

12

cheer. Such firing I never heard.

The boys used about one hundred rounds each before we were relieved, and then we fell back, giving place to another regiment. But then there is a sad, very sad thought connected with this success. Four of my own men were left dead on the ground in the pits, never, I suppose, knowing what hurt them. Charles Howgate, who lived in Bridge street, near Union, and whose family are there now, I suppose, was struck with a shell on the top of his head as he was replenishing his cartridge box. He breathed only a few gasps, and all was over. I spoke to him, but he knew nothing. The next man was Corporal John Van Alstyne, one of my best men. He was standing about six feet from me, and by the side of Lieutenant Gridley. There

was a tree between he and I. Sergeant Tuttle turned and spoke to me, saying "John Van Alstyne has got it." I went at once to see, but he was dead! a ball had struck him in the face, and I suppose cut the spine. He was an excellent man, and from Amenia. In about two minutes, John P. Wing and Levi Rust, of Washington, were struck by the same ball, it going through John's breast and then striking Levi Rust. The latter fell at once. John looked up to me, I thought as much as to say "That came close," when he fell over on his hands and knees and settled down in death, with only a groan. Geo. T. Willson, Color Corporal of my Co., was wounded in the forehead, not seriously, but is in the hospital. James L. Place, from Washington, lost his right hand forefinger. Hamilton Brannon was just grazed on one of his knuckles.

Of course there were many narrow escapes. The colonel had a ball very close to his head.

We went into the pits again but lost no men. Our fire was exceedingly effective. A great many were lying dead in the valley. About fifty came up to our pits with a flag of truce and surrendered themselves. Cos. G, E, and C each lost one man. There are about twenty wounded. We lay there till afternoon, not in the pits, but in the rear. We moved up to assist the left just before night, but were not needed. We got Longstreet and many prisoners, some say 10,000. We occupied our same bivouac last night, and came to these pits this morning.

SUNDAY MORNING, July 5, 1863. }
About 1 1/2 miles South of Gettysburg. }

We are bivouacking in an open field without tents, baggage or rations, and it has rained twelve hours. Our Regiment was in all day Friday. I lost four men killed instantly, and three of them within a very few feet of me. Three other companies lost five men each. I append a list. Our colors are shot in about twenty places, and both lances split.

KILLED.

Chas. Howgate, Co. A, Poughkeepsie; John P. Wing, Co. A, Poughkeepsie; Levi Rust, Co. A, Washington; Corporal John Van Alstyne, Co. A, Amenia; Jed. Murphy, Co. E, Dover; Barney Burnett, Co. G.; Barnes, Co. I. All of these were killed in the Rifle Pits.

George T. Willson and Jonas L. Place of

13

my Company, wounded slightly. How Gridley Mabbett escaped cannot be accounted for on the doctrine of chances. My company was most exposed. J. C.

Letter from Lieutenant Sleight, of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Regiment.

EDITORS OF THE POUGHKEEPSIAN—*Gentlemen*: I send you an extract from a letter written in part upon the battle-field of Gettysburg, by an officer of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Regiment, to his friends in this vicinity. It may be interesting to your readers as part of the history of that regiment, many of the members of which are so well known to them. Yours, &c., W.

HEADQUARTERS TWELFTH ARMY CORPS,
FIRST DIVISION, LOCKWOOD'S BRIGADE,
BATTLE-FIELD NEAR GETTYSBURG, PA.
SUNDAY, July 5, 1863.

