

# Lieutenant Messinger.

BY

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## LIEUTENANT MESSINGER.

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### CHAPTER I.

Horace Messinger.

A PARTY of young men sat round a table in one of the rooms of Yale College. Some books, thrown carelessly on a desk, a cap and overcoat trailing from a chair, gave token of the careless habits of the proprietor, who, with flushed face and nervous manner, sat with a wine-glass lifted in his hand. There were five in the circle. One other who seemed to be by himself, sat by the window, farther off, busy with the contents of a newspaper. His face indicated more force of char

acter than was exhibited by either of his companions. Intellect was there, age, and manly beauty.

The sons of proud families, the brothers of doting sisters, the beloved of ambitious fathers, composed the small group. There was light in excess, though out of doors the morn shone gloriously. It strove to let in its slender beams wherever there was any shadow, and so it happened they fell partly on the broad brow of Horace Messinger, who ensconced in the deep window, was partly out of the glare of the gas. His face was one on which a mother's gaze might linger proudly; innocent and serene, yet not wanting either in depth or firmness. His was one of those rare characters that can stand temptation, and he was singularly free from the excesses that enervate many of the young men of this country. Yet till now, he had relied in no strength but his own, and his happy temperament had enabled him to possess many friends. Some

of the latter looked upon Horace as wanting in courage and strong mental power. He must be afraid of himself, they said, and hence his resolute manner when negating any pleasure in which his conscience would not allow him to take part.

When Horace was but a boy of twelve, he evidenced the unusual traits that afterward made him conspicuous. His mother at one time found his journal, written in a childish hand, and smiled over frequent entries like the following:

*Mem.* — To-day I conquered myself. Jim Walters swore at me and got me violently angry, but I remembered that it was neither decent nor courageous to swear, and held my lips tightly together. He wanted me to fight him. If he had struck me I don't know what would have been the consequences, but I refrained from touching him, though my hands itched to strike him. I do not believe in bullying or blows.

*Mem.* — This evening I found Jim Walters

crying over a sprained foot. He turned away when I spoke to him. I suppose he thought I should be glad, and taunt him for treating me so. Instead of that, I endeavored to help him home. He thanked me after he had got there, and said he hoped I wouldn't remember his passion — that he knew he was a bad fellow. I told him I was always willing to forget unpleasant things. He and I have been good friends ever since.

*Mem.* — Sister Alice asked me to go with her to L——'s last night. I had depended upon an evening at home, for I had an entertaining book — so I told her I could not go. She looked quite sad over it, and went away nearly crying. Then I thought how selfish it was in me to prefer my own pleasure to her comfort, for she had made an appointment. I wish to abhor selfishness — no character can be great that cherishes it, and it is my ambition to have a perfect character. I went to Alice and told her I would go with her. Her face lighted up, and I was well rewarded, for Pro-

fessor H. was there and told me many anecdotes and facts which I must now record."

Mrs. Messinger smiled as she read.

"We must be very careful," she said to her husband, "before Horace. He is building up for himself a perfect character, and consequently his eyes will be open to every imperfection."

"The dear boy will learn, before many years, that he cannot build up for himself," was Mr. Messinger's reply.

Horace, however, kept steadfastly on. His parents trembled for him when he entered college, but there, as at home, he bore himself proudly, with an unblemished reputation. I say proudly, for he was *proud* of his consistency, and rated himself higher than ordinary men, because of his ability to say no. To-night he made one of the party, having been invited on account of a young Southerner, who had recently entered college, and to whom some friends were to give a supper.

"Come Horace, come!" said Fred Millmain,

the eldest of the group—"we want some toasts."

"Excuse me;" said Horace, quietly; "you know I never drink wine."

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Howard West, half turning himself round—"never drink wine, that's exceedingly curious." Howard was the Southern boy, not yet twenty-one. Dark and comely, he was an adept in all the graces of society. With wine he had been familiar from his infancy, and an embryo contempt sprang up in his bosom, at the reply of Horace Messinger.

"But you can give us a toast, and there is plenty of water," replied his friend, shrugging his shoulders. Instead of assenting, Horace, with a preoccupied air sprang from his seat, exclaiming, "there will be war—yes, I am certain there will be war!"

"Nonsense, Hod, that's all newspaper thunder;" replied one of the convivialists.

"I tell you the South is behaving shamefully—shamefully!" exclaimed Horace, with fire.

"Take care, there!" cried the Southron, starting from his chair, his face quite pale with sudden passion.

"I didn't mean to offend you, Howard," said Horace, who had learned to like the young man—"but I must repeat that if Sumter is fired upon, it will be a shameful fact in our history, and one that will call for blood."

Upon that a stormy scene ensued. Two of the Northern students contended for the right of the South to take the attitude she had assumed; the rest, of course, were on the side of Horace Messinger. Words ran high, and it was only by the calmness of Horace, that nothing else ensued. The fiery Southerner gave vent to several exclamations touching the jealous pride of the Northern students, and the latter defended themselves. The harmony of the little circle was thenceforth and for ever broken up. On the fol-

lowing day the sad news rang through the land—Sumter was attacked, and millions of hearts beat with one resentful throb.

The evening of that day found Horace walking his room excitedly. He had no lamp, for the mild moonlight flooded the atmosphere with a soft, delicious splendor. Strange thoughts were revolving in his mind. The welfare of the country was at stake. War had been virtually declared. Who should go now to the defence of sacred liberty? To him, as to thousands of others, all sights and sounds of war, were as myths. There was something grand in the contemplation of the battle field, viewed only by the vivid imagination. The tramp of victory—the march under the precious banner of a noble country—the rush of contending foes, the martial charge—it set many a young heart beating, many a hot brain dreaming of valor won, and feats of glory not impossible to those who dared. But Horace was calmly balancing within himself, his motives and his in-

clinations. Passionately fond of his studies, by nature retiring and modest—neither rash nor inclined to settle any matter by force, it was with him a struggle to know what was his duty.

There was a knock at the door.

“Come in,” said Horace. Fred Millmain entered.

“Well,” he said, quietly, “this is the time to try a man’s metal. What are you going to do?”

“I presume I shall give myself to my country,” said Horace.

“And so shall I. I’ve already had a Lieutenancy offered me.”

“Then you will go.”

“To be sure I shall,” said Fred, lightly. “It’s a first rate opportunity for a man to be somebody. I’ve wanted to distinguish myself all my life; and now here’s the chance. I expect the women will feel dreadfully at home, though.”

Fred spoke flippantly, but he touched a chord that vibrated painfully in the breast of Horace

Messinger. His almost idolized sister Alice, she whose fragile health the wear of mental machinery might shock to its overthrow—his mother! could she give up her only son—his father! would he be willing to forego all his ambitious plans, all his hopes that had been centered in the welfare of his boy?

"By the way, Horace, Howard West is leaving for the South."

"Is that so? does he intend to fight?"

"Of course he does. His chivalrous blood is terribly up. He considers himself insulted by you, me and everybody. Indeed all the Southerners are expected to leave. It's amusing to see the air of constraint which they put on when any of us speak to them."

"We must fly to arms," said Horace, his face lighting up with enthusiasm; "the honor of our nation is at stake—I have seen the spirit of the South in the violence of our young men here, and I am glad the thing has come to the crisis it has."

## CHAPTER II.

### The Christian Sister.

**I**N a beautiful house in one of the suburbs of Boston, lived the parents of Horace Messinger. Their dwelling, situated back from the main street, was one of the handsomest in the town, abounding in piazzas, trailing vines,—bay windows and noble trees. On the left was an arbor covered with woodbine, on the right a beautiful little bower, the work of Horace, and dedicated to his sister Alice. This bower in the summer season made a pleasing feature in the landscape, inasmuch as it was graced with the brightest roses of the season, which seemed to love their clinging-place, and to spend all their little strength in putting on the

crimson bloom, and in keeping it till the dreary fall months came again.

Everything about this place was dear to Horace. His bees, sheltered by the old barn—Ponto in his kennel, looking out yet for the coming of his young master, the cows, the grape-vines—the very ground over which his boyish footsteps had so often wandered. Here he was born; and the little red school house where he first conned his lessons, stood half deserted now, used as a gardener's lodge, and filled with pots and plants. The walks around were all sacred, and thoughts of home influences and enjoyments did much towards making him the careful, thoughtful young man he was. Mr. Messinger was a wealthy merchant, and the interior of his house lacked no adornment. Good judgment and good taste characterized every part of the mansion. Horace's room was in the second story, neat and well furnished. There stood his writing table in the middle of the floor, and on the walls hung

shelves filled with the best authors. Paintings, refined and elevating in their tendency, graced the four walls, among them Cole's Voyage of Life, exquisitely colored and arranged so that they were the first object of interest that met the eye. Mrs. Messinger was a lovely woman, and wore the true mother-look. Her mild voice and sweet smile made an instant impression for good. None knew her but to love her.

Alice, the sister, and only daughter, was somewhere between seventeen and eighteen years of age. Slight almost to etheriality, pale to wanness, and delicate as the frailest flower, she won the sympathies of all who came near her. A complexion of the clearest hue displayed every passing emotion. Her countenance reflected the heavenly trust in which her life was spent. Alice was a Christian of the loveliest type. Feeling that perhaps her time might be short, she devoted it to good works. Everybody who knew her bore the same testimony to the uniform beauty of



her Christian life. Old and young, rich and poor, all were alike attracted towards Alice Messenger, and to all was she equally affable. If there was any case of distress in the town, it was sure to be reported to Alice, and she distributed of her father's bounty as she pleased. He never called her to account, knowing as he did that her charities were well and thoroughly bestowed.

Go where one would among the poor, and Miss Alice Messenger was invariably spoken of as one of God's good angels. To one poor family in particular, she was a spirit of consolation. The grandmother of this household was bed ridden, the youngest daughter helpless from some spinal affection, and supported partly by the town authorities. Here, after Alice became acquainted with their wants, certain little luxuries appeared in the poor house, that seemed indispensable to the comfort of its inmates. A rocking chair for the old grandame, a chair on wheels for the poor, pale girl that could not walk, and whose life al-

ternated between the little low-ceiled kitchen and the rude porch.

"Indeed, it's not long for this life is she," said the old dame of ninety-two, to her minister, who sat by her bedside, and who was speaking of Miss Alice. "She's not long for this life, mark an old woman's words."

"I hope she may live many years, and be a great blessing," said the minister.

"Ah! it's no use hoping, sir. There's something I feel here, sir, in my heart every time she comes a near me, that tells me she's to go soon; perhaps before I do."

"I doubt not she is fully prepared," said the pastor.

