

The Alleghenian.

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I WOULD RATHER BE RIGHT THAN PRESIDENT.—HENRY CLAY.

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EBENSBURG, PA., THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1862.

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Western, " at 10 o'clock, P. M.
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Eastern, daily, at 8 o'clock, P. M.
Western, " at 8 o'clock, P. M.
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Leave Ebensburg on Friday of each week, at 8 A. M.
The mails from Newmarket, Mills, Carrolltown, &c., arrive on Monday, Wednesday and Friday of each week, at 3 o'clock, P. M.
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" Fast Line " 8.56 P. M.
" Mail Train " 7.35 P. M.
East—Express Train " 7.42 P. M.
" Fast Line " 12.17 P. M.
" Mail Train " 6.50 A. M.
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" Fast Line " 9.18 P. M.
" Mail Train " 8.09 P. M.
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REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE CONDUCT OF THE WAR.

The Rebels Worse than Savages—Atrocities they Committed upon our Dead and Wounded at Manassas—Sickening Details of Fiendish Cruelties.

The Joint Committee on the Conduct of the Present War has made the following report to the United States Senate: On the first day of April the Senate of the United States adopted the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on the Conduct of the War:

Resolved, That the Select Committee on the Conduct of the War be directed to collect the evidence with regard to the barbarous treatment by the rebels at Manassas, of the remains of officers and soldiers of the United States killed in battle there; and that the said select committee also inquire into the fact whether the Indian savages have been employed by the rebels, in their military service, against the United States Government, and how such warfare has been conducted by the said savages.

In pursuance of the instructions contained in this resolution, your committee have the honor to report that they examined a number of witnesses, whose testimony is herewith submitted.

Mr. Nathaniel F. Parker, who was captured at Falling Waters, Va., testifies that he was kept in close confinement, denied exercise, and with a number of others, huddled up in a room; that their food, generally scant, was always bad, and sometimes nauseous; that the wounded had neither medical attention nor humane treatment, and that many of these latter died from sheer neglect; that five of the prisoners were shot by the sentries outside, and that he saw one man, Tibbitts, of the New York 27th Regiment, shot as he was passing his window, on the 8th of November, and that he died of his wound on the 12th. The perpetrator of this foul murder was subsequently promoted by the rebel Government.

Dr. J. M. Homiston, surgeon of the Fourteenth New York or Brooklyn regiment, captured at Bull Run, testifies that when he solicited permission to remain on the field and to attend to wounded men, some of whom were in a helpless and painful condition, and suffering for water, he was brutally refused. They offered him neither water nor anything in the shape of food. He and his companions stood in the streets of Manassas, surrounded by a threatening and boisterous crowd, and was afterwards thrust into an old building, and left, without sustenance or covering, to sleep on the bare floor. It was only when faint, and without food for twenty-four hours, that some cold bacon was grudgingly given them. When, at last, they were permitted to go to the relief of our wounded, the Secession surgeon would not allow them to perform operations, but entrusted the wounded to his young assistants, "some of them with no more knowledge of what they attempted to do than an apothecary's clerk." And further, "that these inexperienced surgeons performed operations upon our men in a most horrible manner; some of them were absolutely frightful." "When," he adds, "I asked Dr. Darby to allow me to amputate the leg of Corporal Prescott, of our regiment, and said that the man must die if it were not done, he said that I should be allowed to do it." While Dr. Homiston was waiting, he says a Secessionist came through the room and said, "They are operating upon one of the Yankee's legs up stairs." "I went up and found that they had cut off Prescott's leg. The assistants were pulling on the flesh at each side, trying to get flap enough to cover the bone. They had saved off the bone without leaving any of the flesh to form the flaps to cover it; and with all the force they could use they could not get flap enough to cover the bone. They were then obliged to saw off about one inch more of the bone, and even then, when they came to put in the sutures (the stitches) they could not approximate the edges within less than an inch and a half of each other; of course, as soon as there was any swelling, the stitches tore out and the bone stuck through again.—Dr. Swalm tried afterwards to remedy it by performing another operation, but Prescott had become so debilitated that he could not survive." Corporal Prescott was a young man of high position, and had received a very liberal education.