The battle on this part of the field seems to be over; at least it is quiet in front of us, though the firing still goes on to the left. To give you a little idea of what our regiment has been doing since I last wrote to you, I will state that we left Baltimore Thursday afternoon, June 25, for Monocacy, which we reached on Saturday night; lay there over Sunday. Monday morning, fell in with the immense army then passing there, camping a short distance north of Frederick City that night; next day, marched in a north-easterly direction all day; next day (Wednesday) to within eight miles of Gettysburg, nearly east of it; the next morning at two, started for this place, where the battle was then going on, and where our brigade was held in reserve till just dark, when we were double-quickened for a couple of miles, to make a charge where the Rebels were making too much headway; but they retired on the appearance of fresh troops, without making any opposition to us. This closed the battle, at our end of the line, for that day. We lay on our arms that night, changing our position several times, and at daylight the great battle of July 3 commenced. The roar of artillery and musketry was beyond description; but I suppose you have the details more fully from the papers than I can give them. When I say that the line of battle was six or seven miles long, you can easily understand that I could observe but a little of it. Our position was on the extreme right of the Federal line, near the town of Gettysburg; and the fight was very severe; but we were, fortunately, protected by a slight breastwork of logs and stones, and our loss was small, though the Rebels suffered much. The bullets and bursting shells flew around like hail, but the loss in our regiment will not exceed ten dead, as yet, and twice as many wounded, more or less severely. Private Barnes, of Co. I, was the first man to fall, shot through the head, close by my side. "ATTENTION BATTALION!" the Colonel is shouting, and I must close for the present.

MONDAY MORNING, July 6.
Yesterday, after commencing my letter, we were marched to Littleton, about ten miles in a S. E. direction from the battlefield, where we remained all night. This morning started a five, and marched three miles to the southward and halted, where I am now writing. We got away from the battle-ground in good time, for the stench had already begun to be sickening. Most of the dead men had been buried before we left, but the dead horses and mules lay thickly about. It was shocking to see them, although you know my nerves are pretty strong. I always had a great desire to

274
witness a great battle. I have now seen one, and am satisfied not to see another; not from fear, either—for, although I lay no great claim to courage, yet I felt an indifference to danger which I can hardly account for.

All the available houses and barns in the vicinity were used as hospitals, and were not enough at that, numbers of the wounded being without shelter and half-naked in the pouring rain. Their skins had become bleached and shrivelled from the exposure.

It has rained very hard most of the time for several days, which has added greatly to our discomfort, as we are destitute of blankets and tents, to say nothing of its making the roads almost impassable. Among other things, it has been difficult to get enough to eat, for a week or two past, but we have plenty of hard tack now, which will support life if a man works faithfully at grinding it up.

I can give you but a faint idea of the battle and the scenes after it, but perhaps more than you care to know. It may be a relief to you to know the Rebel dead, so far as my observation extends, was three to one of the Federal. Our position in the battle was in a thick wood, behind a slight breastwork, and during the fight hardly a Rebel could be seen from the thickness of the foliage, but on going over the fields next day the slaughter among them was found to have been dreadful. In the heat of the contest a number of them threw down their arms and made a rush for our lines, waving white flags. The firing ceased, and two hundred came into our lines and gave themselves up, amid great cheers from our side.

The cannonading of the 3d of July, was said by old soldiers, to have been the most severe of any battle during the war. The enemy is now said to be making his way to Virginia, with all possible haste; has lost all his pontoons, and used up his ammunition. But you can hear more about that than I am able to tell you. Lee has certainly not made much by his invasion thus far.

Dick joined the regiment at Monocacy, and has been with us since. He is unhurt, as well as myself. Captain B. was taken sick, on the road from Baltimore to Monocacy, and was left in the hospital at Frederick. He has since gone back to Baltimore, where he now is.—Our colors are riddled with bullets, and both staffs nearly shot off. They are no disgrace to us now. Though the privations and hardships we have experienced for two weeks past have been severe, yet I feel as well as when leaving Baltimore. I am very much in need of clean clothes, a clean face, a shave, and would enjoy a good night's rest in a dry bed, without the harness on. Still, I am not suffering, and make no claim for sympathy.—There are hundreds at Gettysburg who need it more. I do not know whether we are to follow Lee into Virginia or not.

From the Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle.

HEADQUARTERS 150th REG'T N. Y. S. V.
Gettysburg, July 5, 1863.

