

Utica Morning Herald

AND DAILY GAZETTE.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH REGIMENT.

CAMP KEYS, VIRGINIA,
HEADQUARTERS 24TH REG'T N. Y. S.V.,
September 18, 1861.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

A night on picket duty. It was not late in the afternoon of the 16th when Major Tarbell came to me and requested that I should take two or three good trusty fellows and take a position on the right of our pickets, near the railroad, from which we could watch any attempt of the enemy to cut off our outposts. I selected Durfee, Whitney, and my brother Vesp. (as we call him,) whom I knew to be sharp shooters and trusty. In a few minutes we were ready for duty, and reported to the Major for orders, which he gave us in about these words: "Be cautious, boys, and watchful. Learn the position of the enemy as well as you can without discovering to them your own. And by all means, do n't fire unless you see a rebel force advancing or manœvering to cut off our pickets." We bowed as he bade us "Be careful," and were soon wending our way along the road toward the outposts. We passed picket after picket, stationed along the road to telegraph danger or attack from the front to the rear. It was about 8 o'clock when we came to a woods, which lead far off to the right. We left the road here, and turned aside into the woods. We wished to take a direction between south and west, and the edge of the woods was favorable. We advanced at first somewhat carelessly, becoming more and more cautious as we proceeded. The moon was just above the horizon, and broad streams of its soft tender light came flooding through avenues among the branches of those great oaks, and fell across our pathway.

"The dews of summer night did fall;
The moon, sweet regent of the sky,
Silvered the walls of Cumæo Hall,
And many an oak that grew thereby."

It was beautiful to stand there, in the shade of a sage oak of centuries' growth, and look into the deepness of the forest, all checkered with light and shade. It seemed a fitting place for the wood nymphs to hold their midnight orgies and do homage to their goddess. And as here and there we stepped into some broad flame of moonlight, each bayonet glistened for a moment and then melted into the next broad shadow.— Still we moved quietly on, while ever and anon some dry twig crackling beneath footfall, made us halt till it settled into silence.

An old deserted dwelling happened in our pathway, which in daylight we might have passed without giving it a notice; but there, that night, on the edge of the forest, with the moonbeams falling on it through the tall trees that stood beside it, I confess I did not near it without a flutter of the heart, and yet it was not a flutter of fear. It was one of those wild thrills that leap through one's heart at times, which seemingly have no cause. We approached it and looked through the doorway. It reminded me of Byron's thought, when, after viewing through "the rents of ruins in the Coliseum wall, the trees waving in the blue midnight," he says:

"And thou didst shine, thou rolling moon upon all this—
And did'st cast a wide and tender light which softened down
The hear austerity of rugged desolation."

We passed out into an open space near a sort of brushwood fence, which turned a little southward. We followed it till we came to the rail road, and then we thought we had advanced far enough. We knew that our pickets were on our left and front, and that the enemy's pickets were

near us. We contrously selected a favorable spot on a woody knoll near the road where we concluded to post ourselves for the night. During all this time scarcely a word had been spoken, and nothing above a whisper. Whispers! How they fall on one's ears on such an occasion! As though the soul were loaded with some dark secret that it does not utter audibly. We threw down our blankets and haversacks, but we didn't feel safe till we had surveyed our position and knew exactly where we were. So, Whitney and myself shouldered our rifles again and started out to reconnoiter, leaving Durfee and Vesp. (as we call him) to keep a bright look out in our rear. We passed round the knoll into a corn field, and creeping cautiously through it, (which was a matter of the greatest difficulty, for ever and anon one of us would strike a corn stalk, and the sound seemed to fly a mile,) we came to a farm house. We passed this, proceeding down a hill into a peach orchard on the opposite side. We came to a tree with some fine soft ones on, and we thought it no stealing to eat one or two ourselves, and carry a few to our fellow pickets. Then passing a little southward, we came round to the knoll again and reported all clear, though oft we had stopped and heard,

"The airy tongues that syllable men's names
in pathless wildernesses."

We found Vesp. with his rifle at "a charge," ready to receive us, with bayonet and bullet if we came too close and were found not to have the countersign, while Durfee had taken position in a chestnut tree near by, from which he could see the country south and west for almost a mile.— He had arranged two pieces of coil in the top of the tree, where he could sit leisurely and watch. They shared our peaches in silence or melancholy whispers.

