CHAPTER V.

CONTAINS A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF MY SOJOURN IN THE SOUTH WHILE A PRISONER OF WAR IN THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY, AND THENCE ON UNTIL I ARRIVED AT BENTON BARRACKS, NEAR ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, WHERE I REPORTED TO COLONEL B. L. E. BONNEVILLE, U. S. A., ON THE 10TH DAY OF APRIL, 1863.

1. I HAVE on a previous occasion written a very full account of my stay in the South while a prisoner of war in the hands of the enemy, and because of that, and for the reason that it is my desire that my narrative may not appear to be drawn out too much, and become tedious because of its length, I have determined to give only a general account in this place of that period. Besides these, there is one other reason why I should not at this time particularly rehearse the sufferings and trials we underwent, and that is because many suffered to a greater extent by far than I did, and they have had their recorders by the score. The treatment which prisoners of war received during those unhappy times will be taken notice of by the

writers of the history of the war when it comes to be made up. For my part, I would rather erase from my memory, if I could, the sad side of the story, and retain only that by which I was benefited, the travelling, changes of scene, and the acquaintance I made with the manners of the different people with whom I came in contact. And although I may frequently have to say that our men suffered, the wounded from lack of treatment and all from lack of food and exposure, yet I am almost ready to apologize for many of the shortcomings of the enemy in these regards, because in nearly every instance they treated their own forces no better than they did us, and this too for the very good reason that what they had not themselves could not very well be furnished to us.

Early on the morning of the 1st of January, 1863, I was awakened by being trampled upon by some of my mates in misfortune. It was a dismal change from the comparatively happy dreamy sleep I had been in, and which had been superinduced by the excitement and fatigue of the previous days, when I awoke on that New Year's morning. For nearly a week before, the tension on our spirits had been strained, until but little was wanting to break us down. The defeat and capture and that night's confinement in the filthy courtyard constituted the last straw, and a more broken-spirited lot of humanity than we were then it would be difficult to conceive of. It had rained all night, as it invariably did immediately after heavy firing, and now we were wet to the skin and chilled to our bones. Every joint in my body ached, and I was in great pain and torture. As soon as the

daylight began to appear we were roused somewhat and cheered by the sound of heavy cannonading and other noises of battle, and thereby we were assured that although the enemy (as they boasted) had captured so many of us (2,500), still our army was not destroyed by any means, but on the contrary was still engaging the enemy, and that too at no very great distance away. When we beheld the hurry and bustle among the Southern forces around us we even hoped for our speedy release by our army gaining an overwhelming victory. But alas! it was not to be gained in time to save us. Upon a full and fair consideration of the circumstances, and by virtue of my own experience, I feel confident in asserting, and I think all will agree with me, that there is no position a soldier can be made to occupy so conducive to a good, strong, healthy appetite for food as that in which he is placed when he realizes that he is a prisoner of war and out of immediate danger of being killed or wounded by purposely directed bullets or stray shots, bursting shells, or solid missiles. Hence I not be required then that I should argue the question, and it will be sufficient to say that I was very hungry, and immediately placed myself on the *qui vive* for something to eat. Early in the day an officer of the Southern forces, a sort of Commissary or Quartermaster, entered the yard of the courthouse in which I was confined and wanted labor to load wagons with provisions, as he said, for the "Yankee wounded." I instantly volunteered, and with some others went along with him. I was willing to go anywhere with anybody where provisions were to be seen, as it would be a hard matter, I thought, if

I could handle food and not get any for myself. I succeeded in getting possession of a sour ham and a quantity of flour and corn meal. With these I returned to the courthouse yard, but I found that my friends had been removed, and I had to follow them a long way through the slush and snow to a bivouac not far from the railroad station on the south side of the town; my note-book says it was near a jail, but I do not remember seeing it.

2. There was great activity in railroad matters; but we did not know that General Rosecrans was to gain such a splendid victory as he did on the Friday ensuing. We received in this place our first ration, and it consisted of a small quantity of sour, coarse, and dirty corn-meal. Brine scraped from the inside of empty pork and beef barrels was used in the place of salt, and the men cooked the corn-meal by first wetting it to about the consistency of plaster, and daubing old flour barrel-heads with the mixture; the preparation was then held against a smoky fire built upon the ground until it became dry. Early next morning we were marched out of the enclosure and taken nearer the railroad track, and after a couple of hours' shivering in the cold slush and snow we were driven into a train of cattle cars, seventy or more of us unfortunates in each car, and the whole train hurried away to the south as fast as the poor railroad facilities would permit. At Tullahoma we were delayed several hours in order to allow other trains to pass us on their way to Murfreesboro'. At this place we saw the marks of previously used defence works, trenches, stockades, etc., which we were told had been erected by one of

our armies on its retreat the summer before. The country around Tullahoma looked miserable; the whole appeared to be covered with a dense growth of stunted pine or cedar, and the people who visited us on the railroad were just as poor looking; what with their ragged, dirty, homespun garments, and their universal, uncouth, half-starved looking countenances they were indeed a pitiful set. After a long and wearisome ride we finally reached Chattanooga. Our entry into this famous place was made some time during the night, and we were at once conducted to the west side of the town, through the cold rain and sleet, and thence to a deep hole in the mountains, in which we were interned without tents or other protection against the disagreeable weather. In the morning we partially discovered where we were. The southerly boundary of our prison was formed of the Tennessee river, and on all other sides were high mountains, not very much unlike the place we so successfully foraged near Nashville a month or so before. The wounded men suffered very much now; their neglected hurts had commenced to fester, and the torn flesh to rot. All of them were miserable, and not a few lost their senses from their pains and agonies. Those of us who were well enough to yell sought to find our acquaintances, and for an hour or so the prisoners tried to get together the men of each regiment by themselves, and during that time the shouts for the "Forty-second Indiana," and this regiment and that, gave considerable life to the hitherto dreary scene. Here, too, several of our men, who had provided themselves with enormous quantities of counterfeit

