

Correspondence.

LETTER FROM CHATTANOOGA.

Chattanooga, Tenn., Jan. 12th, 1864. Rev. J. W. MEARS:—Dear Brother:—It is only now and then that we realize that we are in the South. We cannot help speaking of it as we do of the Southern Confederacy—as only the "so-called" Sunny South; when on New Year's night it was cold enough here to freeze 300 nules to death.

Affairs now wear quite a different aspect from what they did a month ago. A general disposition and shifting of troops into winter-quarters has, it is supposed, been completed, and this army now settled down into quiet for the season.

The suffering thousands have been reduced to one-third of their original number by death, discharge, furlough and transfer. Transportation is better, but withal food is yet very meagerly supplied especially sanitary stores. The only excitement of interest to all has been the rush of regiments into the veteran service. That was an admirable hit—a timely offer of the war department.

The army here is in excellent spirits notwithstanding all the hardships and privations suffered in this recent campaign. They are most hopeful, and but await impatiently, with bright anticipations, a comprehensive early spring movement for final complete victory.

The sick and wounded here are still suffering considerably, on account of the scarcity of proper diet—for such things as the Sanitary and Christian Commission mostly furnish. While facilities for transportation are much better—the way opened to favor our Commission, astonishing as it may seem, comparatively no goods come on to Bridgeport, Ala. At a time when no other portion of the army requires such prompt and speedy efforts to provide for the comfort of our suffering soldiers, it is truly surprising that this department in which several bloody battles have been fought, and so much want and suffering incurred, should seem to have been so largely neglected.

It is constantly urged by a class of persons, that this is a war for the negro. So far as the North is concerned this statement is false, for the North did not originate the war at all, either for the negro or for any other cause. The reproach which is deemed so stinging, the sarcasm which is thought so scorching, lies solely upon the South, who did commence the war for the negro, and for the dominance of slavery on this continent. This is their own account of the matter, as appears from the published declarations of their higher officials. The North were forced to take arms in defence of the constitution and the laws, and the blows which have fallen on slavery were the result of the fact that the South forced their domestic system into the war, and made it a belligerent, and the whining, either North or South, about the fatal thrusts it has received, is both pitiable and ludicrous. It is urged, also, that a just ground of offence on the part of the South existed in the extreme views held by a portion of the North in regard to slavery. I have never been an apologist for fanatical opinions on this subject or any other, but freedom of speech is a necessary condition of the existence of a free government, and where christianity is constantly assailed by infidels, and the marriage and parental relations upon which rest society and law by Socialists, without legal restraint, it would hardly do to prohibit all discussions on the subject of slavery, or to prevent the expression of the wildest theories, and the stormiest denunciations. To demand this would be to demand the abrogation of our free institutions.

The revolt is for the exaltation and extension of human servitude; the resistance of the loyal States and people, is necessarily to abase and destroy it as the special enemy of the nation, and the common enemy of mankind. The object of the insurgents is to perpetuate the bondage of four millions of blacks, and the ignorance and mental slavery of six millions of white men, who are necessarily tending to barbarism under a system which deprives them of schools and churches; in our armed resistance of the traitors, we are providentially forced to declare the "acceptable year of the Lord, the opening of the prison doors," to our poor white brethren, and the right of the black man to his wife and children, and a fair compensation for the labor of his hands. In this controversy, where is truth and justice? Is it with the three hundred thousand slaveholders who are in insurrection against the government, or is it with the freemen of the North, who return the poisoned chalice proffered to their nationality to the lips of slavery? Is that the cause of righteousness which would, at the price of a nation's life, extend the dark area of human bondage, and once more cover the sea with slave ships, the cries of whose cargoes of human souls rise above the roar of the waters, to pain the indignant Heavens? Let the sea answer from her depths, where unnumbered thousands of dead slaves lie, east alive out of the accursed slave ships; let the earth reply, whose bosom has been bedewed

with the sweat and tears of unrequited toil; let the sky respond, whose starry eyes have watched the gory steps of the midnight fugitive, with the bay of the bloodhound on his track. As surely as God lives and reigns, as certainly as the divine Redeemer came to break every yoke and let the oppressed go free, so certainly and so surely is the cause of the North the cause of mercy and justice, of truth and righteousness!

