Prison Life of One of The Immortal Six Hundred

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LYON, COAHOMA CO., MISS.

To Dr. J. C. Brown. With the Compliments of his friend the author [illegible]

Alvon, W. Va. Sept 9th 1910

The Prison Life

Of

Major Lamar Fontaine

One of the Immortal Six Hundred Confederate Officers, Prisoners of War, on Prison Ship Crescent City, on Morris Island, Fort Pulaski and Hilton Head, S. C., 1864-1865.

Dedicated with love, through sunshine or shower, to his prison comrade, Capt. J. W. Mathews, 25th Virginia Infantry, Confederate States Army, of Alvon, Greenbrier County, West Virginia. He is a gentleman, a citizen and a soldier; none truer, under the canopy of heaven, in all the walks of life.

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A Brief Sketch of the Prison Life of Major Lamar Fontaine, a Member of the Immortal Six Hundred, Morris Island, Prisoners of War, 1864-1865.

In this little pamphlet I shall endeavor to give the reader a brief sketch of my prison life while a member of this band of Confederate prisoners of war, all officers of the Confederate Army and Navy, who were subjected to the most cruel and barbarous treatment by the brutal "long armed Ape," as Secretary of War Stanton, called him, in the White House, at Washington, from August, 1864, to June, 1865 And this band of six hundred officers are known to-day as "The Immortal Six Hundred," so named, in front of Stonewall Jackson's monument, in the Capitol Campus in Richmond, Virginia, at our first meeting, in June, 1896, by Capt. J. W. Mathews of Alvon, Greenbrier County, West Virginia, he being a member of that immortal band and an ex-Captain in the 25th Virginia Infantry.

In giving my own individual history while a member of that immortal band I wish, in no braggart or vain glorious style, to show to the younger generations of my loved Southland the unfaltering, unyielding, unswerving, lion-hearted fidelity and devotion to duty, love of country, and the principles for which we fought, on the

tented field, on more than two thousand bloody plains of death, with only 600,000 men, against 3,000,000 men, volunteers, hirelings from the shores of every clime under the sun, and how, when chained and starved, in the gloomy cells of these same barbarians, we, with the same fidelity, could not be forced to surrender, or knuckle to them, or yield one single iota, of the principles that were our beacon lights, in that great, unequal struggle, where 600,000 soldiers, in reality, were contending against an armed world, buried against us by the New England fanatical bloodhounds of hate.

Each member of that immortal six hundred, whom the hand of Fate placed upon the lofty pinnacle of Fame, feels and knows in his inmost soul that out of that army of six hundred thousand Southern soldiers, one hundred times six hundred men, could have been chosen, who would have p sed, with the same proud record, through the fiery hell of suffering that any one of our number did. And as our banner, on which our record is inscribed, takes its position in the line of march, beside the shot torn and battle scarred banners that are born aloft; they greet us, worthy of the adoration that is befitting those that are bloodstained on the fields of death.

I feel, as one of The Immortal Six Hundred, that it is my duty to give to my children and grandchildren, and to the future generations, who shall take our places, as citizens beneath our Southern skies, the record of the fiery ordeal that we had to pass through during that great intercecine war, that was forced upon us, not for the preservation of the Union, but for the sole purpose of taking from us, and freeing the slaves, that the descend-

ants of the Puritans of the bleak, cold, storm swept, and inhospitable, ice-bound shores of New England forced upon us. They first seceded from us, and sent to foreign lands, to get commissioners, to survey, and to stake the line between the North (themselves) and the South. This line was drawn because the South forbade them from, and by law, compelled them to cease the capturing and sale of the savage African negroes and importing and dumping them upon our shores. The cutting off of this source of revenue caused the deadliest, unreasoning hate, to spring up among these descendants of the Mayflower; and they drew the Mason and Dixon line, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River, entirely across the whole then so-called United States, and, in thunder tones, commanded us to stay (with the property that we had bought from them) south of that line, under penalty of confiscation of that property, if we dared disobey. And when we made the Louisiana Purchase from Napoleon, and extended our Southern territory far north of their line, and westward to the Pacific Ocean, then they began a bloody war against us, known as The Missouri Compromise, which war ended in the great struggle of the sixties and the ten years of Reconstruction, in which they placed the heel of the black savage slave upon the necks of the Southern white men, and for all time since they have held it there and treated us as conquered provinces. They waged the war of the sixties against the South to gratify their insane blood-hound hate. They captured, first and last, 220,000 Confederate soldiers, and with all the ports of the world open to them and super-abundant supplies at their beck and call, with medicine, clothing and food at

hand, 26,000 of these poor prisoners perished in their hands; while the South captured 270,000 Yankee prisoners, and with not a port open, with no medicines (for these their god, Abraham Lincoln, declared contraband of war,) no supplies from any foreign ports, (for all these were hermetically sealed by six hundred armed gun boats, manned by 30,000 men and sailors), and their whole country over run and devastated by an invading, destroying host of hirelings, from every clime under the sun, commanded by their generals and the powers at Washington, to leave the country of the South land, through which they marched so drear and desolate, that a crow flying over it would have to carry his provender with him for the balance of the season. And that these foreign and native hirelings carried out these instructions and obeyed the mandates of the sainted "Long Armed Ape," and the "Bloody Gorrilla, at the other end of the Avenue," of Thad Stevens, the scars upon the bosom of the South to day amply testify. And yet, despite this condition of things, the records of the U. S. War Department show, that out of 270,000 Federal prisoners (50,000 more Yanks than they had of us) in this land, desolated and destroyed by the invading armies of the North, but 23,500 Yankees died; while out of the 220,000 Confederate soldiers, prisoners of war in the Yankee prisons, under the kind and humane treatment of the best government the world ever saw, 26,000 Confederate prisoners died. Comment is unnecessary. When I look back through the vista of the intervening years, at the pale emaciated forms of my comrades of the Immortal Six Hundred, who for sixty five days were fed on rotten corn meal and soft, slimy pickle, both

condemned years before (with the commissary store of the fort full of wholesome food), and think how they bore it all, for love of home and country. My heart goes out, filled with a love too strong to die. It cannot perish, for God is Love, hence Love is Immortal. Your example, all ye Immortal Six Hundred, who stood true to the end, you have erected a beacon light of glory to Southern manhood that towers like a huge mountain above the American Continent, that will ever catch the first rays of the rising sun off Morris Island's sand plain on the eastern Atlantic, and its snow capped crown will catch the last glint of its setting ray as it sinks beneath the crests of the rolling waves of the Pacific, beyond San Diego, on California's shores.

Each one of us will meet again and answer to "Roll Call" in our eternal bivouac beyond the stars, under the smiles of a just, approving God.

Your friend and comrade, in sunshine or shower,

LAMAR FONTAINE, C. E. and Ph. D.

Lyon, Coahoma County, Mississippi.

On the 12th day of May, 1864, by the side of Major Rafe Bell, of Yazoo County, Miss., in the fearful charge to recover our breastworks, in the "Bloody Angle," at Spotsylvania Court House, in Virginia, I was shot down, and left upon the field, and, with the other wounded Confederate soldiers, removed to the hospital tents, under our own surgeons. Our army moved forward, and left many of our wounded behind, I, among the rest. A few days afterwards the Yankees appeared and took us all prisoners, surgeons and all, and removed

us, in wagons and ambulances, to their boats on the Potomac, and thence to various prisons. I was carried to Fort Delaware, on the Delaware River, on Pea Island, below Philadelphia. Here I spent a week or two in the prison hospital, and was then turned into the officers' barracks. Here I met many old friends and comrades, and for several days enjoyed their comradeship. About the 20th of June, 1864, Generals Jeff Thompson of Missouri and C. B. Vance of North Carolina, Maj. W. G. Owens of Harrodsburg, Kentucky, and myself, were taken out of the officers prison and marched into the walls of the old fort, carried down into a dark, damp cell, just under the "Port Cullis," of the fort, and each of us chained by our ankles to a large iron swivel ring, located in the center of the cell. Our chains were about three feet long, each containing twenty-two links, each link being about five-eighths of an inch thick. These were of polished steel and very heavy; they were locked to rings of the same metal, that were banded around our ankles. In this cell, which was about eight feet square, as dark as midnight, unventilated, without a blanket, or even a straw mattress between us and the hard, cold, damp floor, we laid together, until the fourth day of July, 1864. On that day my three companions were released and carried out, and we were separated, as far as I was concerned, forever, as I have never met either of them since, during a period of forty-six years.

Our sojourn together in this dark and loathsome Yankee dungeon for fifteen days was one period of living hell. The cold, damp floor and atmosphere, and the constant torture of the chains, pressing, like tight shoes

LAMAR FONTAINE, MAJ. CAV. C. S. A.
P. D. BODDY'S STAFF

Wounded at Chickamauga Sept. 17th, 1863. Taken while in temporary command of the Post at Tuscumbia, Ala., Oct. 29, 1863
Residence, Austin City, Texas

upon our tender ankles, the stench constantly arising from the unemptied wooden vessel, that was used as a sink, and the swarms of body vermin, with which the dark cell was infested, added tortures that the English language is too poor in simile to give expression to.