From the position we had, it was not necessary that more than one should watch at a time. So we arranged it to take turns in watching from the top of the chestnut tree.

I threw myself down on my India rubber blanket and spread my great shawl over me; but I also took my rifle on the same blanket and under the same cover with me. It is amazing how one will hug his gun at such a time as this! It becomes the dearest of bed fellows—the most interesting of companions.

I had scarcely entered dream land, when a volley of musketry, apparently about two miles to our left and near Munson's Hill, started me to my feet, and immediately the alarm guns telegraphed to headquarters. Have you ever heard an alarm of chain pickets? It is worth all the hardships of a campaign to hear such an one as we heard that night. There was a regular chain of pickets from Bailey's Cross Roads in a south-westerly direction as far as Throgmorton's Hill, a distance of about two and a half miles; thence taking an easterly direction toward Washington, but terminating at the reserve picket guard, stationed at Ball's Cross Roads. These pickets are placed at intervals of four or five hundred yards, and their business is to communicate any alarm or hostile movement of the enemy, to the reserves, by firing, one after another, at intervals of about twenty seconds, regularly along the line, beginning where the attack is made or danger appears. I jumped to my feet, and immediately the alarm guns wended their way along the frontier line, beginning near Bailey's Cross Roads, turning almost at right angle, following the road down the hill—crack—crack—across the east road about a half mile below where we were stationed, up the hill on the other side, and away off till they died in the distance toward Ball's Roads.

I stood still a moment to see whether the firing continued, but all was so still that I tried to hold my breath, lest my breathing might be heard. I was in doubt what to do. We were half a mile from where the alarm had crossed the railroad, and the pickets on the lines had not given the

alarm. I thought they must have retreated in silence, and left us to work our own way out. I left two of the boys, and accompanied by the other one, I proceeded cautiously in the shadow of the woods towards the rail road crossing.— The first station of pickets were in the same suspense, the second were ditto: at the third the mystery was solved; the pickets of this post were all asleep. Here the telegraph was broken, and we were left exposed through their neglect. By the articles of war, their lives were in our hands. Their's was a grievous offence. We wakened the boys, and warned them of the dire consequences of their neglect. And I think after last night's experiences they will be better and more faithful soldiers. The alarm proved to be a false one and we returned to our post. It was Durfee's trick to watch, and I threw

without the least anxiety, for I knew that the enemy must be invisible who could approach very near without his knowing it. He was with Scott in his Mexican campaign, and learned under him, in those his palmy days, the duties of a soldier.

I had slept perhaps an hour, when Durfee came and touched me softly, and beckoned me to listen. Footsteps were distinctly heard approaching.— We four were soon wide awake; the trampling sounded nearer; a body of the enemy were coming; this we marked as certain. Our rifles looked through the bushes in that direction, and come what might, we resolved to count their number if we could; and then, when the figures of men grew more and more distinct, Whiting said his gun was "getting mighty anxious."

Thus we stood in breathless silence, just waiting till we could each "select our man." And what was our chagrin when a sudden flame of moonlight revealed a dozen dark faces, of all ages, sizes and sexes. They each had bundles on their backs and under their arms, and the velocity with which they were moving inclined them forward at an angle about forty degrees.

The first knowledge of our presence was such a grim "halt" of the boys, as seemed to straighten their forms and turn their hair white. The foremost one was a tall, bony woman, who reached one hand down to hurry along a little girl, while the other embraced a bundle. She stood speechless, while the other women and men cried out—"Lord, massas, don't shoot! don't shoot!"

We heard their story and let them pass. But were I a sculptor or a painter and could reproduce in marble or on canvass that tall, dark woman, I'd call her the Giant Goddess of Sorrow.

The rest of the night was passed in quietness. We breakfasted on our meat and crackers, and during the morning Durfee entertained us with stories of our Chieftain General's brilliant achievements on the plains of Mexico, and often did he wish that he could see the old General ride along the lines once more as of old, that he could once more hear him give the word, "Onward, to the breach or the battery or the heights." But the wish is vain. The waters that were fabled to give perpetual growth, live only in mythology, and time writes alike its heavy hand on the chieftain's brow and brain, as on the humblest peasant's.