Confederate bills, and who had apparently allowed themselves to be captured on purpose, were arrested by the Southern authorities for using the commodity. They were taken away to prison, and, as we were told, received some very severe punishment. Every one of us had to produce our wallets for inspection. Many of us believed at the time that the whole was a pretended fear, and that the inspection was a ruse of the authorities to get a knowledge of our funds, because they did not appear to discriminate in their seizures of bills. One of the first things we did on being captured was to make the most we could out of our superior currency, and it was natural to suppose that the most honorable of us were liable to be imposed upon in the exchange. We now had our first picture of Southern life in war times; that is, life away from the field. We bought breakfast biscuits for two dollars (Confederate money) a dozen, milk at one dollar a quart; a tiny dried apple or dried peach pie for a dollar, and everything else there was to be had at the same high prices. The people seemed to have plenty of money, and even little boys sported pockets filled with "shinplasters." But it was "greenbacks" that all wanted, and a dollar of our money had from ten to twenty times the purchasing power of a "greyback," as the Southern money was called. We received our second ration at Chattanooga, and it consisted of a small measure of corn-meal of nearly the same quality as the previous dole, and was cooked by the men in the same manner.

3. We remained in Chattanooga in all about twenty-four hours, at the expiration of which time we were

again put upon the filthy cattle cars, and conducted on a "strap-iron" railroad to Dalton Junction, Georgia. On our route we passed over and saw the grand mountains of that region, which have since then become so historical, but our spirits were anything else but conducive to our artistic appreciation of the scenes. Dalton is a station on the road to Atlanta, and where the railroad coming from East Tennessee joins the one going north and south. I think it was then called the "East Tennessee and Virginia" railroad. We were delayed here also, for a couple of hours, but there was nothing of interest to be seen. There was the same inanity prevailing as at the other places we had stopped at. Then we went on at a snail's pace to Atlanta, Georgia. On arriving at Atlanta we were at first conducted to a pine woods beyond the town, and although deep snow was on the ground, the place was welcome to us as offering some chance to straighten our limbs and stretch out at rest. During the night we were mustered under a strong militia guard, and by the light of blazing pine-knot torches we were brought through the sombre forest and across lots to an empty square about in the centre of the city. In the morning we were there exhibited to the wondering people of the place. Crowds of all kinds came to see us. There were throngs of young and old, white and black. It was said that there was cause for especial astonishment to many of the inhabitants for that whereas we were "Yankees," and no mistake, yet we had no tails as monkeys have, and as they had been assured the "Yankees" wore, and besides that, we had

feet very much like their own, and up to this time better clad. During the wintry day we received many marks of enmity from the populace, but I must not omit to say that I at least was treated kindly by a rebel soldier and also by a lady who lived on the easterly side of the square. The first divided his stock of provender with me and the latter sent her servant with a basket of provisions to the party in which I was. In the evening I slipped the guard, and went partially through the town. In one place I read a newspaper called the "Atlanta Confederacy." The editor of the sheet was present, and he was very jubilant and demonstrative. I also went into a store where a very long-tongued man was glibly crying goods off at auction. He had a very meagre stock, but the prices he got when compared with prices in the North were as dollars to cents or half-dimes. From Atlanta we went to West Point. West Point is on or near to a river that forms the western boundary of Georgia and the eastern line of Alabama. Before reaching West Point we stopped at one of the prettiest towns I ever saw. I think it was called La Grange. If it was not, it bore an equally pretty name. I went from the railroad some distance before entering the town. There was a large square surrounded by neat houses, and in the centre there was a fine well with an enormous but old-fashioned pump. On one side there were the post-office, a large, commodiously built structure, and an airily built hotel. But all was empty and silent. I walked along the corridors of the elegant looking hostelry, but no sound was heard save the echo of my own footfalls. I met no one to impede

me; there was actual desertion in the place. The stores too were closed and empty, and the whole place looked as if it was dead—as if it had been visited at midnight by the angel of death, and none left to bury the victims. The town had been drained of its willing fighting material, and the unwilling ones had taken to the wilds of the hills to escape conscription. I was told that each house was one of mourning. As I retraced my steps over the grass-grown street to the station, I felt it was a great pity that so fair a place should have to suffer so much. Near the depot I saw some of our men in the act of despoiling a house around which there were apparent some signs of life. After I had prevailed upon them to desist from unnecessary violence, I went into the house. Here I found Major Thomas J. Barry, of the Sixtieth Georgia regiment of infantry. He lay in his bed, where he had been for a long time suffering from wounds in both legs. He was very grateful for my interference, and he showed his gratitude by furnishing me with something to eat. Before I left him he talked with me very sensibly about the war, but of course from the standpoint of a Southern gentleman, and so for that reason it was impossible for us to agree. He told me that he had been educated at West Point Military Academy, and up to the breaking out of the war had been a Lieutenant in the regular army. Yet he refused to agree with me that that fact alone constituted a strong argument in favor of the General Government and against his native State holding the prior right to his personal services. From my experience with the people of the South (excluding, of

