

CHAPLAIN STEWART'S LETTER.

NEAR SPOTSVYLVANIA C. H., VA., May 9, 1864.

DEAR BROTHER MEARS:—As a veteran Regiment we arrived at our old camp near Brandy Station, on Tuesday evening, May the 3d. Our religious service camp was reinaugurated by a large and interesting prayer meeting at dusk. At daylight the following morning, we, with the entire grand army of the Potomac, were in motion towards the Rapid Ann. The dawn was clear, warm, and beautiful. As the almost countless encampments were broken up; bands in all directions playing lively airs; banners waving; regiments, brigades, and divisions falling into line, with the various columns moving in converging lines towards the rebel capital—the scene, even to eyes long familiar with military displays, was one of unusual grandeur. Had Homer beheld it—for like Milton that fabulous old poet must have used his eyes at some period of life—a description even more sublime than that of Grecian armies marshalling for the siege of Troy, would be the proud rehearsal of future ages. Imposing as the concentrating of Napoleon's Grand Army for the invasion of Russia. By nightfall, almost the entire army, and without opposition, crossing at Germania Ford, was encamped on the opposite side of the Rapid Ann. Thursday morning, May the 5th, arose in all the exquisite loveliness of opening May. Tree, shrub, plant, grass, bursting into bud and flower. Numerous birds carolled forth their songs, unafraid by the presence of so many invaders. Carnage and bloodshed could with difficulty even by the imagination be associated in near proximity with such a scene of peace and loveliness. We were again early in motion, and advanced four or five miles through a region marked, and fitly, on the maps of Virginia, The Wilderness—undulating with occasional swamps, technically sloughs, through which if a man attempts to walk, he sinks leg deep; some large trees, but generally a thick growth of pine, cedar, oak, and hickory, with scarce a field or house. About noon, the enemy were suddenly encountered without any previous admonition of their near proximity. The locality may be traced on ordinary maps of Virginia by the following direction. A plank road runs from Madison Court House to Fredericksburg, crossing the Rapid Ann at Germania Ford. Along this road, our columns passed until another plank road was struck, leading from Fredericksburg to Orange Court House—the place of intersection being some three or four miles west from Chancellorsville. Turning westward on this road two or three miles, the enemy was encountered coming down the road from Orange Court House. A dozen or more years since, the timber had all been cut off this section for the supply of an iron furnace in the neighborhood. A thick young growth of oak and hickory has sprung up. In these roads the confronting columns formed on each side of the road, and without delay fiercely encountered each other. This description refers specially to the second division, sixth corps. Other divisions advanced by different ways to the battle. The location afforded few facilities for the maneuvering of artillery and hence but little was used. Our brigade was in the front line, and advanced through the bushes until the rebel line was discovered, and ours by them within direct and deadly range. Suddenly these hitherto quiet woods seemed to be lifted up, shook, rent and torn asunder. Thousands and thousands of minie-rifles united their sharp crack and ear-piercing sound, rendering the tumult one of terrible grandeur. The mode of fighting in such cases is to form a line of battle, two men deep, one line of these about two paces behind the other. A similar line of battle is formed, fifty to a hundred paces in the rear of the first, another in the rear of this, often to four or five. When the battle opens, only the first line fires, the rear file of which passes the muzzles of the guns over the shoulders of those in front. At the first order to fire, the discharge is usually made by the line simultaneously after which each soldier loads and fires as fast as he is able. Thus, along the whole line, often extending for miles, rolls an ever-recurring crash, crash, roar, roar. Occasionally, and without any seeming concert, a momentary cessation occurs, yet like the lull in a hurricane, but to increase its strength. When the front line becomes exhausted, expends its ammunition or suffers severely, the next line takes its place; or if heavily pressed, it falls back behind the second. While the front line is engaged, the rear ones usually lie flat upon their faces in order to avoid in some measure, the flying bullets of the enemy, a curious sight, at which I have often taken a hearty laugh. The slaughter where we were, soon became terrible. Our regiment was in

