

For the Recorder.

CAMP 55th N. C. TROOPS, Near Suffolk, Virginia, April 22d, 1863.

DEAR BRO. HUFHAM:—On the 11th inst., our regiment with the other troops of this department, crossed the Blackwater with our faces turned towards Suffolk, and on that evening came up with the outposts of the enemy, captured some of their pickets and forced all the remainder within their fortifications around the town, where they have remained ever since, cannonading and shooting with small arms every bush that moves or anything else which would indicate the presence of a rebel sharpshooter.

The Yankees certainly care but little how much ammunition they destroy, for while we have not done one twentieth part of the shelling that they have, I think that we have done them more damage than they have us.

There has been heavy skirmishing along the lines every day for ten days. Our loss for the whole time has been very slight, considering the firing to which we have been exposed.

Last Saturday night three companies of our regiment under Capt. W. H. Williams, Company (I) received marching orders to go down on the Nasemond River to support some batteries which had been planted on the river to contend with some gunboats lying in the river. They got to the place and were ordered to fall back out of range of the enemy's guns, and await orders. Sunday morning the remaining companies of the regiment came down. We remained inactive all day Sunday until about dark, when we were ordered to the river to support a battery, which had already been captured by the enemy. However we were not long in getting to the scene of action when we found that the Yankees had landed and captured the whole battery with five guns, (I understand) and had either thrown them into the river or put them on their boats. I have not been informed officially how many men or guns were captured by the enemy, but 5 guns and 54 men are reported captured.

There were some six or eight boats in the river, and some land batteries on the other side of the river which shelled our regiment all night Sunday night and nearly all day Monday, when we were relieved, late in the evening.

Our loss since we crossed the Blackwater has been only two men seriously wounded, one company (A) B. Scott, in the arm, amputated. Serg't Welsh, company B in the hip mortally, ten or fifteen others received slight wounds, which will not disable them for duty but for a few days. The shelling of the enemy on last Sunday night is said by some old veterans to have been furious. I thought so at least, for I had never been under heavy shelling before. I thought I had learned to dodge them, when but a few came, but must confess that there were other places which would have proved more congenial to my feelings than in the midst of such a continual crack of the shells and crash of every thing in their reach. The regiment remained under this fire for nearly twenty four hours, moving occasionally so as to protect themselves when the enemy found our exact position, and how it was that we had no more men wounded than we did I can not see. Notwithstanding that this was the first time our regiment had all been under fire together, that it was in the night, and that we were exposed to such heavy shelling and could not reply at all except when the Yankees would come out a short distance from the river, every man with some few individual exceptions, such as every regiment as large as ours is sure to have in it, men who are so constituted naturally, that they can not stand fire, did his duty. Our own feelings, in regard to the conduct of the regiment, for that trying twenty hours without food, drink, or any thing else but shells were a sense of pride, thrilling our bosoms that out of over six hundred men there were so few who were so base as to lag behind when their comrades in arms were pressing forward, to drive the enemy from our sacred soil. These were the emotions which made us feel proud that we had been able to discharge our whole duty but our mutual congratulations were of short duration. A battery had been left. Some one was to blame for it. North Carolina had some sons in the thickest of the fray, and as a mother of course, if any thing goes wrong in a fight where there are any North Carolinians, they must bear the blame, and before we had got off the field it was reported in every direction that our regiment was supporting the battery, or were there to support the battery, but that our Colonel refused to charge the enemy or to aid in preventing the capture or making any effort to recapture it. It was really humiliating to think that we should be taunted with acting cowardly by the very man who had charge of the two Alabama companies which were supporting the battery and who is to blame for the capture if any person is. I learn that one Captain Sorrell on General