course, the blatant, loud-mouthed portion of it), I am led to conclude that the great power of the Confederacy was derived from a difference in the political education of the people North and South. They of the South recognized the National Government as a mere engine of convenience, having no supervisory powers over the several States, the latter being so many sovereign and independent republics—in fact, that our country was a mere confederacy. We of the North not only believed the contrary, but had been taught to look upon the Union of the States as a perpetual federation—that the Union was first, and States or communities at least second. If it had not been for this difference in training, I do not believe that the Southern Confederacy could have recruited a second army. At West Point Alfred Rogers and myself (for we had become almost inseparable companions) got our supper at the house of a Frenchman, who did not scruple in private to berate the South, its armies, president, and everything belonging to it, but told us that he hoped we had not been noticed as we entered his house. We slept that night under the platform of the depot, and had for our bed a lot of decaying cotton-seed. In the night it had rained in torrents, and when we awoke in the morning it was still falling heavily. There were fair promises made that we should get a ration of food, but as far as we were concerned we did not place much confidence in them, so that the first question that we propounded to ourselves was, "Where shall we get our breakfast?" In solving the problem we had to take into consideration the warning of the French gentleman, and according-

ly we headed our course in a direction different from that of his mansion. After a lively run through the pelting rain, and jumping numerous temporary water courses, and experiencing many rebuffs, we reached a neat-looking house, where we were taken in. The lady of the house informed us that her husband and two sons were members of the famous "Hampton Legion," and in treating us well she hoped that some one in the North would be led to do as much for her loved ones. Hers was a sad story. Her husband was far away in the East, confined in a hospital until his wounds were healed enough to enable him to travel, and when that time came he would return a cripple; one son had fallen on one of the battlefields of Virginia, and she said she had "some consolation in knowing that he was dead"; but her youngest son was she knew not where, as he had not been heard from for many months. Her recital, however, did not prevent our speedy entertainment; for, as soon as it was over, we were conducted to a dining-room, and there helped to a comparatively substantial breakfast. Nor did the sad bereavements of the family prevent the good lady's three daughters from being somewhat gay. After the meal was over we entered a neatly furnished parlor, and were treated to music and lively conversation. In due time we separated with mutual promises, names, and addresses; but I have forgotten what I received, and I doubt not that in the succeeding disastrous state of affairs in that country the memory of us soon faded from their minds as well. At a beautiful town called Opelika, in Alabama, we stopped, and found the same

scenes of destitution as we had at La Grange, in Georgia.

4. Up to this time we had good reasons for entertaining hopes of our speedy deliverance from captivity. As we understood it the programme was that we should be conducted to Vicksburg, Mississippi, that city being then a depot for the exchange of prisoners under the existing cartel; but after we had reached a point a short distance to the east of Montgomery, Alabama, we were chagrined on ascertaining that a serious hindrance to our delivery existed. I forget now exactly what it was, but I think General Grant had been making some grand movement, and that our forces had cut the communications. At any rate we were given to understand that we were to go no further that way, but retrace our steps to some point toward the Atlantic sea-board—some said Charleston, others Salisbury, North Carolina, and the rest Richmond, Virginia. While we were outside of Montgomery the men created quite a stir. They had taken the old advice about the early bird, etc., and at an early hour some of them went to the public market and bought nearly all the stuff there was to sell, and much of the money used had been counterfeit. When the citizens got up to make the usual purchases for the day they found they had been cornered. This caused a proclamation by the Mayor to be issued during the day, and we were thereby interdicted from all trade with the people. At Montgomery we received the only respectable issue of rations that we got during our entire captivity. It is deserving of commemoration because it consisted in part of roasted beef and fresh bread.

We were bivouacked along the railroad track to the east of the town, and were permitted to use some of the pine wood that was corded near by for fuel. The weather was quite chilly and cold, but it is doubtful from which we suffered most, the cold or the dense black smoke of the pine-wood fires. It was ordered that before the issuing of rations the men should form themselves into companies of about one hundred each, so as to expedite the work. Then four or five of them would get the food and make the subdivision. On this occasion there were eleven companies, but five or six men with whom I was proceeded to the place of distribution and demanded rations for the *twelfth* company, and got them. In this way we got considerable more than our share.

Our retrograde journey was not at first so lively in pleasant incidents as our forward movement had been. The wounded men began to fall off here and there, and many died in the cars. All of us were more or less in low spirits. On our journey hitherto the men had been somewhat gay even at times. The Germans were particularly so. They engaged in singing songs of different kinds, but all were alike in having uproarious choruses. It must have been startling to the people living along the road to hear in the middle of the night nearly a thousand men singing "Johnny Schmoker" and that other song with a chorus something like this:

Rituria, rituria, swilly willy wink um poop.