"Ah! sir," replied the trembling voice, "I only wish it was as well with me as with her. She's going in the bloom of her days to the Saviour, while I gave him only the husk. Well, well—if we could only see sin in the well days as we do in the dying ones!"

"She's a sweet lamb of Christ's flock," murmured the old pastor.

The pleasant spring had come. Alice had watched for it, but as she watched her breath shortened and her eye grew dim. She had not been so well all the winter, and now that the first blades of the season were bursting from their earthy sheath, she felt a distressing weakness for which she obtained no relief. For a long time she struggled against it, but it grew perceptible in her altered demeanor. Her mother saw it first, when of whole afternoons she would lie amid the sofa cushions, a distressing weariness visible on every line of her sweet face. Precautions were redoubled, new medical aid called in, but the enemy was too strong. The beautiful city was besieged and it was only a question of time.

"How long?" now began to tremble on the lips of her anxious parents, as they watched the sad symptoms. "And how shall we tell Hor-

ace?" queried Mr. Messinger, as they sat together trembling for the life of their precious flower.

"I know not," replied his wife. "He will feel the blow terribly; he almost worships Alice;" and then came a few silent tears.

As they talked thus, the postman came up the path. Another moment and an open letter was in the trembling mother's hand. She read a few lines and burst into tears, as she cried in a voice of anguish, "Oh! George, must we lose Horace, too?"

He took the letter, and with a paler face commenced its perusal. Thus it ran:

"DEAR MOTHER AND FATHER,  
SWEET SISTER ALICE;

You all know how much I have thought of finishing my collegiate course. It has seldom, if ever occurred to me that there was any plan of life which I should deem preferable to that my parents have long marked out for me. But you

are by this time fully aware of the troubles that threaten this beloved country. Since I have read the first sentence in relation to those troubles, my mind has not been at ease. Day and night the self-same subject has come up for discussion. I have studied the matter thoroughly, placed it in every light, and have come to the conclusion that I must, at least for a time, abandon everything, and take up arms in the defence of my native land. I know all you would say—I have listened to your arguments—carried on in my own mind, day after day, but I still remain of the same opinion, that it is my *duty* to fight. Three of our Southern students left to-day; they are very bitter against us because we threw out the national flag, and their base tirades against it led me to the conclusion that it is to them no sudden aversion, but one long nursed and long debated. I am certain that this Union is in terrible danger, and I can give no attention to my studies while I seem to see America calling upon all her sons for

help. My home-education has made me a patriot. Do you remember your stories of grandfather and old Bunker Hill? Do you remember the broken, rusty sword in the study, and the sash that your great uncle wore, and fell in, for the defence of liberty? Ah! these stories are all fresh in my memory. I see your kindling eyes, and feel my own heart beat faster at the mention of names that stand high on the roll of our native land; names that can never die. Dear mother, dear father, can you consent to give your boy up? Darling little Alice, will you give the soldier-brother a blessing as he goes forth to fight for his dear ones. Will you not bravely say, "go and strike for liberty—go and redeem an insulted flag? I am almost certain you will. Dear parents, Alice will be your comfort, when I am gone. I only await your approval to come home and prepare for the struggle. Ten of my fellow-students have enlisted, but I did not think it judicious, or even respectful to do so without your sanction."

Then followed some little affectionate remembrances, and the letter was read.

Mr. and Mrs. Messinger sat in silence. The twilight faded into a deeper darkness, and still they had not spoken. Presently a soft moonlight glow pervaded the apartment. It crept up to their troubled faces, marked now with the lines of care, and kissed them with the gentlest touch. As they sat there, unwilling each to break the silence, the door opened, and something white floated in and towards them. It was Alice.

"I was at the window, up stairs, mother," she said, "and I saw the postman. Was there a letter for me? or did you alone get one from Horace?"

"Horace has written," said her mother, her tones grief-touched.

"What is it, mother? any trouble? Is Horace sick?" she instantly exclaimed, feeling sudden alarm.

"Your brother is well, my dear," said Mrs.

Messinger; "but he writes us upon a matter which it has not occurred to me he would even think of. You have been reading, lately, of our national troubles. What would you think if Horace should enlist?"

"O! mother, that would be too hard to bear," said Alice, burying her face in her mother's neck. "Our Horace go as a soldier! You will say no, of course; there are so many who can better be spared than he."

"We have not yet decided what to do," said her mother, falteringly. "He seems to feel it so evidently his duty, that we hardly know how to act."

"And he must leave all his studies, his home; leave us! to fight on the field of battle! O! mother, will it ever come to that?"

"I cannot say, my dear," was her mother's low reply. "I only know that he feels a strong conviction that he ought to go. Other mothers, I suppose, will have to give up their sons, and other sisters their brothers."

“Yes,” said Alice, trembling from head to foot —“but Horace! our dear, noble Horace. O! when I think of the possible dangers of the battle field, how can I give him up?”

“Well, my child, we will talk of it to-morrow. If it seems best to deny him what appears so plainly to him a privilege and a duty, he will respect our opinions and defer to our judgment. But we must not be selfish. Clearly the liberties of this land are in imminent peril. Our fathers sacrificed their lives, and gave up their sons. We must not be too selfish. If there is to be a struggle, it will be between liberty and despotism. My boy’s blood is not more precious than that of many another. I will try and be guided by the dictates of reason and duty. Meanwhile let us all pray that light may come out of this threatened darkness. Let us put our trust and commend the dear boy to the care of Him who knows the secrets of all hearts and sees the end from the beginning.”

And there in the rich moonlight, mother and father and daughter knelt down to pray. O! holy bond that unites desponding souls in one common sympathy! O, precious comfort that distils like the evening dew upon the sore heart, healing and refreshing, strengthening and consoling. Who that has known the sweet influence of communion with our Father—who that has felt the barbed point of anguish blunted at its touch by the Divine hand—who that has come from the closed grave and gone to God of all the living, feeling that the face he shall see no more on earth, shines in the seraph-bliss of eternity, would exchange the bliss of prayer for any earthly glory? Ah! not one. The poor widow would sooner bend beneath the load of poverty, the sorrowful man bear the burden of anguish till death should end it. The boon of prayer! angels alone can sing the sweet redeeming power that gave to earth a blessing so precious.

### CHAPTER III.

#### *A Father's Letter.*

**A**LICE awoke in the morning with a weight upon her spirits, for which, at first, she could not account. She had gone to sleep with her brother's miniature under her pillow, and now, as her thoughts slowly recurred to the past night, she sighed heavily, and took it from its resting place.

"Dear Horace," she murmured, "if you were only a Christian—if that noble heart could only be given to God! But to go upon the dreadful battle field, with your life in your hand; to die, perhaps suddenly, and no preparation for a future life—no real belief in an eternal home—I cannot bear the thought."

It was true that Horace had always rejected the corner-stone of Christianity. He had fallen in with loose thinking companions, and his mind had been well prepared by a long systematic life of self-righteousness, so that he imbibed ideas and opinions contrary to revelation, but very satisfying to a mind engrossed with the cares and pleasures of the world. He had never exactly said as much to his sister, but she could not help seeing it in the tenor of his letters, and it gave her many an anxious hour. She knew his habits were formed, his morals unexceptionable, but she also knew that he had formed for himself a theory that had in it no Saviour, and she trembled for him. In fact her anxiety on his behalf had dimmed the lustre of her eye, and worn upon the vital powers. Anxiously she had awakened in the dead hours of the night to pray for him, and it told upon her feeble strength. This morning she was too weak to rise. Several times she made the attempt, but failed utterly.

Her mother came up stairs at the breakfast hour, and still Alice reclined, a fever flush deepening the hectic of her cheeks.

"Are you not well enough to rise, darling!" asked her mother.

"Not quite; I have been so anxious about Horace."

"I too have passed a sleepless night, but I can bear the loss of rest better than you can. Can you not commit this thing into the keeping of your heavenly Father, and there rest?"

"O! mother, it is so hard," and her lip quivered. "Besides I am afraid—" here her voice failed her.

"Afraid of what, my darling?" asked her mother, gently.

"I am afraid you do not know how ill I am. I have not liked to tell you, because I knew you would suffer—but mother, I *do* think I am going to leave you soon. I have tried to be strong—have put away the impression that this weakness

is to last, but it is of no use. I am not unhappy, mother, nothing makes me unhappy now, but the news from brother Horace. If Horace was only a Christian!

For some moments Mrs. Messinger could not speak. The wasted form of her child, her flushed cheeks and brilliant eyes, told that she had nothing to hope. It seemed as if heaven had laid heavier burdens upon her than she could bear. But if Alice was resigned—if she could look upon the certainty of her death with composure, her mother felt that she must conquer her own feelings and be calm. She sat down by her daughter's bed, and, stifling her sad impressions, began to caress her, and whisper words of comfort. They had a long talk about Horace, and gradually both became more cheerful.

Meantime Mr. Messinger had returned to his study and written to his son, as follows:

“MY DEAR BOY;

Your letter caused your mother and myself unbounded surprise, and as you may imagine, some pain. Through all the commotion and preparation for war, we had not seemed to include you as one of its active participants. We looked upon you as retired, in a measure, from the world, wrapped in your studies, and almost unconscious of the grand strife beginning outside your college walls.

You ask us to give our consent to your enlisting in the army. Your mother and I have thought and prayed over it, and still, as yet, we hardly know what to say. You are our only son. Selfishness pleads that there are scores of families who have two, three, five, as many as seven sons, and of these they can surely spare one or even more. But to give you up—it is like parting with the prop of our old age. I am persuaded, the newspapers and our neighbors to the contrary, that this is to be a painfully protracted war—a savage and

bloody contest—perhaps the last that civilized nations will be permitted to see, before they turn their swords into ploughshares. Many lives will be lost, many hearth-stones become desolate. I cannot say that I look with complacency upon the fate that I fear is in store for you—if not a violent death, years and years of arduous service, and a consequent loss in your studies, and drawback to your profession. I tell you beforehand, what you are to expect, for I cannot bear that you should go thoughtlessly into such a dreadful contest as this is sure to become. I can be pardoned, too, for feeling a parent's solicitude—if you were not my all—I cannot tell; another might not make the sacrifice less terrible.

And now I leave the settling of this matter entirely to yourself. I shall not, of course, be so unpatriotic as to deny or prevent you from going at the call of your country. God forbid! If the preservation of this Union demands the sacrifice of my all, I trust I shall give willingly, children,



fame and property. It is worth the lives of thousands of such sons as you—a glorious holocaust—it is worth much and precious blood. It is certain that we are growing vain, proud and luxurious. That the poor and the outcast are no longer sacred in our sight, and the dollar is worshipped more than the Creator. We need a regeneration and baptism.