Laws staff is the author of the report which if not corrected would injure the standing of the officers and men of the regiment, and make our friends and relatives at home blush with shame when our names are mentioned in their presence. No doubt that ere this our good standing at home is already suffering from the slanderous report put in circulation by some envious person who having failed to either do his duty or gain as much renown as he thought he could bear, has determined to detract what he can from the bravery and patriotism of others in order that he may shine a little himself. But here he has signally failed for we have put our selves to some little trouble to find out who originated the report, who believed it, and why it was first started; and as I have already said it was nothing more than another insidious attempt to injure the fair name, and pluck off one of the well won laurels from the Carolinians, by calling in question the bravery of her sons. Carolinians do not deem it absolutely necessary for them to shine when they must do so by pulling down in the dust those of her sisters, who have succeeded in winning the admiration of all. I am writing this letter by a lightwood knot fire while on picket. If any thing of interest transpires down here I will write again. I. G. C.

For the Recorder. GOLDSBORO, N. C., April 30, 1863.

DEAR BRO. HUFHAM:—Some scenes of interest occur in the Goldsboro' Hospital. At Bro. Cobb's request, under whose appointment my labors as missionary are conducted, the following one is published:

Last Sunday evening a message came for me to see a wounded soldier. Going to the Hospital, I found a young man, Frank Cabanis, of Cleveland county, (once when a little boy, a pupil of mine,) severely wounded in the right shoulder. He commenced crying when he saw me—he wanted to go home—I told him I would go with him. On Monday a furlough was granted him and Monday night we expected to leave here. Monday afternoon another message came that he wanted to see me. On going up, I found him much worse, and he felt that he would soon go to his long, long home where I could not go with him. The first words he said were "I want you to pray for me." We talked about his condition then. He said amongst other things that he well remembered, "how he had laughed at mourners at Double Springs and Zion churches, and now he felt he was himself lost." He said that "once he had tried to become a christian but was shamed out of it; but never would be again." He says, "I have been a miserable sinner and am lost." I tried to pray for him—at first my own faith was weak; but before the end of the prayer, it grew strong. Then I tried to illustrate the plan of saving sinners—Jesus' love—God's mercy. He seemed to be most taken with the publican's prayer "God be merciful to me a sinner," and often did use that prayer. He complained of a hard heart—no faith. He prayed that God would teach him how to come. Every moment he was praying. I remained with him until dark, and then telling him I must go home a little while, I told him every moment was precious to him, that for him to pray, pray, pray every moment, and I could try to do better. On my way home my feelings were so overwhelming that I stopped on the way and knelt down to pray for him. I remained at home only a short time and started back. But, oh, there was such a burden of sorrow and anxiety on me that again I was forced to stop on the street as I went back kneel down and pray for him. Then hurrying on with trembling heart not knowing what minute he would die, I went up to his bunk. Oh what was the change—Jesus had been—was then there, and Frank Cabanis was happy. The first thing he said was "I am ready to die now." My mother I thought came here and brought Jesus with her—I know Jesus has been here and pardoned all my sins." He said "when you left me awhile ago I saw the fires of hell, and I was sinking down into them, but Jesus stretched out his arm and picked me up—and I am so happy." Then he began to talk about his sin in making fun of those who once tried to be christians, how that once when he tried to be a christian by presenting himself for prayer, a nephew of his, laughed at him and got him to swearing before he left the church. He said "he thought it was smart then, but would never swear again." I told him we ought to return thanks to God for his wonderful mercy. He says "yes" and while I was leading in prayer he would often respond amen—amen. Many of the inmates of the Hospital gathered around the melting scene and heard him talk. All—even the sinners around seemed to rejoice. Happy Frank then commenced talking about his mother (his father died years and years ago and his mother a few years ago.) He repeated a prayer his mother had taught him while a child. "Now I lay me down to

sleep," &c.,—then said that his mother had often talked to him, before she died, about being a christian—that his sisters had tried to persuade him also. Then he spoke of his brother, and prayed for him, and he prayed for those boys who tried to ruin him he said when he was a child—and he prayed for every body.