Thus, with many a good story, the forenoon passed away quietly, and we were relieved at noon by a party of the Thirteenth.

We arrived in camp safely with the rich experience of one night on picket. JEAN.

Utica Morning Herald

AND DAILY GAZETTE

From the Twenty-Fourth (Oswego)
Regiment.

ARLINGTON HILLS, VA., August 24th, 1861,
HEADQUARTERS 24th REGIMENT N. Y. S. V.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

It has been so long since I have seen a **UTICA MORNING HERALD**, that I really have an intense curiosity to read "the latest by telegram" from its columns; just to see how I would feel after it. Long, I said, perhaps it is not very long when measured by almanacs, old clocks or daily issues; but I seem to have unconsciously adopted other meters of time, as, for instance, good breakfasts, which come at distant intervals, little skirmishes which happen here and there, and nights without alarm, which are "few and far between;" and measuring time by these, it seems a long time since I have seen a copy of your paper. And this afternoon I have so little to do, or rather so little that I will do, that I find myself sitting in the shade of a large Virginia-oak (perhaps one of the P. F. V.'s) with a copy of the *Atlantic Monthly* near me, which I have read and re-read till I have almost fallen in love with little Agnes of Sorrento, and methinks if I could see here at the orange stand this afternoon, I'd contrive to send old Elsie away, just that I might kiss Agnes once. But I have not only read Mrs. Stowe's story, "There are Things Slowly Learnt," and "The Rose Eubroced," and this last title, I confess, was a poser for me, and the poem not less than the title. I have read and re-read it, and I can't find out what it means. I have tried Dr. Hickok's *National Cosmology*, to see if that would explain it, and then Paley's *Natural Theology*, but neither of these will lead me into its meaning, and I have laid it on the table till the weather gets cooler, and my head clearer.— And by the way, you will see by these titles that the *Atlantic* before me is the June number—my latest. I subscribed for it for the year, and I presume my July and August numbers are waiting for me in some Post office, but I do n't know where, and I can't cross the Long Bridge to get other copies; and I am left, this warm, sunny, eighth of August afternoon, with this June number as my all and latest. I have no other reading matter just at hand; in fact, there are no very extensive libraries convenient to our camp at present, and I find many an hour longer than it would be if I could get hold of some favorite author.

You or some one else may think it strange that one can't find employment enough here without books, but although we are the advance guard, we see but little of the enemy; now and then a party of skirmishers make their appearance, but this lasts only for a moment, and we are left to our own musings, and as for perusing Scott or Hardee, or that other compilation, when the mercury stands at a hundred Fah. in the shade, I confess I'm not equal to the task. One of the greatest evils of this kind of life is, that men let loose every restraint, and forget that though in war, they are men with a personal and national character to sustain. Cards is the commonest amusement, and swearing, one would think from its prevalence, is the greatest luxury. I indulge in neither of these, and for this reason I am left ostentive to count my own fingers (not some one else's,) or contemplate the horrors of war. Memory is a grateful blessing here, though, for I sometimes call up the days gone by, or repeat to myself the Greek alphabet, and think of the friends left behind me, especially one. But curi-

osity to see one of your papers was, just now, got the better of all these, and I can't do anything till I write and get you to send me a copy, and if I like it as well as I used to, maybe I'll subscribe for it for a year or six months, more or less.