As our eyes became gradually accustomed to the darkness, the Stygian horrors of the place became more apparent, and we almost gave up hope, and one of our party prayed for death to end it all. Our daily ration, which was shoved through a "cat hole" under the bottom of three iron doors, by a forked stick, in the hands of an unseen Yankee guard, ignorant of the English language, consisted of one-half loaf of stale, sour, sobby prison bread and twelve ounces of water, which had a horrid, slimy taste, as though some natrona and epsom salts had been dissolved in it. The amount of sour, stale, sobby bread weighed ten ounces. This was our ration for twenty four hours. As the guard would shove this meagre pittance to each of us, he would call out a semblance of our name, in a croaky, harsh tone, and as we would answer, he would shove our ration through, and say, "You dere"; and then he would add, "We dakes you out, mat six o'clock, and shoots mit you." Old Jeff Thompson would always yell back at him with an oath, and say, "Shoot, you d——n blue b——d son of b——h, for I had rather be dead than in this living hell." As my thoughts fly back, down the dim corridors of time, how distinctly the scenes of those dark terrible days loom up before my memory's vision. As we entered the frowning walls of Fort Delaware, under an escort of twelve armed blue coats, with fixed bayonets, we were filed right, into an empty casement;

the light streamed through the yawning port holes, almost on a level with the outer surface of the ground. Here we are measured and weighed, our names and rank in the army taken, and a full description of each, just as if we were convicts. I remember distinctly that while they were taking the name and rank of my companions I leaned against the mantlepiece over the fireplace, and seeing a small nail, I scratched my name on the smoothe slate slab, on which rested a fragment of a small oak board, about six inches square, and possibly three-quarters of an inch thick. I pocketed the rusty nail and the board and carried them with me into our cell. It was a lucky thing for us that I did so, for in the long days of ennui this little board became a race course and battle field, where we became excited, and for many weary hours forget our condition and kept our senses, and, I am frank to confess, that I have been more excited and royally entertained while viewing a combat royal between two grey-back gladiators than were the Grecks and Romans, in the ages past, when they contended before the seething crowds that flocked to Athens or Rome, and felt as great a thrill of pleasure at the winning of a race by my grey-back steed as I ever did when the grand "Lexington," in the palmy days, was crowned king of the Kentucky thoroughbreds.

The "Grey Back" is the bravest, the gamest and most desperate fighter that has his habitat upon the earth, that I am acquainted with. His onslaught and attack ends only in death; when they once clinch the hold is never loosened, except by the grim reaper death. The race begins, away from each other, as soon as their

"feelers" come in contact, and they continue to move, until they drop off the board. And so it will be if they grapple in deadly combat, they never turn loose, until death ends the struggle. I was fortunate enough to secure a real "Champion Grey Back" gladiator, as well as a racer; and I kept him in pasture, behind my ear; and when time for a race, or a gladiatorial exhibition was "pulled off," I would reach up carefully, and bring my Champion to the front. In a few contests I was in possession of all the Confederate money in our cell One day I missed my Champion, and the "boys" said that while I was asleep Old Jeff Thompson caught him from behind my ear and smashed him between his thumbs; any how I lost heart, and never did I feel the same interest in the further races or combats. How strange such narratives must sound to the readers in these halcyon days it is hard to imagine, for they cannot put themselves into such a predicament as we found ourselves, nor under such conditions, for in all the annals of history, no modern civilized people were ever placed.

I recall those days now with a shudder. And I can see the noble Jeff Thompson, one of God's grandest productions, in His own form and image, shut out from the light of heaven, with his own loved wife, the star of his life, an inmate in a Yankee mad house, because she refused to betray him. Peace to your ashes, dear old prison comrade It would take several tomes to give the reader a full description of our life and sufferings in that dark cell in Fort Delaware for the fifteen days that we were chained together. We think we get a pretty good idea of a man when, in the walks of life, we come

in daily contact with him in social and business relations. We find out more about him when we are in the camp and on the picket line, but when you are chained to him, in a gloomy cell, there you learn to know him well. This cell, under the "port cullis" of Fort Delaware, is the first place where I ever saw the "minority" rule. You will remember, that four of us were chained to one ring, in the center of an eight foot cell. It was impossible for us to lie down, without our feet being piled up, one on the other; and it was impossible for us to take any exercise, unless we did so by a lock-step, at the length of our chain, in a circle around our swivel ring moved as one man together. Now we all had to move at once, and keep step, should a single man refuse to take part in this exercise, the other three could not budge a peg, without lifting the rebel up, and carrying him by main strength, in our circular procession; and no single one of us was able or had the bodily strength to do this. So here, if he chose, a single man had dominion over the other three. Sometimes Old Jeff, as the men would familiarly call him, would lie down and refuse to walk with us for hours at a time, and we three would have to wait his pleasure. Thus the minority rule prevailed.

On the fourth day of July, 1864, my three comrades were taken out of my cell, and I was left alone. I heard that they were to be sent to Charleston, South Carolina, for exchange; and I felt glad for their sakes, and sad, of course, because I was not one of the fortunate ones. I had an idea why I was not so honored, and right here I shall show you the reason why I thought I was so cruelly treated, as the subsequent

events will show as the narrative progresses. Where I first came into prominence, before the public, during the great struggle of the sixties, was at Leesburg, Va., in August, 1861, when I gave to the 13th, 17th and 18th Mississippi Regiments my poem, now so well known to the reading public, "All Quiet Along the Potomac," and the next was at Waterloo Bridge, in Farquar County, Virginia, in August, 1862, when Stonewall Jackson was circumventing the braggart Pope, prior to the second battle of Manassas. Here, in the presence of Generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson, and various members of their staff, and in the presence of nine Federal officers, prisoners of war, two of whom I had that morning, singly and alone, captured, and in the presence of an onlooker of the British Army, I shot down sixty Federal soldiers at sixty shots, without a miss, and in less than an hour's time, with my breech-loading Whitworth rifle; and for my escapade at Vicksburg, in carrying caps and despatches between Johnstone and Pemberton, through the lines of the besieging army of U. S. Grant. These things had been known to the Federal authorities, and were treasured up by them, against me; hence I say that I did not wonder at their cruel treatment of me. The British officer gave his nation (which they did not believe at the time) an account of my deadly marksmanship; and when our army returned from the Maryland campaign, and the remnant was reviewed in Richmond by President Davis, his Cabinet and the Confederate Congress, and I had led the van, that day, as the Scout, and received the salute from Mr. Davis and the plaudits of the multitude, the following poem appeared in the old Richmond Whig, and was read by

the men, women and children of that day with interest, and will be read with equal interest by the present generation, both North and South. I here give it, not in a vain glorious or braggart style, but to show the prowess of a Southern Soldier and to leave as a memento to my own children and grandchildren, and to the coming generations. Here is the poem, written by M. L. Williamson, a Confederate Mother, of that day and time:

A SONG OF LAMAR FONTAINE.

Ho, bugliers! sound the charge!
  Ho, Marshals! clear the way!
For Southland's Knights, in all their might,
  Ride Richmond's streets today!
And every gate and doorway,
  Is decked in color bright,
In honor of our Chieftain,
  And heroes of the fight.

They come, each crowned in glory;
  They've won a deathless name,
But renowned within that number,
  Is brave Lamar Fontaine;
Who, like Horatius Cocles,
  In brave days of old,
Feared neither flood nor foe,
  Within his heart of gold.

His eagle eye and steady aim,
  TWICE THIRTY FOEMEN SLEW,
While the pulsing minute hand,
  ONCE, 'round the dial flew;
And Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson
  Stood gazing in surprise,
At the calm and valiant scout,
  Who thus the foe defies.

He spared not blood or muscle,
  His "Duty" was his pride,
'Til many gory wounds
  Bedewed his gallant side.
On! On! Through blood and carnage,
  He'll ever press his way,
And will so continue
  'Til Southland wins the day.

Ho, bugiers! blow a louder note,
  Ho, Marshals! lead the way!
For Southland's Knights, in all their might,
  Ride Richmond's streets today.
But in the serried ranks
  Of that long, glittering train,
Breathes none more brave, more true,
  Than Scout Lamar Fontaine.

With this record behind me, I say, I did not wonder at their treatment of me, especially by the substitutes and foreign hirelings and negroes that composed the greater part of the Federal Army with whom I came in contact in twenty-seven of the heaviest battles fought during our war, and fifty-seven of the bloodiest skirmishes, two long sieges (Vicksburg and Petersburg), and in one hundred and nine individual skirmishes, where I alone represented the Confederate side, and where I left from one or more dead or wounded behind me. I expected harsh treatment, and not one of my companions, in those terrible days of prison torture, can truthfully say that they ever heard a murmur of discontent or complaint at our cruel treatment fall from my lips. On the stone wall of our prison cell in Fort Delaware they saw me, with the rusty bent nail, carve these lines, first penned to Alice Key Howard of Baltimore, Md.:

"You can never win us back, never, never,
Though we perish on the track of your endeavor;
Though our corpses strew the earth
Which smiles upon our birth,
And blood pollutes each hearth—
  Stone, Forever.

We have risen to a man, firm and fearless,
Of your curses and your ban, we are careless;
Every hand is on its knife,
Every gun is primed for strife,
And every palm contains a life,
  High and peerless.

You have no such blood as ours for the shedding;
In the veins of Cavaliers was its heading;
You have no such stately men
In your abolition den,
To march through foe and fen,
  Nothing dreading.

We may fall before the fire of your legions;
Paid with gold, murderers hire, base allegiance:
But for every drop you shed,
You shall have a mound of dead,
That the buzzards may be fed
  In our regions.

The battle to the strong is not given,
While the judge of right and wrong sits in heaven,
And the God of David still
Guides the pebble at his will;
There are giants yet to kill,
  Wrongs unshriven."

