

THE COLUMBIA SPY.

SAMUEL WRIGHT, Editor and Proprietor.

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Poetry.

Midwinter.

The speckled sky is dim with snow,
The light flakes fall and fall slow;
Athwart the hill-top, rap and pale,
Silenly drops a silvery veil;
The far off mountain's misty form
Is entering now a tent of storm;
And all the valley is shut in
By flickering curtains grey and thin.
But clearly the chickadee
Sings to me on trees and trees;
The snow falls round him, as he sings,
White as the down of angels' wings.
I watch the snow flakes, as they fall
On bank and brier and broken wall;
Over the orchard, waste and brown,
All noiselessly they settle down,
Tipping the apple-boughs and each
Light quivering twig of plum and peach.
On turf and curb and lower roof
The snow-storm spreads its ivory roof;
It paves with pure the garden walk,
And lovingly rounds their stalk
And shivering stem its magic weaves
A mantle fair as lily leaves.
The hooded bee-hive, small and low,
Stands like a maiden in the snow;
And the old door-slab is half hid
Under an alabaster lid.
All day it snows; the sheeted post
Gleams in the dimness like a ghost;
All day the blasted oak has stood
A muffled wizard of the wood;
Garland and airy cap adorn
The sun and the way-side thorn,
And clustering spangles lodge and shine
In the dark tresses of the pine.
The ragged bramble, dwarfed and old,
Sprinks like a beggar in the cold;
In surprise white the cedar stands,
And blesses him with priestly hands.
Still cheerily the chickadee
Sings to me on fence and tree;
But in my inmost ear is heard
The music of a holier bird;
And heavily thoughts as soft and white
As snow-flakes, on my soul alight,
Clothing with love my lonely heart,
Healing with peace each bruised part,
Till all my being seems to be
Transfigured by their purity.

[Atlantic Monthly.]

Selections.

(From the New York Post.)
Life in the Army.

SCENES AT THE OUTPOSTS.

PICKETING AND ITS DUTIES.
"To shoot your enemy or to be shot by him is the only chance you have in picketing," said a Sergeant one night to picket he was posting. "Here are you, here, and there are the Rebels, there. If you get a crack at them first, all right; but if they get a shot at you first, then look out for thunder!" The ambiguous declaration of consequences aside, the remark of the Sergeant reveals the whole philosophy of picketing. To avoid being shot or surprised, and, perhaps, to shoot or surprise his rebellious neighbor opposite, is the basis of all the picket's cunning stratagems, eye-watching, crafty sneakings, and other manoeuvres.—His entire service is rendered under the stern law of *meum vs. tuum*, with his life as the stake.

THE LINE OF OUTPOSTS.

The principles of picketing are the same throughout our entire army, so that the practice which obtains in Virginia and Missouri holds good in Tennessee and South Carolina. As in a forward movement into the enemy's country the commander throws out a body of skirmishers in advance of his main force, so in a permanent encampment does he throw out a line of pickets, posting them, singly or in groups, immediately in front of the foe to watch his movements, or at least so far in advance of his own force as to secure a suitable notification of any advance or other demonstration of the enemy. These posts are generally within sight or hearing of one another, and the line they form is so extended as to enclose and protect the whole body of troops to which they belong.
All natural advantages, such as trees, rocks, narrow defiles, &c., are considered in the selection of picket stations, and important openings and frequented footpaths near an encampment are habitually placed under surveillance. In active services in Virginia, or in almost any settled district, our picket stations are farm-houses, mills and barns, which the enemy has deserted at the approach of our troops. Around Alexandria, at Port Tobacco, beyond Chain Bridge, towards Centerville, Fairfax, and other places where our forces have been so long resident as to boast of being natives, the picket has taken unto himself local appointments and conveniences, and rendered his "peculiar institutions" quite domesticated; frequently occupying a comfortable house and a good bed, and sometimes keeping a cow or pig—

For the picket, like everybody else, from the disciples of the *haut philosophic* downwards, is keenly alive to the divine "law of compensation," as witness the paritancy with which he demands that a night of exposure should be followed by a bottle of whiskey!

THE PICKETS POSTED.

