road where our train was delayed for several hours. It was a favorite sport to beat prisoners, going to and from the sinks at night, with their heavy rubber cloths rolled up like a club.

Such cruelties practised upon helpless men go to prove that the true soldiers were mostly at the front, for none but a coward would maltreat a prisoner, though an enemy.

With little to do, except to try to get something to eat, and keep from being eaten by vermin, the hours and days were necessarily long and weary. Men rarely talked of any subjects to the exclusion of a "square meal," and the hope of an exchange, which meant—home. All the rats which could be caught were eaten, and woe to the dog which ventured on our

¹ By an order dated June 1, 1864, the daily ration for Northern prisons was fixed as follows: Pork or bacon, 10 ounces (or fresh beef, 14 ounces); flour or soft bread, 16 ounces (or 14 ounces of hard bread, or 16 ounces of corn meal). To every 100 rations: beans or peas, 12½ pounds; rice or hominy, 8 pounds; soap, 4 pounds; vinegar, 3 quarts; salt, 3¼ pounds; potatoes, 15 pounds. Every other day the sick and wounded were to have 12 pounds of sugar, 5 pounds of ground or 7 pounds of green coffee (or one pound of tea) to every 100 rations. The difference between the cost of the above rations and the regular rations of Union troops in the field was credited to a "prison fund" for the purchase of articles "necessary to the health and proper condition of the prisoners." The cost of the regular ration to prisoners was esti-

territory. One fat canine was captured by my messmates and was considered a "feast." It was boiled and then baked. I was invited to the "dinner," and although the scent of the cooking meat was tempting I could not so far overcome my repugnance to this animal, as an article of diet, as to taste it. Those who ate it expressed themselves as delighted.¹

Work for each other, barter or trade, all meant a bit of bread or a piece of tobacco. The staples of prison commerce were bread, crackers, bones, and bone butter. The only currency was tobacco, which it is scarcely necessary to state was never issued to prisoners. Those of us who had money to our credit at headquarters got sutler's tickets for it, with which we bought little black plugs of tobacco and traded these for bits of bread and other food with those who preferred to go without something to eat for tobacco to chew and smoke. In fair weather there was a regular market-place where the dealers kept their stands. The unit of currency was a chew (pronounced "chaw") of tobacco, cut about one inch square and a quarter of an inch thick. A loaf of bread about three and a half inches wide and deep by seven inches long was known as a "duffer," a cracker as "hardtack." The oil and marrow of beef bones, which were carefully split into fine particles and boiled, formed a luxury called "bone butter."

When the weather was inclement, and we were huddled in our crowded and miserable berths, the peddlers would stalk through the barracks with their small stock of groceries. "Who'll give a cracker for a chaw of tobacco?" A response would come, "I'll give you half a cracker for a chaw." If a trade was struck the parties met, and while one measured the size of the "chaw" to see if it was of standard gage, the other devoted his attention to the inspection of the hardtack.

"Twelve chaws for half a duffer," would be shouted by one tradesman; "Thirteen chaws," by a second; and so on until the highest bidder would get the half-loaf of bread.

The great prison luxury was bone butter, and it took a good many "chaws" to get the regulated at 13.63 cents; to prisoners employed on public works, 20.31 cents; to Union troops, 26.24 cents. The above exhibits the cheapest ration, which was under the order of June 1, 1864; between that date and April 20, 1864, the regular ration to prisoners had cost 16.48 cents; and on January 13, 1865, though the hard bread ration was reduced 4 ounces, the cost was raised to 16.81 cents.—EDITOR.

It would be interesting to discover how many times the contract to feed the prisoners at Camp Morton was sublet. I have no doubt the government intended to issue to each prisoner the regulation prison ration above given as official, but I know it never was received. I believe (in fact I heard while there) that it dwindled away under the contract system.—J. A. W.

lation slice of this delicacy. When beef was issued the men who fell heir to the large joint bones were deemed lucky, although there was only a small quantity of meat attached. The flesh was usually scraped off, cooked, and eaten. The bone was then split into very small pieces, put into a kettle, and boiled until all the fat was driven out and the water evaporated. The residue was filtered through a piece of cloth to separate the fragments of bone, poured into a plate, and allowed to harden. It was then ready to be eaten. I would not care to try Camp Morton bone butter now, but twenty-five years ago it had a taste more delicious than the best Berkshire butter found in our New York markets.