I fear that many evils will follow in the train of this war—famine, dividing of families, curse upon curse. O! it is fearful to look forward to the long and bitter harvest of evil deeds. Be faithful, my son. Be constant in prayer. See that your call is a true one; trust not in impulse—weigh well the consequences, and then if you can make up your mind to bear whatever suffering may reasonably be expected, sickness, maiming, perhaps death—then go, and God go with you. You shall have our blessing.

Of course, if you leave your studies, you will return home for a short season. Your sister is far


from well; we sometimes fear the worst in her case. But I have no doubt that it would be the greatest earthly pleasure she could experience, if she could see you. You have been loving and undivided in your lives, God grant it may be so ever.

Your affectionate father,

G. MESSINGER.

## CHAPTER IV.

## The Message by Telegraph.

ORACE received this letter on the following day, and carried it to his own room. Thrice he read it attentively.

"Alice not so well," he said to himself.

"Dear Alice! I fear this news will add to her illness. My kind, good father! reasonable as ever—and yet I can see how sore it makes his heart to let me go. Well, come in," he cried, as a knock sounded.

"Holloa! old fellow," said Fred Millmain.

"Have you got a letter from your old chap? I've got one from mine."

"I have a letter from *my father*," said Horace, coloring at his friend's implied disrespect.

"O! I forgot you abominate slang, so you do. Well, it's right, I suppose, but a fellow gets the habit, you know. See here, I've got a letter from my—the—governor, that is, from my respected parent. He says he likes my pluck, and sends me a hundred to buy a uniform and whatever the State don't allow. He seems to think that if he was young he'd like no better sport than to kill off the rebels. I tell you the old man is in earnest, and don't stop to consider circumstances: got the real war-spirit. Just listen to this:

"You always could take care of yourself, Fred, and get the better of your antagonist. Now you have the chance to try your pluck on a grander scale, and I know you will not flinch. These rascally people down South are trying for dominion; they've been trying for long years and I have seen it. I am glad my boy is going to have a hand in helping to put them down. It will be a comparatively easy task. Three months will end the rebellion. Work hard, Fred—put them out of the

way as fast as you can, for they are not fit to live in such a country as this. Enclosed I send you a check, etc., etc."

"How different from my letter;" thought Horace, as Fred went on.

"Father thinks the war will be for years, instead of months," said Horace.

"He must be an old foggy—beg your pardon, but the idea! Years, why, we'll whip them in less than three months. What! the whole armed force of the North, and years! Pshaw. Why we'll put them down the first fight, mark my word."

"Very well, we shall see who is right in time," said Horace. "When do you intend to leave?"

"College? Oh, I shan't vacate my room till I go into camp, I say, Hod, you'll have to give up your temperance principles. Who ever heard of a soldier minus his whiskey bottle? Come, now, confess that you shall enjoy a free and easy life."

"I shall confess no such thing," said Horace,

with spirit. "I go into this war in the same way that I abstain from strong drink, from principle. As to whiskey, I believe it works more mischief in camp than gunpowder. I advise you to let it alone. If there is trouble among soldiers, be sure that whiskey is always at the bottom of it."

"If you go to preaching your temperance principles in camp, be sure you'll get laughed at," said Fred, "leisurely taking a sup from a small pocket-flask he carried. "I warn you, you will injure your influence."

"If my influence is to be based on the brandy-bottle," retorted Horace, "Then the less I have of it the better. One thing is certain, I shall carry all my isms and ultra measures on to the battle-field with me, and not demoralize myself because I am going without the sphere of such influences as I have been used to."

"O! of course, parson," said Fred, good humoredly, "of course. We all know your line of life. *Mem.* To rise at four in the morning.

*Mem.* To say my prayers. *Mem.* To read—let me see, what is the first course? And lastly at night, *Mem.* To retire exactly at ten. *Mem.* To say, “Now I lay me down to sleep.” *Mem.* To dream in regular sequence, and to wake up after just being ordered by Professor L. to charge on the enemy with Prayer-books.”

“You are too bad, Fred,” said Horace, who had half a mind to lose his temper and send his college friend out of the room. Still he could scarcely help laughing in spite of himself, and he had more than once borne such railery on account of his principles, but he did not relish it at all.

“Well, I must be going,” said Fred. “By the way, let me know when you get fairly under way, because I should still incline to be in your shadow. You are so extra good, that I expect in your wake will be safety ; good morning.”

And now Horace had one more duty to perform ; and that was to ask the advice of his kind friend, Professor L., a good and upright gentleman. He

called at his room, and found him in, and willing to advise with him. He stated his case fully, and his friend appreciated all his sacrifices and difficulties. He first inquired about his parents, and seemed much pleased with the letter of Mr. Messinger.

“He writes like a sensible man,” he said ; “like a man who thinks. You are safe with the advice of such a father. I, for one, would advise my own son to go, were he still living. I know of nothing more honorable than to rally at the call of country. But you must be aware, this is to be no child’s play. With your father I have seen the shaping of events for a long time past, and I, too, believe this war is not to end in a year, possibly not in five. I hope you start with a full sense of your obligation as a Christian,” he added, taking his hand, tenderly. Horace could not reply. He had his own views, to which he clung with the tenacity of self-righteousness.

“I shall do all my duty, you may depend upon

that," he said in answer, "and I shall moreover carry my principles into camp, and endeavor to influence all I meet for good. I believe in unflinching morality under every circumstance of life."

"And the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I trust," said the Professor. Horace again answered evasively, "I shall do all my duty, sir."

"I don't doubt it," replied his friend, pressing his hand sincerely. "You shall have my blessing and my prayers, my young friend;" and they parted more like father and son than pupil and master. That same day, at seven o'clock in the evening, came a telegraph message to Horace Messinger.

"Come home immediately—Alice is very ill."

At eight he started. His exultant spirits had departed—a sad foreboding weighed him down. Speed as swift as they might, the train was not fast enough for him. The faces around him seemed care worn and harassed. Men were beginning to feel that the evils of war hung like dim clouds

above their country's horizon. Thoughtlessness and levity were put away for a season. Many a strong, athletic frame then speeding to its journey's destination, would, ere long, lie upon the battlefield unknelled, perhaps unhonored. The night grew very dark. Through towns and villages and wide stretches of country they flew, here and there a red lantern or cluster of lights flashing out sharply as they passed it. The conductor was grim and taciturn, the passengers silent, thoughtful or sleepy.

Horace looked at his watch again and again. How slowly the hands crept. Could it be possible that but five minutes had passed since he last noted the time. Presently he felt his shoulder touched. He glanced up. The grizzled beard and honest face of old Abel Tompkins, the Presbyterian deacon, his father's senior, met his gaze.

"Glad to see you, my boy," he said, holding forth his square brown hand, "what brings you home?"

"The most important reason is my sister's sudden illness," said Horace making a seat beside him. "I had a telegraphic dispatch. Have you heard anything about it?"

"Nothing at all," replied deacon Abel, "although I noticed that brother Messinger's prayers were more wrestling than usual last night, and that he prayed for strength and grace to bear affliction. But I thought that was 'cause you had listed. Leastways I heerd you had; how is it?"

"I am on my way to enlist," replied Horace.

"Wal, now, it does seem a'most a pity to take you college fellows away from your books, and send you off to the wars. But I like your grit. It's a good cause you're going to engage in, and if ye must go, why the blessing of God go with you."

"Thank you for your good wishes," said Horace, "but it is strange you have heard nothing of my sister's illness.

"I've looked upon that sister of yours as one

destined to go home airly," said deacon Abel, his thoughtful face taking an expression of tenderness. "It's my opinion," he added, "that angels ain't permitted to stay long on this earth—'taint in reason they should, and if ever there was an angel in mortal form, it's your sister Alice. I've knowed her ever since her little golden head came up to my knee, and I've always knowed her for the same uncommon character. Why, bless you, to them prayer-meetings brother Messinger had when we was going through that blessed revival, ten years ago, that dear child, I raly think, was the most airnest Christian among 'em. She got the holy Spirit in her heart that time, and never lost it—no, never. I tell ye, Horace, I love that girl like my own, and it'll go hard with everybody in W. if she's taken away. Yes, I'd rather have a name and a memory like hers, if she's sent for, than be the proudest Gineral that's a going in the army of these States."

Horace was silent. The tears came and choked

him. He had not thought it was possible she might die. That she was perhaps very ill, that his sudden determination had affected her spirits, was more than likely—but she would live to console his father and mother when he had gone—it was a thought too awful—that she might die—his beautiful, loving sister Alice.

“And let me tell you, Mr. Horace, I’m in hopes you’ve got the same power in your soul that she has. You need it if your’re going on the battle field. It takes a Christian man to make a good soldier. I went into one of the camps to-day, and I tell you I was glad to git out of it. The men had been drinking, more or less, and if I am any judge, the officers had been drinking, too, for they didn’t seem to know what to do, or where to begin. I found out the name of that Colonel, and I tell you what, if there’s any retreating or cowardice, I expect to find his name mixed up with it. That’s going to be one of our troubles; we’re going to have too many drunken rowdies for officers,

now mark my words. They say that whiskey makes men fight—I say it makes ’em a pack of cowards, and it’ll be found true in the long run, you take the word of old deacon Abel for it. I wish we had some of them old-fashioned fighting Christians, now, I do; we want ’em—praying soldiers of the Lord’s army, men that won’t get drunk and swear, and cuss and gamble, and go at the head of their regiments, or in the ranks for the sake of the pay, caring mighty little whose side they’re on, or what they’re fighting for. If I ain’t mistaken, ’tother side’s going to fight for their institutions, and *they’ll fight*. There’ll be no half-hearted, easy going souls in those regiments who think that the first battle is going to finish up. It’s like the war between the powers of light and darkness, it’s like the fight of Armagedden, it’s a strife between principles, wrong and right, and our folks is got to be brought to the strait where they’ll think so, and think hard, too. I’m sorry this war’s got to come, but I’ve seen it a long ways ahead. My good old gran’ther Clough, who’d the whole Scripture

at his tongue's end, talked right eloquent about it afore he died. Says he 'it'll be ag'in like the days of the Revolution, we'll have soldiers on our hills and camped in our valleys, and there's going to be a terrible struggle between justice and injustice, and the whole world'll tremble at it and git mixed up in it; and I feel it's coming—it's a coming."

Deacon Abel took out his gray silk handkerchief and wiped his gray old face. Horace had listened quietly, and much of the time with the conviction that he was hearing the words of prophecy. The conversation had taken his mind up and prevented him from dwelling too much on the sad impressions that had been forced upon him. He could not help heartily assenting to the old deacon's assertions, and determining in his own mind, that none should find him direliet in duty. At that moment the long whistle sounded, the familiar bridge was being crossed; in a very short space of time, and he should know how it fared with his beloved sister.