At times a single picket is placed at post, and relieved every two hours, like a sentry of the regular camp guard; but it is customary for three or four men to be put on one station, with orders to relieve each other at their mutual pleasure, taking care only that one of the three or four is always wide awake and rendering the requisite service—the others sleeping, reading, playing cards, or doing anything else they please, according to the hour and the weather. Five days is the usual period for a detachment of pickets to remain on duty, and three pickets is the average number to each post, so that while one is on duty his two comrades may be at leisure, each thus having two hours of service to four hours of rest. It is found that a line of solitary pickets is not so serviceable as one of groups, probably because solitude is not the normal condition of the biped under discussion. One picket no sooner finds himself alone, in "dense midnight," on a lonely post, than he abstractedly swallows tobacco-juice in such quantities as to make himself sick, while another, under the same circumstances, incontinently bolts the rations of himself and comrades for several days. Still others are so reckless as to seek a sheltered and secret place and go to sleep. For these and similar reasons, it is customary to post pickets in twos, or in larger groups, according to the exigencies of the case.

THE DRAMA OF PICKETING OPENS.

We will suppose we are moving among the advanced posts of our army in Virginia a *savoir* with the outpost of Gen. McClellan's division, for it matters little where we place ourselves as regards the duties or adventures we shall witness. The time is evening—a cold, wintry night, when the sky is overcast with a leaden canopy of clouds, and when a thin crust of sleet and snow covers the face of the earth and whitens the forest. The hour is ten o'clock, when the silence of the sleeping armies seems in keeping with the desolation of nature, and when the picket can hardly distinguish the forms of his foes from the unreal beings of his apprehension. Here we are far away from the lights which make the city living and pleasant in even its sleepiest moments—far away from the world of peace and all its comforts and blessings, and suddenly ushered upon the stern labors and repulsive realities of the world of war! Here we are, a mile or two in advance of the tents of the advance brigade of General McClellan's division, and all around us is silent and desolate—all silent save the wind, and even that is a voice of desolation—its sighing seeming at once a requiem for the past and a moan for the red-winged hours which are coming.

THE PICKET ON DUTY.

We are not alone in this sullen empire of night. Yonder, away by that old oak which rears its branches nakedly towards heaven, is a figure in human form which moves slowly to and fro. "As we draw nearer we can see a comrade fifty rods to his rear, with the aid of our reconnoitering night-glass, and another comrade the same distance in front, so that we need have no difficulty in comprehending that they belong to a line of pickets which stretches far away from the approaches of Leesburg to the shore of the Potomac below Alexandria—a line of outpost averaging from one to three miles in advance of those white tents which render still whiter the snow-clad plains of Virginia. The man we see first see is a picket on his post—a number two man, rear rank of the fourth group of the first section of the second platoon of Company C, Eighth Regiment. (You may see from this statement what a military nomenclature the man will die in if he should be so unfortunate as to be shot!)

We perceive that he wears huge boots, a huge overcoat, huge comforters around his neck, and is, on the whole, so well provided with clothing that his mere person would prove him no friend of the hatless and coatless prophets of the bogus Confederacy.—His gun is carried at "secure arms," out of respect for a mist in the air, but his eyes move rapidly from one point to another, so that it would be quite useless for a Rebel to attempt to sneak upon him unawares. He is especially attentive to a thickly-wooded knoll half a mile to the southwest of his post for it is there, he can tell you, that one of his most respected comrades was shot, only three nights ago, by a prowling Secessionist, while carelessly strolling about, and he himself is determined not to furnish another lesson of the kind to his fellows.

THE POST.

The post, in this instance, is one of those little wash-houses, besides a spring, which are one of the peculiar institutions of the Slave States. It is situated almost at the foot of the old oak aforesaid, and is not far from ten feet square, and of a height sufficient for the occupants to stand upright without trouble. A dozen rods beyond it is a hole, surrounded by loose stones, which is readily recognized as the former cellar of a house which some earnest Rebel consigned to the flames before he turned his face finally towards Manassas. The wash-house itself is charred and blackened on the outside, showing that it was saved from the fate of the dwelling only by the humidity of the logs of which it is composed. The window

in one end has been closed with pieces of logs, and a sort of a door has been formed of the same materials. Inside, in rude benches against the wall, are lying the three pickets off duty (this detachment being posted in "groups," or just as they would be deployed as skirmishers). None of them are asleep, but are discussing the intensity of the cold, and the several subjects of research belonging to the place and the hour.