The chief struggle, as I have said, was for subsistence. The second in order was to keep fairly rid of vermin. Crowded as we were, in close personal contact with all sorts and conditions of men, many of whom did not have a change of clothing, with no place to bathe in except the open air, and this for months in a very cold atmosphere, and with slim accommodations for boiling our apparel, it is not to be wondered at that all were infested with parasites. On a number of occasions our committee forced those who were negligent in cleanliness to strip and boil their clothes, and would clip the hair from the heads of others who would not keep themselves clean of headlice. After a few weeks of prison life many of the better class of prisoners in our barracks (I answered to roll-call in No. 7, but slept in No. 4) banded together and bought the upper berths of one side of the shanty, but even with this precaution we were not wholly rid of vermin. Our association soon excited comment, not always free from envy, and we were known as the "top-bunk aristocracy." One of our "top-bunkers" is now a United States senator.

In February, 1865, our hearts were gladdened with the assurance that a cartel had been agreed upon and a draft of five hundred prisoners was ordered for exchange. The selection was chiefly from those disabled by wounds or sickness, and I fell in with this number. We came by rail to Baltimore, and by steamer

¹According to the latest estimates of the War Records Office the prisoners, North and South, who died in captivity are estimated as follows:

U. S. prisoners confined by the Confederacy	196,713
" " died in " "	30,212
Percentage of deaths	15.3
Confederate prisoners confined by the U. S.	227,570
" " died in " "	26,774
Percentage of deaths	11.7

The above figures represent the number of prisoners captured and confined on each side. The total number of Federal prisoners captured was 213,381, of whom 16,668 were paroled on the field; the total number of Confederates captured was 476,169, of whom 248,599 were paroled on the field.—EDITOR.

to Aiken's Landing on the James River, thence on foot to Richmond. With what a yell did we welcome liberty when our guards in blue turned back and we rushed over the breastworks and were once more among our own "boys." I reëntered the army early in April, and was with the command surrendered to General J. H. Wilson at the capture of Macon, Georgia, but succeeded in escaping. Two days later, while trudging on foot over the Southwestern Railroad, I met a man who inquired of me if it was true that the Yankees were in Macon. I at once recognized by his accent that he was a Northerner, and upon my inquiry as to his command he became confused and evidently agitated. As Andersonville was only a few miles off, I was convinced that he was an escaped Union prisoner, and upon so expressing myself he broke down completely, saying, "For God's sake don't take me back to that place." I had taken my life in my own hands just two days before rather than go back to Camp Morton, and I could appreciate this poor fellow's agony. He went with me to a house near by where he signed a parole and made oath on a Bible that he would not "take up arms against the Southern Confederacy until regularly exchanged as a prisoner of war." I shared my slender stock of rations and Confederate money (more money than rations) with him, told him Wilson was in Macon, and if suspected and arrested to show his parole for protection. He was by turns the most scared, most surprised, and most grateful human being I ever met.

I have waited to publish this unhappy experience until a quarter of a century has elapsed since it happened. The Southern side of prison life has not yet been fully written. The reputation of the South has suffered not only because the terrible trials of Northern prisoners in Southern prisons have been so fully exploited, but because the truth of the Confederates' prison experience has not been given to the world. My comrades died by the hundreds amid healthful surroundings, almost all of these from the effects of starvation, and this in the midst of plenty. The official records show that at Camp Morton 12,082 prisoners were confined, of which number 1763, or 14.6 per cent., perished. Excepting the few shot by the guards, the deaths from wounds were rare. The conditions were not malarial, for Indianapolis was not unhealthy. There were no epidemics during my imprisonment of about fifteen months, and little cause for death had humane and reasonable care of the prisoners been exercised.¹

John A. Wyeth, M. D.