Now it was altogether changed, and but little ribaldry was heard. We were now told that we were to retrace our steps to Dalton, Georgia, and go thence on to

Knoxville, Lynchburg, and so on to Richmond. As we travelled along we were greeted with the waving of flags from the houses near the road, the people evidently taking us for patriots of their own side—those of us who were able raising a derisive cheer in reply to such demonstrations. In this part of our journey we frequently saw negro women ploughing the lands for cotton planting. The ploughs were drawn by single mules, and the women sang mournful tunes as they followed after. In due time we reached Atlanta again, and furnished another spectacle for the populace. From there we proceeded to Dalton Junction, some thirty miles south of Chattanooga. Here we were ordered to halt and allow some more pressing freight to pass us. Up to this time we had been in ignorance of the state of affairs in our late army, but now we got an inkling of what had been going on, and exaggerated the news that was vouchsafed to us by our enemies. We were of course correspondingly elated. The switches near the depot at Dalton were well filled with loaded trains, and as we were not very efficiently guarded, it was not long before the men found out that the cars were loaded with provisions, such as rice, corn-meal, sugar, etc. The sugar was in large tierces and so was the rice. In the beginning a venturesome man broke through the corn-cob stopper of the bung-hole or inspection hole of a tierce, and scooped out the sugar or rice with an iron spoon, but they soon went further, and broke in the heads of the casks, and the plunder was then handed out by the tin cupful. In a short time the whole party was liberally supplied, and the guard too got all they wanted.

These men were not many degrees better provided with food than we were ourselves, and had in fact stood by and winked at our depredation.

5. Proceeding on our new route, we reached Knoxville, and realized that we were then in the heart of that country made so famous by its "Union men" and "Union women" during the whole war. That is what we called those loyal people. Down South they were designated as traitors, as we stigmatized the Southern sympathizers living in the North "Copperheads." We saw much that was gratifying to us in the conduct of the people thereabouts, and heard from them many saddening stories of the horrors of the war. After leaving Knoxville we passed through Jonesboro' and several other towns of lesser note, and as we approached the mountains, we came to a break in the railroad. The road ran over a tongue of land, formed by a river doubling in its course. A few days before our coming General Carter, of our troops, so we were informed, had made a raid through the mountains of southeastern Kentucky, and he and his troops had succeeded in destroying the railroad bridge at each place of crossing. Thus, when we arrived at the river, we were compelled to evacuate the cars, wade the river as best we could, and climb the high steep bank on the other side. When we had got over we found a man of a Michigan cavalry regiment in a hotel there. He had been wounded in the fight incident to the burning of the bridges. The wife of the raider General Carter was also there, as we were informed. If I am not mistaken, I think I was told that thereabouts was the

General's home. The men had to trudge the distance of seven or eight miles to the other break, and when they arrived they were all very tired and weary. All through this section there was deep feeling expressed; the neighboring woods and mountains were filled with men who had been outlawed by the Southern authorities. One old woman, while handing to us some dried meat, told us of her husband, who had but recently been hung; another, of her husband and son, and all because they had dared to be loyal to the Union. The children, ragged and dirty as they were, were as intensely loyal as their more Southern mates were in for the Southern Confederacy, and I never heard people "hurrah for Abe Lincoln" in the North more lustily than did those women of East Tennessee. What they brought to us out of their meagre stores they would accept no pay for. Once I succeeded in remunerating an enthusiastic lady for some kindness by handing to her a quantity of pins and needles out of a "housewife" that some kind friend had provided me with, and which up to this time had lain quietly uncalled for in the bottom of my coat pocket. It appears that even as early as that the whole country was in a woful state, when pins and needles were indeed worth more than their weight in gold. By-and-by, as we went along, we reached Bristol, on the boundary line between Virginia and Tennessee. At this place I perceived my strength giving way. I was very weak by reason of lack of proper food and rest, and sick from the constant exposure. In this condition I determined to desert the over large company I was in, and

with which I had hitherto kept myself, and so my special partner Rogers and I hid ourselves beneath the floor of the depot in the town, and there we remained until the main column had moved on. Early in the ensuing morning we had succeeded in breaking open a barrel and getting possession of a quantity of flour. Eluding the guards, we proceeded to a house not far away, and prevailed on the mistress of it so that she got her negro woman to cook a portion of it for us, while she retained the remainder for herself as recompense. I have to take our hostess as a specimen of the inhabitants of the country. She was very free in her manner, and amused us by telling a long story of herself. She was a tall, straight woman of about thirty-five years of age, of a dark, swarthy complexion, and she had black, piercing eyes, with suggestively pointed features. She told us the difference between *her* kind and the people through whose country we had just passed. *Her* kind were the real Virginians—the others were the "white trash." She herself, according to her story, was a lineal descendant from the renowned Pocahontas. As she warmed up we were pathetically asked, "What did you-uns come down *South* to fight we-uns for, anyway?" We of course declined to enter into the obviously "irrepressible conflict" of opinions as to that, and by silence intimated to her that we had given up the conundrum. Our apparent defeat was as balm to her, and she enjoyed her victory in an ecstacy of triumph; but she magnanimously acknowledged that there was still no reason why "we-all and you-all" might not yet be friends. Bristol was at that time the headquarters of