## CHAPTER V.

"Just as I Am."

HE looked anxiously along the gloomy station. There was no moon. Somebody came up with a lantern.

"Frank, is that you!" asked Horace.

"Did you bring the carriage?"

"Yes, sir — right out here on the road. Jessie's rather skittish — better wait till the train's gone."

Horace tried several times to put the all-important question, but his voice failed him. He was some ways on the road before he spoke.

"Frank, how is my sister?"

"I expect she's pretty bad, sir," was the boy's quiet answer, given in a low voice.

"Has she had the physician?"

"O! yes, sir; three or four times to-day."



"Then she must be bad enough," thought Horace, with a pain at his heart. He alighted at the door; his father stood on the steps, and welcomed him with a silent, earnest pressure of the hand.

"How is she?" asked Horace, chokingly.

"No better," was the low reply.

They stood together in the parlor, face to face. To Horace, his father seemed to look quite old and careworn. The light burned dimly; everything, in the gloom and desolation now gathering, seemed to wear an unfamiliar shape.

"She was taken very suddenly, bleeding at the lungs," said Mr. Messinger, after a long pause. Then he added slowly, "it is not for her we need to mourn, but for ourselves. She is safe either for time or eternity."

"Can I see her to-night?"

"Yes, her mother has made arrangements. But don't be surprised if she should not know you. She has asked for you several times, but is so reduced by weakness that she is part of the time

or ite senseless. She casts such heavenly glances upward, however, and so bright a peace shines in her countenance, that it is a privilege to enter the chamber where she is."

"Did you know she was so dangerously ill?"

"It came upon us, me at least, with but little preparatory warning. Your mother has seen signs of failing strength, and we have neither of us expected to keep her with us, long. But I trusted a few more years might be granted. However, the Lord's will be done. Go to your room, my boy, and rest yourself. After that come to mine, and we will go together and see Alice."

Horace followed his father's instructions, though with some reluctance. He felt that it would be better to seek rest and refreshment first—yet in his sad impatience to see Alice, he could hardly brook the least delay. As he passed his sister's chamber, he paused a moment at the door, which was slightly ajar. Standing there, he heard a low murmur, and presently in a soft, sweet voice, that

was music itself, his mother began to sing. Rooted to the spot he stood, nor moved till the last holy strain had ebbed into silence. His heart throbbed, the tears rushed to his eyes. Nothing had ever moved him so deeply before, as those trusting, beautiful words, familiar to the lips of every Christian, even while the sentiment was one in which, hitherto, he had placed but little reliance. Who can read those sweet lines without feeling a thrill of holy faith to the heart's core?

“Just as I am, without one plea,  
But that thy blood was shed for me,  
And that thou bidst me come to thee,  
O ! Lamb of God, I come !

Just as I am, and waiting not  
To rid my soul of one dark blot,  
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot  
O ! Lamb of God, I come !

Just as I am, though tossed about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt,  
Fightings within and fears without,  
O ! Lamb of God, I come !


Just as I am—thou wilt receive;  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,  
Because thy promise I believe;  
O ! Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—thy love unknown,  
Hath broken every barrier down;  
Now to be thine, yea thine alone,  
O ! Lamb of God, I come.

“Yes, thine alone, thine alone,” murmured a faint, broken voice, which Horace recognized as his sister's. It was too much for him. He burst into tears, and groped his way to his own room, where for some moments he sat weeping like a child. Only by a strong effort, could he, after a struggle, control himself. It seemed as if his own long sorrow, the shadow hovering near, the desolation of his parents, the trials of his country, all pressed upon his heart at once. The enthusiasm of his military ardor had almost died out; he was helpless and suffering before the power of the great visitant, death. For a long time he sat silent nor roused himself till his father tapped at his door.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A Sainted Sister.

RS. MESSINGER left the bedside of her daughter at her request, to increase the light. Alice lay supported by pillows, weak and white as a broken lily. There was yet that on her countenance that told how much happier she was than pen or language can describe. God was with her and angels ministered unto her.

"I heard a carriage a moment before you sung, mother," she said, in a voice so faint the mother bent over to listen.

"Yes, dear; and if Horace has come, his father will bring him here," was the reply.

"Mother," she said again, "do you know I have been praying for weeks that dear Horace might be

a sacrifice? It may be God has heard my prayer, for at last I feel at peace about him—at last, I know that my brother *will* come to Jesus. It may be through smoke and flame and blood, it may be through intense suffering—but, mother, he *will* be saved, he will believe! O, such joy as this thought gives me! Such joy! It is next to entering heaven."

Yes, there was no mistaking that joy. The burning characters of Christ's love, spiritualized, and made her face as the face of an angel. O! who could dread death, came it always in this guise, a glorious anticipation—a sweet foretaste of the eternal bliss beyond the grave! The soul lifted as on wings—the very atmosphere made sacred, the presence of Deity realized! Even the mother-heart, bleeding as it was, triumphed as a Christian, that she had been enabled to hold, to nurture, and at last to give back so precious a trust. There was a sincere exultation even in the midst of her grief, as her heart was buoyed up by the promises.

The door opened and Mr. Messinger appeared leading Horace, who in vain strove to keep up his composure. Alice looked eagerly towards him. A smile, bright as with seraph gladness welcomed him. He could only say, "O, Alice!" as he took her wasted hand in his, and sank upon his knees at her bedside.

"I am glad to see you, my brother," she said, softly, laying the hand he had released upon his brown curls; "I was fearful you might go away without returning home."

"No, Alice," he said, in low and broken tones—"I could not have gone and not seen you."

"I am very sick, Horace; I am dying; did they tell you?"

His head fell again upon the pillow, as he half sobbed, "yes,"

"Yes, I am dying—but I am very happy. This dear home has been delightful to me, but the one above, my Saviour has prepared for me. I can seem to see him standing by the door, and led to see his error, even if my life was needed as

waiting to open it. Blessed condescension, my Saviour waits for me. My tongue is loosed," she continued, "I could speak before worlds. O! that all knew him. He has not disappointed me; He never disappoints. Horace?"

"Well, darling."

"You are going to the war?"

"Yes—I hope to do so."

"But there is another battle to be fought, dearest. Has the conflict begun? Mine is almost ended, and I can say thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ, who giveth us the victory! O, there is no sting in death; to me the grave is all light—all light. Peace, peace, perfect repose," she murmured, with shut eyes and smiling lips.

"Horace, dear, you do not believe in Christ," she said, turning to him again.

"Perhaps not as you do," he said faintly.

"But you must—oh! you must, you will—not because I do, but because the interests of your immortal soul demand it. I see no longer with mor-

tal eyes but with spiritual vision. I see the infinite forbearance and patience of our Lord. How long he waits, tenderly beseeching. Horace, he calls you from this bed; through the lips of a poor, weak girl, whose world has been her home, whose surroundings have been so different from yours. You have been in the midst of temptation, you are going into fiery trials. O! my brother, you have forgotten the simple faith of our childhood. You have grown great and wise and strong, as you think, and so you have. My brother, you have grown *too* wise, above the wisdom of Christ; you have rejected that Holy One."

"Alice, I feel all you say, but alas! I cannot believe;" sobbed Horace.

"You must believe—you will believe; said Alice with solemnity. "When I am gone, and you think of me as lying in the grave—and you know that my spirit has returned to God who gave it, oh, will you not sometimes think of me?"

"Always, always, my Alice," sobbed Horace, overcome.

"And then will you think of my dying words to you? It is a solemn truth that you *must* come to Christ, or you are lost. To-night I am his messenger, feeble girl that I am—and you cannot say in that last day, that I have not been faithful."

"God bless you for it," burst from the lips of her weeping brother.

"Yes, he blesses me for it even now, in the faith he gives me, that you and I shall meet again. Horace, I only ask one promise from you. Will you not believe in that Saviour who has died for you?"

"I wish I could," he answered.

"But will you try? It is my last request. Will you pray to God night and morning that he will give you the enlightening power of his Holy Spirit? Dear Horace, you are going where you will need it sorely. In the midst of the dead and wounded, with danger threatening you on every side, you need something to anchor you; you need a hope in Christ. Dear Horace, will you meet me in heaven?"

"With God's help I will try," was his response.

"And in the camp, dear brother, never forget your duty. Be God's soldier, and you will bless all who come in contact with you. You will see men there dying without Christ, you will hear them cursing his Holy Name. O! my brother, you must do your duty there—God calls you as his missionary. Horace, promise me."

"I do promise you that I will seek light from heaven. I do promise you that I will try to meet you there, and I pray God to help me."

"Mother, father, what did I say? O! thank God! He will be saved; I have nothing to do now, but to die.

"O! what hath Jesus bought for me!

Before my ravished eyes,

Rivers of life divine, I see,

And trees of Paradise!

I see a world of spirits bright,

Who taste the pleasures there,

They are all robed in spotless white,

And conquering palms they bear.

O! what are all my sufferings here,

If, Lord, thou count me meet,

With that enraptured host t' appear,

And worship at thy feet!

Give joy or grief—give ease or pain,

Take life or friends away,

But let me find them all again,

In that eternal day."

And thus repeating the sweet words, she gently fell asleep.

"Not yet unto death," said his father, as Horace wildly cried that she had gone. "She is gone. She is exhausted. For days she has not spoken five consecutive minutes at a time. But she had her work to do, and she is content.

"God giveth his beloved sleep," murmured Mrs. Messinger."

"If I were but as well prepared as she!" cried Horace, gazing yearningly on the spiritual face.

"Seek preparation where she has sought it, my son, and you cannot fail," replied his father. The conversation was carried on almost in whispers,

until midnight. Then Horace went again to the bedside.

"How peacefully she sleeps!" he said, with quivering lips.

"It is my conviction that she will wake no more in this world," said his mother, tearfully. "Her next waking will be in heaven."

They gathered silently around the bed. It was a solemn moment. Only those who have watched the passage of a breath in the hush of such an hour, know its deep significance. The little clock ticked painfully loud—the shadows crept farther across the room, but she stirred not. One hand in its waxen clearness lay across her bosom, one on the side of the bed. Cheeks, brow and lips were colorless, and but a faint fluttering motion told of life. The spirit seemed to show through the beautiful form like a bird through the wires of its cage. But she did awake, much weaker, still happier.