I felt every word of this, and it came straight from the heart. After my three comrades were taken out of my cell the Federal armorer, or blacksmith, entered my cell and riveted my chain around my left ankle. My rations were reduced to ten ounces of water and eight

ounces of stale prison bread, that you could see the marks of teeth on, occasionally. In solitary confinement, with my thoughts only, I lay from July the fourth until August the twentieth, with no mark of time, save the boom of the morning and evening gun, and an occasional salute, to some Federal officer, a passing man-of-war of the Yankee navy, or a foreign flag, or some supposed victory over our fast depleting forces. I do not care to go into the details of each day of this solitary imprisonment, for one day was just like the other. My body was a mass of sores, worn by the constant contact with the hard stone floor, and by the blood sucking vermin that constantly tortured my sleeping and waking hours. Once every twenty-four hours I would (if awake) hear the sentinel on duty at my door say, "Gif me dat coop." And if I did not hear him a full twenty-four hours would pass before I would have another ten ounces of water, or if I was slow in getting my cup through the cat hole in my cell door.

You readers can imagine my sufferings, and my condition, while thus a guest of the greatest government on the face of the globe. Words and similes of the English language are too poor for me to describe it.

On the twentieth day of August the brutal guard, with a Dutch blacksmith, threw the doors of my cell open and let in the first breath of untainted air that I had drawn within my lungs since the fourth of July. The stench from the wooden sink, that had overflowed, from the excrements of my body, almost overpowered these brutes in human form, and for a moment they hesitated to enter.

As they hesitated at the foul odor arising from the

cesspool of corruption that was fast creeping over the cell floor, a harsh, piping voice, well-known to every Confederate prisoner on the Island, as that of Lieutenant Auhl, commanded them to enter, strike the chains from my limbs, and bring me out. With no gentle hands, the blacksmith obeyed, and I was commanded to "Cum out." It was very difficult for me to obey, for I was but a shadow of my former self. Dirty, covered with vermin and the filth of the loathsome dungeon, no one wished to defile himself by touching or aiding me. I made but slow progress, and the brutal Auhl said, "Cum on, or I'll put you back and keep you there." By will-power alone I went forward; and when the blinding light of the upper world flashed upon me I was as blind as a bat and weak as a sick kitten. I could hear the murmur of happy voices, and they sounded like the whisperings of angelic hosts from the shores of the land of Beulah to my listening ears. In pushing forward, I fell; I heard a brutal oath hurled at me, and at the same time I felt a friendly, sympathetic hand, grasp, and lift me to my feet, and guide me forward. The friendly hand that laid hold of my foul and miserable body was that of Lieutenant Legg of the Fiftieth Virginia Infantry, as pure and noble a man as ever walked this old earth of ours. He led me up the gang plank and down into the reeking hold of the old Crescent City, a miserable little coasting steamer that plied between New Orleans and the "City of Brotherly Love," so-called. Out of the HOLD of this little steamer, but a few days before, had been driven a herd of cattle, and down in the HOLD had been erected shelves, one above the other, just like the shelves of a dry goods merchant.

These shelves, or bunks, were in three tiers, and the distance from the top to the bottom of the hold was only about seven feet, and the whole of them below the water line of the vessel. There was a gangway the whole length of these two tiers of bunks about thirty inches wide; along this gangway we could pass, to and from, a ONE HOLE SINK, which was situated on the top of the paddle wheel of the vessel. The stench of this dark, sickening HOLE was something terrible as we entered it, as the manure, and drippings of the cattle, had not been removed from it, and the heat was fearful, for only a thin, board wall, separated us from the boilers and furnaces. I was carried to the farther end of the rows of bunks, and as I went down into the DARK HOLD I could see very plainly, for my eyesight was accustomed to the darkness of my recent cell, and the gloom of the vessel's hold was a relief to my light blinded eyes. I selected the top bunk, in the extreme stern of the vessel, and asked my kind conductor to occupy the one next to me, forgetting how foul and loathsome a creature I was, with my body reeking with mephitic odors, and covered with a living mass of vermin, that kept me constantly tearing my flesh, with my long, beast like claws. Of course my appearance caused my companions to give me as wide a berth as possible, and they did so. As they FILED in, I could not but notice the SELFISH MEN, and those who were willing to SACRIFICE THEMSELVES for the pleasure of their comrades. Not one, within the range of my vision, had ever been to sea, and these all wanted the bottom bunks, and it was hard to get a single man to take a top one. Soon the vessel was loaded with its human cargo, and I lay like

one in a trance. The voices of my comrades sounded like the music of the angelic hosts that hover around the Great White Throne, and I listened to their murmurings with a contentment close akin to that of a poor condemned being, when he hears a "WRIT OF PARDON" read as the noose is about to be adjusted around his neck.

As the vessel's furnaces and boilers began to roar and rumble, and the heat assert its sovereignty, our discomforts began. And you could hear the complaints coming from all along the crowd. Soon the paddle wheels began to turn, and the vessel to move, and a shout arose that we were "Off for Dixie," and a wild hurrah echoed from every throat, and all discomfort was forgotten. Soon I heard a voice command, "Get in your bunks, all of you." I glanced down the gangway, and could see greasy, dirty looking men, with tin cups and camp kettles, slowly coming my way, handing out hot pea soup and ship-biscuit to each head that protruded from his bunk. We all had to crawl in, FEET FOREMOST. When the dirty scullions, with their GREASY, SALTY, SLIMY pea soup and ROTTEN, WORM-EATEN ship-biscuit reached me, I took my portion, sipped the horrid stuff, and crunched my worm eaten cracker, with a gusto, without looking at it. Being accustomed for so long to the stale prison bread, sobby and sour, and the horrid water, in my cell, the change of grub was welcomed by me, and to see so many of my comrades, and hear their voices, was a real pleasure.

Our meal was eaten in silence, and soon the cups were returned, and water given that, to me, was as sweet and pure as the nectar which Jupiter sips. After

my hearty, warm meal, and the drink of pure water, the first that I had tasted in two long, dreary months, despite the crawling, biting, and torturings of the vermin that were sapping my vitals. I sank back and drew my head into my soft, springy, plank bunk, and was soon sound asleep; and my dreams were of my early boyhood days, on the wild, wind-swept prairies of my Texas home. How long I slept, or dreamed, I know not. When I awoke, I felt the heaving of the vessel and the swash of the waves as they lashed her sides, and it was like the lullaby of my sainted mother, when I was an innocent child, in the long ago. I turned, and yielded to the gentle motion, and again was wrapped in the soothing arms of forgetfulness. Not so with my comrades; they were tortured with the intense heat of the furnaces, which were at our feet, and the terrible stench of the bilge water, and the offal of the cattle; and the hot, salty pea soup, and the rotten ship-biscuit, combined with the heaving and plunging of the vessel as she entered the rough waters of the Atlantic, off Capes May and Henlope, and with the perspiration streaming from their bodies, their condition was pitable. With only one sink hole for the use of six hundred men, and that at the top of a narrow iron ladder some thirty or forty feet above their heads, and half a dozen Yankee bayonets that permitted only one at a time to ascend and return before another could do so, it was a trying time. The calls of nature could not be disobeyed, and the consequence was that soon this narrow pass-way from the bunks to the sink hole at the top of the ladder was sloush with the excrements of these suffering men.

Streams of vomit would gush from the mouths of

the men on the top and middle tiers of bunks down upon those who had, what they thought, were the comfortable ones, on the bottom row. Can the reader catch a faint idea of our condition? And instead of trying to better our lot they increased our suffering by giving us hot, brackish, half-distilled water to drink, from an evaporator only capable of distilling a sufficiency for thirty men every twenty-four hours, while instead of thirty men, it now had to water six hundred Confederate officers and two hundred and thirty guards, and the crew of the vessel added. And the water we received had to be cooled, in a temperature of one hundred and twenty degrees, slowly, before we could swallow it.

For eighteen days, in this dark hole, below the level of the sea, with the perspiration pouring from every pore of our skin and dripping to the floor below, and the awful effluvia of the vomit and the excrements from six hundred human beings, sloshing in waves six inches deep along the entire gangway, and steadily rising and becoming more putrid, can you not conceive what we poor humans had to endure? Do you blame us for being proud of the fact that we had the will-power to suffer and endure this for the love of our country and to uphold the honor and integrity of our own loved Southland? We were only six hundred Confederate officers, no different from any other six hundred that you could have selected from among them all; each Confederate would have borne himself with the same heroic, self sacrificing devotion to honor and to the cause of his country. The Fates placed us there, and how we stood the test the annals of our Southland tell. That we are proud of our record, we do not deny; for we

would be cowardly cravens not to be. And on bended knees, each night of my life, I thank my Great Creator that He gave me the physical stamina and the will-power to suffer and endure, and to let my name be inscribed upon the scroll of the Immortal Six Hundred.

But this life of eighteen days on that floating hell, the Old Crescent City, was but a mere bagatelle, a mere introduction, to what was before us; it was but a gentle prelude. In reality, it was, this life on the Crescent City, but the pickets fire that announced the approach of the enemy.

On our arrival at Hilton Head, in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, we were marched up on deck. Many great ocean men-of-war were grouped around us. A tug came up, and the scuttle-holes of our vessel were opened, and long lines of hose soon sent streams of water into the hold of the vessel, and the foul hold, our recent quarters, were purified with the clear waters of the gulf stream, so well named "The River in the Ocean." We were then carried to Morris Island, landed on a barren sand bar, on the seventh day of September, and under a guard of brutal negro soldiers, in our weak and exhausted condition, marched through deep sand, under the hot September sun, to a rude corral, such as we used to brand our cattle near my old Texas home on Bay Prairie, Matagorda County. I was faint and weak and on crutches, and half blind from the glare of the sunlight, and the glitter of the hot sand tortured my eyes. As we formed, and the roll was called, before we began our two-mile tramp, I glanced along the lines at the faces of my comrades, and I can assure you that any city belle would have envied them their complexion,

for it was pure and fair. Every one had got rid of the bile, that colored skin, and for eighteen days he had been in a Turkish bath tub. The contrast with the color of his blue-coated, thick-lipped, woolly-haired, black, savage negro guards, and their New England officers, was strikingly apparent. In the terrible march to our encampment two miles away I would frequently fall from sheer exhaustion, and so would others; and being so filthy, not a negro would put his hands upon me, but the two (for I was in the extreme rear) would shove their bayonets under and lift me up, as log-rollers do with their hand spikes. This they would do very roughly and with an oath, that if I did not quit falling and keep up they would run their bayonets through and carry me along.