some general, and I think his name was Humphrey Marshall. The town is situated amid some grand scenery. Hereabouts we saw on the one hand the range of high mountains called the Great Smoky mountains in western North Carolina, and on the other the wild, rugged eminences of the Cumberland range in southeastern Kentucky. After dark of that day my companion and I went by a roundabout way to the other end of the town, and led by a negro, we went to his master's house for supper. Here we were entertained very well, and when asked about payment the host said he would only take pay, if at all, in greenbacks, because one of his sons was engaged in smuggling medicines and other easily transported goods through the lines from Cincinnati, and could therefore use only our money. We were then told some of the secrets of the business, and were surprised to hear the extent to which it was carried on. We were told that there were many houses in our lines, and even commandants of posts, commissaries, etc., in Kentucky, who were in a sort of league with smugglers. As we returned to the depot we intended to keep as far as possible from the headquarters and other places where guards were, but as we went along, we came nearly stumbling over a man on sentry. We were at first somewhat shocked, but the guard reassured us when he saluted us by saying only, "It's a d——d dark night, isn't it?" I do not know what reply we made, but we hurried as fast as we could to the friendly shelter of the depot platform, and laid ourselves down to sleep there. When we had thought that our comrades on the cattle cars were far enough in advance

we came out of hiding and reported to the first officer we met. We were then placed upon the regular train bound east—into the first passenger coach I had been in since entering the service. At a place called Wytheville we mingled with the crowd of Confederate officers, and with them partook of the slender breakfast supplied by the hotel near the depot. We now entered a very wild and mountainous stretch of country. The cars in some places seemed to be winding up a serpentine road and running in an awful proximity to dreadful precipices. To render the situation more dangerous, it must be remembered that the rails, cars, and engine were sadly in need of repair. In at least one place I saw that the iron rails were loose. Most of the time, however, I took the sailor's advice, and kept my eyes aloft, gazing at the rugged mountain tops that seemed to penetrate above the clouds. Our train travelled so fast when compared with the regular prisoners' accommodations, that we reached Lynchburg, Virginia, just as our late comrades moved out toward Richmond, but too late to be forwarded with them.

6. The town of Lynchburg as a curiosity is probably well enough, but as a city it is much different from a Methodist's typical Zion. It is built upon the summit and sides of a high hill, and the streets are all terraces. The railroad depot was at a point at the foot of the hill upon which the town is built, and there we were caused to disembark from the train. We trudged up the steep street through the snow, nearly a foot deep, and still falling, and amid the jeers and ribald shouts of the urchins on the sides of it who were

as ragged as ourselves. I was now bareheaded and nearly barefooted. My stock of clothing had been reduced to a cloth shirt and a very thin blouse, with a pair of ragged trousers which failed completely to cover my limbs. In a meal-sack I carried what beggarly kit I was possessed of. We labored up that street until we reached another on which the Provost Marshal had his office. To that official we were reported, and I with a few others was immediately thrust into an upper room, where were already confined a number of Confederate soldiers of a low class, and who had committed various offences. The windows of the room had been boarded up so that but little light entered. The place smelled horribly, and the prisoners were wallowing in filth. Close to the wall on one side were ranged a lot of wooden pails, nearly all of which were filled with filth. I became sick immediately upon my entrance, and must have fainted, for I remember requesting to be taken out, and I was conducted, how, I do not know, to an area way far beneath the level of the street. Here water was poured over me, and when I came to myself I recognized a negro man as one whom I had seen before. I found that he also knew me, as did some others of the blacks. They had formerly been attached to some Massachusetts regiments, and had seen me at Darnstown and Poolesville early in the year before. These men took me into their quarters and cared for me. Most if not all of them had been captured during the seven days' fighting on the retreat of McClellan from the front of Richmond, Virginia. One had no scruples in boasting that he was captured while engaged in

robbing dead bodies. They had made escapes, but were now finally in prison, and served as cooks to the other inmates. These negroes were by no means ideal slaves, but Boston, New York, and Philadelphia men, and remarkably well educated at that. Of their shrewdness I saw a great deal. All had plenty of money, and in telling of their treatment of me I will also be telling how they came by their funds.

Some time prior to my advent the Southern Governmental authorities had proclaimed a sort of mongrel martial law and sequestration of sufficient power and strength to seize quantities of alcoholic liquors—whiskey, apple jack, etc.—and for which the owners were paid only such price as the authorities chose to give, be it ever so much below the market value. A cellar immediately below the Provost Marshal's office where we were confined had been converted into a sort of bonded warehouse or public store, and the whiskey that had been seized was stored therein, and it was then filled with apple jack in barrels, worth at the market price a great many dollars per gallon. The oldest of the negroes, and he who acted as a sort of officer over the rest, was in particular a sharp, shrewd fellow. He had taken an impression of the lock of one of the doors by which the great cellar was entered, and had possessed himself of a key by which he obtained access to the spirituous stock. He had for a perquisite the fat that was skimmed off from the boiling of pork and bacon in the cook-house, and this stuff he was in the habit of carrying off and selling. During the evening he proposed that I should go with him and see a little around the town. He assured me