267 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK.

fication of the public policy of preserving the forests for the larger uses of the people.

We misjudge the State of California if her citizens will sit idly by and see the sources, in part, of her greatness turned over to the tender mercies of private individuals. The preservation of her scenery, the conservation of her forests, and, most of all, the security of the water-supply of her valleys, ought to move the press and the people of the Golden State to prompt and vigorous protest against the flagrant and long-continued disregard of her interests.

"Progress of Ballot Reform,"¹ Colorado.

COLORADO should be included in the list of States which have passed new ballot laws. It enacted an excellent law in 1891, and, like Michigan, incorporated in it a corrupt-practices act which forbids the improper use of money in elections and requires sworn publication after election, by both candidates and campaign committees, of all money received and expenditures made.

¹ See "Topics of the Time," in this magazine for September, 1891.

OPEN LETTERS.

M. Gounod and his Ideals.

IN a private letter to a friend last summer the composer of "Faust" announced that the end of his creative career was come; susceptibility to heart-disease would prevent him hereafter undertaking any work of magnitude. M. Gounod is now an old man and much broken in health. He spent last summer in Versailles, but, I believe, returned to Paris in time to witness a performance of "Lohengrin" at the Grand Opera, and give expression to his admiration for the genius of Richard Wagner. Of late years his life has flowed along as peacefully as a meadow brook, and its conclusion bids fair to have the tender grace of a dying day of our Indian summer. It is a well-rounded life which in its decline is modulating into the key of its early years. In his old age M. Gounod recurs to the ideals of his youth and sets an example for the things that are lovely and of good repute in morals and art.

The critical historian of the future will look for the explanation of the "Faust" score in the German models which the composer chose early in his career. They were Mozart, Von Weber, and Wagner. For Mendelssohn, too, he had much love, and, indeed, the two men were not unlike in their gentleness of character and its lyrical expression. Sympathy for Mendelssohn's ideals turned his thoughts toward the oratorio nearly half a century ago, and found expression, mild but unmistakable, in his "Redemption," with its revival of the use of the *chorale*. The gospel of dramatic expression Gounod read in the scores of "Don Giovanni," "Der Freischütz," and "Lohengrin." Like Verdi, he knew the score of "Don Giovanni" by heart already as a conservatory pupil; but, unlike Verdi, he never became satiated with it. Young Verdi respected but did not love Mozart's masterpiece. Young Gounod's admiration for it was a passion which remained perennial and only a short time ago bore its loveliest fruit in a glowing eulogy and analysis of the work, printed for the benefit of the young composers of France. "The score of 'Don Juan,'" writes the composer of "Faust," "has influenced my whole life like a revelation; for me it always was and has remained the embodiment of dramatic impeccability." That such an admirer of Mozart should appreciate Von Weber at his true value and have an open heart for the newer evangel of Wagner is not at all surprising; that he did not follow Wagner to the logical outcome of his theories was due to the essentially lyrical trend of his genius. Gounod is an

eclectic musician, and therefore, in the nature of the case, he could not be a revolutionary force in French art; but his "Faust" worked a greater change in the manner of operatic composition in France than all the reformatory harangues of Berlioz.

In his youth Gounod's nature had a strong religious leaning. Even after he had won the Prix de Rome and was living as a *pensionnaire* of the Institute in the Villa Medici, his love for music had to struggle for supremacy with an ardent desire to enter the priesthood. The painter Ingres in Rome drew a portrait of the dreamy youth in monk's dress. His first compositions were ecclesiastical. A letter from Fanny Hensel, written in 1843, says that the young Frenchman, who was much liked in the Mendelssohn household, was then engaged on an oratorio entitled "Judith." What became of that work I do not know, but the old predilection for the oratorio form returned when M. Gounod came to complete the edifice of his works. "The Redemption" and "Mors et Vita" are its expression. The same tendency may be found in his choice of operatic subjects. "Polyeucte" tells a story of Christian martyrdom, and when Dr. Hanslick, of Vienna, visited M. Gounod twelve or fourteen years ago, he found him engrossed in the sketches for an opera to be called "Abelard and Heloise," which, the composer explained, was not to celebrate the passion of the famous lovers so much as it was to symbolize the struggle between enlightened conviction and petrified dogma. The work was put aside, but the fact of its conception remains to speak of the blending of fancifulness and earnestness, liberality and devoutness, in Gounod's religious nature.