The same witness describes the sufferings of the wounded after the battle as inconceivably horrible; with bad food, no covering, no water. They were lying upon the floor as thickly as they could be laid. "There was not a particle of light

in the house to enable us to move among them." Deaf to all his appeals, they continued to refuse water to these suffering men, and he was only enabled to procure it by setting cups under the eaves to catch the rain that was falling, and in this way he spent the night catching the water and conveying it to the wounded to drink.—As there was no light, he was obliged to crawl on his hands and knees to avoid stepping on their wounded limbs; and, he adds, "it is not a wonder that next morning we found that several had died during the night." The young surgeons, who seemed to delight in hacking and butchering these brave defenders of our country's flag, were not, it would seem, permitted to perform any operations upon the rebel wounded. "Some of our wounded," says this witness, "were left lying upon the battle-field until Tuesday night and Wednesday morning. When brought in, their wounds were completely alive with larvae, deposited there by the flies, having laid out through all the rain storm of Monday, and the hot, sultry sunshine of Tuesday." The dead laid upon the field unburied for five days; and this included men not only of his own, the Fourteenth Regiment, but of other regiments. This witness testifies that the rebel dead were carried off and interred decently.—In answer to a question, whether the Confederates themselves were not also destitute of medicine, he replied, "they could not have been, for they took all of ours, even to our surgical instruments." He received none of the attention from the surgeons on the other side, "which," to use his own language, "I should have shown to them had our position been reversed."

The testimony of Wm. F. Swalm, assistant surgeon of the Fourteenth New York Regiment, who was taken prisoner at Sudley's Church, confirms the statement of Dr. Homiston in regard to the brutal operations on Corporal Prescott.—He also states that after he himself had been removed to Richmond, when seated one day with his feet on the window-sill, the sentry outside called to him to take them in, and on looking out he saw the sentry with his musket cocked and pointed at him, and withdrew in time to save his life. He gives evidence of the careless, heartless and cruel manner in which the surgeons operated upon our men.—Previous to leaving for Richmond, and ten or twelve days after the battle, he saw some of the Union soldiers unburied upon the field, and entirely naked. Walking around were a great many women, gloating over the horrid sight.

The case of Dr. Ferguson, of one of the New York regiments, is mentioned by Dr. Swalm. "When getting into his ambulance to look after his own wounded, he was fired upon by the rebels. When he told them who he was, they said they would take a parting shot at him, which they did, wounding him in the leg. He had his boots on, and his spurs on his boots, and as they drove along his spurs would catch in the tail-board of the ambulance, causing him to shriek with agony." An officer rode up, and placing his pistol to his head, threatened to shoot him if he continued to scream. This was on Sunday, the day of the battle.

One of the most important witnesses was Gen. James B. Ricketts, well known in Washington and throughout the country, lately promoted for his daring and self-sacrificing courage. After having been wounded in the battle of Bull Run, he was captured, and as he lay helpless on his back, a party of rebels passing him cried out, "Knock out his brains, the d-d Yankee." He met General Beauregard, an old acquaintance, only a year his senior at the United States Military Academy, where both were educated.—He had met the rebel General in the South a number of times. By his head of the rebel army, on the day after the battle, he was told that his (Gen. Ricketts') treatment would depend upon the treatment extended to the rebel privateers. His first lieutenant, Ramsey, who was killed, was stripped of every article of his clothing but his socks, and left naked on the field. He testified that those of our wounded who died in Richmond, were buried in the negro burying-ground, among the negroes, and were put into the earth in the most unfeeling manner.—The statement of other witnesses as to how the prisoners were treated is fully confirmed by Gen. Ricketts. He himself, while in prison, mainly subsisted upon what he purchased with his own money, the money brought to him by his wife. "We had," he says, "what they called bacon soup—soup made of boiled bacon, the bacon being a little rancid—which you could not possibly eat; and that for a man whose system was being drained by a wound is no diet at all." In reply to a question whether he had heard anything about our prisoners being shot by

the rebel sentries, he answered, "Yes, a number of our men were shot. In one instance two were shot; one was killed, and the other wounded by a man who rested his gun on the window-sill while he capped it."