By will-power alone I followed my companions into our stockade, a pen about three hundred feet square. Here, surrounded by the 54th Massachusetts negro regiment, nominally under the command of Col. C. D. Shaw, but in reality under the command of Lieut.-Col. Hallowell, who was the apotheosis of everything else except a Christian and a gentleman. This stockade was a few hundred feet, just in front of Battery Wagener, Batteries Gregg and Chatfield, and between them and our batteries, on Sullivan's Island, Fort Sumpter, and all the guns and batteries, defending the City of Charleston, South Carolina.

We had to dig holes in the sand, and drink the seep water, which was of a stale, brackish taste. We had old Sibly "A" tents, put up in streets, with four men assigned to each tent, out on the hot sand bar, in the blazing September sun, with a hundred brutal negro

soldiers watching you day and night.

As soon as I entered the coral I sank exhausted, just "inside the dead line," and rested for I don't know how long, in the hot sun. I then crawled to a clear, open spot, and commenced digging for water. As soon as I got some to a trench, about three or four feet long, I took off all my ragged clothes and lay down in the warm tepid water, and washed my face for the first time since the twentieth day of June, and this was the seventh of September. I rubbed and scoured my hands, face, arms and body with the pure white sand, and rubbed it through my hair. I then took my clothing, and until almost sundown I wet and rubbed them with sand. After this I laid them in the trench I had dug, and piled the sand high above them. I also partially covered myself with the white sand, and lay still, and watched the men move about in and out of their tents. Lieut. Legg, in passing, came near, and I asked him if he had a pair of pants that he could lend me, as I had buried mine in the sand and water to get rid of the vermin. He lent me his coat, and borrowed a pair of drawers from one of his friends, and so I was soon able to knock around and mingle with the "boys."

While we were congratulating ourselves on the change from the miserable hold of the old Crescent City, there was the roar of a gun, fired from Battery Wagener, just in our rear, and a huge shell rushed over our heads in the direction of Fort Sumpter, and soon others began to fly over us and our batteries. Then came replies from our guns; and they would burst their shells and the fragments hum and hiss down among us; and the guards, in their bomb-proofs, would laugh at our pre-

dicament. Sometimes the Yankees would send a shell low down and explode it just above our heads. We realized our position at once, and saw the diabolical scheme for which we were put on this island of tortures. To the men who have been in the heat of battle, where the shot and shell are flying thick and the ground ploughed and combed by grape and cannister, and the air vocal with the spat and hiss of the deadly minnies, and the shout and yell of charging legions, there is a wild, fearsome fascination that has to be felt in person to realize. But here, on this hot, sun kissed sand-bar, with no duty to urge, no shelter of any kind, nothing to do but to lie still and anticipate death in its most horrid form, the ordeal, and the terror of it all, cannot be described. It was like a nightmare dream, belching up from the open mouth of a real, man-fashioned hell. For forty-two days and nights this immortal band of six hundred Confederate officers of Southland stood this ordeal without a murmur, and with smiling faces rejected the proffer of the Oath of Allegiance to the Yankee government that would relieve them of this hideous nightmare.

Our food under this storm of fire, during our stay was, at the beginning, a slice of fat pickle pork and two hard-tack ship biscuit, full of bugs and worms, for breakfast. This you had to stand in line to receive from the hands of a big, beefy, greasy negro; one came in front, with a dirty, greasy tray on his head; as he passed, he would reach up and take a slice of the horrid stuff and hand it to you; and behind him came another, with a tray of worm eaten, rotten hard-tack; two of these were a ration. For dinner, you received a tin cup of thin,

greasy, salty pea soup, served like the morning meal, and another ship biscuit, mouldy and worm eaten. For supper you had as much step water and fresh air as you could drink and breathe. The commander, Lieut.-Col. Halloweil, upon our arrival, told us he was going to treat us as humanely and generously as prisoners of war could be treated, if we obeyed the prison rules. A few days after we had fed on the spoiled hard tack and sour, salty, condemned fat pickle pork, he sent a lot of empty barrels into the stockade, and informed us that they were for us to put our fresh meat and soup bones in.

He had a detail of officers every day to police the coral, under a negro brute, with negro guards accompanying, and would ask how we liked our negro masters and overseers? Individually, I only stood this fire of hell and delectable menu from the seventh of September until the fifteenth of September. I let my clothing lie in the water, buried in the sand, for three days; I then took them out of their sandy grave, and on an empty cracker box I rubbed them thoroughly, with sand, until they were clean and dry and free from vermin or their germs. On the fifteenth of September Captain Frank Bell of the Veteran Invalid Corps, once a captain in the Pennsylvania Bucktail Rangers, who had lost a leg during Stonewall Jackson's historic Valley campaign, entered the stockade, and seeing me, with my crutches, sitting near the port cullis of the stockade, came up, and asked me what rank I held in the Rebel Army. I replied that I was a Major in the Regular Army of the Confederate States, and that I had been assigned to staff duty on account of my wounds. He then asked me if I knew who was in command of the Reis in Charleston. I replied that I had heard General W. J. Hardee was in command, assisted by General Sam Jones. He then asked me if I had any personal acquaintance with General Hardee. I told him that I had known him from my boyhood days up. He then asked if I had any influence with Hardee. I asked what kind of influence he meant. He then replied that they were very anxious to obtain the exchange of some Rebel Major for a Major Harry White of Pennsylvania. I replied that there was not a Yankee in Charleston that General Hardee would not give for me. He arose and said: "Then you are the man we are hunting for; get your things and follow me." I was whittling a gutta percha button into a finger ring at the time of this conversation, and but few of my comrades were in sight in the stockade. I replied: "I have no things to get; I have on all my worldly gear now, and I am ready." He said: "Well, come on." I said: "Captain, I am crippled, and you will have to help me upon my crutches; then I can go." He replied: "I am crippled too." And rolling up his pants, he showed his wooden leg. We entered a yawl boat, only a few yards from this gate to our pen, and the sailors rowed to a large man-of-war in the offing, and I was escorted into the presence of General Foster, the Yankee General commanding the besieging forces around Charleston. Here I signed, in duplicate, a parole of fifteen days extent, to repair to Charleston for the purpose of exchanging myself for Major Harry White of Pennsylvania. Capt. Frank Bell, under flag of truce, was to accompany me, and escort Major White back into the presence of General Foster.

Capt. Frank Bell and I left the ship and were carried

to a small steam launch, and our launch weighed anchor, and sped away for Beaufort, on Beaufort Island. Here we were tucked away in an ambulance, and under a flag of truce and a small cavalry escort, we reached Pocataligo River, at the old ferry landing. Here we crossed the river and met the Confederate flag of truce and were escorted to Pocataligo Station, on the railroad between Charleston and Savannah. In going across Beaufort Island we passed alongside of an old Huguenot church, with about four acres of church yard, all under the shade of magnificent wide spreading live oak trees, with tall green grass and bright southern flowers carpeting the whole in a wilderness of neglected, primal beauty. It was the first touch of nature that my eyes had rested upon that gave me a glimpse of the freedom and solitude of the woods. On the side of the road, close to the fence that enclosed the church yard, stood a plain white marble column, with these words engraved in plain gothic letters: "Stranger, stop, my father sleeps here." This beautiful old church yard, with its proud, ancestral oaks, and this strange, yet eloquent, tribute to a father by some loving child, made a deep impression upon me, and though I had been rather garrulous with Capt. Bell, talking of our experiences during Stonewall Jackson's Valley campaign, I was silent so long that Capt. Bell asked me what was the matter, and I replied that I would be perfectly willing, should I continue in the same frame of mind, to spend the rest of my life under the shade of the trees and in the quiet of that old church yard. He, too, was silent after my reply, and said that it was an ideal spot in which to end such a life as had been mine.

At Pocataligo Station we boarded the train, and when we reached the outposts of Charleston the guards refused to let Capt. Bell enter the city. I had a short conversation with the commanding officer, whose name I have forgotten, and he promised to take good care of Capt. Bell and treat him in true Southern, hospitable style, until my mission was accomplished. I was then carried in a hack up to General Hardee's headquarters, and found him alone, sitting in an arm chair, with his feet on a table, scanning a map of Charleston harbor. I at once approached him, and the thud of my crutches on the floor caused him to lift his eyes. He did not recognize me until I introduced myself. He rose at once and gave me a warm hand shake, summoned a servant, and gave me a glass of pure water, such as I had not tasted for an age. He remarked that he was glad that I had arrived, that it was a God-send to him, as he had much work for me to do, and that he knew of no one else that he could trust to do it as he wished. I answered by pulling out my parole, which he carefully read, and remarked that the exchange should take place that day. He then repeated the name, "Harry White. Oh, yes," he said. "I have a letter here on my table from him addressed to a lawyer in Richmond, Virginia, a school or classmate of his, requesting this lawyer to try and get him a special exchange. How fortunate for you and him both, and for myself also." My heart bounded with joy, and I felt like one lifted up from the darkest depths of despair into a bright haven of rest. I told him of the poor devils of ours on Morris Island, under fire of our own guns, and of our experiences on the prison ship Crescent City. And the tears gathered

in his eyes, and he was lost in thought for some time. I then asked him if I could read Harry White's letter, and he pointed it out to me. Lying in an unsealed envelope, was a letter directed to a kinsman of mine (Richard Meade) of Richmond, Virginia. That is the letter I had reference to, said General Hardee.