NO FIRES PERMITTED THE PICKETS.

About the first of November General McClellan issued an order prohibiting the pickets from having fires on their posts, for the avowed reason that the light pointed out the position of our pickets and forces to the Rebels. Dire the condemnations this order received on the advance posts, from the amateur destroyers of Virginia woods and fences and it is to be suspected that it was more generally honored in the breach than in the observance. Unless the officer in command of the picket detachment should remain up all night, and go around the posts every half hour and put out the fires himself, the pickets can see no good reason why they should not have them. Soldiers are essentially independent in their ideas. "You can't go out of camp without a pass," said a sentry to one in the writer's hearing. "But you see that I can though," was the pleasant rejoinder, and the soldier passed on.

A COLD PROSPECT.

As we stand on the post we have supposed ourselves, reader and writer, to be visiting, at midnight, on this cold winter night, it is to be confessed that the prospect of the picket is not remarkably brilliant and attractive. If he had a fire at the cabin, or in any sheltered nook in the vicinity, he would hardly dare avail himself of its warmth, for he has not been warned that the enemy's prowling cavalry are liable to visit him at any moment! He has nothing to do but to atone and fro, and keep himself warm as he can by his own resources, and at the same time keep a good lookout in every direction. If the cold mist should chance to turn into a colder sleetly rain, so much the worse for him, but he must still keep his eyes and ears open, and perform his allotted share of the night's work.

THE DIGNITY OF THE SENTINEL.

But, for all that, be on your guard against undervaluing the dignity of a picket or any other sentry whatever. For he not only has a legal power of life and death, but the cold instrument in his hands with which to put that power into practice. If General McClellan, or Abraham Lincoln himself, were to endeavor to pass that picket without the countersign, or if those distinguished gentlemen were to refuse to halt at that picket's command, then their blood would be upon their own heads if he shot them on the spot. In his particular province the picket is as autocratic as the Czar himself. If he chooses to pass a colored vendor of biscuits, or a "friend" who presents him with a bottle of old "rye" in lieu of the countersign, who shall gainsay his wisdom? Or, if he chooses not to let his own Colonel pass when he does not have the magic word, as sometimes happens, and if peradventure, he shall keep that Colonel shivering at the point of the bayonet for an hour or two, under pretence of not knowing him, albeit he knoweth him as well as he knoweth his father, verily, in even this case, is the sentry not refuted within the limits of his just and legal power?

"GRAND ROUNDS."

At the dead of night, in the "small hours," it is customary for the officer in charge of the pickets to make a tour of observation among them to see that everything is going on as it should. On these occasions, as in regular camp duty, the escort of the officer is a file of men and a Sergeant. No sooner does the party approach to within a few rods of the sentinel than he challenges them.—"Who goes there?" bringing his piece to a port. The answer is "Grand Rounds!"—"Halt, Grand Rounds!" is the peremptory command of the picket, and the party halts, when he adds: "Advance, Sergeant, and give the countersign." The Sergeant advances, and as soon as he is within five paces the picket brings his piece to the position of charge bayonet, and the Sergeant whispers the word as he halts immediately in front of the weapon. The sentry then says: "The countersign is correct—advance, Rounds!" and faces to the front, shouldering his piece, while the Rounds pass on. In the immediate presence of the enemy this ceremonious inspection is usually omitted. The countersign is sometimes the name of a State, running through from Maine to California, and sometimes the name of a battle, as "Palo Alto," or "Waterloo," or of a number, as twenty or forty-two.

AN ALARM.

As the night wears on the report of a rifle suddenly disturbs the silence. As will readily be conceived, the firing of a piece at this hour on the lines is an event, and everybody is instantly on the alert to know what it means. It soon turns out that one of the pickets has accidentally shot himself, while going to relieve his file-leader, and the poor fellow dies before half of his comrades comprehend the nature of the alarm.