EDITORS EAGLE—I have the opportunity of sending by special messenger (all-mail communication being suspended) a brief account of the desperate battle just fought here and the part borne by the One Hundred and Fiftieth in the same. After a fatiguing march we reached this place on Thursday morning, July 2d, and found heavy skirmishing going on. About the middle of the afternoon the general engagement came on, opening with a furious artillery charge. An hour or two before sunset our corps (the Twelfth) was called out. The Dutchess boys, though weary, responded at once, but by the time we reached the position assigned us dusk was coming on and the

tremendous fire which had been for hours incessantly kept up was slackening down and soon after altogether ceased. We drove the enemy more than a mile; however, and recaptured and brought off three cannon which they had taken. While the regiment halted, awaiting further orders, I strolled over the field, and fearful was the sight. All around the Union wounded lay thick, and pitiable were their cries for help. The ambulances soon arrived and commenced gathering them up. As it was too late for anything further that night, our brigade (General Lockwood's) was ordered to return to its camp. We rested upon our arms—At two o'clock the following morning we were again aroused and soon after formed in line of battle, the enemy having massed in the woods upon our right. About six or seven o'clock the 150th marched up to face the foe with three rousing cheers. A breastwork of fallen trees afforded them partial protection and over this they poured upon the rebels a telling fire. Till nearly noon the entire line was one continuous sheet of flame. Experienced officers declared that our men fought admirably and commended them in the strongest terms. One distinguished general said: "If that is the fire of a new regiment, I wish all our regiments were new!" Not far from noon the rebels fell back, some fifty or sixty coming in and giving themselves up. This ended our fighting for the day. Our wounded were removed to a large stone barn near by, where they were attended to, and then transferred to the Twelfth Corps general hospital. Our regiment suffered less than almost any other of which I have heard, notwithstanding rebel sharpshooters posted in the trees picked away constantly. I append a list of killed and wounded, which I believe is correct:

Co. A,—*Killed*—Corp. John Van Alstyne. Privates, Charles Howgate, Levi Rust, John P. Wing. *Wounded*—Corp. George Wilson, slightly in the forehead. Private James L. Place, slightly, in the hand.

Co. B,—*Wounded*—Privates, Valentine Jones, slightly, head; James M. Chambers, slightly, neck; Owen O'Neil, slightly, leg; Nelson P. Shafer, lost an eye; Charles Weaver, slightly, hand.

Co. C,—*Wounded*—Sergeant A. Seely, slightly, head. Private Tallmadge Wood, mortally, in the chest.

Co. D,—*Wounded*—Corporal Richmond, slightly, head.

Co. E,—*Killed*—Private Judd Murphy. *Wounded*—Samuel Clement, very slightly, face.

Co. F,—*Wounded*—Private Stephen H. Ryners, in the hand.

Co. G,—*Killed*—Private Barnard C. Burnett.

Co. H,—*Wounded*—Private Michael McGinn, severely, abdomen.

Co. I,—*Killed*—Private Henry Barnes. *Wounded*—Edward Hart, severely, in the hip; Alexander Rodgers, lost a finger.

Co. K,—*Wounded*—Corporal George W. Buckmaster, slightly, neck. Privates, Patrick Cane, reported wounded; L. E. Dutcher, leg; F. Pot-

burgh, arm; James Lynch, leg, Thomas Way, arm; Alfred Woodin, hand.

Total—Killed, 7; Wounded, 22.
There was no fighting yesterday. A few of our men are missing, but it is supposed that they are straggling. None are known to have been taken prisoners. I gathered up our dead yesterday, and saw them interred. Yours respectfully,
T. E. VASSAR, Chaplain.

Visit to the Army of the Potomac.

For the America Times.