I opened it, and as I read I saw all hope of an exchange vanish like the unreal visions of a dream. I felt as Sir Walter Raleigh did when he stepped upon the scaffold, gazed at the headman's ax, and feeling its keen edge, remarked: "A sharp medicine to cure my disease." The contents of that letter were of such a cringing, fawning, snivelling, sycophantic, mean and base, beggarly tone, that I could hardly read it. There was one part of it, to this day, I can never forget; and I at once determined to send it to General Foster for his own perusal. My face flushed as I turned to General Hardee, and asked if I might copy the letter and send the copy, with a note of explanation, to Cousin Dick Meade, and keep the original? He gave me permission; and there and then I made a careful and verbatim copy, and added this postscript: "Dear Dick, this is a copy of a letter written by a Yankee officer, for whom I have been sent from the Stockade on Morris Island to be exchanged for. I positively, and emphatically, refuse to be exchanged for such a —— —— —— ——. I will rot in prison first, and he may do the same."

The principal part that I knew would strike General Foster was where he promised Dick Meade that if exchanged he would never again, in any capacity, serve the U. S. government. And right here I would like, before I go on with my story of the prison life, to digress

a little and give you an aftermath of this very episode. I sent the original letter to General Foster by Captain Frank Bell, who was awaiting to escort the writer of said letter, and to it I appended this brief postscript:

"General Foster, Commanding U. S. Forces Besieging Charleston, Hilton Head, S. C.

Dear Sir:

I positively refuse to be exchanged for this —— —— —— —— ——.

Very truly yours."

Gen. Hardee was surprised at my action in the matter, and asked me if I had not had a sufficiency of Yankee hospitality. I remarked that I certainly had, but that I would rot before I would let my father and family be so disgraced, and my comrades in arms even know that I had suffered such a man to be acknowledged by me as my equal. He then said: "If you are so choice, suppose that you go to the Yankee prison and pick you out one that you will be willing to exchange yourself for?" I accepted his offer at once, and immediately got in the cab, and told the driver to carry me out to the Yankee prison pen. As we were passing down the street I saw a Lieutenant Harrelson, of our navy, whom I had known from my boyhood days. I hailed him, and as he was walking in the direction my driver was going I invited him to get in and I would drive him to his point of destination. He did so, and I immediately informed him of my object and my destination, and showed him my authority from General Hardee to select any Federal Major I might wish to offer in exchange for myself. He said: "Our headquarters are in the Roper Hospital, with Captain Sharpe, our Naval Ordinance Officer, and

there are a good many Yankee officers quartered in the hospital, some sick and some wounded; we'll go there, and you may find the very kind of a Yankee that will suit you." So I directed the driver to take me at once to the Roper Hospital.

Here I was introduced to Captain Sharpe, and I passed at once into the prison ward of the hospital. The scene that here met my vision was in such strong contrast to the Northern prison hospitals that I thought that I must be mistaken, and I asked a negro attendant, who was dressed with extreme neatness, and bearing a waiter of delicacies, where the Yankee prisoners were? She replied: "Dese is all Yankee prisoners." I could hardly believe her. Just then a young man entered with a hospital steward's uniform on, and I accosted him, and asked if this was where the Yankee prisoners were confined. He saluted and said that "These are all Yankee officers." Some of them were playing chess, some writing at comfortable tables, and others conversing, and not one had the appearance of being sick. I was silent for a few moments, and before I spoke several ladies, with a servant, entered, bearing a large waiter with plates of different kinds of preserves, cakes, and cups of steaming tea, and glasses of home-made wine, etc.

I could contain myself no longer. I turned to the crowd of blue-coats and said: "Gentlemen, I am in your presence for the purpose of selecting a Federal Major to be exchanged for myself, and I came in here to select him. Now, I want a Yankee gentleman to swap places with me. I am tired of eating Yankee grub, and I want to be where I can get some of the good things that I see our ladies feeding you on. Now, I

want a Yankee Major, understand, who, when he gets back into his own lines, will fight me to a finish, do his duty, and give me a chance to kill him, or be to kill me. And I want one who, when he gets home, will not lie, but tell the truth, about how he was treated while he was a prisoner in our hands. Now, gentlemen, from a casual glance, I cannot select this Major, but I leave you to choose him. As soon as you have made your selection, in any manner you may, send your man up to General Hardee's headquarters, and I will see that he goes at once through our lines to General Foster, who now is in command of the Federal forces besieging this city." I bid them adieu, returned to General Hardee's headquarters, and reported what I had done.

From General Hardee I borrowed a horse and turned toward the western outskirts of Charleston, and rode down past the Roper Hospital, and asked Captain Sharpe the nearest route to where I could get into a dense woods, where I could not see any signs of civilization. He said that I would have to go outside the line of sentinels some two or three miles, and that out there I would find a wilderness, among the swamps, that would give me all the solitude I wished. He then gave me the "countersign" that would enable me to pass in and out of our lines. I rode until I reached our outposts, and from a native of the region, who was on guard at the moment, I was directed how to find a "blind road" that would carry me deep into the shades of the primal forest. I followed this road, or trail, until I could hear no sound save that of the siege guns that were shelling my comrades on Morris Island.

Here I halted, tied the bridle rein of my horse to

a small log that he could slowly drag as he fed upon the rich herbage, and taking off his saddle, I spread the blanket on the soft grass at the foot of a giant live oak, and with the saddle for a pillow, I laid down, and as soon as quiet was restored, which had been broken by my intrusion into their domain, the birds, squirrels, and other denizens of these sylvan wilds, began their carols and their gambols, and soon the whole forest was alive, and I, entranced, lived a whole life time with my wild friends, the birds and animals, as I lay on my blanket, on the soft, sweet-smelling earth bed. I banished all care, and revelled once again in the wild freedom of the woods. The few hours I spent in the unbroken forest, and the breaths of pure, sweet air, re-invigorated me, and upon my return to the city I was a new man. Long years after the close of the war these events were recalled to my memory by the following letter:

SOUTH POLAND, Maine,
Feb. 21st, 1890.

Major Lamar Fontaine, Hilton, Yazoo County, Mississippi.

Dear Sir: I dare say you have not the remotest idea who I am, and for that reason I will explain. You will remember that in the year 1864 you came to the prison where the Federal prisoners were confined, in stockade at Columbia, or possibly you had visited us in Charleston before our removal to Columbia. While in Charleston we were at the Roper Hospital. (The reader will remember that it was at the Roper Hospital that I paid my visit to the Federal prisoners.) At all events, your errand was to arrange with some Federal Major to be exchanged for yourself. The Major was selected, but I

have forgotten his name, but if you remember it, please give it to me. (The reader will remember that Major Harry White was the Major whom I was to be exchanged for.) The Major who was selected wrote a letter, as I understand it, to a lawyer (my cousin Richard Meade) in Richmond, asking him to attend to getting the exchange, and promised that, if exchanged, he would never again enter the Federal service. This letter, instead of going to Richmond (the reader will remember that I sent it by flag of truce to General Foster) got into our lines and was opened, and the matter was brought to the attention of our government and orders were immediately issued that this Major was not to be exchanged for you, and that nobody else should be taken except myself. I was suddenly hurried to Pocotaligo, S. C., expecting to be exchanged for your own good self. After going to our lines three days in succession in the hope of being exchanged, I was informed by Secretary of War Stanton that special exchanges had been stopped in that section, which I thought was either on account of the yellow fever or Stanton's peculiar views on the negro question. At all events, I was taken back to Columbia, and I went back, very much like the King of France, after his famous march up the hill and down again, with twenty thousand men.

My object in writing you is to ascertain the name of the Major who was first selected to be exchanged for you, and further, to learn when you were exchanged. I should also be pleased to learn your military record. I get glimpses of your name, once in a while, in the records published by Congress. You were considered quite a hero by us, as you made your mark at Waterloo

Bridge with Stonewall Jackson, in August, 1862, with your single rifle, and as you carried caps and messages between Johnstone and Pemberton, after many messengers had been captured, and at the time of making your trips it was said that you were severely wounded. If you have the time, and it is not too much trouble, will you please give me a little of your history. I thought I had your address in my diary, but I got your present address from the Adjutant General of Texas, for I believe you served in the Texas troops, and are a Texas man. By the way, Texas is a grand old state. I made a short trip there four years ago.

Yours very truly,

CHARLES P. MATTOCKS.

Ex Major 17th Maine U. S. Volunteers.

Attorney at Law, No. 31½ Exchange Street,

Portland, Maine."

In conclusion of this exchange business, which is a part of my life as one of The Immortal Six Hundred, I will give a brief sketch of Major C. P. Mattocks, who came in contact with one of the Immortals, and to show that he was a soldier and gentleman. I consider it but justice to him, as well as to myself, that I should say that at the breaking out of the Spanish-American War, Major Charles P. Mattocks was made a Brigadier General, and in his Brigade was the First Mississippi Volunteers, under Colonel Govan, and in that regiment I had many of my own blood relatives, and while his brigade was encamped at Chickamauga, in 1898, I was sent a special invitation, to my humble little home in the great Yazoo Delta, and an escort from Chattanooga, to visit, and be the guest, of General Mattocks while there in camp. I

took advantage of this, and enjoyed his hospitality, and was treated as royally as one gentleman knows how to treat another. While his guest, in his military camp, I was mounted upon his richly decorated steed, and clad in my old gray uniform, with an escort of honor, I was introduced to the men and officers of his command as one worthy of their honor and respect. When the roll is called in the last grand encampment beyond the Mystic river, I will feel no hesitancy to grasp the hand of Charles P. Mattocks, Soldier, Statesman and Patriot, of Portland, Maine, and answer "HERE," in his presence. There was but few like him in that great army that poured down upon the beautiful land of Dixie in those dark, bloody days, that are now echoing far away in the dim and misty past.

