

FROM THE CHAPLAIN OF THE 51ST PENNSYLVANIA.

The following letter though delayed in publication, will be found interesting to many of our readers who are acquainted with the regiment and its chaplain:

FREDERICKSBURG, VA., May 19th, 1864. BRO. MEARS.—After several months' absence from my regiment—having resigned while it was at Vicksburg—I again joined it on the 5th of April, at Annapolis. In the midst of a dreary rain, and for the first time in my life, riding on a locomotive, I entered the city where in 1861 I joined the original Burnside expedition. My first business was to seek the husband of a woman, who had come from central Pennsylvania with an infant in her arms, to find him. He was sick in the hospital. Succeeding in this, and leaving them together, I made my way to the table, where nothing but the prices would suggest that I was in a first class hotel, and prepared by rest and food and a change of clothing, for reporting myself for duty.

While the troops were lying at Annapolis, from the 5th to the 22d of April, was the time for me to be busy with my work, knowing that on the march and during an active campaign there is little that a chaplain can do. During this short period, I was happier in my work and felt more encouraged than in all my former experience in the army. Visiting the hospitals almost daily, where I read the Scriptures, prayed and distributed religious reading, so liberally supplied by the Christian Commission, distributing religious papers and tracts from the same source, throughout the regiment, having prayers at dress parade and a prayer-meeting in my tent every evening, and preaching on Sundays, this was the routine of my delightful labors.

Larger numbers attended my Sunday preaching than I had been accustomed to see before, and my tent was crowded to overflowing, night after night, at the prayer-meeting. That companionship of Christian men, which a chaplain in the army pines for, and ordinarily cannot have, I found among the agents and delegates of the Christian Commission. Camp Parole was very near my own camp, and there with Revs. Turbutt, Bent, Sloan and others of this Commission, and Rev. J. P. Cook of the 94th N. Y. V., I spent such hours as I could spare in social and religious conversation, in praise and prayer and Bible reading, exhorting and encouraging each other.

One sad event cast its shadow over this period. Washington Griffith, who had been a scholar in my Sunday school at Norristown during all my pastorate there, and had but lately entered the army, sickened and died. He was a tall, soldierly young man—had I might call him—in vigorous health but a week before his death. He graduated at the Polytechnic College in your city, with the view of entering the Naval school, and being a year too young, thought he might improve that year by active service in the army. A lad of bright parts and good training, he bade fair to make his mark in the profession of arms. But to my surprise one morning, I found him sick in the hospital; the next day his vocal organs were so swollen that he could not speak to me, but he laid his hand carelessly on my cheek and looked imploringly into my eyes, and when I promised to send for his father, seemed to thank me; at my next visit he was unconscious and remained so till his death, which his father arrived just in time to witness.

Brethren, the time is short. The night cometh when no man can work. Most unexpectedly, this period of camp life and regular labor was brought to a close, and on Saturday, the 23d of April, the Ninth Corps left Annapolis to join the Army of the Potomac. On Monday following they passed through Washington and encamped near Alexandria. Thus ended our dream of a coast expedition. Thus began one of our severest marches and most active campaigns. D. G. M.

Guitar's Table.

Mendelssohn. Letters of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, from 1833 to 1847. Edited by Paul and Carl Mendelssohn Bartholdy; with a Catalogue of all his Musical Compositions compiled by Dr. Julius Rietsch. Translated by Lady Wallace. Philadelphia: Frederick Leyppoldt, 1860. pp. 421.

This is a second and final series of the exquisite letters of the great composer, extending from the point reached in the former volume to his death. They reveal to us a character of uncommon beauty and symmetry, with indications of ability, good judgment and general excellence by no means limited to his immediate profession. A truly great man admits of being contemplated from more than one point of view, and

is interesting to every class of observers. Bible-readers will notice the decided preference given by the great composer to the very words of Scripture in such compositions as refer to Scripture events. Thus speaking of his "St. Paul," he writes: "All the passages that from various reasons I formerly wished to transpose or to alter, I have replaced exactly as I find them in the Bible—it is always the best of all." Again; how encouraging to a youth looking out on the busy and crowded scene of human pursuits on which he is about doubtfully to enter, are the following noble and wise words, addressed to his nephew: "In all employments and in all spheres, there is now and always will be a want of able, honest workmen, and therefore it is not true when people declare it now more difficult than formerly to achieve anything. A genuine, faithful heart, true love, and a brave, determined will, are alone required for this. And," as if correcting himself, he piously adds: "Even if you do all in your power, still nothing is done, nothing is attained, without the fulfillment of one fervent wish—may God be with you!"

Mr. Leyppoldt always gets up his books in excellent taste, to which this handsome volume is no exception.

LITERARY ITEMS.