"Angels, mother," she whispered, "angels; I see them—sing of them." Softly in the death-hush rang out the silvery music of the words,

"Ye angels who stand round the throne,  
And view my Immanuel's face—  
In rapturous songs make him known,  
Tune, tune your soft harps to his praise.  
He formed you the spirits you are,  
So happy, so noble, so good;  
When others sank down in despair,  
Confirmed by his power ye stood,"

Her lips moved, her mother bent lower. "The last verse," she whispered impressively; and Mrs. Messenger sang, not without moistened eyelids and a faltering voice:

"I want to put on my attire,  
Washed white in the blood of the Lamb,  
I want to be one of your choir,  
And tune my sweet harp to his name.  
I want, oh! I want to be there,  
Where sorrow and sin bid adieu,  
Your joy and your friendship to share,  
To wonder and worship with you."

It was all over. In vain Horace caught her in his arms and pressed his lips again and again to her cold forehead. She was where she had longed

to be. The beautiful spirit had departed, the beautiful clay remained. Far into the morning Horace walked and wept. O! if like her he could just trust himself to Jesus, simply, with all the confidence of a child! But his doubts, his fearful doubts. They came up like an army and clouded his vision. The sentiments he had read and pondered and argued would not down, but like so many spirits of evil, tormented him, Alas! he must pay a penalty for his self-righteousness—there was much to shake off yet—much trial to pass through before he could be purified.

## CHAPTER VII.

### Dexon Abel's Good Advice.

THE house was very still now, and Horace felt a painful longing to get away. Her grave was not far off, for they had buried her on their own grounds, and the pale tomb stone could be seen from the study window. Horace thought of his promise. It was always with him. Night and morning he strove to do his duty; the Bible was seldom out of his hands, and yet he could not say that he had found peace. Instead of that a strange unrest had taken possession of him.

He had received a commission as second lieutenant of Co. A. — Regiment, Mass., and felt himself quite a soldier when he donned his regimentals,



and buckled on his sword. His military ardor had never failed. Every day added to the pressing necessity of the times. Horace received many congratulations upon his fine soldierly appearance, and as the mirror told a somewhat flattering tale, he took great credit to himself. Good men came to him with advice, among them the venerable minister, and deacon Abel.

"Horace," said the latter, "You're the son of my dear friend—the child of many prayers, and you may think me meddling for talking to you, but I must say my say, or else my conscience won't be clear. I always make it a point to be on good terms with my conscience, because I expect some day or other it will have the power to do me a good turn, or else to convict me before all Israel and the sun."

"Go on, uncle Abel," said Horace, "I am certain you have my best good at heart."

"To be sure I have, and I don't know as there's any need of my saying it, but it is a fact, that the

sons of praying men go into the army and learn to swear."

"You need never be afraid of that," said Horace; "I think altogether too much of myself to descend to such a vulgar habit."

"Yes, but don't brag about that *self*; that self is jest what gets people into bad habits, and until people come right out of that self into Jesus Christ, there's no guarantee that they will keep from breaking the commandments. Don't you see?"

"I suppose you are right," said Horace, dryly.

"Well, at any rate, that's what my Bible teaches me. I wouldn't give a snap for a man's principles, in the long run, if they are based upon self-righteousness, not that I imply that yours is—no, by no means. But I know there's a deal of power in association. You see I larn't that in Mexico. I was younger then than I am now, though pretty well in years, too—but I tell you I went so long without religious privileges that I

almost forgot how a Church appeared, and I became so used to swearing, that at last I justly looked for it, and God forgive me, came pretty nigh to doing it myself. It's a bad case to state, but it's a fact, and you'll find it so in the army. Nice, soft-mouthed lads will go away from home, and in less than two weeks they'll stand up to anybody for profane swearing. I can't understand it. But I tell you this much—wherever the swearing was hardest among the ranks, it was hardest among the officers. And you may put it down as a fact, that a profane Colonel will set everybody, even to the drummer boy, to swearing. Rum and blasphemy and licentiousness, these are the curses of army life. Men git away from the restraints of home, and they are just weak enough, most of 'em, to fall into all the vices they see practiced. It's a black shame, and a black fact, but fact it is, and there's no denying it. I do beg you, my dear boy, to set a watch upon the door of your lips. Don't have any man's curse upon your soul. Influence is

mighty, and men look up to their officers. I spoze I'm throwing all this talk away, edicated as you've been."

"Not at all, deacon Abel; I'm very much obliged for your kindness, and appreciate your arguments. God helping me, I shall try to do good and not harm."

"God helping you! that's the way I like to hear you talk. I feel dreadful grieved, somehow, when a man I know and like, goes into the army. I've seen sad things in Mexico—some of our best and bravest officers driven to the wall, dying miserable deaths from the effects of strong drink—regular drunken sots, that's just it. I tell you its hard to see a man so given up to his passions—created in the image of his God—making himself below the beast. But where is your camp, sir?"

Horace told him.

"I'll come there and look in upon you some time," said deacon Abel, and Horace cordially invited him.

"Horace," said his mother, taking him aside and holding towards him a little volume, silver clasped, bound in purple velvet, "this was Alice's Bible."

"O! mother," exclaimed Horace, "let me have it. I'll keep it next my heart."

"Yes, she wished me to hand it to you after she was gone. You will see many passages marked. She spent hours and hours over that Bible; I am sure it was for your sake." Horace opened it. It was literally covered on the margin with pencil marks, and scores of passages were interlined. Horace held it with a reverent hand. It seemed to bring her mild blue eyes before him. He could hear the sweet voice; he could see the dear form bending over work or book, the golden curls falling on her shoulders. Connected with this volume her image would be more palpable than any picture, because engraven upon his heart.

"Here are also some little packages which she designed for you," continued his mother, handing

him some papers. You were to read the first one, marked No. 1, on the receipt of it; the second one on the eve of battle, if possible, and the third, if sick or wounded, you were carried to any hospital. You see she was ever thinking of you."

"Precious Alice!" murmured Horace, the tears falling, "her death has marred all my pleasure." He took the little packages to his chamber and immediately opened the first one. In it was a small card photograph, and a tiny curl of shining brown hair. He pressed them to his lips and then addressed himself to the reading of the missive which commenced as follows:

"DARLING, BELOVED BROTHER HORACE,

When you receive this, you will no longer be able to kiss me, or to hear me say to you what these lines express. You cannot tell how tenderly dear you are to me, Horace, my own brother. I have wondered what the love of Jesus must be, when mine for you is so absorbing I think of you

all the time. Perhaps my anxiety on your soul's account, keeps your image more distinctly before me. In the night I dream sometimes that I am gone, and you are in some place of confinement, to which I am sent to draw you out. I must think that God has some great purposes in store for you. O, my dear Horace, I do so want you to be a Christian gentleman, a Christian soldier! You know that beautiful little poem—

“Am I a soldier of the cross,  
A follower of the Lamb—  
And shall I fear to own his cause,  
Or blush to speak his name?”

O! the blessed name of Jesus! You would not wonder at my enthusiasm if you knew how happy he makes me. To serve Christ is to have all things, to abound in riches—to need no luxury, to need, even, *really* need no friends—for in a desert place one would never know solitude with him. Do I fatigue you with this theme? Remember, she is gone who talks with you. Her spirit

knows now the reality of eternal things; it has seen Christ Jesus, it is infinitely happy. Remember that she will never trouble you again—but I will not intimate a thing so unjust—I do not trouble you, do I, my brother? But oh! I am anxious, so very anxious that you should love your Saviour as he desires, for it will be not to farther his happiness, but to promote your good, your glory, if you will.

Dear Horace, you must be a soldier of the Lord. You must forget those unholy things you wrote me about—they are the product of fallen humanity, of man's depraved reason. Have nothing to do with the unclean thing—it is doubt of God, and that is unbelief—a sin whose enormity no one can fathom. I know that I write like a girl, but dear Horace, I do write from the heart. My whole soul is stirred when I think of you. I am in an agony lest you go on in these infidel principles, for such they seem to me. I want you to pray for yourself, to ask God to enlighten you, to

encourage and finally bless you by sending his spirit. You will soon need it, for you may be called to the battle field. I often imagine dreadful pictures of that place. My heart sickens as I see them—and feel that they are to be a reality among us. And then the thought that you may go amid such scenes unprepared—it distracts me, and were it not for my entire trust in my heavenly Father, I could not bear it. I know the prayers and arguments of a weak girl are poor weapons against all your philosophy, and those grand ideas that have taken possession of your mind. Grand, I say—seemingly so. I feel that they are small beside the simple Bible truths—beside the beautiful words of Jesus Christ that shall stand for ages, while the others will prove to have been written in water.

O! my brother, there is but one faith, and one Lord. He is the ark of safety, hide within him. Throw yourself trustingly within his holy arms of protection. If it be possible I will be with you

amid the dangers to which you may be exposed. We have often had long talks about that, and if the angels of those who depart are admitted to exercise any care over the living, it will be a blessed employment for me to hover around you, and to lead your thoughts to Christ. Be a good soldier—but above all choose Jesus Christ for the Captain of your salvation. Then, come life, come death, you are safe for a long and glorious eternity.

Your ever loving sister,


ALICE."

The old theme renewed. Horace covered his face with his hands and strove to feel. There must be something in this wholly giving up of self, of which he had yet no knowledge. Beside that, he loved his own opinions. They were the result of long study and much investigation. He had settled down upon them as upon a rock; it was hard to change them, and bow his metaphysical genius to the common altar of simple revelation. But he

tried to follow his sister's instructions for the love he bore her. He knelt in prayer—it had always been his habit, but now he prayed for enlightenment, while unconsciously he hugged his old principles, and clung to his preconceived opinions.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *The Wounded Adjutant.*

ORACE had left his house for the camp. In the severer duties now devolving upon him, he had but little time for religious reflection. Yet he did not forget Alice. That influence of purity which had been brought to bear upon him within the charmed circle of her life, still seemed to encompass him with undiminished force. In the profession he had chosen he was unwearying. No labor was too hard for him. He was ambitious to be master of every movement, competent for any emergency. His fare was good, but he eschewed luxuries, confining himself to the plainer articles of diet, conforming more to the standard of the private soldier whose confidence he wanted. His com-

panions laughed at his abstemiousness, but his Colonel, a man of great capacity, marked him as a man of superior ability—and the others respected him notwithstanding his “spoony” habits, as they called them among themselves.