Turning back to the episode of my parole days in and around Charleston, from September the fifteenth, the beginning of my parole, until October the first, its expiration, I busied myself for the alleviation of my suffering comrades on Morris Island. I set the newspapers aglow with the story of our sufferings and cruel treatment. General Hardee sent flags of truce to the Commander of the Federal forces, and threats of retaliation and redress filled the columns of the daily papers. I was feted and dined by both the elite of Charleston and Columbia, and when the day for my return to prison life came, an immense crowd was at the train to bid me "Good-bye"; and large stores of clothing, tobacco, tea, sugar and vegetables and fruit for our prisoners, and bedding of all kinds, were given in my charge to deliver to our brave boys on Morris Island. I had a few individual possessions. Upon the arrival at the flag of

truce station, the Provost Marshal and the flag of truce officer was informed by the Yankee flag of truce guard and officer that nothing could be permitted inside their lines except my individual self, and only a part of my individual property. Only a small box of tobacco, no bedding of any kind, and only a single change of under, wear, and the clothing I had on. This was a severe blow, to all my hopes. But the orders were from the White House at Washington, and had to be obeyed. With a sad heart, I bade adieu to my dear friends on the train, and under the Yankee escort crossed the Pocotaligo River, and again, with Capt. Frank Bell, took my place in the ambulance for Beaufort and General Foster's headquarters off Hilton Head.

On reaching the ship I was helped up the gang plank and down into the General's presence. All retired except the General and myself and a clerk, who was at a writing table. The general greeted me with: "Well, I see you did not have as much influence with General Hardee as you thought you had. How is that General? Why did you not succeed in getting yourself exchanged for Major Harry White?"

"General, did you read his letter?"

"Yes, I read it."

"Well, now, General, would you have been exchanged for him if you had been in my place?"

"Well, Major Fontaine, is not Morris Island a miserable place to sojourn upon?"

"Yes, General, it is a hell on earth."

"Was not the hold of the old Crescent a terrible place?"

"Yes, General, that, in reality, was as near a floating hell as could be, in my estimation, found on earth."

"Well, now, Major, with your experience and knowledge, it does seem to me that, with the chance you had, that you would have been exchanged for a negro or a yellow dog. I am satisfied that I would."

"Well, General, that very fact shows you the difference in the material out of which the Confederate and the Federal soldier is made. We of the South are always gentlemen, and never forget ourselves, or lower our standard, even under the most adverse conditions."

"Well, Major, have you any good friends on Morris Island?"

"Yes, General. Every man on that Island who wears a grey coat is a friend of mine."

"Oh, I don't mean that. I mean have you not some warm personal friends whom, in constant association, you think more of than you do of ordinary acquaintances?"

"Yes, General."

"Well, give me the names of some."

I had but a few personal friends, and I began to call their names, and he said: "Don't call so fast. Give my clerk a chance to take them down." I called about a dozen when I suddenly thought: Now, what does this mean? I may be getting my friends into trouble. I had better go carefully along in this matter. I hesitated a moment, and he said: "Are they all you have?" and I said, "No, sir. There are many more." "Let my clerk have them." I then thought of our wounded, and those that I knew the names of who were crippled. I gave all the names that I could think of at

the time, and some of those who occupied the bottom bunks of the old Crescent City. At last he asked his clerk how many he had taken down, and the clerk ran his pencil up and down the column, and I think he said "Forty," "That will do," said the General. And turning to me, he said: "Captain Bell informs me that in going across Beaufort Island on your way to Pocotaligo Station, that you admired an old church and its yard, and said that you would like to spend the balance of your days in just such a spot. Now, I hear that forty men can be quartered there, without crowding, and can sleep on the benches in the pews. Now, I am going to parole you and the men you have selected, and give you the freedom of the church and the yard that surrounds it, and send several of the old soldiers of the veteran invalid corps to protect you, and you will have a chance to buy such things as the citizens offer for sale to add to your larder." Then I saw what was before me, and I was sorry that I had not named all my friends and let them enjoy with me the quiet life in the old church and yard at Beaufort, S. C. The following names, their rank and the states and regiments to which they belonged constituted our family in the old church at Beaufort, to wit:

1 Lieut. Col. Evan Rice, 55th Va. Infty.
2 Maj. Lamar Fontaine, Staff of P. D. Roddy, Alabama Cavalry.
3 Maj. A. A. Sumdler, 7th Va. Infty.
4 Capt. E. Carter, 8th Va. Infty.
5 Capt. E. D. Camden, 2nd Va. Infty.
6 Capt. R. S. Elam, 22nd Va. Infty.
7 Capt. J. B. Fitzgerald, B. W. R. Lost his mind,

and died in Fort Pulaski.
8 Capt. Geo. Hopkins, 10th Va. Cavalry.
9 Capt. W. T. Johnson, 18th Va. Infty.
10 Lieut. C. D. Chadwick, 33rd Va. Infty.
11 Lieut. J. P. Chalkey, 14th Va. Infty.
12 Lieut. C. R. Darricut, Stewart's Artillery.
13 Lieut. N. A. Haskins, 25th Va. Infty.
14 Lieut. L. C. Leftwich, C. S. Navy.
15 Lieut. C. R. Long, 11th Va. Infty.
16 Capt. R. M. Atkinson, 2nd N. C. Cavalry. (Took oath of allegiance.)
17 Capt. A. A. Cather, 34th N. C. Infty.
18 Capt. A. S. Critcher, 37th N. C. Infty.
19 Capt. J. C. Garman, 2nd N. C. Infty.
20 Capt. I. H. Gilbert, 37th N. C. Infty.
21 Lieut. E. W. Dassey, 11th N. C. Infty.
22 Lieut. R. A. Gleen, 22nd N. C. Infty. (Took oath of allegiance.)
23 Lieut. F. M. Boughman, 1st S. C. Infty.
24 Lieut. J. W. Burt, 7th S. C. Infty.
25 Lieut. J. L. Greer, 4th Georgia Infty.
26 Lieut. James Collins, 5th Florida Infty.
27 Lieut. W. H. Bedell, 1st Ala. Cavalry.
28 Lieut. W. A. Ledyard, 3rd Ala. Infty.
29 Lieut. J. D. Meddows, 1st Ala. Infty.
30 Lieut. A. H. Farrar, 13th Mississippi Infty.
31 Lieut. James Martin, 1st La. Infty.
32 Lieut. Sam. F. May, 10th La. Infty.
33 Lieut. W. E. O'Riley, 9th La. Infty.

34 Capt. M. S. Bradburn, 16th Ark. Infty.
35 Capt. W. B. Burnett, 19th Ark. Infty.
36 Capt. W. A. Fermney, 3rd Ark. Infty.
37 Capt. J. W. Greer, 23rd Ark. Infty.
38 Capt. H. L. W. Johnson, 12th Ark. Infty.
39 Capt. R. C. Bryan, 4th Tenn. Infty.
40 Capt. J. M. Cash, 2nd Tenn. Infty.

The above list of officers constituted our colony of prisoners at the old church, under the care of Captain Frank Bell, and about six men, all belonging to the Veteran Invalid Corps of this department of the U. S. Army, and they were all wounded veterans, not one of whom was not a cripple, and they knew how to treat a prisoner. They would come into our quarters, and make the negroes police them every day, and send them out on foraging expeditions to get us vegetables, chickens, eggs, butter, and all the delicacies that our island afforded. As long as my supply of "Greenbacks" lasted I kept our tables supplied bountifully, and I divided my box of tobacco with all my comrades alike. But among a promiscuous crowd of men there are always some who are envious and discontented, and nothing that you do can satisfy them. Our crowd proved no exception to the rule. The reader will remember that in choosing them I had picked out "many of the bottom bunk fellows" that I noticed as we were being stored, like bales of goods, on the shelves of the old Crescent City.

These "Discontents" I could not satisfy, and they were constantly in a growl about something, and made our lives unpleasant. I would do all in my power to

make the time pass pleasantly, but they would not be pacified. They seemed to envy my ability to confer happiness and pleasure upon my especial friends. In the distribution of vegetables that I would purchase for the entire party they would accuse me of showing partiality. Of course, knowing human nature as I did, I paid little attention to their murmurings, and continued to provide all the luxuries that I could for the forty of us.

One day, an old negro woman, from whom I had often bought her whole cart load of produce, came by with a clean, fresh, new shuck mattress, carrying it, she said, to her daughter in Beaufort. I persuaded her to let me have it, and she could make her daughter another. I bought it, and got one of the negro men, who assisted in policing our quarters, to carry it up in the choir loft, and put it on two benches put together fronting each other. This made me an elegant bed, enclosed on all sides, and I could enjoy myself in solitude away from the crowd, in the body of the church below. My bed and quarters excited, of course, the envy of the concourse of discontents, and all kinds of unpleasant innendoes and suggestions would be whispered in my hearing, to all of which I turned a deaf ear, well knowing the frailty and weakness of my fellow-man. I covered their faults and weaknesses with a mantle of Christian charity, and looked at only the good that was in them. I mention these things only as a part of what I, as an individual member of that Immortal Band of Six Hundred Confederate Officers, had to bear during that long siege, that alone was ours.