On Monday, the 6th of July, the writer in company with Messrs. BORDEN and WATTLES, with 1,800 lbs. of stores, started for Gettysburg, to administer to the wants of the 150th, who were engaged in that fearful struggle. On Tuesday we reached Baltimore, and made all possible enquiries concerning the regiment, but to no purpose. With Mr. W., we started for G., and proceeded to Hanover Junction, 45 miles, where the road to Gettysburg intersects the Northern Central Road. Here, with hundreds, we encamped for the night; some in barns, some on the floor, and some in the open field. There we beheld for the first time the works of the enemy, in burnt bridges, cars, &c. The road had been repaired to G., a distance of 40 miles, and we expected at early dawn to be on the way; but red tape, or something worse, prevailed to detain us until 4 P. M. Previous to this, Mr. W. had determined to return to Baltimore, and go over to the front, which proved a wise arrangement. That night we reached Hanover, a large and beautiful village, where the cars stopped for the night. We were entertained at the house of a hospitable family, and for the first in life beheld a battle field—the cavalry fight with Stewart. There, said my host, fell two men dead at my door. There, on that eminence, a furious charge was made. Houses and fences bore the marks of the fight. At length, we mount the top of the cars and proceed through a fertile and beautiful valley to G., 18 miles. Never shall we forget that Thursday morning. All nature was smiling, as we neared the field of death. Nearer and nearer we approach. All eyes are strained to catch the sight. But it is reserved for another organ near the eye to first detect our proximity to the battle field. Nearing the village far away at our right, is the College and Seminary, and the scene of Wednesday's fight.

High at our left, south of the village, is the Cemetery. The streets are full of people. Far as we can look, it is one moving mass, assembled from every Northern State. Parents are there for their sons, in painful anxiety respecting their fate. Wives have come to search for their husbands, brother for brother, and friend for friend. Ministers of the Gospel, too, in large numbers, to minister to those whom they love. We salute each other with the freedom of old acquaintance. Tell me, says one, where is the hospital of the 1st Army Corps, where the 2d, 3d? &c. For ourselves, where is the 12th? Procuring a guide, we

17

proceed near 4 miles, part of the way over the battle ground covered with the debris of the army, when on an eminence, near a farm house, is the hospital we seek. What emotions are awakened, as we enquire from tent to tent, for those we know. We cry at the door of each, "The 150th," but no answer. At length, a voice, and then another. And these are all. Thank God, the 150th are safe, and with the army. Nor did we learn to the contrary until our return. Of the numbers and condition of the wounded on that tented field, much has been written yet how faintly realized. Conceive of 30,000, including the rebels, laid mostly on the cold earth, with no covering but of cloth, to screen them from the storm. Nine surgeons and assistants, with a few boys as nurses, detailed to care for the 1,200 in our charge. Brought from the field covered with rags and mud and blood, they are a piteous sight.

As yet, few hospital stores have arrived. The work of amputation, extracting balls, &c., goes on. And those terrible wounds from Minnie balls! And yet, how strange, that men shot through and through survive. For eleven long days and nights, we sat in the tents of those suffering men—nurse, letter writer, anything and everything which we could turn our hand. And such cheerfulness and patience! No complaints, no murmurings, save against traitors and copperheads. The common sentiment was, we have got these wounds in a good cause, and are not ashamed. Their gratitude for favors and regard for each other, is very marked. Said a bright and amiable youth, to whom we presented a cup of lemonade, "give it to that man, he needs it more." Both of these were carried to the grave. Among the most affecting sights, was that of parents searching for their sons, and would not be comforted because they were not. In one tent is seen a daughter fanning her dying father; in another, a mother weeping over a dying son. Of those fallen and buried on the battle-field, we speak not, and of the anxious search of friends to recognize their dead, we know but little. The work of embalming went on; but for ourselves, we felt to say with a lady from Massachusetts, "Let them rest in peace." She had come to visit her son, but to find him among the killed. When asked if she would have him embalmed and removed, "No," was her reply, "I believe in the resurrection of the great day, and that my son will rise as surely and sweetly from the field of G., as from my own loved cemetery, at home." The large proportion of deaths was in the night, with none but Jesus to comfort them, as they went down into the dark valley. To lead men to him was our chief work, and never did we speak to such open ears and willing hearts. No scepticism there. But little indifference. Many instances of a most affecting nature we saw and heard from others, which we cannot now relate.