He frequently wrote to his father, and this is the view which he took of camp life :

“I am hardening—in muscle and endurance, and if I am not careful I shall be hardening in some other qualities. My companions are men who swear, even the Colonel. But he does not make habitual use of profanity. It is only on occasions of aggravated faults—and I assure you there is much to try a man’s patience; here—that he blasphemes. But when he does, he shocks heaven and earth. I had no idea such venom could be concentrated in an oath. Our Captain swears constantly. He is a little man, with a remarkably large moustache and an amusingly small waist; he seems to think something wanting either

in his proportions or his manhood; so he struts, smokes and swears. The second Lieutenant is more of a gentleman, though he smokes profusely, and swears when in a passion. He, however, is good tempered, generally. I am thus surrounded, as you see, by adverse influences, but in the midst of them all, I snatch a little time now and then, to get some mental food out of Alice’s little Bible. It does indeed seem at times as if her dear spirit were hovering around me, especially when I lie awake in my tent. I wish I could think as she thought; I am determined to try; I shall fulfil my promise. This life is so widely different from what I have been accustomed to, that it will take many weeks to feel at home. We expect before long to get in the field. Our men seem quite anxious, and I confess I have a desire to go forward only held down by fear of incompetency. I wish to be perfect in military knowledge, so that I may have as little embarrassment as possible in action. To-day we have found whiskey smuggled into camp. Drinking is the curse here. It pro-

motes insubordination, and converts some naturally amiable men into fiends. Our Colonel, however, is a temperance man—at least I never see him drink,—and very severe upon the soldiers who are overtaken. He has an instrument of torture which he calls the ‘turning point.’ A man is fairly trussed like a turkey, hands, feet and head powerless. It looks cruel, but may prevent a repetition of the fault.

“14th. I have just been through a trying scene. Our Adjutant is a drinking man—is always what I consider two-thirds drunk. He has been retained only because he is a personal friend of Colonel H. Yesterday, after drinking freely, he was very savage with the men, and although they were at dinner, insisted that they should leave their rations and commence drill. One man refused, and with him the Adjutant had a violent altercation. The soldier had his dirk-knife open, cutting his bread and meat, and at the moment held it with the blade projecting. Something he said infuriated our Adjutant, and he sprang forward to

collar the soldier, receiving the blade of the knife just under his left ribs in the abdomen. There was a terrible time and I was called in. O! the fatal effects of intemperance! There lay the Adjutant on the floor, ghastly, his wound bleeding freely, while he swore with the most reckless abandon, that he would be the death of the man who had struck him, accusing him of trying to murder him. Two soldiers held the prisoner between them, he protesting vehemently that the Adjutant ran on the knife, and that he had no intention of doing him any injury. This I could readily believe, for I had always found the man teachable and gentle. He was, however, removed to the guard house to await investigation, while the Surgeon dressed the Adjutant's wound, pronouncing it a dangerous one. How true it is that rum is the curse of the soldier! I never realized it so fully before. Last night I watched with the Adjutant. His name is Lewis. At first he was very nervous and restless, but presently he began to talk



“‘I suppose I shall get up in a day or two,’ he said.

“‘Not in a day or two; I hope you may in a week.’

“‘Well,’ he replied, ‘I have had warnings enough. My mother wrote me her dream, and begged me to keep from liquor, or I should get into trouble. I little thought it would come so soon. Are you a Christian, sir? I have thought you was.’ I was confused, and replied, ‘what made you think so.’

“‘I have seen you by yourself, sir, reading the good Book. Officers don’t take pains to get out of the way in order to read the Bible, unless they are Christian men, I take it.’

“‘I told him I had always been in the habit of reading my Bible—my mother had brought me up so. I could not tell him I was a Christian, for at that moment, I painfully felt that I was not.

“‘You haven’t got a better mother than I had, sir,’ he said; ‘she’s tried her best to save her

wayward boy. I’m only twenty-eight, sir, but I’m old in sin. The boys used to say I’d make a good preacher, because I had the gift of gab; but I tell you, sir, when I’m sober I feel all I say, and no man wants to do better more than I do—but something impels me to drink and when I taste, I’m gone.’

“Here he began to grow a little delirious, and I asked him if I should read.

“‘Yes,’ he said, ‘yes, read me the Bible.’

“He was very quiet until I had finished the fourth chapter of John. Then he wished me to sing. That I could not do, but repeated instead the beautiful hymn you sung to Alice, ‘Just as I am.’ He seemed much affected at that, and asked me if I wouldn’t pray for him. His request gave me a singular sensation. I felt for the first time in my life, a real motive—a real need for which to ask the Father. Heretofore when going by myself, I have not carried my soul in my petition. I know now that I have not really

wanted what my lips asked for. But for this man I felt most deeply. I knew he was dangerously, perhaps mortally wounded. I knew that he was habitually a prayerless, blaspheming, drunken man, and that it would be awful to appear before his Maker without repentance. I did not then apply these reasons to my own case, which would have been only just—my sympathies were wrapped up in him. I had never prayed aloud before a second person, but the circumstances inspired me and I felt a strange boldness and willingness to plead for him. After I had done he thanked me, and said he would try and sleep. About twelve he waked up again, and his first question was, ‘What shall I do to be saved? Lieutenant, I’m going to die of this wound, I know I am.’

“I endeavored to cheer him; told him that he was weak from loss of blood—that he must keep his spirits up—that the mind had great influence over the body, etc., etc.

“‘It’s all very well, Lieutenant,’ said he in reply, ‘for you to encourage me; but it’s of no use. I’m a dead man.’

“I endeavored to ascertain what made him seem so positive. At last he told me his dream. It seems he thought his mother appeared to him, and pointing to his wound, said, ‘It is come. I warned you. Prepare to meet your God.’

“‘I’m sure to die now, Lieutenant,’ he added, feebly. ‘You are a Christian—tell me what I shall do to be saved! Is there any hope for me at the eleventh hour.’

“O! how I felt, then, the need of my sister’s simple faith. O! how I wished I could point him to Jesus! At that moment a little ray of light entered my soul, which seemed enlarged, drawn out towards this poor man. A heavenly peace filled me with joy, to which I had hitherto been a stranger. So impressed was I, that I involuntarily called out, ‘Alice, I have found Him!’ Yes, father, mother, in that sweet moment my prayers,

though cold, were answered. He saw that I was sincerely looking for truth. What I said under the influence of that strange, delightful visitation, I cannot now recall. Suffice it, that my whole theme was Jesus. Since then,

“‘Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.’

“Tears ran down the Adjutant's cheeks. ‘I have often thought,’ he said, ‘when told of my poor, dying mother's prayers, that I needed something of this kind to save me. I don't think I have been hardened—it looks to me now, my past life, something like insanity. I have made up my mind a thousand times to be a Christian, and a thousand times plunged into sin. Rum has been my curse. Rum! rum!’ he ejaculated, with fearful energy. ‘But my mother prayed for me night and day, and I'm not sure but this is the way her prayers are going to be answered. Her wicked, wayward boy, may be saved, so as by fire. O! if my poor soul might not be lost eternally!’

“I asked him how he felt towards the man whose carelessness caused the deed.

“‘O! let him go,’ he said—‘he never meant murder. At the first I said he did; I wanted him put in confinement. Perhaps I thought he turned the knife purposely. But I don't now. The man never meant any harm to me. He knew I was drunk. Don't keep him in the guard house. Tell the men to keep away from that infernal liquor that makes demons of some and beasts of others. But for that I shouldn't have broken my old mother's heart, as I fear I did.’

“Seeing that he was growing wild again, I began soothing him with sweet and exceedingly precious promises. And here Alice's little Bible was invaluable. The passages that her dear hands had marked were exactly suited to his case, and to my mind every word was illuminated. How little she thought, dear girl, that the great mercies she was preparing for me, would also be shared in by the sick and suffering soldiers! Her works of mercy follow her.

"The Adjutant fell asleep once more, and I sat lost in happy thought. Till the dawn I remained there, reading my little treasure, my *new* found treasure (for the Bible had before been a sealed book to me) and praising God. O! how my heart leaped out and up towards him. *My Father—my God.* I was lost in a trance of sweet delight.

"The sun had not arisen when the poor soldier waked up, calling for ice. I laid some on his parched tongue; I knew by his sunken temples and hollow eye that he was no better. I asked him how he felt.

"*'Calmer than I ever hoped to, Lieutenant,'* he said. *'I am going to take God's word. I'm a poor, lost sinner, but Jesus Christ died for me, for me. I throw myself on his mercy. I am unworthy. I am lost of myself. I have no where else to go. Do you think he will pity me?'* I turned to Alice's Bible.

"*'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him,'* I replied.

"*'And do you think he will save me!'*

"Again I lifted my invaluable treasure and read,

"*'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'*

"*'That is comfort, he said—'but oh! I am afraid to die, still. Who shall take away the sting of death?'* I thought of dear Alice's favorite hymn:

*"And let this feeble body fail,  
And let it faint and die;  
My soul shall quit this morunful vale,  
And soar to worlds on high;  
Shall join the disembodied saints,  
And find its long sought rest  
That only bliss for which it pants,  
In the Redeemer's breast."*

"*'Thank you,'* he said faintly, *'you know how to answer me. I am a miserable gift—I am offering the dregs of an ill-spent life, but somebody loves me—my sisters love me; my wife loves me.'*

They will be here to-morrow. I cannot feel yet that God loves me—I wish I could.’

“I repeated these sweet lines :

“‘Can a woman’s tender care  
Cease toward the child she bare?  
Yes, she may forgetful be,  
Yet will I remember thee.  
Mine is an unchanging love,  
Higher than the heights above,  
Deeper than the depths beneath,  
Free and faithful, strong as death.’

“He burst into tears, and for a few moments sobbed like a child—then glancing upwards, his eyes streaming, he cried out, ‘God Almighty, I thank thee for this suffering, for I have found thee.’

“It was a solemn season. I prayed with him again. The men were rousing themselves outside the thin partition, for we were in a rude barracks.

“‘I have got two little children,’ he said, soon after, in a broken voice. I turned over the leaves of my Bible and read,

“‘Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.’

“‘Yes, yes,’ he murmured, ‘I will try to give them up to God.’

“At seven the Surgeon came. The Adjutant eyed him narrowly, and seemed to detect his lurking thoughts.

“‘He believes I am going to die,’ he said to me when the Surgeon had gone. I did not contradict him. Surgeon Low had told me in an aside that he could not live twelve hours. At nine his wife came. She was in tears and in her arms she carried a little helpless babe not yet six months old. She looked like a superior woman. I did not see them meet. Such things are too sacred for the common eye. His sisters came soon, two neat, capable looking New England women. They talked to me afterwards, weeping. Said one of them, ‘his mother feared that nothing short of some such dreadful accident would save him. She prayed for him night and day. I have seen

her get out of her bed in the dead of night and go praying for him. He is the child of prayer. He was a noble son and brother, had only that one failing, a love of liquor. He has broken off repeatedly, and now if it is God's will that he is to go in this state of mind, I can say, amen, for I do think he is a sincere Christian.' His sisters were beside him when he died. His little babe lay sleeping on a pillow near—his wife knelt down, his hand in hers. A triumph came in his face at the last moment. I shall never forget it. He cried 'Victory!' and 'forward, men—fight for your flag'—but I knew he died also a happy believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *In Camp.*

**ORACE**, the young Lieutenant, carried his religion with him day by day. Alice's Bible became his inseparable companion. Outwardly he did not appear much changed. He had always been moral, conscientious in a high degree, and careful in his conversation. When there was a necessity for it, he did not shrink from avowing his sentiments. He made no parade of religion, but it influenced his daily life—it made him different from the majority of the officers, and his men saw it. If there was any serious difference he was called upon to adjust it. The men had faith in him. They never swore in his presence without he rebuked them with a

mildness and at the same time a sternness that was effectual, and though his brother officers nicknamed and ridiculed him, yet in their hearts they felt his superiority, and respected and even courted his influence.