"Accidentally shot" is a term often uttered and written in the army of the Potomac, and it really seems as if there can be no end to the carelessness of the soldiers in handling their weapons. There is scarcely a regiment in the service but has lost from one to a half-dozen members in this most saddening manner. The mangled remains are borne away to headquarters to await honored burial, yet it is not certain but that some of those most affected by the event will meet their fate in the same careless manner.

THE PICKET HEADQUARTERS.

The headquarters of the picketing detachment is an old barn or other building, so situated as to be in a central position from the several posts. It is here that the men get their meals; that the *cuisine* department is carried on, that the officer in charge is usually to be found, and that the majority of the men who are off duty congregate. Let McClellan say what he pleases about having fires on the posts, he has not yet abolished the fire in the "kitchen," nor prescribed its size, and let what a consumption of logs and rails is therefore in progress at these headquarters! The Lieutenant in command is asleep, wrapped up in a blanket before the fire, and many of the men are imitating his example, so that the scene inside of this rickety old barn presents quite a cheerful contrast with the cold and gloom which prevail out-of-doors.

A CAVALRY CHARGE.

The next shot that is fired will have a different meaning. Jake is now on the post, in his turn, as fiercely wrathful and wakeful as the toothache can make him, and he sees the shadowy horse moving against the Southern horizon long before that horse can take the distinct outlines of men and horses. The instant he is certain what is coming he fires his piece. Immediately there is an outpouring of pickets from the headquarters and a lively excitement along the lines. The Lieutenant is instantly on his feet and reconnoitering the approaching Rebel horsemen, while quietly making his dispositions for their reception. Like a thunder cloud they come on, with here and there a flash, while the pickets rally on Jake's post to receive them, it being already seen that they are not in force, but only a dozen or so daring and reckless troopers on a scout. The question of their character is speedily decided by a few straggling shots they send in advance, and a sharp volley from the pickets is the answer they receive.

The next moment they rush in upon our brave boys, striking right and left with their long swords, but they have reckoned without their host this time—the sad accident before described having left the pickets in a situation to quickly and intelligently rally. For a few minutes there is an active *melee*, the tall leader of the horsemen doing wonders, but it is soon evident that the assailants are getting more than they bargained for, and the next instant they commence a retreat in considerable confusion, all save the three or four of their number who will never more beat a retreat. A general cheer breaks from the lips of the pickets, even as they proceed to raise the poor fellow the tall trooper has cut down, and the two or three others who have received more or less injury in the affair, for it is an exciting and jubilant thing to see your enemy flying before you.

EMPTYING A SADDLE.

Another cheer of delight is soon heard along the post, for it is seen that the daring leader of the Rebel party is going directly across the ravine in a course that will bring him near the advanced post number two.—He is speedily beyond the sight of Jake, and his comrades fading away in the gloom on the right of his followers, but the report of several rifles is heard a minute or two later, and a cry of triumph from the "boys" at post number two announces the result. The horse of the doomed man is seen by these latter ascending the side of the plateau, bounding onwards with renewed speed *rideless!* The Rebel is dead—shot through the heart. He lies there, a stranger dead among strangers, surrounded by those who do not even know his name and who never saw him before. He has come for blood, and taken it, made just such another desolate home as his own was fated to soon be; and these are the fortunes and the fates of war!

NONBORING WITH REBEL PICKETS.

It is probable that there will be no hobnobbing between our pickets and those of the Rebels along these lines to-night. But the interchange of these courtesies is common. It is decidedly comical to see two men who have lain behind a couple of trees or logs, on the opposite sides of a river, all the forenoon, each seeking for an opportunity of putting a bullet into the diaphragm of his adversary—it is comical, I say, to see these same men wave a handkerchief at last as a flag of truce, lay down their arms, and advance to a meeting in the middle of the river (up to their waists in water), where they shake hands, "treat" one another, exchange New York papers for Richmond, and discourse most amicably for an hour.—It is still more comical to see these same men, the instant they get back to their respective posts, renew their dodging behind the logs, and repeat their efforts to get a good opportunity of blazing away at each other, yet this scene is a literal statement of proceedings the writer has repeatedly seen on the Potomac and elsewhere.

PICKET GOSSIP, INCIDENTS, ETC.