Gen. Ricketts, in reference to his having been held as one of the hostages for the privateers, states: "I considered it bad treatment to be selected as a hostage for a privateer, when I was so lame that I could not walk, and while my wounds were still open and unhealed. At this time Gen. Winder came to see me. He had been an officer in my regiment; I had known him for twenty-odd years. It was on the 9th of November that he came to see me. He saw that my wounds were still unhealed; he saw my condition; but that very day he received an order to select hostages for the privateers, and, notwithstanding he knew my condition, the next day, Sunday, the 10th of November, I was selected as one of the hostages." "I heard," he continues, "of a great many of our prisoners who had been bayoneted and shot. I saw three of them—two that had been bayoneted, and one of them shot. One was named Louis Francis, of the New York Fourteenth. He had received fourteen bayonet wounds—one through his privates—and he had one wound very much like mine, on the knee, in consequence of which his leg was amputated after twelve weeks had passed; and I would state here that in regard to his case, when it was determined to amputate his leg, I heard Dr. Peachy, the rebel surgeon, remark to one of his young assistants, 'I won't be greedy; you may do it,' and the young man did it. I saw a number in my room, many of whom had been badly amputated. The flaps over the stumps were drawn too tight, and in some the bones protruded."

"A man by the name of Prescott, (the same referred to in the testimony of Surgeon Homiston) was amputated twice, and was then, I think, moved to Richmond, before the taps were healed.—Prescott died under this treatment. I heard a rebel doctor, on the steps below my room, say, 'that he wished he could take out the hearts of the d-d Yankees as easily as he could take off their legs.'" Some of the Southern gentlemen treated me very handsomely. Wade Hampton, who was opposed to my battery, came to see me and behaved like a generous enemy."

It appears, as a part of the history of this rebellion, that Gen. Ricketts was visited by his wife, who, having first heard that he was killed in battle, afterwards that he was alive, but wounded, travelled under great difficulties to Manassas to see her husband. He says: "She had almost to fight her way through, but succeeded finally in reaching me on the fourth day after the battle. There were eight persons in the Lewis House, at Manassas, in the room where I lay, and my wife, for two weeks, slept in that room, on the floor by my side, without a bed. When we got to Richmond there were six of us in a room, among them Col. Wilcox, who remained with us until he was taken to Charleston. There we were all in a room. There was no door to it. It was much as it would be if you should take off the doors of this committee room, and then fill the passage with wounded soldiers.—In the hot summer months the stench from their wounds, and from the utensils they used, was fearful. There was no privacy at all, because, there being no door, the room could not be closed. We were there as a common show. Colonel Wilcox and myself were objects of interest and were gazed upon as if we were a couple of savages. The people would come in there and say all sorts of things to us and about us, until I was obliged to tell them that I was a prisoner, and had nothing to say. On our way to Richmond when we reached Gordonsville, many women crowded around the cars, and asked my wife if she cooked, if she washed, how she got there. Finally Mrs. Ricketts appealed to the officer in charge, and told him that it was not the intention that we should be subjected to this treatment, and it was continued she would make it known to the authorities. General Johnson took my wife's carriage and horses at Manassas, kept them, and has them yet for aught I know. When I got to Richmond, I spoke to several gentlemen about this and so did Mrs. Ricketts. They said of course, the carriage and horses should be returned; but they never were. 'There is one debt,' says this gallant soldier, 'that I desire very much to pay, and nothing troubles me so much now as the fact that my wounds prevent me from entering upon active service at once.'"