H. E. Krehbiel.

The Camp Morton Controversy.

I.—COMMENTS ON DR. WYETH'S REJOINER.

I DO not care to make any extended reply to the rejoinder by J. A. Wyeth to my article in the September number of THE CENTURY, concerning the charges contained in an article entitled "Cold Cheer in Camp Morton" in the April number of THE CENTURY.

This controversy has reduced itself to a question of veracity between certain ex-Confederate prisoners of war and ex-Union officers of the highest standing and respectability who have enjoyed the confidence and respect of the communities in which they have lived for a long series of years, and they are sustained in

many cases by the records of the War Department and other official data. They also have the indorsement of a committee of seven of the most distinguished officers that served in the Union army from Indiana, viz., General Lew. Wallace, General M. D. Manson, General John Coburn, General James R. Carnahan, Major Charles L. Holstein, Major James L. Mitchell, and Captain E. H. Williams, who were appointed, in pursuance of a resolution at the last annual State encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic, held in this city in April last, to investigate the charges in Dr. Wyeth's article, as well as the indorsement of Colonel I. N. Walker, the department commander of said organization. Some of these officers enjoy a national reputation, and all are well and favorably known outside the State of Indiana.

There is scarcely a statement in the evidence produced by Mr. Wyeth that could not have been suggested by his first article, and, like that, the later article is singularly deficient in names and dates. Among his witnesses there are but two of whom I ever heard or have any knowledge, viz., P. M. Gapen of this city and Dr. W. P. Parr of Emporia, Kansas, both of whom were known as Southern sympathizers during the war, and whose testimony I propose to impeach.

He quotes P. M. Gapen of this city as saying that the firm of P. M. Gapen and Co., grocers, purchased during the early winter of 1864 a large quantity of coffee, sugar, rice, etc., through persons now deceased, which he afterward learned was from, or was intended for, prisoners at Camp Morton. Upon such testimony Mr. Wyeth attempts to prove that the rations intended for the prisoners were stolen and not issued. Neither the name of P. M. Gapen nor P. M. Gapen and Co., grocers, appears in the Indianapolis City Directory or Marion County tax duplicate for 1864. If he bought these goods at the prices named, did he not suspect that those from whom he bought them had wrongfully come by them? And when he was so informed, did he inform the Government, and if not, why not?

Dr. William P. Parr was a contract surgeon who served at Camp Morton from February 12, 1864, to February 5, 1865. W. W. H. McCurdy, a well-known and reputable citizen of this city, says:

I was in the employ of the United States Government at Indianapolis in 1864, during which time I became acquainted with Dr. Parr. In the spring of 1865 I opened a law office in this city. Dr. Parr was an almost daily visitor to the same, and the condition and treatment of Confederate prisoners was a subject of frequent conversation between us, and I distinctly remember that he always spoke of the abundance and excellence of the supplies, of the splendid physical condition and the kind treatment they received, all of which I, of my own personal knowledge, knew to be true. Had the doctor been cognizant of such a state of things as his statement in the September CENTURY would indicate, I am certain he would in some of our conversations have alluded to the matter.

George W. Smith of Lebanon, Indiana, was intimately acquainted with Dr. Parr, visited him in Camp Morton, and often talked with him as well as the prisoners, most of whom said they would rather be there than in the field, as they had better treatment than if they were in their own hospitals, had plenty to eat, and had roofs to sleep under. He says: "I have often heard Dr. Parr, during the time he was in the service, and since, while we were neighbors at Lebanon, Indiana, say that the rebel prisoners were better treated than the soldiers

who guarded them." I was very much surprised to see his statement in the September CENTURY, as it does not correspond with what he has always told me.