When the Fire Zouaves first went picketing in Virginia last summer, they used to receive a great deal of attention from the rebellious citizens in the vicinity of their outposts, especially after nightfall. Lurking around the neighborhood in the daytime, the would-be assassin was accustomed to get the spot where the picket could be found after dark pretty well located in his mind, and so creep up to him, rifle or knife in hand, to despatch him. On one occasion a Zouave who was picketing on the Centerville road, suspecting that this sort of game was to be tried on him that night, secreted himself a short distance from the spot his comrades had occupied during the day. As he expected, his adversary failing to find him in the usual spot, commenced to "feel him out" by throwing stones in various directions, wherever he presumed the picket to be. Having been duly warned by the death of a companion of the danger of springing up and demanding "Who goes there?" (which question had been answered by a fatal volley), the Zouave remained still as death, with his rifle at half-cock, behind the bush where he had hidden himself, and quietly awaited results. The would-be assassin, after vainly endeavoring to "sit up" his enemy by throwing stones, finally went in search of him, with a cocked revolver in his grasp, looking here and there in the bushes, and moving stealthily about in the vicinity, until he finally stumbled upon the hiding-place of the Zouave, when it was discovered on the following morning that one of the most active and influential Secessionists of that county had been shot dead near the post of that same Zouave!

Not the least of the charms of picketing is the freedom it gives the picket, when off duty, to rove about in the vicinity of the advanced posts. With the pass of a picket in his pocket, it is not difficult for him to lay the inhabitants of the vicinity—if inhabitants there be—under involuntarily contribution for such objects as please his sharp appetite and keen sight. A turkey or a chicken never comes amiss to him, and a nice sheep has an attraction for his digits which even that of the pole for the magnet cannot excel. In all his goings and comings the picket is especially mindful of what he shall eat and drink, and never fails to be in possession of a goodly store of provisions which the Quartermaster's accounts do not mention—never, albeit he may not have seen the color of Uncle Samuel's gold for two months! His great delight is to make a descent upon some rich old Rebel, and secure a piece offering from that same which shall furnish his mess with an abundance of feasting. The one thing he knoweth, beyond all other knowledge, is that a good dinner is the *primum mobile* of a soldier's valor, as it is his chiefest enjoyment. And if his hardships appear harder to him than all other hardships known to man, so do the comforts to which we have referred appear more comforting to him than any other comforts whatever.

RELIEVED.

Having seen the principal things to be seen in picketing, we will return. The way lies through dark ravines, over slippery hill-sides, and through lonely woods all white with snow and frost. Before we leave the advanced posts of the army, however, we will see the wounded picket cared for, the tired ones asleep, and our friend Jake shall be relieved. We smile our adieu as we hear him go growling to the wash-house, declaring that he is tired of picketing, it is so much the same thing ever and over—a little danger, a little hunger, a little to eat, a little blanket to cover one's self, and a little sleep; and then a repetition of all these littlenesses day after day, forever.

THE END COMING.

And yet—not "forever!" Even in the embittered mind of this picket, as he goes to his rude couch, there is a sparkling consciousness that this order of things will not always endure. Beyond all the pains and hardships of this service, beyond all the darkness of these perilous times, is seen, with the eye of faith, the day when this arraying of man against man shall cease, and when our beloved and glorious Union, purified and redeemed, shall be still more beloved and glorious; the day when even these stern and rugged picketing grounds will be beautiful beneath the blended smiles of summer and of peace!

FROM ONE WEEK.

The Latest Thing in Ghosts.