Why any man at the North should desire the perpetuation of African Slavery, after it has been laid open to destruction by the treason of slaveholders, is to me a mystery. What is there in the moral influences of domestic despotism to favor its continuance? What is there in it lovely and of good report, that it should be desired? No! it is the worst of all, the most exhausting, the most wasteful of all. Has it benefited the slaveholders? No! it has made traitors of the majority of them, and ruined alike their tempers and their fortunes. Has it improved the six millions of poor whites! Alas! it has degraded them even below the level of the slaves. Has it benefited the black race? It has indeed partially civilized them, but that the providentially appointed time of their deliverance has come is manifest in the divine permission of this war; the report of the first cannon fired against Sumter was the voice of God, reverberating over sea and land, saying, "let this people go."—Rev. John C. Lord's Thanksgiving Sermon.

The work of the Lord continues—souls are still inquiring the way to heaven; men's hearts are opened by suffering, and naturally religious at such times, they look up for higher comfort and peace than the world can give. Men learn their own frailty—the vanity of human help—and sigh for help and strength that will not fail—a sustaining power imperishable and almighty.

Oh! what a precious work to preach to men who like most of these are hungering and thirsting after righteousness; who ask you not to forget them in holding religious services—to come and sing, and pray with them.

Though so "abundant in labors" and in the midst of much confusion and excitement, we formed a part of the world's great prayer meeting last week. Daily, at 1 P. M., did the brethren coming from the East and the West, the North and the South "sit down together" in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; to mingle our voices in prayer and praise. And it is touching to hear those that are "soldiers of the Cross," as well as of their country, pleading with God for the salvation of their brave comrades. And there is something peculiarly precious in the thought that while all the Christians, friends, fathers and mothers, sisters and wives at home were praying for the soldiers, the soldiers were praying too. We shall continue this interesting noonday soldiers prayer meeting. Brethren pray for us.

I should love, if time and space allowed me, to give some precious incidents in our work here, but must reserve them for my next. J. L. L.

MORAL CONTRASTS OF THE WAR.

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THE BRITISH ARMY CHAPLAINCY.

In the earliest organizations of the British army, chaplains appear as staff officers, with regulations to insure a proper respect for them.

The second article of war of the United States army regulations seems to be almost a verbal copy from that of the English service. In 1640 the English regulations required that "All those who often and willingly absent themselves from divine service shall be proceeded against at discretion. All commanders are strictly charged to see Almighty God reverently served, and sermons and prayers duly frequent;" and in 1686 they were modified so as to read as follows: "All officers and soldiers not having just impediment shall diligently frequent divine service and sermon in all such places as shall be appointed for the regiment, troop, or company, and such as either wilfully or negligently absent themselves from divine service, or else being present, do behave themselves indecently and irreverently during the service, if they be officers they shall be severely reprimanded at a court-martial, but if private soldiers they shall, for every first offence, forfeit each twelve pence," &c.

But notwithstanding this article of war, owing to a loose mode of appointing chaplains, and the absence of a proper supervision and recognition, the office fell into disrepute, and the incumbents were frequently fox-hunting parsons, given to much wine, and fond of filthy lucre. In a popular burlesque of the last century, called "Advice to Officers," the author devotes a chapter to the chaplain, and in view of the want of dignity so often witnessed, and the servile obsequiousness to the commanding officer, upon whose nod he was dependent, gives the representative of good morals some very hard hits, some of which are unfit for ears polite. Among the injunctions to the chaplain he says: "If you are not already expert at it, it will be highly proper for you to learn to carve. Your principal attention in acquiring this accomplishment must be toward the discovery of where the choicest parts lie, which you must reserve for yourself and the commanding officer."

About fifty years ago officers of high grade, who began to see that gentlemanly tastes and habits decreased as religion was sneered at in the mess-room, or ridiculed in the barracks, demanded that the chaplaincy system should be reorganized. By Parliament a separate chaplain's, like the medical, department, was created, and a chaplain general appointed to provide proper reading through various agencies, and to superintend the distribution of chaplains in a way to make them most serviceable. From that day there has been a gradual disappearing of the jolly set of chaplains of the old regime, and in their place has been substituted those who have endeavored to manifest Christ in their walk and life, and who have been instrumental in leading young officers, like Hedley Vicars, into the church. Under the present regulations of the British army, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic chaplains are on the same footing, and are divided into four classes. Those who have been in service less than fourteen years have the rank of captain; those who have served under twenty-one years, and over fourteen, the rank of major; those who have served under thirty years and over twenty-one, the rank of lieutenant colonel; and those who have served over thirty years, the rank of colonel.