Captain James H. Rice of Hartford, Connecticut, who was provost-marshal at Camp Morton every sixth day during the time Dr. Parr was on duty there, says he was familiar with the barracks, as he inspected them, and that he knew Dr. Parr and never heard a complaint from him.

Elijah Hedges, undertaker, says:

I have read the testimony of Dr. Parr in the September CENTURY, in which he says a great many of the frozen dead bodies were carried from the bunks to the dead-house. I removed all of the dead bodies from Camp Morton, and I solemnly assert that there never was a frozen body taken from the dead-house, and I never heard of any one being frozen in the camp until I read Mr. Wyeth's article. If any one ever had been frozen in that camp, I am sure I should have heard of it.

General A. A. Stevens, commander of Camp Morton, while recently looking through some old letters from ex-prisoners of war who were confined at Camp Morton, found the following, which will speak for itself:

CHAMBERSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA, November 11, 1864. COLONEL A. A. STEVENS. DEAR SIR: I have felt very anxious about my nephew, John Wyeth, who was sick when I last heard from him. You have granted me so many favors respecting this dear misguided boy that I take the liberty of asking you if he is sick, to let me know of it, and anything he needs, if you will supply it, I will, with many thanks, repay you. . . . Respectfully yours, LOUISA W. DOUGLASS.

Mr. Wyeth and all of his witnesses speak in the highest terms of the management of the hospital at Camp Morton, and are highly complimentary in their references to the surgeon in charge of the same. In the next breath they charge that large numbers of persons were frozen to death in camp. This statement is disproved by the records and statements of the physicians in charge of the camp, which could not have happened unless the facts had been suppressed and records falsified by the very surgeons they compliment so highly. Such a policy, if adopted, would have been known, and would have been resented, not only by the community as a whole, but by the numerous rebel sympathizers that partially composed it. The men in charge of the prison were humane, and the intimation that the prisoners in their care were deliberately starved, beaten, and murdered is grotesque to the point of absurdity.

A grievance uncomplained of for six years, says a leading newspaper in commenting on Wyeth's article, is for the most part held to be no grievance at law. A grievance uncomplained of for nearly thirty years has no claim to attention in a court of conscience.

W. R. Holloway.

II. CONCLUSION BY DR. WYETH.

SINCE writing my article in the April CENTURY, I have been furnished with an article on Camp Morton written by the Rev. J. G. Wilson and printed in "Scott's Monthly Magazine" (Atlanta, Georgia) in 1868. Dr. Wilson was president of the Huntsville (Alabama) Female College, 1865-72; transferred to a Kentucky church and president of the Military Academy at Bowling Green, 1872-76; thence to St. Louis in charge of the St. John's Methodist Episcopal Church, where he died in 1884, honored and loved by all. This article by

this educated and Christian gentleman, written while the experiences of his prison life were fresh in his memory, coincides in nearly every essential particular with mine. He says the prisoners "suffered the pangs of hunger almost constantly" (p. 297). "Men who when captured were stalwart, fleshy men would dwindle away to skeletons." "Prisoners in the extremity of their hunger were often seen rooting like so many hogs in the piles of garbage from the hospital cook-room" (p. 299). The charges of cruelty and shooting of prisoners are also fully corroborated, but I cannot ask THE CENTURY to give space for a duplication of my statements that already have been strongly sustained.

John A. Wyeth.

Will H. Low.