My address may be divided into several parts. In the first place, "24th Regiment N. Y. S. V." is a part of it, because that is the number of our Regiment. We were snugly encamped on Meridian Hill on Sunday, July 21st, when orders came for us to hold ourselves in readiness to move at a moment's notice. We packed up immediately, and thought we would be off before dinner. The moving order did not come, and we thought we were in for another night in camp. We heard the booming of distant guns at intervals during the day, but when we received orders that night to cross the river, we did not know what "had turned up." But when, along with our orders to move, came also orders to proceed to the armory and change our old Harper's Ferry muskets for brand-new Esfield rifles, we knew there must be something up; otherwise the rifles would have been in the armory for months, and we would have gone to battle with almost useless muskets. So, about twelve (midnight) we fell in and marched to the armory, about three miles distant, changed our guns, and then marched back to camp, making a distance of six miles, and after taking breakfast, we were ready a little after daylight, with two days rations and forty rounds of cartridges, to go where we were needed. It began to rain about this time, a slow, drizzling, continuous rain, lasting unceasingly all the day. The boys were all in high spirits, for we did not know the story of Bull's Run, and we thought we were going straight to Manassas. We passed down 14th street, and as we neared the Avenue and passed Willard's, the throng in the street and the attention directed to us struck us as strange in a place where regiments and brigades had passed and repassed daily for many weeks; and many were the "God bless you, boys," and few were the smiles. Ladies waved their handkerchiefs in token of recognition, but I do not remember of seeing a single lady smile, and I saw a man, I think, a Congressman, step from the sidewalk and grasp Lieut.-Col. Beardsley by the hand as he rode by, and look in his face with a strange emotion. He said something, but I did not hear it. Our march from there became funeral.

The gloomy faces of the crowd seemed to cast a shadow on the merry spirits of the regiment. Washington was pale, very pale, and her pallor made us quiet through sympathy. After we passed the canal bridge, some of the boys struck up the Star Spangled Banner, but it was not contagious, and soon died away into silence. It was raining, and there was a sort of something that whispered bad news, but still a majority of us knew nothing of its real nature. The first thing that made a forcible impression on me, was a four-horse regimental wagon, on the canvas covering of which was marked 2d N. Y. V.— There was an air of defeat about that wagon that told me almost the whole secret. I saw it in the driver's face, in the jaded horses, in the half dozen soldiers that showed their heads fore and aft. And from that time began that Monday's march, a march which we will never forget, and those of us who live to see home again, will have nothing on which we will dwell with greater interest, even should we pass through several campaigns and many battles. To advance in the face of a great army of Americans retreating, was never the lot of any regiment before, if I remember correctly, (for American armies have seldom retreated,) and we have no desire to have such a march again, not because of the march in itself, or the rain, or any fear, but to see our brothers retreating in such a way, is a sorer sight than we wish to see again.

I have not time to tell of that day's march.— I do not want to tell of it. Suffice it to say that we crossed the Long bridge, and by the entrenchments, where were three mammoth guns which spread an atmosphere of consolation on the desolation around. Far as we could see the road was lined with guns and soldiers, each hurrying to some place of safety. Still our Colonel gave the word "forward," and we promptly though not cheerfully (it was no time for cheer,) obeyed. Every straggling soldier had his story to tell us, and many were the times we heard "You'll soon be glad to get back!" After proceeding about six miles we came to a halt, and loaded our pieces, and then throwing two companies forward as skirmishers, we proceeded again. We did not know what moment we would come in contact with the

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—Moses Summers, of the Syracuse Standard, went to Washington to visit the Onondaga regiment, but was refused a pass over the river. He smuggled himself over in an ambulance, and is sending home interesting letters. He describes the condition of the Onondagas as deplorable.— They are on the verge of mutiny, discontented and spiritless. Mr. Summers tells a different story of the 24th regiment, as follows:

I visited the Oswego camp yesterday, and had a pleasant time with Col. Sullivan, Lieut. Col. Beardsley, Capts. O'Brien and Miller, Chaplain Gallagher, Major Tarbell, Sutler Schwartz, and a host of other officers and privates with whom I had the pleasure of an acquaintance. Their camp is located very pleasantly on the bank of the Potomac, on a slight declivity, in full view of Washington, and about a mile from our camp. The Oswego camp appears like a perfect Paradise, and the men act as if they were engaged in a picnic party. Everybody was jolly and happy, and nothing but enjoyment was visible. The scene presents a heart sickening contrast with the camp of the Onondagas, and yet there is no reason why both should not be equally pleasant.

It is laughingly said that the only company in the Army of the Potomac that can eat all their rations is one connected with the Oswego regiment and commanded by Capt. O'Brien! But it is also understood that this company can fight as voraciously as they can eat. The regiment are all handsomely uniformed and furnished with the best Enfield rifles, and a large supply of new clothing is in camp which they have no need for.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH (OSWEGO) REGIMENT.