Not long after the death of the Adjutant, Horace wrote to his mother as follows :—

“We have struck tents and are under marching orders. Our probable destination is Fortress Monroe. Dearest mother, good-bye. If I never see you again on earth, remember that I died a Christian soldier. Keep Alice’s grave bright with flowers. Sometimes I think she is hovering near me. If it should be so, does not her sweet spirit rejoice in the change! I feel I am soon to see the realities of war. O! this noble country; are there not Christians enough to preserve it by their prayers! Pray mother, pray father—I feel there is a power in prayer that the greatest Christian little realizes. He does not know what a weapon

he wields, when he goes to his God. O! for a little of that faith by which mountains are removed!

“It looks pleasant to see whole regiments on the stir. We still have drunken men to put under arrest, but I am happy to say that in Company A. not one man has violated the principles of good order for a month past. I believe they respect me and respect my religion. May God help me to be faithful to these souls in a measure under my charge. O! say what we will, laugh at good men’s folly and weaknesses as you will, there is no power like that of Christ’s religion. I feel it day by day. For the want of it I see officers in our army committing the most heinous crimes—crimes against God and against society. Alas, I see men here, our superiors and governors, who cannot govern their own passions. God have mercy on them! I tremble for my country.”

Again he wrote :


"I date this Fortress Monroe. We are to be stationed awhile at the Rip Raps. There are wars and rumors of wars, I suppose, but everything this way seems quiet. Last night we all thought we heard the long roll. It sounded solemnly in the 'dead waste and middle of the night.' Every man was on his feet and getting ready, when some one coming in told us it was the steamer puffing at some distance, and letting off steam. I never heard a more exact imitation of a heavy drum-roll. The men are doing well. There is not so much chance for them to get whiskey, though it is often smuggled in, and once in a while there is a case of violence. There is a little drummer-boy in Company A. who interests me very much. He is only eleven years old, has no mother, no father. He was a profane little fellow when I first knew him, evidently thinking it was manly, or at any rate, soldierly, to swear. Men older than he, grey heads do it, why not he? He

is a very pretty little fellow, intelligent above the ordinary, and I feel anxious with regard to him. The camp is not the place for such children. For several days past, I have commanded his services as frequently as possible, that I might have an opportunity of talking with him. His name is Charlie Row. I have given him your name and address, so that in case I should not return, and he should live, or be wounded, you can do something for him—perhaps educate him. I assure you it would well repay you, for a boy of more sprightliness and intelligence, I have seldom seen. To tell you the truth, I fancy he looks like Alice, or as she did when she was his age. His eyes are blue, and his hair soft and curly. His face is quite brown, but a healthy red shines through."



## CHAPTER X.

### After The Battle.

ELL, brother," said old deacon Abel, coming into the sitting-room, of Mr. Messinger, "So we've had a battle at last, eh? and a defeat, eh!"

Mr. Messinger and his wife had long been nursing their sad thoughts. Since the battle of Big Bethel, their souls were dark with forebodings of the gloomiest character. They had scanned with straining glances the lists of wounded, killed and missing. The beloved name was not among them—yet their fears were by no means quieted.

"Horace is all right, I guess," said deacon Abel, hap hazard; and even this thoughtless guess gave them comfort. At any rate, they would soon

know, why anticipate danger? Deacon Abel's whole theme was Horace. He had always loved him and predicted a career of usefulness.

"God is not going to let powder and shot harm him," said the deacon, in reply to something Mrs. Messinger said. "I've been praying for his life, and I reckon there's a good many more been doing the same thing. Come, now, here's the postman, and a good long letter from my boy, I warrant ye."

Yes, by the gleeful look of the postman as he came up the gravelled walk, they knew there was good news. He held up a letter, it was Horace's hand-writing, and mailed the day after the battle.

"Thank God?" said both parents, softly, Mrs. Messinger opening the letter.

"Read it out, mother," said her husband.

*"At the Fortress.*

"DEAR PARENTS,—

"I have but time to write you a hurried letter, and to tell you that I have smelt gunpowder,

that I have been in the fight, and I believe acquitted myself, with at least, some coolness. When I first heard the orders to march on the enemy, I confess a nervous trembling seized me, which was new and troublesome. I could hardly handle my weapons, and I began to despise myself for what, if not cowardice, was as I thought, an unmanly physical weakness. But after a while I recovered, and on our weary march had full time for reflection. I commended myself to God, and felt safe. Had not he enclosed me in his powerful keeping? Why should I fear even cannon balls? If he willed, they would not harm me, and if it was his purpose they should, they would only destroy the flesh—thank God that the soul is indestructible. With feelings like these, I went to the fight, calmer than I had thought I could be. No nervous trembling now, no, not even when I heard the first rattle of the murderous artillery—for that could not separate me from the love and companionship of Christ Jesus, my Redeemer. Well, the

fight became hot. I can describe little to you; it is too sickening, and I only knew in its intensity that there was blood and carnage on every side. I seemed to lose my own identity after a while; I thought of nothing but fight. It is a poor time to depend upon impressions when one is so near eternity. I saw Winthrop fall. The sight maddened me. I was near Lieut. Greble when he went under, poor fellow! A more gallant soul never paid the penalty of this wicked rebellion than his. A few men were called for to take their stand in his place. I volunteered, and worked there, his bleeding body in full sight. I also had charge of many of the wounded on my way back to the Fortress. O! did I not feel then the value of religion? Some of the poor fellows listened eagerly to the precious, comforting words of Christ—more or less they wished me to talk with them. And such confessions as I listened to! Sometimes my heart would sink as I saw death written on the contracted forehead, and the spirit hardened against its

Maker, perhaps uttering oaths. I have remained in the hospital more or less, ever since. I believe the wounded men are learning to look for and love me. I talk to them as plainly, and at the same time as gently, as I know how.

"Alas! if I had not taken up this mode of life for the sake of my country, I could not bear the horrors of it. Sometimes I think I will stay away from these scenes of suffering that so jar upon and shock my nerves, that thrill me to the core of my being. I will do as others do—I did not come here to be nurse and comforter. But one piteous, appealing look, one sweet word of thankfulness, touches me to the heart—and I am willing to forego all comfort and many luxuries. I think the officers ought, when possible, pay more attention to the sick and wounded. It may seem a little thing to them, but let them be stretched upon a narrow pallet, surrounded by moaning men—surgical operations going on, their comrades dying before their eyes, the same faces, the same mo-

notonous walls—and they will know how to appreciate a visit, particularly from one who has been looked up to, perhaps honored and admired as a commander. But I must close, as there is to be a meeting of a few officers to consult upon the expediency of inaugurating some little gatherings for prayer and conference. There is some talk of ordering a part of our division to join McClellan's forces on the Potomac. Do not know what will be done yet. Perhaps my next letter will be dated at Washington."

It was even so. Within the month his parents received the following letter:

*"Washington.*

"DAREST PARENTS,

"Here I am in the Capital of our nation. I am very much impressed with two facts, first, that the public edifices are very splendid and imposing, second, that the private residences are very common, to me, almost mean. However, in time, say a hundred years from now, Washington bids

fair to be a beautiful city, *and the monument completed*. We are getting forward to one of the divisions under General McClellan. Expect to be assigned in a few days. Meanwhile I shall look round, see the President, if possible, and visit the hospitals. The men laugh at me for this last—ask me if I am picking out my quarters, etc. Alas! if it is God's good will, I never wish to languish in a hospital. Yet, if wounded, or sick, of course, I shall expect to be treated as other soldiers are, and unless it is convenient or expedient for me to get home, I may prefer to take my chance where perhaps I can do the most good.

"Our little drummer boy has attached himself very closely to me, and I think I am influencing him for good. He is very steady now, and never swears. He says he will stand by me through thick and thin, and has really proved himself in the fight, a dauntless little hero. I have become exceedingly fond of him, and it does me good to have something to pet, now I am away from you

and your petting. I get him to read his little Testament to me every night, before we sleep, and he is becoming much interested in Bible history. With God's help I'm going to make a Christian man of him.

"It is so pleasant to feel that you are never alone; that Jesus is with you, close beside you in the thickest of the fight! I forgot to tell you that I read the second little note of dear Alice the day before we went to the Big Bethel fight. It was very short, only this:

"DEAREST HORACE,

"Have you found Jesus yet? If not, now, on the eve of danger, perhaps of death, give yourself into his hands. It is an act of faith, dear brother—I know that *almost* you are persuaded—oh! be quite, even now, this moment, say,

'Dear Lord, I give *myself* away,

'Tis *all* that I can do.

From Alice.'

"Thank God with me that I could say, 'yes,

my angel sister, I have found Jesus. Unworthy as the gift is, I have given myself. And oh! most blessed fact, he has accepted me, has written my name I trust, I *know*—on the Lamb's book of life, and I am safe forever and forever.

"5th. We have very little to vary the monotony of camp life. It is four days since I wrote you, two since I have been here on the Potomac. Our General is very busy, and the men seem to like him. The first day here, my little drummer boy met with an accident. A pistol going off accidentally, the ball went through the fleshy part of the thigh. He was very much frightened, but bore his pain with great fortitude. He was afraid he should die, however, and lamented a great deal, saying that he wasn't good enough, that he didn't know where he was going, etc., etc. I talked with him every opportunity I could get, and finally he became reconciled, and professed a hope in Christ. I know he is sincere, for I have heard him praying by himself, and he appears to see with spiritual

sight. He is quite contented to lie and suffer, or even to die, though he shows the spirit of a soldier, and says he would rather be killed in battle than by an accident. I am trying to do all the service I can for the Lord. We shall attempt a prayer-meeting twice in the week, and I want to get up a Bible class. Our Chaplain appears to be the right kind of a man, but most of our officers, not being religious, put their faces against these reforms. Strange that they do not see that a man who is prepared for death, must make a better soldier, than the reckless, dare-devil drunken loafer, who, I believe, in many cases, would if his pay were the same, as lief fight on one side as on the other. But they are blind, and cannot see. God help them in the face of death, if at no other time, to call upon his name.