IN Mr. Millet's excellent article in the November number of this magazine (undoubtedly correct in the main both in statement of fact and the deductions drawn therefrom) occurs the following, which I think admits of some qualification: "Few of those whose names have been prominent among the promising young artists abroad have kept up the high standard of excellence, much less have continued to make progress, after a short season at home." The work of Augustus St. Gaudens, Olin Warner, Carroll Beckwith, Kenyon Cox, Walter Shirlaw, George de Forest Brush, Alden Weir, Wyatt Eaton, William Chase, Abbot Thayer, T. W. Dewing, and Will H. Low and others seems to invalidate this assertion, for I am sure Mr. Millet will admit that they are better artists to-day than when they returned to America from their studies abroad, ten or more years ago. While it is true that the progress of these men may not have been so rapid as their more fortunate confrères whose means have permitted them to remain in the Parisian forcing-frame of art, is it not possible that there may have been upon the whole (as they have not been dominated by the Salon or the dealer) a greater tendency toward the development of the individual? Whether fortunately or unfortunately, the American artist of to-day, with rare exceptions, must turn his hand to many things. Happy the man who finds time to discover in which line of art his individuality lies. I think that Will H. Low, a reproduction of whose painting "Dolce far Niente" is published in this number, is a good example of this. He has done an extraordinary variety of work, little of which has been the unhampered expression of his individuality. His individuality would probably be in the line of decoration, wall-paintings, or large works to form part of the architectural design of important buildings. Certainly he has done nothing nobler or better than "The Welcome," and nothing which has more promise of a successful result than "The Parting," the picture he is now engaged on—both colossal works for the Plaza Hotel. But Mr. Low has had few opportunities for doing this class of work. He has, however, made some large easel pictures. Perhaps the best-remembered of these is "The Skipper Ireson," painted in 1881, certainly as good a picture as, if not a better than, "Le Jour des Morts," painted in France four years earlier and exhibited in the Salon. But although there are other well-known works of Mr. Low in this genre, the present condition and patronage of American art have not per-

mitted him to confine his attention to easel pictures, for such works need time and money. He has made designs for stained glass, many illustrations for magazines and books, and done much teaching. In all this variety of work he has found recognition both from artists and the public. Several of his pictures are in public collections; his illustrations to Keats's "Lamia"¹ and the sonnets of Keats are recognized as among the best work of their class; the window designed by him for Rock Creek Church, Washington, D. C., is an excellent example of an art in which the United States leads the world. In 1884 he was given charge of the antique class of the Cooper Institute; in 1888 was made an associate of the National Academy of Design. Soon after he was appointed director of the antique and life classes in the Academy schools, and in 1890, when thirty-seven years old (he having been born in Albany in 1853), he was elected an Academician.

W. Lewis Fraser.

Notes on "General Miles's Indian Campaigns."

I. THE RETURN HOME OF THE NEZ PERCÉS.

IN Major Baird's condensed and valuable historical article in your July number, on "General Miles's Indian Campaigns," he makes the following statement in reference to the restoration of the exiled Nez Percés: "Nearly seven years later, when General Miles had received promotion, and was commanding the department of Columbia, he at last succeeded in having Joseph and the remnant of his band returned to the vicinity of their old home." I am sure that a bit of history escaped the eye of Major Baird, and I feel confident that this unqualified statement escaped the eye of General Miles when he looked over the proofs of the article in question. General Miles is a gallant soldier, and has won the highest admiration of thousands of his countrymen, not only for his brilliant victories on the frontier, but for his Christian humanity in dealing with a conquered foe. From the beginning to the end he was the steadfast friend of the Nez Percés, but his early and vigorous efforts in their behalf, like those of Senator Dawes and Secretary Teller, were unavailing, and the Nez Percés would have perished in their exile but for the efforts of friends unknown to General Miles, who took up the lost cause, and at large expense for printing, traveling, and public meetings, and through four years of watchfulness and labor, secured the necessary congressional legislation for their removal. The documentary evidence of this is in my possession, and is sufficient to fill THE CENTURY from cover to cover.

The record of this labor includes ten thousand miles of travel, a publication of the condition of the Indians which reached not less than one million readers, mass meetings in our principal cities from New York to St. Paul, a presentation of the matter to the President, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Senate and House Committees on Indian Affairs, the work of missionaries among the Nez Percés, the strong memorials to Congress by the Presbytery of Emporia, the Synod of Kansas, and the Presbyterian General Assembly, and the personal care and attention given to the matter by Senator Dawes and Secretaries Teller and Lamar.

The details of the transportation, and location of the Nez Percés in the Northwest, were committed to Sec-

¹ See THE CENTURY for December, 1885.