THROGMORTON'S HILL, HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIGADE,
1ST DIVISION OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
Sept. 28th, 1861.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

Yesterday, we had an inspection of arms, accoutrements and clothing, by Gen. McDowell.—

We were just preparing for dress parade in the evening when a messenger rode up to our camp. In less than thirty minutes afterwards our regiment was in line, in light marching order, which means with blankets and one day's rations. We gave three cheers for the marching orders, and started. Most of us were ignorant of our destination or of what was to be done, and most of us did not care, so that it was advancing.

When we wound up the hill toward Arlington House, it was just dusk. The band was playing, colors flying, and the boys in the best of spirits. As we moved along the narrow winding path, with vast abattis of fallen trees on either side,

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the line resembled a monster serpent, bristling with steely scales, dragging its lengthy self along. It began to be whispered among the boys that Munson's Hill was occupied by the Massachusetts Twelfth, and that we were going to support them in case of an attack, but a hundred other stories flew along the line, and we were left to wonder and wait. Pretty soon we met a regiment coming back from the scene of our expedition. It proved to be the Thirty-Third Pennsylvania, under Col. Black, who in his eagerness to lead his fifteen hundred Pittsburghers to the field of action, had mistaken his route, and he was now going back to take another road.

At Ball's Cross Roads our brigade halted for a moment, and while we were there the Eighteenth Massachusetts boys passed us. They said they were going "to Manassas to take the cars there for Richmond;" a little adventure which I quietly thought might prove to be more merrily said than done. But what they said they were going to do. They have the will and the pluck to try, though they may be a day or two in getting through. In a few minutes the word "forward" came down along the ranks, and the "march" that followed it set us in motion. The march was very slow. Artillery wagons rattling over the stony road in our front made us feel all the safer for their presence. After proceeding about a mile and a half beyond the Cross Roads we had orders to halt and load our pieces.

It was then about half-past 9 o'clock. The sight was beautiful—not a cloud was to be seen; but while I looked, a sudden small dark cloud, shaped like a scorpion shot above the horizon in the south-east, and moved westward. I thought at first, it was some dark spirit winging its way through the beautiful heavens, seeking what it might destroy. But it could not long endure the brilliant vigor of those twinkling September stars. As it crossed the "milky-way" it disappeared, and I saw it no more. And then I thought it must be the evil angel of the dark rebellion that disgraces the clear heavens of our country's existence. Its rise and progress were like the rebellion's, and I hoped their disappearance might be similar, and their ends the same. But Major Torbell's command of "attention" broke in upon my musings, and the column began to move. All talking died away as we moved down the hill toward the railroad, and there was nothing heard but the steady tramp of men—the rumbling of wheels, and the stroke of the axemen far in advance, clearing the road which the rebels had blockaded with fallen trees. It was a beautiful sight to stand at the top of the hill and watch the dark mass in the deep shade of the woods, move down into that dark hollow. It wins one nearer to the whole race, to thus mingle with men who have hearts strong enough to leave the sweet comforts of home and the luxury of friends, and partake of such midnight emotions, and face dangers even unto death.

One learns to look upon men differently, and to love even those whom he once could scarcely recognize as brethren of the same humanity.

But perhaps the incidents of the night would be more interesting to you than any such meditations. We passed without harm or molestation down the hill, across the railroad and up this hill, (by some called Upton's, but more properly Throgmorton's,) to the table land about half way up its side, on which we are now encamped. Having stacked arms in divisions, we lay down, not doubting but that in a few minutes we would be charged upon by the rebel cavalry, or awakened by rebel batteries. But the minutes lengthened into an hour, and the hours grew to one o'clock A. M., and most of us were sleeping—all were still—when a volley of musketry was heard far off on our right. Scarcely three files had fired till every man was on his feet and in line. The first volley was followed by a second which seemed

to come from the other regiment. We stood in silence with listening ears, expecting each moment to be called to aid some fellow soldiers in the wild work of battle. But nothing more was heard, and all soon settled down again into sleep, or gathered around camp fires, and indulged in stories or more domestic thoughts. In the morning we learned that the firing was caused by the sad conflict between Owens' Irish Regiment and the California Regiment, the history of which you have heard. Nothing more of importance happened during the night, and this morning I was on my feet early, and looking around to see where we were and what was "to pay."