If some such simple system was adopted in our army, one half of our chaplains could be dispensed with, and not only could the Government save thousands of dollars, but a class of men would enter the service that would be the peers of those who occupy the most influential pulpits of the land. Under present regulations the best men, for want of a definite position, are forced back into the pulpits from whence they came into the army, while those who were unacceptable as preachers to those engaged in civil pursuits remain, and are looked upon as mere hangers-on, a species of camp followers. Every one, no matter what his manner of life, has respect enough for the common religion of the land, and which he was taught to respect in his childhood, to desire to see his Government proper provision for the support of a class of clergymen in the army who, by their blameless life, their education, and courtesy, will secure the love and respect of officers and men.

Should Congress annually appoint a commission of clergymen of different shades of belief, composed of men like Bishop Simpson, of the Methodist; Bishop McIlvaine, of the Episcopal; Bishop Wood, of the Roman Catholic; Wayland, of the Baptist; Barnes or Boardman, of the Presbyterian branches of the church, to con-

vene and examine the credentials and appearance, and general fitness of candidates for vacant chaplaincies, there is no doubt that the esprit du corps of their profession would lead them to select a much higher style of men than those which under the present system are generally chosen by the colonel and officers of a regiment. To prevent any denominational jealousy, it would be very easy to provide, by law that not more than one-fifth or fourth of the chaplains at any one time should belong to the same ecclesiastical body.—Washington Chronicle.

Editor's Table.

PAMPHLETS AND PERIODICALS.

THE BIBLICAL REPERTORY AND PRINCETON REVIEW, for January, 1864. Contents: The Union of Church and State in the Nicene Age. Davidson's Introduction to the Old Testament. The late Rev. James Hoge, D. D. Can God be Known? Shedd's History of Christian Doctrine. Short Notices. Literary Intelligence. The average size of the five leading articles is nearly 40 pages. Yet they are, for the most part, valuable, and we will endeavor to give our readers the pith of them ere long. Philadelphia: Peter Walker, 821 Chestnut Street.

GODEY'S LADIES' BOOK, for February, is a treasure of the most varied and entertaining sort for the family. The fashions are elaborately portrayed; all kinds of fancy work for the ladies are described and illustrated; a fresh batch of these suggestions to busy and delicate tastes and fingers appears every month, while the bulk of the magazine is made up of readable articles from skilled writers in this line, including the celebrated author of "Alone" and other volumes, Marion Harland. Several engravings and a page of music accompany each number. Mrs. Sarah J. Hale edits the work, in connection with L. A. Godey, the publisher, in this city. Price \$3.

ARTHUR'S HOME MAGAZINE. The number for February proves that this old favorite still deserves the patronage of those who seek a distinctly moral tone, as well as amusement, for a leisure hour, in the articles of the magazine. The editors, T. S. Arthur and Miss Virginia F. Townsend, have the best of aims, and write their very readable articles in an excellent spirit. If their magazine is not so elaborate in its adornments as others, the price is less, (\$2 a year.) Published by T. S. Arthur & Co., at 323 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

Second Annual Report of the Philadelphia Branch of the Women's Union Missionary Society of America for Heathen Lands. Published by order of the Society.

This document briefly recounts the labors of the Philadelphia Branch of the General Society situated in New York, the object of which is to aid in sustaining female teachers and Bible women in heathen lands. Mrs. Sarah J. Hale is at the head of this branch, and a large number of our excellent women of all evangelical denominations are associated with her in management.

MINUTE BY THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER of British Burmah. Dated Rangoon, 1st May, 1863.

We have already referred to this report of Col. Phayre, which exonerates Mrs. Mason of the serious charge of tampering with the political affairs of the Karens, and has met the hearty concurrence of Dr. Duff. It is published by the "Women's Missionary Society of Boston."

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE, for January 30, contains: Caxtoniana, from the Saturday Review; The Amber Gods—Spectator; Cousin Phillis—Cornhill Mag.; The Southern President; The Northern President; Equivoque of England and France in 1863—Spectator; Poetry: Short Articles. THE ANNALS OF IOWA: A Quarterly Publication by the State Historical Society, January, April, July, and October, 1863, and January, 1864.

From the editor of the Annals, Rev. S. S. Howe, we have received the numbers above named, with the deepest interest and gratification. That one of the youngest of our North-Western States should already commence the important work of conserving her history, and that so much care and good taste should be shown in the work, are matters of surprise and congratulation. Generations to come will prize these annals, and gratefully recognize their merits, in which the faith and patience and large aims of the founders of an American Commonwealth, with schools, colleges, and churches in the wilderness are detailed by the graphic pens of the actors themselves.

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