After a few days supplies came in in great abundance. The Dutchmen with their immense lumber teams, brought straw, and the large army wagons in great numbers hauled up the stores. The Christian and Sanitary Commission vied with each other in the good work. Of the former, we

18.

have more knowledge. In addition to providing medical and hospital stores this commission has done a great work, in furnishing books and christian men to labor with the soldiers. Of late, they have made arrangements with the Government, whereby they may transmit all stores that may be furnished by individuals, or societies, without cost to those for whom intended. And for the information of those who contributed for the 150th, I turned over those stores to the Ch. Com., they engaging to forward them to the regiment, and do farther engage to transmit and account for all what money or stores, that may be sent. Money they prefer, as they can best procure what is needful. Now, friends, is the time to do good with your substance. Let not one soldier suffer for lack of what we can spare. No private charities through individuals can reach the army; but sent through the commission they will be forwarded without delay.

Address George H. Stewart, No. 13 Bank Street Philadelphia, and you need have no farther concern. H. SMITH.

OUR ARMY CORRESPONDENCE.

On the march through Boonshoro Valley,
July 9th, 1863.

Friend Dutcher—A partial suspension of mail communication and pressing duties of other kinds will account for my tardiness in keeping the readers of the TIMES acquainted with the movements and achievements of the regiment in which many of them feel an interest so deep. When one is on the march from dawn to darkness he feels decidedly more inclined to slumber than to write, but now while we are halting on a hill side for dinner, I place a sheet upon my knee to jot down some incidents of the eventful two weeks past, persuaded that though they may come a little behind time to some they will be welcome still. On Thursday, June 25th, our final marching orders came, and about four o'clock in the afternoon we turned away from Belger Barracks—a place endeared to us by a thousand pleasant memories. Ten miles of tramping brought us to Ellicott's Mills, a small manufacturing village on the line of the Baltimore and Ohio road, where we rested for the night. Rested I say, though stopped would a more appropriate term, for soon after lying down rain set in and our bed and its covering soon became slightly damp, disturbing rest. Through rain and mud we journeyed the next day to Poplar Springs, seventeen miles beyond, and camped in a grove which Stuart's rebel cavalry pitched in twenty-four hours after we left. Saturday evening we brought up at Monocacy Junction and spent the Sabbath there. Very unlike a Sabbath it seemed, however. All day long the army of the Potomac went tramping by as it had been doing for the previous forty-eight hours. At night the scene perfectly magnificent. Every hill top in the region was a camp, and thousands of lights, with here and there a blazing camp fire, gleamed like a city's illuminated streets. Monday morning early orders came attaching us to the 12th army corps, and bidding us go on to join it. A few hours after

we caught up, and on Thursday morning came in sight of Gettysburgh. Again and again while on the route I wished that those at home who complain of the slowness with which the army moves could look on and see what moving the army really means. Not one person in a thousand at the north has the slightest conception of the magnitude of the work. Ambulances, provision trains, artillery, caissons, ammunition wagons, horses, men, all to be pushed along together, is an undertaking of no ordinary kind. Of course the highways will not give space sufficient for this moving through, and roads are speedily made through meadows and fields of wheat and corn along which the hosts surge.