One more incident that I shall specially note, and then I will pass on and away from my comrades of the

old church and its lovely, sylvian surroundings. All kinds of medicines were contraband to us, by order of the cruel, bastard born baboon who sat in the Presidential chair at Washington. He was the only ruler of a civilized and enlightened nation that ever did such an inhuman act in all the annals of history. One or two of the Immortals suffered from chills and fever and other malarial troubles, and as no surgeons or doctors ever came near us, I felt great solicitude for those who were sick, and I asked Capt. Bell if he could not get me a little nitre, quinine and calomel, especially the latter, as I thought one of the boys was threatened with hematuria, and if taken in time, I could relieve him. He pulled from his pocket an order, which positively forbade him to permit any medicine or drugs from entering or being used in our quarters. This was a blow I had not expected, and I saw no hope for my sick comrades, but I was determined to aid them if possible.

I asked my old negro woman, from whom I procured my shuck mattress, if she could get me the quinine, nitre and calomel from a drug store in Beaufort and slip it into me. She said yes if she had the money. I gave her a five dollar bill, and told her that if that was not enough I would give her more. That evening, on her return, I halted h r just in front of the monument that had made such a deep impression upon me while going under the flag of truce to Pocotaligo Station. She gave me an ounce bottle of quinine, the same of calomel, and about a pint of sweet spirits of nitre. I gave her a dollar extra, and she said "God bless you, master, you's stuw a good man." I returned at once to the church and in.o the choir loft. Here I parceled

out the calomel and quinine into proper doses and hid my supply under a loose plank near the gothic window of the loft. I then beckoned my sick comrade and he came slowly up the steps, and though his fever was high, I gave him a large dose of calomel, and told him that as soon as it acted I would give him quinine. He thanked me and retired. That night it had the desired effect, and I followed it with quinine; and in a few days he was free of fever. The news, of course, spread among the prisoners, and I used my medicine freely, and I was betrayed in this manner. One of our number, suffering from chronic diarrhea, with his bones almost protruding through his skin, was too weak to go up into the loft; asked me to let him have my bed brought down for his use. This I did, and I began giving him small doses of of calomel, and I had a lot of the roots of the dewberry and blackberry vines boiled until a strong tea was made. This I gave him to drink, and he began to show a decided improvement. I gave others quinine and calomel. One day, Capt. R. S. Elam of the 22nd Virginia Infantry, who had lost a leg at Gettysburg, was standing looking at the stone shaft that had this motto engraved upon it, "Stop, Stranger, My Father Sleeps Here." No name, no date even, accompanied these words, and we were contemplating its true significance when a strange Lieutenant, in an artillery uniform, approached us from the old church. He stepped up to me and said: "Are you Major Fontaine?" I answered "Yes, sir." "Well, come on back to the church." As I entered, my friend (?) to whom I had loaned my shuck mattress was laughing, while many of my comrades looked distressed. Capt. Bell held up a partially emptied quinine bottle, and the

rest of my supply of nitre and calomel, and said: "Major, is this your property?" I answered: "It looks like mine." "Well, Major, did I not tell you that these articles were contraband, and could and would not be allowed in this prison?" I replied that he had. "Did you bring them, under flag of truce, from Charleston?" "No, I did not." "Where did you get them, and who gave them to you?" "Captain Bell, I must refuse to tell you, for by so doing I would betray a friend and involve an innocent person." "Well, sir, you have broken a pledge and disregarded and forfeited your parole of honor, and you must suffer for it." (I will here add, without calling his name, that the occupant of my bed, whom I had so befriended, was my betrayer, and gave the information that sent me into the gloomy dungeon at Hilton Head, and that he took the oath of allegiance and was liberated for the act.) I was immediately carried to a strong log dungeon and, in a solitary cold cell, chained to a ring in the wall, by a chain that was just long enough to permit me to lie down with one arm always extended upward. A single handcuff encircled my wrist, but did not fit very tight. My tormentors thought, of course, that this act would add to my tortures, but my wrist and bones were very pliant, and I had no difficulty in slipping the handcuff off whenever I chose. But that cell was a den of horrors. For days and weeks I laid in this gehenna, uncertain of my fate. The negro guard that brought me, once a day, a pint of horrible, dry corn meal, not even heated, and a tin platter, with a sour, slimy mixed pickle mess that almost took the skin from my fingers to handle, and about half a gallon of yellowish looking

water, would say: "Day gwine keep you in dare till you done take de ofe of legance."

I soon began to grow weak and faint, and could hardly slip my handcuff on or off, as the occasion required. The meal increased in rottenness, and was in hard lumps, of various colors. These lumps I would crush with my crutch, and separate the colors, and taste each kind. Some days the yellow would be more palatable, and then another would taste better; thus I had a variety, and something of a change. The whole mass was filled with different kinds of bugs, worms, some slick and wiery, others soft and hairy, and all kinds of moths and weevil. These alone constituted the substance that preserved life in the meal; and the creeping, moving things, with the water and the animalcule that floated in it, was sufficient to keep one alive, but I could not say that it was a diet that would fatten a human being; it might a bird that had its habitat in a sandy desert.

How long I occupied this cell I know not. It was not as dark and foul as my cell at Fort Delaware, for the air was purer, and sometimes during a storm, water would percolate the roof of logs above, and drip on the floor in several places, and a small grated opening high up in the wall admitted a ray of light, that was pleasant to the eye. The rotten meal, bugs and worms caused watery blisters to form all over my body; and these blisters would turn a dark brown hue, harden, and a dull, brown colored substance would ooze through the cracks in this brown, hard skin; and the joints of my fingers, toes and limbs would give a faint, creaking sound as I would move them; and a constant itchy feeling pervaded

the whole body. As time passed I became too weak to turn over, and get up to meet my guard to receive my rations. For two days this was the case before any relief came.

I think that it was sometime near the latter part of November or the first of December, two burly negroes, under the command of a negro corporal, came into my cell, stripped the clothing from my body, plunged me into a tub made of a barrel sawed across through the center of a bung hole, and with hot water and soap they gave me a bath, and put a clean suit of hospital underwear on me, and in a stretcher they conveyed me to a steam launch, and after a long run the engines ceased throbbing and I was lifted up a gang ladder and carried down one flight of steps to the gun deck of what appeared to be an old wooden man of war. The port holes were open, and I could see the places where the guns had been removed. There were several sick, pale and emaciated looking men lying about on the floor of this gun deck. But they paid no attention to our entrance. I was wrapped in a blanket on the port side of the vessel, near one of the stern gun port holes, about eight feet from the gunnel. Here I lay, as helpless as a new born babe. I could not turn myself any more than if I had been an inanimate log. Negroes passed by every now and then, and I could hear their loud guffaws and coarse jests, and also the tramping of the guards on the deck above my head.

Two of our own men, Confederate soldiers, assisted in ministering to the poor, sick infeeiles, like myself, who lay helpless upon this gun deck. As the foetid flow, that exuded from us, made its appearance in pools

around where we were lying, they would call a negro and remove us to another spot and cleanse the place that we had befouled. When death came to the relief of a poor sufferer a port hole near my place was opened and the body heaved overboard, and you could hear the splash as it struck the water, and the rush of the sharks that hung in swarms around our vessel as they fought for their prey. And I would listen to the guffaws of the negroes on our deck and the guards above as these monsters of the deep would tear the corpse into shreds, and battle for the fragments. I often wondered how many hours would elapse before I would be but a morsel for these tigers of the sea.

Our vessel was anchored out at sea seventeen miles from the mainland, where the warm waters of the Gulf stream lent its intense blue to each passing wave. I have but a faint remembrance of what was given me to eat and what happened to me while I lay in a semi-comatose state on the gun-deck of this old hulk.

I could see my straight prison crutches, not far from my side, and also, now and then, tasting some sort of warm salty substance, poured down my throat, that left a miserable salty taste in my mouth, that was not pleasant. By unusual sounds and jars, and the creaking of timbers, and the incessant rolling of the vessel, and the intensity of the cold, I was thoroughly aroused one night, and the ship lanterns were burning extremely dim and all the negroes out of sight. I was informed that we were in the path of a terrible north-east gale, with the wind blowing sixty-five miles an hour, and our decks being fast covered with sleet and snow, and that all the guards and watchmen had been removed from the

decks, and that the anchors were slow-dragging us toward the land. I was thoroughly aroused, and asked which way the wind was blowing us? I heard them say, "Right toward the main land."

I then begged the men to give me my crutches, and to throw me overboard. For two long hours I begged and entreated, and made every effort to get my crutches and climb out of the port hole; but I was too weak, and the vessel was plunging so that I could make no progress.

At last I told them that if they did not throw me overboard now that I would soon be dead, and they would in the end have to, and that, as I was alive, I might float to land and escape. About nine o'clock they lifted me, and with my hands grasping my crutches, they sent me overboard into the dark, boiling storm-swept waves. It was inky dark, and I could not see my hand before me. The plunge beneath the warm waves of the Gulf stream revived me like an electric shock, and as I lifted my head out of the water and felt the chilling breath of the icy north-east wind and the pressure of it against the wave crest, a new life seemed to permeate my whole body, a vigor added by the wild rush of the winds and the unbridled power of the waves. I tried, to the utmost of my vocal strength, to give a yell of delight as I rose to the crest of a great mountain wave, but my vocal powers were too weak and I could only revel in gladness at the freedom I was enjoying.