the front line for three long long hours; during which time our Colonel and Captain Drum, with a sorrowful number from the ranks were instantly killed; while six of the officers and over a hundred privates were wounded with all manner of mutilations. What awful, sickening scenes! No, we have ceased to get sick at such sights. Here a dear friend struck dead by a ball through the head or heart! another falling with leg or thigh broken and looking resigned, yet wistfully, to you for help away from the carnage; another dropping his gun, quickly clapping his hand upon his breast, stomach, or bowels, through which a minie had passed, and walking slowly to the rear to lie down and die; still another, yea, many more, with bullet holes through various fleshy parts of the body, from which the blood was freely flowing, walking back and remarking, with a laugh, somewhat distorted with pain; "See, the rascals have hit me." All this beneath a canopy of sulphur and a bedlam of sounds, like confusion confounded. Night at length put an end to the carnage and left the two armies much in the same position as at the opening of the strife, our lines somewhat advanced. Both unsubdued and still fiercely confronting each other. Early on Friday the 6th, the work of death was resumed; and, with various lulls, changes, and shiftings in different parts of the long extended lines, lasted all day. Night again put an end to the struggle, leaving the contending armies, substantially in the same position as on the previous evening, our own lines somewhat contracted. Never did troops support the character of American soldiers better. Not one, so far as my observation went, in our own regiment shrank for a moment from the place of danger, new recruits as well as veterans. When the strife ceased on Friday the second day, I went back about two miles to one of the large depots for the wounded—hospital in this wilderness there was none. Here, about two thousand wounded had been collected. Such multiplied and accumulated suffering is not often seen. Not half the wounded from yesterday had yet been reached. All the surgeons present were exerting their utmost; the few nurses all busy; the Sanitary and Christian Commissions had, perhaps, a dozen delegates, in all, present,—these were unceasing in the distribution of their various comforts to the sufferers. But what were all these among so many? A title could seemingly not be reached. When coming in from the field my strength seemed almost wholly exhausted; but on seeing such a mass of suffering and need, it revived and I turned in to help during that seemingly long night. To wait upon a multitude of helpless sufferers is a terrible tax both upon the mental and bodily energies. Oh, had we now and here, a thousand generous-hearted, kind-handed men and women from the North, who would gladly hurry into this wilderness were it possible! During the forepart of the night an order came to have these wounded removed a number of miles towards Fredericksburg, and the work commenced with all the ambulances which could be procured, yet was not completed for more than twenty-four hours. On Saturday morning, forty-seven were laid in one row, who had died in this one locality, of the wounded during the past day and night; all of whom were buried in one ditch. Reader, our Union, our liberties, our hopes for the future must be very precious. This is their price. Solomon assures us, "There is a time for every purpose under the sun." Most certain is it that during the past has not been the time for holding religious meetings or services of any kind. Too busy in the appropriate work of war,—destruction. It seems fitting that our doings in connection with the army should be written of; and such has been the course of this letter, as will be others. In my next you may learn briefly how we got here and what we are doing. A. M. STEWART.

**MARRIAGES.**  
In Dayton, Ohio, on the 3d inst., by Rev. J. G. Spees, D. D., Mr. E. O. CARRINGTON, of the firm of Kelly, Forester & Co., Philadelphia, to Miss SUBIE B. SPEES, adopted daughter of the officiating clergyman.

**DEATHS.**  
On the morning of the 6th inst., at Delaware City, Del., MARY BIDDLE, wife of Francis Moutrie.

**Special Notices.**  
Notice.—The Buffalo Presbytery will hold their next stated meeting at Silver Creek on the second TUESDAY (the 14th day) of June, commencing at 4 o'clock, P. M. TIMOTHY STILLMAN, Stated Clerk.

**Anniversary of the American Sunday School Union.**  
The services connected with the FUND RAISING MEETING OF THE AMERICAN SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION will be held at the MUSEUM FUND HALL, Locust street, near Eighth, on THURSDAY EVENING, May 24th, at a quarter to 8 o'clock. Tickets of admission may be had at the Society's application at the Society's Buildings, 112 Chestnut street.

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**The following Railroads have agreed to return free, Commissioners to the General Assembly (N. S.) of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, Ohio; Central Ohio; Cincinnati & Hamilton & Dayton; Dayton & Cincinnati; Cincinnati & Marietta; Little Miami; Columbus & Xenia; Dayton & Western; Cincinnati & Indianapolis Junction; Louisville, New Albany & Chicago; Indianapolis and Cincinnati; Indianapolis & Cincinnati; Cincinnati & Dayton; Terre Haute & Richmond; Terre Haute, Alto & Ellettsville.**  
The Indiana Central agrees to return clerical but not lay Commissioners free. The Committee of Arrangements has corresponded with all the leading Railroads, but have, up to this date, received favorable answers from the above only.

**To the Public.**  
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Has won for itself a reputation unsurpassed in the history of medical preparations. It is as well known in the trading ports of India and China as in New York and Cincinnati; and its continually increasing demand, where it has been longest known, is one of its strongest recommendations and best advertisements. It began to be favorably known in A. D. 1859, and has ever since been gradually growing into public favor, all in thousands of families, it has come to be considered a supply of such necessity that they are never without a supply of it to resort to in case of accident or sudden illness. It is not unfrequently said of it—"We would as soon think of being without flour in the house as without PAIN KILLER." It gives immediate relief in case of scald or burn, as well as in the sudden attack of Diarrhoea, Dysentery, or other similar affection of the bowels; and, being entirely a vegetable preparation, it is as safe as it is reliable. The promptness and certainty with which it acts in relieving all kinds of pain, makes it eminently worthy its name—PAIN KILLER—a name easily understood, and not easily forgotten.  
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118 South Seventh st., Philadelphia.  
L. MONTGOMERY BOND, Chairman,  
McGREGOR J. MITCHESON, Secretary. 637-44

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