The case of Louis Francis, who was terribly wounded and maltreated, and lost a leg, is referred to by General Ricketts; but the testimony of Francis himself is startling. He was a private in the New York Fourteenth regiment. He says: "I was attacked by two rebel soldiers, and wounded in the right knee with the bayonet. As I lay on the sod they kept bayonetting me until I received fourteen wounds. One then left me, the other remaining over me, when a Union soldier coming up shot him in the breast, and he fell dead. I lay on the ground until 10 o'clock next day. I was then removed in a wagon to a building; my wounds examined and partially dressed." On the Saturday following we were carried to Manassas, and from there to the general hospital at Richmond. My leg having partially mortified, I consented that it should be amputated, which operation was performed by a young man. I insisted that they should allow Dr. Swalm to be present, for I wanted one Union man there if I died under the operation. The stitches and the hand slipped from neglect, and the bone protruded; and about two weeks after another operation was performed, at which time another piece of the thigh bone was sawed off.—Six weeks after the amputation, and before it healed, I was removed to the tobacco factory.

Two operations were subsequently performed on Francis—one at Fortress Monroe and one at Brooklyn, New York—after his release from captivity.

Revolting as these disclosures are, it was when the committee came to examine witnesses in reference to the treatment of our heroic dead that the fiendish spirit of the rebel leaders, was prominently exhibited. Daniel Bixby, Jr., of Washington, testifies that he went out in company with G. A. Smart, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, who went to search for the body of his brother, who fell at Blackburn's Ford in the action of the 18th of July. They found the grave. The clothes were identified as those of his brother on account of some peculiarity in the make, for they had been made by his mother; and in order to identify them, other clothes made by her were taken, that they might compare them.

"We found no head in the grave, and no bones of any kind—nothing but the clothes and portions of the flesh. We found the remains of three other bodies all together. The clothes were there; some flesh was left, but no bones." The witness also states that Mrs. Pierce Butler, who lives near the place, said that she had seen the rebels boiling portions of the bodies of our dead in order to obtain their bones as relics. They could not wait for them to decay. She said she had seen drumsticks made of "Yankee shinbones," as they called them. Mrs. Butler also stated that she had seen a skull that one of the rebel artillery had, which, he said, he was going to send home and have mounted, and that he intended to drink a brandy punch out of it the day he was married.

Frederick Scholes, of the city of Brooklyn, New York, testified that he proceeded to the battle-field of Bull Run on the fourth of this month, (April), to find the place where he supposed his brother's body was buried. Mr. Scholes, who is a man of unquestioned character, by his testimony fully confirms the statements of other witnesses. He met a free negro, named Simon or Simons, who stated that it was a common thing for the rebel soldiers to exhibit the bones of the Yankees. "I found," he says, "in the bushes in the neighborhood, a part of a Zouave uniform with the sleeve sticking out of the grave, and a portion of the pantaloons. Attempting to pull it up, I saw the two ends of the grave were still unopened, but the middle had been prised up, pulling up the extremities of the uniform at some places, the sleeves of the shirt in another, and a portion of the pantaloons. Dr. Swalm (one of the surgeons, whose testimony has already been referred to) pointed out the trenches where the Secessionists had buried their own dead, and, on examination, it appeared that their remains had not been disturbed at all. Mr. Scholes met a free negro, named Hampton, who resided near the place, and when he told him the manner in which these bodies had been dug up, he said he knew it had been done, and added that the rebels had commenced digging bodies two or three days after they were buried, for the purpose, first, of obtaining the buttons off their uniforms, and that afterward they disinterred them to get their bones. He said they had taken rails and pushed the ends down in the centre under the middle of the bodies, and prised them up.

"The information of the negroes of Benjamin Franklin Lewis corroborated fully the statement of this man Hampton. They said that a good many of the bodies had been stripped naked on the field before they were buried, and that some were buried naked. I went to Mr. Lewis' house and spoke to him of the manner in which these bodies had been disinterred.