As I was finishing breakfast the other day, I received a visit from my friend Perkins, who entered my room hastily with some papers in his hand.
"I've written a ghost tale," said Perkins, "and I want your opinion on it."
"I'll devote my morning pipe to you, I can't afford you any more time than that; so hand me the tobacco, and produce your spirit." And I filled the pipe and assumed the critic.
"The sun had set some two hours," began Perkins, "and dark night was—"
"One moment," I interrupted; "is it a tale of past or present times?"
"Present," answered Perkins.
"Rather an old-fashioned beginning," I observed. "However, fire away."
"The sun had set some ten hours," resumed Perkins, firing away as directed, "and dark night was gradually extending her reign over field and fell, when a traveler might be perceived making his way, as well as the darkness would permit, through one of those immense German forests, the haunt of the wild boar and the wolf."
"What on earth was he doing there," I asked.
"He had lost his way, of course," replied Perkins.
"So I suppose," I said. "Travelers always do in ghost stories. But is this a tale of the present time; pardon my inquiring where the luggage is?"
"He left it in the chaise," answered Perkins.
"Which had been overturned, and our traveler wished to get to the nearest town on foot. Is not that it?"
"Of course," said Perkins with some irritation.
"And in order to reach the nearest town he turns into the nearest forest."
"He thought he would take a short cut across country," explained Perkins.
"And after walking some distance he comes to an old castle, eh?"
"Well!" said our author, sulkily.
"And, finding it uninhabited, he wraps his ample cloak around him, and goes to sleep in the corner, does not he?"
"Yes," said Perkins, something surprised.
"But he is aroused from his sleep by the clanking of chains, and, on raising his head perceives a figure standing in the doorway."
"Why, confound it!" said Perkins, starting up indignantly, "you must have seen my manuscript."
"Which figure," I continued, "raises its manacled arms above its head, and clanking its chains together, utters a frightful cry—My dear fellow, this will not do, you know; it went indeed. Modern readers must have modern ghosts."
"Well! but give it a fair hearing; don't condemn it unheard," said the author.
"Oh! read it! By all means read it," and I resumed my pipe, and he his story, which was much as I had anticipated.
* * * * *
Originality in ghost stories is very easy to get. All you have to do is to imagine some very unlikely position for a ghost to be in, and to put him into it. For instance, a ghost in a balloon, or a ghost under water, or a ghost having himself would, if I mistake not, be all of them new. Here, now, is a skeleton of a ghost-story, which I flatter myself is entirely original.
Mr. S.—initials, of course. For some reason or other initials may do things that names may not. The public allow Mr. S. to have seen and done things, which, if assigned to Mr. Smith, they would reject with scorn.—Mr. S. and his wife are staying at the fashionable sea-side town of R., where one morning Mr. S. receives a letter from his friend B., requesting him to come without losing a moment, to L, where B. is lying ill.
"Here's the ghost," think the public; "B. is the ghost." A false scent is rather a judicious thing in a ghost tale. The public are mistaken. B. will live some fifty years longer, very likely; at any rate his ghost will not walk in this story. In due course, S. appears at B.'s house, and witnesses the will or whatever it may be, for which he was wanted. While he is at dinner, the servant I. brings him a telegraphic message. It is from Mrs. S.—"Return at once—I have fallen over the cliff." S. is in great agitation—returns by the night train. When he reaches his home, M., the housemaid, opens the door for him.
"Oh! is that you, sir? Poor misses has fallen over the cliff."
"Well, I know that," cries S.; "how is she?"
"Lor, sir," replies M., "she's been dead ever since."
"Dead!" gasped S., "why did you not say so when you telegraphed?"
"I never sent nor telegraphed," says M., weeping.
"Oh, no, I forgot. My wife sent the message, of course. She lived long enough to do that, did she?" asks the much agitated S.
"Missis never sent no telegraph, I'm sure," replies M.; "I saw her fall from the cliff, and she never stirred afterwards."
"This is most extraordinary," says S.; "but where is she? Let me see her."
He finds that there is a fearful cut on his wife's temple, and that the left arm is broken. When his agitation will allow him, he again thinks of the mysterious telegram, and as every one in the house denies that any telegram was sent by them, and as every one asserts that it was impossible that Mrs. S. could have sent it, the perplexed widower goes to the telegraph office.
"Do you remember who sent this telegram, and at what time?" he asks the clerk.
The reply is:—
"Yes, I remember it distinctly. It will be a long time before I forget it. The message was sent just at the very time that that unhappy accident happened at the cliff; and the person who sent it was a deadly pale lady, with a fearful cut on the temple, and whose left arm hung by her side as if broken."
S., with a fearful shudder, rushed from the office. There can be no doubt about it. Mrs. S.'s ghost sent the telegram.
There! I consider that I have capped the ghost in the railway carriage now. My ghost tale is positively the last out. The only merits that I can claim for it, however, are these. It is short, which, I take it, is one of the greatest merits that a ghost story can have. It shows progress—the latest improvement in ghosts being their traveling by rail; my ghost goes a step farther, and telegraphs. And it does not pretend to be true. I candidly confess that there is not a word of truth in it from beginning to end.