On the same flat with our regiment I see the other regiments of Keyes' Brigade; a little further up the hill the New York Twelfth; on the top of the hill the Twenty-first and Twenty-third, and Capt. Platt's battery of flying artillery, with four guns of Lieut. Edward's battery. Passing along the hill to Throgmorton's house, I could see Munson's Hill with the New York Thirty-seventh on it, and Mason's Hill with part of the Thirty-fifth in possession of the fort, which is scarcely more than a rifle pit, with several embrasures for cannon. The fortification on Munson's Hill is a very inferior rifle-pit. And all these wondrous works, which have occupied so many columns in some of the New York papers, have turned out to be mere children's play, mounted with stove-pipes and such other deadly weapons. There is no evidence of the rebels ever having more than one or two small guns on these hills. There are a thousand reasons given for their abandonment of them, and I'll not venture one of my own. The day has been as quiet as could be expected. I have written this while a hundred noises have blundered against my pen—a hundred questions drawn me away. It is time for the supper bell. Alas! I forget myself.

JEAN.

The Twenty-Fourth Regiment

TO BE RE-ORGANIZED,

Lt.-Col. Raulston of the 51st to be its Commander—
Oswego likely to be the Headquarters.

THE FOLLOWING is a copy of the Order detaching Col. Raulston from the 51st Regt.:
HEADQRS. DEPT. OF VIRGINIA & NORTH CAROLINA,
FORTRESS MONROE, VA., August 2d, 1863.

[EXTRACT.]

SPECIAL ORDERS No. 14:

2. Lieut.-Col. WILLIAM O. RAULSTON, 51st Regiment New York Volunteers, is hereby detached from his Regiment and ordered to New York, to report to the Adjutant General of the State for the purpose of reorganizing the 24th Regiment New York Volunteers. Colonel RAULSTON will report back to his Regiment at the expiration of sixty days, unless otherwise ordered.

By command of Major-General FOSTER,
Louis H. PHELPS, Asst. Adj.-Gen.

To the Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Privates of the Old Twenty-Fourth, And to all others who are desirous of re-entering the Service, this affords an excellent opportunity. It is the intention of the Governor to re-organize the original thirty-eight (two years) Regiments—and to do it, if possible, by recruiting. The large bounties for Veterans will no doubt have the effect of filling them up in a very short time.
Col. Raulston is at present stopping at the WELLAND HOUSE.

MOVEMENT OF TROOPS.

OSWEGO, Thursday, May 2, 1861.

Two companies of Oswego volunteers, Captains E. M. Paine and Frank Miller, will start from here at 8 o'clock to-morrow for Elmira. The companies are chiefly composed of well drilled and efficient men from our city military. Three additional companies are forming. An Oswego regiment will shortly be in the field.

Utica Morning Herald

AND DAILY GAZETTE

THE TWENTY-FOURTH (OSWEGO) REG-
IMENT.

CAMP KEYES, VIRGINIA,
Headquarters 24th Reg. N. Y. S. V., }
September 26, 1861. }

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

These are surely the "*septem placidi dies*" of the army of the Potomac—the halcyon days so loved by the Naiads—so propitious to the mariners of old. The tide of war seems lulled to a deep repose. Not a rumor of advancing foes or of midnight hurrying forth to battle, any longer disturbs our dreams, or ruffles the surface of our thoughts. The greater light rules the day and the lesser light rules the night, in their friendly alternation, as they have done from the beginning. The bright, bold colors of summer are fading, and the gray tinge of autumn is creeping over the forests and the meadows, and to-day nature seems to have made her toilet in keeping with the time set apart by a great nation for fasting and prayer. There is a meek humility in the atmosphere. It comes in gentle south breezes, leaving purity and sweetness in its pathway round the world, as prayer refreshes and gladdens the hearts of the devoted. And in its noiseless mission of good works to-day, it will visit every hearthstone all over this broad land, while a wave of prayer will go forth from every patriot heart—from assembled congregations—from the ten thousand times ten thousand whose hopes are bound up in the hosts that at this hour stand ready "to open the bleeding testament of war"—a prayer for our country—for all humanity—for children's children till the end of time. It is a precious thought to think that to-day in every village and city all business is suspended; that the smith has left his forge, the merchant his store; that the good and faithful everywhere are gathered together in sober thought and humble devotion. It strengthens the soldier to know that he is encircled by his country's prayers; that the tears of holy mothers and sisters and wives find their way to the throne of the God of battles, and bring down blessings of health and safety on his head. Gainsay it as he may, the most hardened sinner has a sacred faith in the prayers of the righteous.