But let us come to Gettysburg. It is a pleasant little village of eight thousand inhabitants, lying among Pennsylvania hills. Approaching it from the south there is quite an elevation to ascend. Off to the north, the east, and west, stretch heavy pieces of timber, in which the rebels at the time of our arrival chiefly laid. The northern part of the town they also held, while the other side we yet kept. We found pretty heavy skirmishing going on, but the general engagement for that day had not begun. The corps of which the 150th is a part was ordered to hold itself as a reserve. From the cemetery at the top of the hill I witnessed the skirmishing for two hours, till the balls of the rebel sharpshooters commencing to fly unpleasantly thick there, I returned to our camp. Toward the latter part of the afternoon the corps was called out to reinforce Gen. Sedgwick on the left of the line, a most furious engagement having there set in. The response was prompt. It was sundown, however, by the time our line of battle was formed. A perfect shower of shells fell all around as through the twilight woods our regiment pushed up. Steadily they advanced, the rebels faltered and fell back. For a mile we drove the fugitives, and then it being too late further to continue the chase, one of our companies laid hold upon four guns which had been captured from us during the day, and brought them off. None that night were hurt. As I went over the dusky, blood-stained field, sad was the sight and sadder still the sounds. Again and again I was stopped by men writhing in their last great agony, and besought in God's name to do something for them if it was only to bring a draught of water. But even dying men I was compelled to turn away from; only able to promise that ambulances would soon be brought. Our wearied men having regained their camp slept upon their arms. At two o'clock we were aroused. The rebels had massed in the woods upon the left. Soon after daylight we were called to support a battery for two hours, and after this ordered into the rifle pits. I went down with the men. In the edge of a heavy piece of woods breastworks built of fallen trees had been thrown up for more than a mile, and in front of these the Confederate forces laid with sharpshooters posted in the thick trees. To the place assigned them our men marched with three rousing cheers. Minnie balls buzzed around us like a swarm of bees. Soon after the commencement of the firing I retired, conscious that my services

would be needed elsewhere, and in a large stone barn near the field which was used as a temporary hospital waited the bringing of the wounded in. The uniform testimony of those who witnessed the fight is that the Dutchess regiment deported itself nobly—so nobly as to earn the warmest commendations from officers whose opinions are regarded as of the highest worth. Twice for more than two hours each time it stood without flinching under the hottest fire, and from the number of dead gathered up opposite that point on the following

morning, there is reason to believe that they left their mark. It was not long before the services of the attending surgeons were in demand. Our band had been detailed as an ambulance corps and upon stretchers soon began to bring the victims in—some rebels, some Union boys. After being temporarily attended to, they were placed in ambulances and carried to the hospitals of the different corps. Soon after noon the rebels began to shell the rifle pits where our men laid, and the batteries nearer to the left. Two of the batteries were near the barn where we were receiving the wounded, and of course the missiles of death fell round us a perfect storm. Two burst within six or eight feet of me. Language is powerless to describe the fury of this cannonade. One hundred pieces were playing without intermission for hours till the solid earth seemed to shake. But vain were the rebels' most desperate attempts. Nowhere could they break our lines, and by night they had fallen back at every point, thousands being taken prisoners, among them a small detachment which surrendered to our own boys. The rebel wounded with whom I had anything to do all admitted heavy losses. Several of them were officers, gentlemanly in their manners, and very grateful for every attention shown.

On Saturday morning I went over the battlefield gathering up and labeling the dead of our own regiment, and looking at the same time upon the slain on the other side. Few if any of their dead had been removed, and at points it would hardly be exaggerating to say that the ground was covered. That portion of the field over which I passed certainly had five rebel dead to one of our own. The scene was too sickening to describe—its memory will remain with me forever. Enough to say that bodies mangled, swollen, discolored and horribly offensive littered that beautiful forest from end to end. Saturday night, at the request of our Brigadier-General, I superintended the burial of the dead of the 150th. Your readers doubtless know that we had seven killed. Close by the edge of the woods we dug their graves. The flicker of the dying camp fires streamed up amid the deep darkness as we wrapped around our heroes their blankets for a winding sheet, and silently laid back earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust. It lacked not much of midnight when we rounded up the last mound, and as I turned away I thought of that coming hour when every sepulchre should restore its trust, and the slain of both armies again stand face to face.

Sunday morning I had commenced looking up the wounded at the general hospital, when I received orders to rejoin the regiment at once, as it