WAR NEWS!

GEN. McCLELLAN TO HIS ARMY.

A STIRRING ADDRESS.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, FAIRFAX COURT HOUSE, VIRGINIA, March 14, 1862.

Soldiers of the Army of the Potomac:
For a long time I have kept you inactive but not without a purpose. You were to be disciplined, armed and instructed. The formidable artillery you now have had to be formed. Other armies were to move and accomplish certain results. I have held you back that you might give the death-blow to the rebellion that has distracted our once happy country. The patience you have shown and your confidence in your General are worth a dozen victories.

These preliminary results are now accomplished. I feel that the labors of many months have produced their fruit. The army of the Potomac is now a *real army*, magnificent in material, admirable in discipline and instruction, excellently equipped and armed; your commanders are all that I could wish. The moment for action has arrived, and I know that I can trust in you to save our country. As I ride through your ranks I see in your faces the sure promise of victory. I feel that you will do whatever I ask of you.

The period of inaction has passed. I will bring you now face to face with the Rebels, and only pray that God may defend the right.

In whatever direction you may move, however strange my actions may appear to you, ever bear in mind that my fate is linked with yours, and that all I do is to bring you where I know you wish to be, on the decisive battle-field. It is our business to place you there. I am to watch over you as a parent over his children, and you know that your General loves you from the depths of his heart. It shall be my care, as it has ever been, to gain success with the least possible loss, but I know that if it is necessary you will willingly follow me to our graves for our righteous cause.

God smiles upon us, victory attends us, yet I would not have you think that our aim is to be attained without a manly struggle. I will not disguise it from you that you have brave foes to encounter—foemen well worthy of the steel you will use so well. I shall demand of you great and heroic exertions, rapid and long marches, desperate combats and privations. Perhaps we will share all these together, and when this sad war is over we will all return to our homes and feel that we can ask no higher honor than the proud consciousness that we belonged to the Army of the Potomac.

GEORGE B. McCLELLAN,
Major-General Commanding.

THE CAPTURE OF NEW MADRID.

GENERAL POPE'S REPORT.

THE PANIC AMONG THE ENEMY.

An Immense Quantity of Spoils Captured.

St. Louis, March 15.—General Pope in his despatch to General Halleck, says: "Our success at New Madrid was even greater than first reported. Twenty-five pieces of heavy artillery—24-pounders and rifled 32 pounders; batteries of field artillery; immense quantities of fixed ammunition; several thousand small arms; hundreds of boxes of musket cartridges; 300 mules and horses; tents sufficient for an army of 12,000 men, and an immense quantity of other property of no less value than one million dollars have fallen into our hands.—The men only escaped, and the enemy's whole force are demoralized and dispersed in the swamp on the opposite side of the river.

The enemy abandoned their works so hurriedly as to leave all the baggage of the officers and knapsacks of the men and their dead unburied. Their supplies were found on their tables, and candles burning in their tents. A furious thunder storm which raged all night enabled them to get across the river without being discovered.

Our heavy battery was established during the night of the 12th within 800 yards of the enemy's works, and opened at daylight on the 13th inst., thirty-four hours after the guns were delivered to us at Cairo. During the whole day of yesterday our lines were drawn closer around their works under a furious fire of sixty pieces of artillery. Fear of an assault on their works at daylight induced them to flee precipitately during the night.

Many prisoners have been taken and the colors of several Arkansas Regiments. Our loss is about fifty killed and wounded.

Captain Hollins was in command of the Rebel fleet, and Generals McCann, Stewart and Grant of the land forces.

The gunboats retired down the river.—Gen. Pope has now twenty-five heavy guns with two defensive works of the enemy, which command every point of the river.

The Evacuation of New Madrid, Also of Island No. 10.—The Official Account.
The following despatch from Cairo has reached the Navy Department:
CAIRO, March 14.—Flag Officer Foote left here at 7 A. M., to-day, with the *Hottilla* and the mortar boats, for down the river.—He was last heard from when he was about to leave Columbus.

A despatch has been received here from Gen. Pope, saying that New Madrid was evacuated last night in the storm.