that I would be perfectly safe while with him, and I consented. Then he provided himself with two pails, one of which I know was filled with the whiskey or "apple jack"; the other *might* have contained soap grease. He took me away by a door leading into a long, dark passage that had the appearance of being bored through the solid rock, and from which we emerged into the street a long distance from the public entrance to the prison. I was then conducted through the darkened streets, alleys, byways, and lanes, and travelled uphill and downhill for half an hour or so, when we reached a sort of "poverty corner" of the town, and upon following my darkey guide I entered a house where there was a negro frolic in full blast. I say "negro" frolic, but there were many white men there besides myself. The whole was presided over by an old white-headed African, and to him my companion delivered the pails of "soap grease." Soap grease or not, we were very welcome and had a hilarious time of it. I was not told so, but I had reason to suppose that my conductor and the host were in some sort of partnership; for I saw them divide money when the fandango was over, and my man demurred to his proportion of "greenbacks" to "Confeds." Some time before daylight we were again in the kitchen under the prison.

There remained now no doubt whatever as to our destination. "Belle Isle," "Castle Thunder," and "Libby Prison" were now before us, and threatening us, each with its horrors. By those who have experienced the like our feelings are known, but to those others who have not it were charity to hide them. I

do not now remember how long it was that we remained at Lynchburg, but think it was about forty-eight hours; then we were sent to Richmond. We presented a sorry spectacle as we left the cars at the depot in Richmond and marched down Cary street toward Libby Prison, and again were countermarched back to a place called for distinction "Castle Lightning." I do not know whether the place received that name officially, but that is what I heard it called. It was situated on a rising ground, and nearly a mile west of Libby. It was a large, newly erected brick building, designed for use as a tobacco factory and warehouse. On entering it we were conducted to the third story, a large, well lighted room, and very clean. We found confined there hundreds of citizens of the more respectable degrees. Many before their capture by General J. E. B. Stuart at Hagerstown had been members of the Maryland Legislature, so we were told. Many were professional men or gentlemen farmers and merchants who had been incarcerated for political offences against the Confederate Government. There was also a sprinkling of newspaper correspondents and private adventurers. One of the latter was an Englishman, and he amused all who listened to his threats as to what he and his Government would do when he got free once more. Nearly all were in poor spirits, although the majority were engaged in the manufacture of all sorts of trinkets possible to be made out of beef bones—miniature Bibles and other books, rings, pins, and figures. Making copies of the traditional Venus seemed a very popular employment. Smoking-pipe bowls were also made from laurel root,

and the fronts of these were embellished with cut figures of the Goddess of Liberty, the American shield and eagle, or other patriotic device. Different colored sealing-wax was used with good effect by the Bible and jewelry makers. This did not seem to be such a very dreadful place; indeed, I thought it was very nice to be there, if we were to be confined at all. We had hardly time, however, to congratulate each other on our good fortune before being ordered to move out of this comparatively pleasant place; and we again took up our line of march to Libby Prison.

7. This was a weary march, and when at length we reached the famous place and had remained for an hour in the cold street below, we felt a sort of easy resignation as we filed into the low, dark entry that formed the portal of the gloomy prison. We were not allowed to proceed up stairs, however, until we had passed the ordeal of search by the commanding officer, and the whole of what was left of our kit and pocket knick-knacks were duly deposited through a hole in the wall, something like a theatre box office, into the custody of our jailor. This done, we were permitted to ascend to the second story, and were allowed to fall upon the filthy floor to rest, if that were possible. Libby Prison had also been a tobacco warehouse, but it was not so modernly built as Castle Lightning. The ceilings in Libby were scarcely six feet from the floor, and all the light and ventilation our room received was through three windows in the front, which were almost wholly boarded up, and three others in the rear, which were broken sufficiently to let in a little air. In the right-hand corner of the rear there was a

small place partitioned off as for a sink, but whatever might have been its intended use, it smelled horribly. The front was on Cary street, and the sidewalks were constantly patrolled by armed guards, whose orders were to shoot on the slightest provocation. That they had received such provocation and had obeyed orders was attested by the bullet-holes in the shutters and in the beams above, and which were significantly shown to us when made acquainted with the rules of the institution. The windows in the rear overlooked a canal, and just beyond that was the James river, full of rocks and very rough. On our right hand we could see a long railroad bridge spanning the river, and to our front or left an island in the river, which, as we were informed, was the famous or infamous "Belle Isle." The room in which we were confined was about twenty-five feet wide and ran the full depth of the building. In it there were two hundred and fifty or even more of us quartered. As soon as we were fairly locked up an ancient negro entered with an iron pot, in which were some fumigating agents, in his hand. He set fire to the mixture, and as he swung the pot around him like an incense holder, he sang a sort of African song. The fumigation only made a worse smell than there had been before, but he furnished a good deal of amusement to those who were able to laugh. We came pretty near incurring severe extra punishment on the first night of our stay at this place. Many of us had constantly hoped for a speedy deliverance, and our spirits were not entirely broken. About ten o'clock that night all was quiet except an occasional groan from some poor fellow whose wound