The wild storm of the passing wind would almost lift me from the water, as we rushed forward toward Dixie land, with the speed of a race horse. When day

dawned, and I felt the tide turn and pit its current against that of the wind, I was in the reach of the sea, known as Port Royal Sound, south and west of Beaufort Island, amid tangled saw-grass and drifting logs. The waves were running high and the undertow of the tide strong. I could see Yankees to the east and west of me, but the winds and waves prevented the usual number of patrol, or guard boats, from plying the waters of the sound. I twisted my crutches to the heavy tussocks of saw-grass, and held against the outflow of the tide. When the wind and the tide again moved toward the main land, up this arm of the sea, I let go my saw-grass tussock and, like driftwood, I followed the on-driving current. All day my progress was slow. I would watch an object ahead and just keep my eyes, nose and mouth above water, for the wind nearly froze any exposed part of my body. As the sun sank and the wind abated some, I felt my strength grow and hope revive. I was, I felt, far stronger than when I was thrown overboard from the hospital ship; and scan the horizon as I would, I could see no sign of her. When darkness fell I was in a dense mass of saw-grass, and could make but little headway, as the grass would retard the current and my onward progress. All night again I drifted, and when morning came I could see the shore of the main land of Dixie, and with the aid of my crutches and a floating plank I swung clear of the saw-grass into the open channel, and by ten o'clock the waves and wind thrust me against the main land, near a rice flume. As I crawled above the slush of the waves, a free, but helpless body, upon my own land, I felt an exultation words cannot describe. My thin hospital underwear had be n slit into

ribbons by the sharp teeth of the saw-grass, and my whole body was scarified and was glowing with the salt sea water, but I was too weak to climb the levee that kept the salt water from the rice fields, and the cold wind was fast numbing me, and I was seized with an intense thirst, for no fresh water had been down my throat for over forty-nine hours that I had been in the sea. I slowly rolled sideways up the levee, with the cold north wind and my crutches to assist me, and down into the clear fresh water on the other side.

While crossing over the levee our own mounted pickets saw me, and as I lay in the cold water, drinking in its life-giving draughts, they rode up and hailed me. I could not give voice to my wishes, but beckoned for help. They came galloping up at once, dismounted, and lifted me out of the water, and rolling me in a blanket, they placed me in a spot, sheltered from the north wind. One of them staid with me, and the other rode off for assistance. Soon I heard the voices of others coming, and four men, with blankets and a stretcher, came up and wrapped me up warm and snug and carried me to their camp and gave me some warm grael and some kind of drink. In an hour or two I was carried in an ambulance, in charge of a surgeon, to Pocotaligo Station, and placed in a warm room. Here the surgeon made a close examination, and gave me stimulants and warm milk, and more grael. Soon I was able to whisper, and I asked who was in command of our forces at this point. They informed me that General N. G. Evans was in charge. As soon as I could again whisper I said, "Please tell Scrap (our pet name in ante-bellum days for Lieut. Evans) to come to see

me." It was only a short distance to the General's headquarters, and when he was told that some one who called him "Scrap" Evans wanted to see him, he came at once. And when I made myself known he had a suit of good heavy underwear and comfortable clothing brought, and sent me with two of his men to wait on me, to the Roper Hospital, at Charleston, S. C. Thus I ended my connection with that immortal band of The Six Hundred, Morris Island Prisoners on the fifteenth day of December, 1864.

My comrades, all save four, who were with me in the old church at Beaufort, reached Charleston on the same day that I did, and in the morning papers I saw my name mentioned on the roll as having been paroled or exchanged with them. And on the Hilton Head Hospital Ship Roll I am recorded as dead, in these words: "Lamar Fontaine, Major, C. S. A. Died December 12th, 1864," both records being absolutely incorrect. And in the history of the Immortal Six Hundred, written and published by the Secretary of our Association, Major J. Ogden Murray, I am enrolled as a "Private," in the 10th Mississippi Infantry, captured at Lexington, Alabama, in 1862, and wounded in the knee and thigh. Now the 10th Mississippi was never in Lexington, Ala., nor was I. So you see how easily it is to get history mixed. I have given in this brief sketch my own individual career as a prisoner of war, from the "Bloody Angle" at Spotsylvania Court House on May 12th, 1864, until I landed on the coast of South Carolina, an escaped prisoner on the 15th day of December, 1864, one of that band, so properly named by Captain J. W. Mathews, in front of Stonewall Jackson's monument in the Capitol

Grounds in the City of Richmond, in June 1896. Now I have but a few more words to add, and I leave the story of The Immortal Six Hundred in the hands of the reader, and see by his verdict whether or not we are entitled to the name "Immortal Six Hundred," inscribed upon our banner.

While I was a prisoner on Morris Island, some times in the clear soft nights, when the atmosphere and the silence between the guns permitted, we could catch the chimes of Old St. Michael as they would come stealing across the waves; and to commemorate them I penned those lines, and dedicated them to my prison comrades. They were written sitting upon the sand while I was waiting for my clothes to go through their sand bath, and grave, to destroy the vermin; and I insert them here to preserve them as a memento of those days:

U. S. Military Prison,
Morris Island, S. C., Sept. 1864.

On Morris Island's sandy Mound,
I stand like one of old.
I hear the night winds howling round
The yellow pines and palms. Beyond
Are corn clad fields of gold.

I feel the mad waves lash the shore,
Whereon we prisoners lie;
I dread the cannons ceaseless roar,
The shrieking bombshell bursting o'er,
Scattering fragments nigh.

Death damps gather, and pallors rest,
On the clay cold cheek of the moon,
A cloudy winding sheet is pressed
By the grieving wind to her waxen breast
As it moans a hollow tune.

Afar, the sea is wailing low,
Its sad complaining song,
And Ocean Ghosts glide to and fro,
In dripping cerements of woe,
Trailing white locks along.

Naught is out on venturesome wing,
Save church yard bat or owl;
The shores with Elfin laughter ring,
With Fay man wild, or Eldrich thing;
With Goblin, Gnome or Ghoul.

Across the waves, there sounds a bell,
Now far off, and now near:
It comes with wierdest of swell,
As if the Sexton, Night would tell,
The dead day's age in fear.

And now the troubled waves of thought,
Come rising in their might;
To sweep the gauzy barriers wrought
By pale Philosophy, to naught,
As winds sweep films of night.

And memory wakens from her sleep;
The dead, calm sleep of old.
It stirs the waves of yonder deep,
'Til they, in widening circles sweep,
Yon shore, fair Freedom's goal.

That land, where wrong shall be made right,
And every tear a gem.
Oh won'drous gift of second sight,
You come to me, this storm swept night,
That I your force may stem.

Beat on vexed waters in my breast,
And lash this prison shore.
Ye bear to me in your unrest
Some olden wrong to be redressed
To grieve me never more.

I know 'tis not a sea of light,
That lit the Chosen Band;
A pillard cloud, by day and night,
O'er wilderness in waves of Might,
Led to the "Promised Land."

Then be thou brave and true my heart;
There is the waiting shore.
Turn not to left or right, but start
In strength, and the wild waves will part,
And bear thee safely o'er.

I close this brief sketch of my individual experience, while a prisoner, a member of The Immortal Six Hundred, whose powers of endurance, will be handed down, in story and song, to the future generations, of our fair daughters and sons of our sunny Southland; and in the poem above, each member of that noble band of Immortals, who lay in the prison pen on Morris Island, when he reads it, will recall the hum and shriek of the passing shells, as with fiery tails they sped above their heads, and like claps of thunder, burst and scattered their missiles of death in their midst for forty two days and nights. And they can hear the sweet faint chimes of the bells in old St. Michaels tower; that since, the revolutionary war, have sent their sweet tones over the Charleston Harbor, as the sun sinks to rest. And the waves of the sea, as they "Trailed their white locks

along," the sandy reach; will whisper lullabies of the past, in memory's listening ear.

As an addenda, or "post script," to this account of my prison life, while a member of The Immortal Six Hundred, I wish to say, that during the Reunion of the Confederate Veterans, at Charleston, South Carolina, with a few of my old comrades, I engaged a small steam launch and visited the site of our prison stockade, on Morris Island; and I was surprised to find that not a vestige of the spot is now visible above the sea. It is covered with the deep blue waves of the purifying waters of the boundless ocean. Nature, and nature's God, has been kind enough to wipe the foul spot from off the fair face of our common country, and cleansed it with the purifying waters, that sweep onward like the billows of eternity; telling us to forgive and forget; reminding us ever, that.

"Forgiveness to the injured does belong;
They ne'er forgive who do the wrong."

Christ has said that we must love those who despitefully use us, and if we are struck upon one cheek, we must turn the other also. This requires the absolute spirit of divinity, and yet it is a divine command, which all should obey. The loved apostle Paul, was human, like you and I; and he amended that command by saying: "Live peacably with all mankind, as much as lieth in you;" and being only human, as was Saint Paul, I cheerfully accept his amendment.

The acts of our so-called humane heads of the most powerful, civilized and enlightened government on earth, through their treatment of us, has put a foul blot upon our nation's history that time cannot efface. And this

order, sanctioned by the bastard born president, and eminating from the headquarters of the army at Washington, while we were in that zone, would have disgraced the most savage people of this, or any other age; and for the enlightenment of the readers, I give that order in full, that they may judge for themselves.

Headquarters of the Army,
Washington, D. C., Dec. 18, 1864

Major General W. T. Sherman, Savannah:

Should you capture Charleston, I hope that by some accident the place may be destroyed, and if a little salt should be sown upon the site, it may prevent the growth of future crops of nullification and secession. Yours truly, W. H. HALLECK, Chief of Staff.

Under this brutal, savage order what were the helpless women, children and old, decrepid and defenseless men to do? Behind Sherman's army all was but a howling waste; for under Grant's orders that, that region had to be left "so dreary and desolate that a crow flying over it, for the balance of the season, would have to carry his own provender with him," had been carried out to the letter. With these facts before you, cannot you see how cruelly they treated us, while they had the power, and we helpless in their hands? I leave our case in your hands.