The Tercentenary of Shakespeare's Birth was allowed to pass in England with but indifferent attempts at a due celebration. A week of dramatic and kindred entertainments was given at his Birth-place—Stratford-on-Avon—and a commemorative oak tree was planted on Primrose Hill, London, but no successful united recognition of the day in a suitable manner could, it appears, be organized. The various literary memorials of the poet, consisting of multiplied editions of his works and various publications touching upon his character, genius, history, &c., were the most worthy memorial of the event in the country of his birth.

The Sale of the Library of the late George Daniel, the critic, is announced for this month in London. One of its distinguished features consists of the works of Shakespeare, comprising the finest First Folio known, and the First Editions of the Quarto Plays, all being remarkable copies of the highest degree of rarity. The collection is also rich in Elizabethan literature, comprising some unique pieces of considerable interest. A most wonderful Series of Black-Letter Ballads, many of which are quite unique, will also form a feature of remarkable interest. There are also some highly curious autograph letters of Dr. Johnson and other distinguished men.

Dr. HORACE BUSHNELL—"Work and Play," by this eminent divine, has been republished in England, and reviewed there with commendation.

FAITH AND PHILOSOPHY.—Among recent works bearing upon the theological questions of the day, Dr. Hannak's *Bampton Lectures* of 1863 is noticeable. Its title is: "The Relations between the Divine and the Human Elements in Holy Scripture." Its concessions to the critical spirit are noticed in the recent number of the *Westminster Review*. Dr. H. does not regard "what may be technically called the narrative of history" as begun before the 5th chapter of Genesis.—A work of value in the same branch of inquiry is "The Nature and Extent of Divine Inspiration" as stated by the writers and deduced from the facts of the New Testament," by Rev. C. A. Row, Oxford; Longmans, London. He says: "The question as to the nature of the Inspiration of the New Testament may be considered the great theological question of the day."

—Rev. Charles Kingsley, the well-known author, has also written and published on the Colenso controversy: "The Gospel of the Pentateuch; A Set of Parish Sermons," in which he "advices" his hearers to believe in the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, drawing them off from critical inquiries, after the example of Stanley in his "History of the Jewish Church."

Du CHAILLU'S Stories of the Gorilla are contested by one W. W. Reade, Fellow of the Geographical and Anthropological Societies of London, &c., who has written a book, "Savage Africa." In this he says he has seen a young gorilla and a chimpanzee in a domestic state, both equally docile. He also says that no white man has ever hugged a gorilla or a chimpanzee.

GOLD AND SILVER COINS.—A new manual of current coins has just been issued in London; said to be "the most useful volume of its kind since the publication of that by Messrs. Bekfeldt and Dubois, of the United States Mint; and in the number and beauty of its facsimiles, and of the coins described, exceeds that well-known work."

An edition of the "False Decretals" in Latin, has lately been published in London.—A Life of the theologian Calixtus of the 17th century has lately appeared in Oxford and London, written by Rev. W. C. Dowling. The author hopes the conciliatory theology of Calixtus may possibly have a beneficial influence on parties at present divided in England.—George H. Lewis' Life of Goethe has reached a sale of 13,000 in England and Germany.—Rawlinson's 2d volume on the "Two Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World" has appeared, and is full of valuable and original matter, drawn from the recently discovered inscriptions.—A Tamil Drama called Arichandra, the Martyr of Truth, has been translated into English by a native Hindu. It exists in the original only on such perishable material as palm leaves, and is supposed to be 500 years old. The hero undergoes every

trial rather than tell a lie; a high moral tone pervades the drama. FRANCE.—It is said that Renan is about to reappear in the position of Lecturer in the College of France upon condition that he confines his studies to the lyrical and secondary historical books of the Old Testament, namely, Ecclesiastes, the Psalms, Job, Esther, etc. This rumor is rather confirmed by the published programme of lectures to be delivered at the College of France, in which his name appears with the note that he will lecture on the book of Job. 60,000 copies of the cheap edition of his "Life of Jesus" have been already sold, and the demand for them continues to be as great as ever. He has already received \$25,000 from the sale of the 8vo. edition, and it is believed that the book—both editions—will put \$35,000 into his purse before the first of July next.

GERMANY.—The first volume of a History of the United States has been issued in Germany by Karl F. Neumann. It brings the narrative down to the Presidency of Jefferson. It is more a constitutional history than a pageant of events. It goes back to the colonial system and traces the complicated party manoeuvres from this time. It is calculated to remove prejudice and acquaint Europe with the facts of which they are willingly ignorant. It will be completed in two more volumes, of which the second will soon appear.—The first volume of a life of Carl Ritter, by Dr. Kramer, has appeared.

THE NEW ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH CABLE.