had been touched by his next neighbor's, for we lay there in spoon fashion, and it was impossible for one to move hand or foot without disturbing the next man. Some one in a far corner let out a cat-call, then another, and in a wonderfully short time there was pandemonium. Cats, dogs, hyenas, horses, and in short all manner of beasts were imitated. This raised the guard, and we were not quieted until threats of shooting had been made. The uproar lasted for nearly an hour, and then we heard the sentry on the street cry out in the old style: "Eleven o'clock, and all's well at post number seven." I will not relate here the sad experiences of that ten or more days in prison. I shudder now as I attempt to recall the fears, the agonies, the hopes deferred, and the melancholy sights around me. I often wonder why so puny and insignificant a person as I was did not succumb altogether. But perhaps my very littleness saved me. Many of our men died there after having borne the hardship of our long transportation, and although the most severely wounded were given some treatment, a great proportion gave up the battle of life. The weather was intensely cold while we were there, and we were exposed to its inclemency. This resulted in the premature cutting off of many and in the lifelong disability of many more.

I remember that it was with feelings of indescribable joy that we received intelligence that we were to be speedily delivered into the hands of our own Government. We had been told so before, but now, when volunteers were called for to assist in making out muster rolls, we were assured that our time had

come. Willing hands by the score offered to do the work, and triplicate rolls were soon made out. It was not, however, until we were safely embarked upon a train of rough freight cars, bound for City Point, that every fear was removed. Then, as we moved away, the men seemed to be reanimated with their former spirits, and despite the strong guard, they indulged in uproarious hilarity. As in the early part of our captivity, the Germans sang songs; others told stories, and almost all were discussing the probability of receiving furloughs when they reached the North. I am nearly sure that many secretly hoped that it would be some time before our army captured a sufficient number of the enemy so as to have them to exchange for us. We went through Petersburg, but in different spirits from those we had entered other towns. As we drew near to City Point the scene became interesting; the more robust got out and danced upon the tops of the cars, and fired off huzzas at everything; but when at last our train rounded a hill that brought us within sight of the river and the flag of truce boats lying there, the scene that ensued beggars description; the able-bodied men danced like so many children on a holiday, and the poor sick and wounded pressed their faces against the openings of the cars and sadly smiled when they were told that our flag was there as well as the flag of truce. One poor fellow had slept, and when he awoke he hardly believed it to be true, but when another man and myself made way for him to see, he was overjoyed, and fell back as if dead. It took us some time to go through the forms of being delivered over. Our

names were called from the rolls, and as we answered we were given up under the direction of Colonel Ould, the Southern Commissioner, and thence we went on to our own Government's boat, the "Metamora." The rebel officers and soldiers on duty here were the best dressed men I had seen in the South. Our officers and men too were most liberally bedecked with gold lace, tinsel, and polished brass, and the business was conducted in an extremely polite and dignified manner on both sides. In company with another steamship, the "New York," we steamed down the James river, and anchored near the blockading squadron for that night. Meanwhile a glorious ration of hot coffee, fresh bread, and meat was issued to us, and an additional ration of soup to those in need of special nourishment. The voyage up the Chesapeake bay was made without any special incident, or if any occurred, I was not in a condition to notice them; neither can I tell whether we were thirty or thirty-five days in the hands of the enemy; we had probably been there the longest time mentioned. When we reached Annapolis, Maryland, we disembarked at the Government dock at the Naval Academy, at which place we left the sick and wounded to have their hurts attended to. The rest of us marched through the place to the camp of the paroled men just outside of the town. Although the snow was deep, and we had not yet been furnished with new clothing, yet we did not feel the exposure as much as we did that which we experienced at Richmond. The change of possession had worked that much for us. Very soon after we arrived at Camp Parole we received good supplies

of warm clothing and camp and garrison equipage. When we had secured a supply of clothing we went into the city and put ourselves into the hands of a barber. I was scared at my personal appearance, and how the negroes in Lynchburg managed to recognize me I cannot imagine. On one side of my chin I wore a long tuft of straggling hairs, and on the other scarcely any at all, while my upper lip looked as if it had been smeared with a finger of molasses. After shaving, bathing, and dressing in my new clothes I was led by curiosity to weigh myself, and found that I turned the scales at just a little less than seventy-five pounds! I had never weighed more than a pound or two above a hundred, but now I was miserably poor. Indeed, the bones nearly protruded through the flesh, my cheeks were hollow, and the skin on my face was dried to the consistency of a drum-head, and all this change in less than forty days! I was in a manner ashamed of myself as I tried to laugh, and caught the effort in a mirror, where I saw a most horrible picture. While in the town I imprudently indulged in eating oysters to excess, and on my return to camp I dearly paid for it by becoming very ill. The surgeon, having examined me, gave the very cheering information that my heart was too weak to force a circulation, and if it was otherwise, that there was no blood in me to circulate. Afterward I became so sick that my life was not worth very much. I was thoroughly exhausted, and when I got better I found that I had undergone pretty severe treatment. I had been placed on infants' diet, I had been cupped and lanced over the region of the heart, and

had but barely escaped the funeral trench as my fate.