"I have lately been thinking that if I am spared, I shall study for the ministry. I feel sure from my little experience, that I have that in me which will command the attention of men—and

whether in a limited position or an extensive field of usefulness, I am certain that I could do my Master service. You will, I know, acquit me of boasting in this matter. I am aware that the toil is laborious, that much self-sacrifice is needed, that a minister, in a peculiar manner, must endure the buffetings of the world and of Satan, that his office can never be filled to the satisfaction of all his people, except in such cases as are rarely found, and that he seldom gathers the dross of this world in sufficient measure even to minister to his necessities. But then what a mission is his! In importance how vastly before the interests of the noblest and most exalted worldly powers that be. A minister of Jesus Christ—his work to lead souls to heaven! O! that I may be in some measure fitted for that wonderful office. Pray for me, dearest parents, that I prove not unworthy.

“10th. Have this day inaugurated a temperance society. Send you with this a copy of the pledge. Several have taken it and say they mean

to keep it. There is no doubt but we shall have successful meetings. I shall make my first speech to-night. Have been studying hard, and believe I am prepared. It is difficult to address such conflicting varieties of mind, but I rely on simple, downright, straight forward argument. I have not seen much drunkenness here, however, we are under such strict military rule.

“You should see our encampments at night. If it is moonlight the scene is one of rare beauty. If the evening is dark, then from dusk till nine o'clock, the tents are lighted with candles, the openings are brilliant, and the wide avenues, kept neat as a lady's parlor, shine in all directions. But pleasant as it is, we long to be employed. Men and officers are weary waiting, but I suppose our Generals know what they are about—they ought to.”

And now for long months came letters regularly, always laden with good news so far as the spiritual profession of Horace was concerned. It

was evident that as a soldier of Christ, he had put his armor on and was in earnest. Many a comrade remembers to-day the calm, thoughtful officer, to whose justice or generosity none were afraid to appeal—who met them as one Christian meets another, willing to comfort or advise, always ready with the word of sympathy—and one whose Christian integrity the worst and the meanest man respected. The earnest eye that lighted up under every kindly emotion, the ready hand, the smile of sympathy—ah! to the dying day of many a man these will be remembered. Not only these, but his manly, straight forward efforts for their good, his pleasant but direct way of reproving them—his unostentatious manner of doing deeds of charity, letting not his right hand know what the left was giving.

“He was a good officer, sir; and more than that, he was a man, every inch of him, without the regimentals. I wish every regiment had more than one such man,” was the comment of his Captain, not long ago.

The time passed slowly to the hearts sitting stricken in their beautiful home. At last, however, they seemed to lose much of their mutual apprehension. From day to day came the telegram, “All quiet on the Chickahominy,” as once before, “all quiet on the Potomac.” The pleasant semi-weekly letters cheered their hearts, and they had put off the evil day. Like a thunder clap came the tidings of the battle of Fair Oaks. Eagerly the papers were scanned, and tremulously they rattled in the hands that could scarcely hold them for fear. His name did not at first appear. Soon came a letter commencing in this way;—

“MY DEAR MADAM;

“Your son requests me to say,” (living then! comfort in that, though wounded none knew how seriously. Then followed:) “Your son is mentioned honorably in the despatches of our Colonel, and was promoted to the rank of Captain on the field. He led his company into action after nearly all his superior officers were killed. His wound is

in the chest—not thought serious, and he is very comfortable. He sends much love to you, desires me to say that he never was in better spirits, and that his faith sustains him.”

“Thank God!” said the parents with tearful eyes. In a week they had a letter from him, dated Washington, in which he said:

“You see I am able to use my hand again, though I confess it shakes somewhat. I am now in the hospital, surrounded by several hundred poor fellows, many worse off than myself. I languish through the long days I hardly know how. If it were not for the divine religion of Jesus, I should be wretched. Now I am unutterably blest in the thought that he is with me. I pity many of the poor fellows here. They have a horror of death, and yet they must die. They don’t want to hear about death, they tremble at sight of the Chaplain, who is requested by the Surgeons to

be careful and not excite their minds. I can readily conceive in what a position this places a conscientious man, but he must obey orders. Nevertheless there is a sort of consolation to many in the mere fact of his presence. They listen quietly, it may be prayerfully, to his public petitions, and seem to feel as if there were a sort of guarantee of their safety in his near vicinity. It is a most important position, this Chaplaincy of the hospitals. A kind, thoughtful, tender-hearted man, gains a mighty ascendancy over the minds of the soldiers. They learn to look for him, and to miss him if he does not come. He sees and corrects abuses, he obtains many comforts and delicacies, he has words of encouragement for the desponding, and his language in the public service on the Sabbath may often touch the heart and stir up the conscience. While regimental Chaplains, many of them, might be dispensed with, particularly in times of service, hospital Chaplains are a necessity and a great blessing.



"Of my wound I have said nothing to you yet. It is painful, but perhaps not dangerous. I say perhaps, because so much depends upon healthy suppuration. I do not as yet, talk much, and my physician says I am doing admirably. I am so sorry to learn that you have both but just recovered from sickness. When you get stronger I hope to see you on here. Perhaps I may be able to go home with you."

A week later he writes :

"15th. Still mending. I walk about now, and it does not hurt me to talk. I went into one of the wards to-day, and the first sight I saw was my little drummer boy. I never was so much pleased in my life as at that moment. The little fellow burst into tears, and sobbed and sobbed—he was so weak, poor little pet. It seems that he had been sick two weeks with the typhoid fever. He said he missed me so much—had no idea that I had been with him, or rather in the same hos-

pital, all that time. I comforted him a great deal by telling him I would try and get him in my ward, so that I could oversee him.

"'O! do, Lieutenant Messinger,' he cried in his little piping voice, 'I'll be so glad—and I know I'll soon get well.'"

"So in a little time I had him placed by me. He seemed delighted with the nice white sheets and bedspreads. Said the darker ones had annoyed him. He looks very pale and pretty under his little netting, and I think he will soon get well.

"I believe I am beginning to feel my inaction, and to fret a little. I want to be in camp, but I may not be able to get back for months. This troubles me, yet I try to think it all's for the best. Of one thing I am sure—Christ makes me happy, *whenever I let Him*. If I give up my own wishes, my perplexing thoughts, and quietly rest in Him, I can bear my inaction. Besides he honors me by allowing me to perform his blessed work among

the sick. They have some of them found out that I am a Christian, and love to have me converse with them and in a few instances pray for them. I enjoy this good work. In this connection I have again and again perused the last letter of dear Alice. The sweet saint, though dead, yet speaketh. I never knew the beauty of her mind before. She writes thus in one part of her letter :

“‘I feel persuaded that you are, that you must be a Christian, that my earthly prayers are answered, that for you to live is Christ and to die, gain—and that living or dying, you are the Lord’s. Blessed brother, my faith tells me that if I hover about your sick bed, I shall see you prayerful in spirit, instant in all good works ; or if the body is too weak for that, the soul will hold sweet communion with its Maker. My faith is strong—very strong ; I cry “it shall be so !” God will hear my prayer.’ This is but an extract. I keep it sacredly over my heart with her dear image.,’

In another letter he says ;—

“My little boy is getting better, while I believe I am growing weaker. This may be caused by the extra efforts I have put forth. So many have died, that it has kept me constantly anxious. Charlie is invaluable—his spirits are high, and he is a happy little fellow. I think I shall live yet to educate him. He must be educated. He is not fit to be in the regiment again, as he still has trouble from that old wound in his thigh. He says as soon as he is well he will nurse me, and take good care of me. But I think this weakness is only temporary. I was getting so much better, and all my old visions and ambitions coming on with returning health. I am looking for you, father—perhaps mother, too. But do not be frightened. Doubtless God has much more work for me to do. Keep that sacred grave bright with flowers. How I wish I could be with you a few hours !”

But three days after the receipt of this last let-

ter, and when Mr. and Mrs. Messinger fondly hoped they were going on to Washington to take the dear invalid home with them, came a sad missive. It was written with a trembling hand:

“DEAREST FRIENDS;

“I am worse, but do not be alarmed. I am very calm—wonderfully so. O! the transporting love of Jesus Christ! My wound begins to bleed internally, but still is not considered dangerous. My little drummer boy sits by me patiently, all day—he would all night if I would allow him. He fans me and tends me with a heartfelt devotion which is very touching. I hope you will come on. It would be such a comfort to see you if I *am* going. You have one angel safe in heaven, do not grudge heaven another offering. Give me up, and if I live, to God be all the glory. If I should not see you, however, let me commend little Charlie to your care. He is my legacy—but oh! I pray God that my earthly eyes may behold

you once more. I am weak, but fancy myself better than I was yesterday. The surgeons give me a great deal of encouragement, but they always do.”

This letter was ended abruptly. That same day on which it was received the almost broken-hearted parents set off for Washington. Long and tedious did the journey seem to them. At times they took hope, but alas! there was that undefinable dread weighing upon their spirits, and that they found impossible to throw off. It was nearing evening when they entered the proud Capital of our Union. Driving directly to the hospital, they inquired with faltering voices for the loved one. The steward met them.

“Lieutenant Messinger,” he said, “was still living.”

Still living! Fearful premonition! But they commanded their hearts to be still, and proceeded softly to the place pointed out. A bright little

countenance, now shadowed, however, met them, looking up between the folds of the netting. Mr. Messinger fell upon his knees as he softly articulated, "my son!"

"Father—mother, oh! you are come; thank God!" he said with a feeble smile. "Now I shall die on your bosom, and be happy."

"My darling, my darling!" murmured the mother between her kisses.

"Yours no longer, dearest mother," but Christ's," he said with a heavenly smile.

It was almost too much for that mother-heart, but for his sake she kept back the struggling tears.

"Mother, there is Charlie," he said "you know what I wanted. He loves me, you will love him." He knew she understood, though she could not speak.

"Never feel troubled because I die here," he said some moments afterward, "it has been a pleasant place to me—the very gate of heaven to

my soul. Don't think, don't feel that my life is thrown away. It is not—God always has a purpose—*always*."

Ah! will that night ever be forgotten by those who watched? The gray dawn stealing in upon the last sweet smile—the last whispered words were, "Alice, and Jesus." Never, never. And though the little drummer boy has found home, love, parents, all that heart could wish for, still at times he feels keenly, through what loss he came there. And they, the parents of that young Christian hero, can look up to-day, and whisper with serenest confidence over the double grave of their children, "The Lord gave and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

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