When the doctor would come to him he would say, oh doctor I am so much better. Late at night we thought he might sleep some and walked off a few feet to sit-down. The nurses and inmates of the hospital gathered around and one said in a low tone.—What do you think of his case? What do you think of death-bed conversions? Frank heard it and said "I have been feeling I was a lost sinner for two or three weeks and have been trying to pray whenever I could get alone—(he had been wounded just one week,) and I wanted you to say to me, "to pray for me—yet I could not ask you till this afternoon, and when I saw you coming up I felt like a pang had been sent to my heart—yet I felt that I must ask you to pray for me." Soon after the surgeon came up and said he might live until next day—then I told Frank I would leave him and come back early next morning. He said yes come and write me a long letter to my sisters, and tell them all to come and see me and bring up your wife to see me. He was calm and quiet as ever I saw any one.—His physical pain seemed to be much alleviated when sorrow left his heart, I bade him good bye in the happy condition. Next morning I hastened back—his bed was empty—he was gone—the nurses gathered around me for they had become deeply interested in him and said that his suffering increased soon after I left—that just before day he sang parts of two hymns—one was "come humble sinners in whose breast," &c., then peacefully, happily died without a struggle—a sweet smile resting on his face a feeble witness. The spirit had left of its happiness as it bounded away from scenes of war and hospitals of suffering. One of the nurses who saw all this scene asked me yesterday if I would publish it. He is not a christian but he with others was so affected by this scene that he wanted it made known, and you can publish it, if you think it worth it. P. D. GOLD.

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DEAR BRO. HUFHAM:—You are, in my opinion one of the most obliging of editors.—While others long since, driven obituary notices from their columns, you surrender from one eighth to one sixth of your entire space to them, much more than is occupied by advertisements. You have begged and entreated your kind friends to spare you such notices; but, disregarding the mild tones of your expostulations, the matter has become more and more grievous instead of improving. The notices are as long and even longer than formerly, for there are more types and alas! many more martyrs than before, we were engaged in this dreadful war. You have to thank not a few of your brethren ministers, and churches in conference for the long list of "resolutions passed" advertised to be sent to press, and many times they come from persons of whom (writer as subject) no one knows anything at all, people entirely removed from any sphere of public interest and a long account of whose dying moments awakens no sentiment at all in the mind of reader. For the most part, they are verbose commentaries or "post mortem" laudations that would not always, we fear, hold a favorable comparison with "ante mortem" opinions. Thus the life or death does not stir the great pulse of human sympathy, and so lengthily a comment deprives their memory of that respectful thought, and even momentary attention that would be accorded, even their death announced in a briefer, simpler style. Not one person in twenty peruses an obituary. They glance at the column, and then over the names and un less that of a friend or acquaintance appears, so much of the paper is a dead loss to them.—(Pardon a pun, so grave a subject.) If the writers of these lengthy articles, could be convinced that they wasted wisdom and words, as well as ink and paper upon people who could not read, do you think you would receive so many prolix memoirs? I do not. The passion for writing demands redress in order to attain the climax of self-satisfaction. If you, or I, or another, could be blessed upon the universal brain this fact, "I imagine you'd sit" far less often "in the shade of a willow tree." A word with you who write these long obituaries; No one wishes to underrate the friends whom you praise—No one doubts their excellencies—nor the grief and agony of friends. All understand the sympathy of the writer of the bereaved; but this rough, coarse way is not attuned to that refinement of sorrow that it can "weep with all" who weep. Your kind communication is often if not generally, construed to mean more of a compliment to the living—the family and friends—than a desire to pay a just tribute to the memory of the dead.—Examine your lives, and confess if this is not true, and be spare the public—the unhappy public. You urge as an excuse for what you do, 'tis but just that they who have lived well and died nobly, should have their lives recorded as an incitement to others to do well. It is but just indeed, and if their lives are worthy of it, make the narrative up in the form of a tract. It will

then have a circulation as wide as you could desire, but place their epitaphs on the marble 'neath which they rest, rather than trust an elaborate eulogy to the frail, perishable medium of a newspaper.