He admitted that it was infamous, and condemned principally the Louisiana Tigers, of General Wheat's division. He admitted that our wounded had been very badly treated." In confirmation of the testimony of Dr. Swalm and Dr. Homiston, this witness avers that Mr. Lewis mentioned a number of instances of men who had been murdered by bad surgical treatment.

Mr. Lewis was afraid that a pestilence would break out in consequence of the dead being left unburied, and stated that he had gone and warned the neighborhood and had the dead buried, sending his own men to assist in doing so. "On Sunday morning (yesterday), I went out in search of my brother's grave. We found the trench, and dug for the bodies below.—They were eighteen inches to two feet below the surface, and had been hustled in in any way. In one end of the trench, we found, not more than two or three inches below the surface, the thighbone of a man which had evidently been dug up after the burial. At the other end of the trench, we found the shinbone of a man, which had been struck by a musket ball and split. The bodies at the ends had been prised up.

"While digging there, a party of soldiers came along and showed us a part of a shinbone, five or six inches long, which had the end sawed off. They said they had found it, among many other pieces, in one of the cabins the rebels had deserted. From the appearance of it, pieces had been sawed off to make finger-rings. As soon as the negroes noticed this, they said that the rebels had had rings made of the bones of our dead, and that they had them for sale in their camps. When Dr. Swalm saw the bone, he said it was a part of the shinbone of a man. The soldiers represented that there were lots of these bones scattered through the rebel huts sawed into rings." &c. Mr. Lewis and his negroes all spoke of Col. James Cameron's body, and knew that "it had been stripped, and also where it had been buried." Mr. Scholes, in answer to a question of one of the committee, described the different treatment extended to the Union soldiers and the rebel dead.—The latter had little headboards placed at the head of their respective graves and marked; none of them had the appearance of having been disturbed.

The evidence of that distinguished and patriotic citizen, Hon. William Sprague, Governor of the State of Rhode Island, confirms and fortifies some of the most revolting statements of former witnesses. His object in visiting the battle-field was to recover the bodies of Colonel Slocum and Major Ballou, of the Rhode Island regiment. He took out with him several of his own men to identify the graves.—On reaching the place, he states that "we commenced digging for the bodies of Col. Slocum and Major Ballou at the spot pointed out to us by these men who had been in the action. While digging, some negro women came up and asked whom we were digging for, and at the same time said that 'Colonel Slocum' had been dug up by the rebels, by some men of a Georgia regiment, his head cut off, and his body taken to a ravine thirty or forty yards below, and there burned. We stopped digging and went to the spot designated, where we found coals and ashes and bones mingled together. A little distance from there we found a shirt (still buttoned at the neck) and a blanket with large quantities of hair upon it, everything indicating the burning of a body there. We returned and dug down at the spot indicated as the grave of Major Ballou, but found no body there; but at the place pointed out as the grave where Col. Slocum was buried, we found a box, which, upon being raised and opened, was found to contain the body of Col. Slocum. The soldiers who had buried the two bodies were satisfied that the grave which had been opened, the body taken out, beheaded, and burned, was that of Major Ballou, because it was not in the spot where Col. Slocum was buried, but rather to the right of it. They at once said that the rebels had made a mistake, and had taken the body of Major Ballou for that of Col. Slocum. The shirt found near the place where the body was burned I recognized as one belonging to Major Ballou, as I had been very intimate with him. We gathered up the ashes containing the portion of his remains that were left, and put them in a cask, together with his shirt and the blanket with the hair left upon it. After we had done this, we went to that portion of the field where the battle had first commenced, and began to dig for the remains of Capt. Tower. We brought a soldier with us to designate the place where he was buried. He had been wounded in the battle, and had been from the window of the house where the Captain was interred. On opening the ditch or trench, we found it filled with soldiers,