And the river before me seems clad to suit the hour—the rich, beautiful Potomac. The sunshine plays upon its surface, giving it the glad smile of Christianity; while the deep still waters speak of sober thoughts for the welfare of the empire which it divides.

Potomac! what a volume of history clusters round the word. The mysterious history of the red man, who once peopled its shores and gave it its name—the history of our fathers, who, fleeing from the iron heel of despotism, come here that they might enjoy the rights of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

How strange that in so short a time, two armies, steeled in the bitterest spirit of death, springing from these same ancestors, the one assembled to defend these rights, the other to destroy them, should sit face to face on the banks of this same river.

Yet, it is but another instance of the speedy degradation of a people where darling sins are bugged for their profit—where ambition runs riot through all the chaste chambers of justice and humanity.

A few aspiring men kept the States of Greece continually at war among themselves, till, degraded and dishonored, the land of the poet and the scholar became the prey of the conqueror.— Rome was proud mistress of the world while her leaders were virtuous, and her armies wielded for the good of the people; but when luxury refined her virtues, and personal ambition led her armies, the mighty legions withered in the grim presence of the stern courage of the North.

A momentary success may crown the efforts of men traveling the narrow path of selfishness, but it is only where broad humanity and justice are at the base, that men and nations tread firmly in the midst of misfortunes.

Had the disaster that overtook our army at Bull Run fallen upon the other side, it is not likely they could ever have rallied. The great mass of the people who love liberty and the Union, would have deserted the inglorious cause, and turned again to their allegiance; while with us the disaster has proved to be a blessing. It has shown how deeply and firmly in the hearts of the people, love of the Union strikes its roots. It has called forth new armies of men ready with their lives to make this Union perpetual.

When the loyal States began this War, they had no serious thoughts beyond a few dollars and a few men. They expected in a few days the rebellion would be among the things that were, and the Union would be the stronger for the effort.

But they have learned by a bitter experience, that the Union is a costlier ornament than they thought. It is to be purchased by a war which will touch every man and every interest of the Nation. The whole people must feel that we are *actually* at war—that there is a tide of battle rolling to and fro over the land, the bloodiest, perhaps, the world has ever seen.

The few thousands in the field may be swept away. Do the people at home stand ready in such a case to back down and give up the contest, or are they ready to spend the last dollar to fill up the ranks, till the last man is under arms? It is with this spirit the South has entered the field. The *whole* South is at war, every city, town and village. They have had three to one wherever our troops have met them. They have been victorious in almost every engagement of consequence. "Who can tell where fortune will turn against them." In a few days more the army of the Potomac must try its strength again in the "grim ridges." It may be defeated—what would be the consequences? Let every one ask himself "what would be the consequences?" It is a serious question, and one that concerns all. Would the people rally again to the standard, or would they let the Union drift asunder to become countless petty States, and spread civil war broad cast along the line of centuries? Who can tell where dissolution would stop? Who can tell what endless misery awaits those who live to see one State go out of this Union, and become free and independent? It may be that God is going to ask countless sacrifices for the restoration of the Union to its former prosperity and greatness. Are the people ready? A million lives were a small price, could the Union be firmly established by that sacrifice, and handed down to our posterity as our fathers gave it to us. It would strengthen the heart and hand of every soldier now in the field, to have the people say that, come what may, "the Union must and shall be preserved!" The thought that death and defeat will overtake us, and after that will come compromise or an acknowledgment of the Confederacy, is hostile to courage.

But I find I have been wandering. I will quit—and while I live I hope to be able to stand where I now do, and behold the city on the other side still standing, the proud Capital of a nation extending from the Lakes to the Gulf—from the Atlantic to the Pacific—with the monument in

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