The following description of the telegraph cable, which is proposed to be laid across the bed of the Atlantic ocean in 1865, is from the *London Observer*:—In the construction of the telegraph cable, the great and difficult problem to solve was how to arrange the various parts so as to prevent any strain upon the "core." There are some portions of the Atlantic where the depth is more than two and a-half miles, and the mere weight of such a length of cable as would extend from the bottom of the ocean to the ship would be sufficient, unless proper precautions were taken, to stretch and probably to break the communication. The line which was first constructed failed in consequence of this point not having been kept sufficiently in view—its specific gravity was much too great for its strength, and it was the strain upon the inner core which was, no doubt, the cause of the failure. The new cable, like the first one, has a centre or core formed of seven copper wires—six laid round one. The weight of copper in these wires is, however, 300 pounds for each nautical mile as against 100 pounds in the first cable. This is in itself an important point of difference, the weight of copper for the conducting wires in the whole length being more than 200 tons greater than in the first cable. The gauge of the wire to be used is that known as No. 18. These conducting wires are to be insulated by four layers of gutta percha, laid on alternately with four thin layers of the material known as Chatterton's compound, the diameter of the core thus covered being rather less than half an inch, the exact figures being .464 of an inch, and the circumference 1.392 inch. In the first cable the core was protected by three coverings of gutta percha, weighing 261 pounds per nautical mile—the difference between the nautical and geographical mile is in the proportion of 1,126 to 1,760 yards—the weight of the insulator in the first cable was 261 pounds; in the one now about to be constructed it will be 400 pounds per mile. The next important point to be considered is the protection to be afforded to the core, and the insulating portions. In the first place there will be a "padding" or coating of soft jute yarn, saturated with a preservative mixture, which will be wound round and next to the insulating outer surface of gutta percha. This will help to resist the strain which will be brought to bear upon the cable when a great length is paid out in deep water. Outside of this padding is the coating, employed only for protective purposes, and forming, of course, no part of the telegraph proper. This consists of ten solid wires, of the gauge .095 drawn from homogeneous iron. Each of these wires is surrounded separately with five-strand tarred hemp, the whole of these ten strands are to be laid spirally round the padded core, and they are formed in such a manner that when a heavy strain comes upon it the wires will lend their strength to the cable. The improvement which the present cable offers over the first one in this respect is very great. In the first cable the protection of the core was sought to be effected by eighteen strands of charcoal iron wires. There were laid spirally round and upon the core. In paying out the cable the whole strain came upon the core or inner portion, and not upon this outer coating of wire, which really served only to increase the specific gravity of the cable, without giving to it any additional strength. The cable about to be manufactured has a vast superiority over the former one in regard to its specific gravity. The first one weighed, in air, 20 cwt.; the present one will weigh 34 cwt. to the nautical mile. In water, however, the weight of the first cable was 13.4 cwt. per mile; the specific gravity of the present one, notwithstanding its greater strength and increased diameter, weighs but 14 cwt. When it is considered that probably some eight miles of the cable will be suspended in water between the points on which the cable rests at the bottom of the ocean, and the ship from which it is being paid out, it will be seen at once how important is this great increase of strength, obtained as it is with so small an addition to its specific gravity. The weight of the respective cables in air is as 20 to 34 cwt., while the specific gravity, or weight in water, is only a few pounds greater. Buoyancy combined with strength appears, therefore, to have

been obtained in a very satisfactory manner. The hemp which surrounds the protecting covering of the iron wires is much lighter than water, hence the comparatively low specific gravity. Another important point is the strength or breaking strain of the cable. The breaking strain of the first telegraphic cable was 65 cwt., that of the present one is 155 cwt., or considerably more than twice that of the former. The new cable is equal to eleven times its weight per nautical mile in water. In other words, if the cable were suspended in water it would bear its own weight for a depth of eleven miles. Now, as the deepest part of the Atlantic, between Ireland and Newfoundland, is 2,400 fathoms, or about two miles and a half, it follows that the cable will bear a strain equal to 6.64, or nearly five times its own vertical weight, in the deepest water in which it will be submerged. The distance to be traversed between Ireland and Newfoundland is 1,640 miles. The first cable was laid with 15 per cent, of "slack" over and above the actual mileage. If the whole of the line be taken on the Great Eastern, as is intended, it is probable that this amount of "slack" may be considerably reduced. It is intended, however, with a view of providing against all contingencies, to manufacture 2,300 miles. The total weight of the cable to be laid will be 4,122 tons, a burden which to the Great Eastern will be a very trifling affair. The actual cost of the telegraph and the expense of laying it are to be defrayed out of the new capital of £600,000, upon which there is a joint guarantee of the British and American Governments of 8 per cent.

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