8. It was in the early part of February, 1863, when we arrived at Annapolis, and soon after March 1 we were mustered for transfer to St. Louis, Missouri. Having been paroled not to take arms against the Southern Confederacy until we were exchanged, it was necessary that we should be kept together in some place until the exchange was effected, and as we were Western troops, we were ordered to St. Louis, Missouri, so as to be nearer our regiments. I had been wise enough to write to my company commander immediately on my arrival at Annapolis and apply for my Descriptive Roll, and had been fortunate in receiving it a day or two before leaving for the West. This placed me in a much more favorable position than that of many others. We started on our journey to the West through Baltimore and over the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, and once upon that great highway, I realized that I had completed such a circle of travel and adventure as I never had before and had no desire to accomplish again. Our command not being in fighting trim, the run was not made with very quick despatch. We stopped at several points along the road to allow more urgently needed freight to pass us. At one place in West Virginia, and not far from Piedmont, we stopped, and the men who had arms indulged in a bear hunt in the mountains, but they did not succeed in capturing Bruin. As soon as we entered the confines of the State of Ohio our numbers began to decrease perceptibly; many of the men were not far from their homes, or where they

had kindred, and such of them had no difficulty in leaving us. As we rolled along we were treated to all the necessary food required, and many of the luxuries furnished by the country were showered upon us. We were looked upon as so many heroes. At many places the people had heard of our approach, and were prepared when we reached them with cooked meats, bread, and drink, which they gave to us. When we reached Dayton, Ohio, we were shown newspapers in which we were described as murderers, cut-throats, and robbers! People were warned to look out for "Rosecrans' Bummers," and advised to take order for the protection of their towns from pillage. The paper was duly noted, and the "Richmond Jeffersonian" was doomed. This treatment of us caused an intense feeling of indignation among the men. We were indeed an orderly set, comparatively speaking; most of the men were wounded, and all happy that they were in a friendly country, too much so to think of robbery, to say nothing of murder. Whatever boisterousness the men had up to this time exhibited was, as far as I saw, altogether devoid of the spirit of mischief. When we arrived at the beautiful town of Richmond, Indiana, it was Saturday night, I think, and we learned that we would have to remain at least twenty-four hours. Like as at other places, the citizens (many of those at Richmond were Quakers) provided ample quantities of cooked food for us to eat. When we had been there a few hours some extra patriotically inclined citizens supplemented their gifts with more than one demijohn of whiskey. Sunday morning more was brought to us, and whole troops of country

people flocked into the town and mingled freely among us. Along toward night the liquor had begun to take effect upon the heads of those who had indulged in it; papers in which we had been so grossly abused were shown, and the feeling of indignation was rekindled. The effect was that after dark a mob of about five hundred of our men marched up the long road leading to the main street of the town and attacked the office of the paper. It was the same "Richmond Jeffersonian" that was shown to us in Dayton, Ohio. In less than ten minutes the whole establishment was gutted; not a type font was left nor a press unbroken; whole cases of type and cuts of all kinds required in a country newspaper office, and large quantities of paper, were thrown higgledy-piggledy through the windows on to the sidewalk and street; and the enraged men did not leave off until they had completed the work by destroying everything they could find belonging to the paper. The publisher was searched for, but in vain. It was said that barring his politics he was a good man, and a religious one too, and that he kept a Bible store in the next square; but if he had been found that night, all his sanctification would not have saved him from a severe thrashing; perhaps he might have been hanged to a lamp-post. Next morning our deed was applauded by many of the citizens; but they had aroused a spirit they could not control, and on the whole they were heartily glad when they saw us safely on our train and moving out.

9. When our train reached Paris, in Edgar county, Illinois, I found that the company of men in whose charge I had been placed had vanished. I alone was

left of them all, and under those circumstances I also abandoned the train with the intention of going to Loda and recruiting my health there before reporting at St. Louis. My way led me to the north through a well cultivated champaign country, and at one place through an exclusively Quaker settlement. At the house of one of that sect, named Williamson, I think, I stopped one night, and was treated in a manner that left no doubt of my welcome or of his kindness of heart. This was my first opportunity for story-telling, and I kept the old gentleman and his wife and daughter up out of their beds until what was to them a most unreasonable hour. I passed on to Danville, where I visited the coal mines then but recently developed on Vermillion river. Here I met with several countrymen of mine, and rested a day or two with them. Finally, I took the cars at Danville for Champaign, and thence on to Loda, where I remained something like a week, the guest of my friends the Weavers. I was equally busily engaged in rehearsing my story and in the enjoyment of recreative exercise. About April 1 I started on my way to St. Louis. On the 4th I reached Springfield, the capital of the State of Illinois, and reported to Colonel Morrison, U. S. A., commanding. He was an old veteran, and had a blotchy, battle-scarred face; he was gouty, too, and cross, although he vented no bad temper upon me. He gave me permission to go about the city and see what was to be seen, and entered a formal order reciting my report to him, and directing me to proceed to St. Louis, Missouri. I remained in Springfield some days, visiting many places of note, among others the

State Capitol, the dwelling house of President Lincoln, etc. On the 10th of April I arrived at Benton Barracks, near St. Louis, and reported in person to Colonel B. L. E. Bonneville, U. S. A., commanding the post. He was another old veteran like unto Morrison. I was immediately detailed by special order to remain at headquarters in the nominal capacity of Post Bugler, but in reality my duties were as a clerk in the office of the Post Adjutant.