But to return to yourself, Mr. Editor, there should be a way to cut short these people who write so long—some way, more imperative than men requests. Notices of marriages are sufficiently brief, and yet that is a topic of universal interest. Suppose you published as lengthy account of every marriage as you do of deaths, every syllable would be read with avidity. I can imagine how lively it would make your columns. Were I not afraid some "daft bodie" would take me to be in earnest in recommending such descriptions, I would give you a specimen, that would be a fair compensation for the mournful tidings that follow, and must follow.

What effect would be secured if you were to restrict obituary notices to a certain number of lines—say eight, or ten at most—and when that much is "set up" stop—no matter whether it is at the end of a sentence or even of a word. Should the break occur in a word, it would only be a practical illustration of the end to which many come—unprepared. Do this a few times, and your correspondents will become noted for brevity I'm confident.

If this plan does not suit you, why not charge for all notices over a prescribed length. That has effectually remedied this evil in most papers, why should you be more kind than others of your fraternity? I have seen you (mentally) in blank despair over your list of "merciful dispensations" and "mournful bereavements" and pitied you, as you have pitied—your readers! But 'tis of no avail. I only hope you will not take it amiss, if, in consideration of your forbearance and long suffering from the diffuseness of your correspondents; I express this belief, that, (both individually and editorially) you must be a most amably disposed young man. Yours, A. STRADLEY, Army Chaplain and Colporteur, April 23rd, 1863.

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that they had heard a sermon in eight months, neither had they had any religious reading except that little they had brought from home. I would go and preach for them the next day. But when the day arrived it was raining so much, and I was so unwell that I could not go.

On my way I spent one day in Goldsboro; and with Bro. Gold to visit the sick in the hospital there. We passed through each ward distributing tracts and Recorders and covering with each inmate. I found three or four as earnest seekers of religion as I ever met. Many of them were christians rejoicing in hope of the glory of God.

I learned of the sick in the hospital prized very highly the indefatigable labors of Bro. Gold. Several regard him as the instrument, in the hands of God, of their conversion. Two men died the morning I was there. One just before I got there. I was told his last end was peaceful and happy. He rejoiced and praised God while he had strength, and then fell on his couch and died without a groan or a single. His only regret was that he could not see a minister and tell him of the blessings of religion in a dying moment. O B. H., or some one more worthy could have been present, to gratify this last dying wish.

When we get such a death with that of the sinner, we would not like Baalam say, let me die the death of the Righteous and let my last will be like his. How happy is the christian soldier. Learning of his Saviour's breast: Free from sin and toil, forever. On that same still shall rest.

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then have a circulation as wide as you could desire, but place their epitaphs on the marble 'neath which they rest, rather than trust an elaborate eulogy to the frail, perishable medium of a newspaper.

But to return to yourself, Mr. Editor, there should be a way to cut short these people who write so long—some way, more imperative than men requests. Notices of marriages are sufficiently brief, and yet that is a topic of universal interest. Suppose you published as lengthy account of every marriage as you do of deaths, every syllable would be read with avidity. I can imagine how lively it would make your columns. Were I not afraid some "daft bodie" would take me to be in earnest in recommending such descriptions, I would give you a specimen, that would be a fair compensation for the mournful tidings that follow, and must follow.

What effect would be secured if you were to restrict obituary notices to a certain number of lines—say eight, or ten at most—and when that much is "set up" stop—no matter whether it is at the end of a sentence or even of a word. Should the break occur in a word, it would only be a practical illustration of the end to which many come—unprepared. Do this a few times, and your correspondents will become noted for brevity I'm confident.

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Take hold of My Hand. "Take hold of my hand," says the little one, when she reaches a slippery place, or when something frightens her. With fingers clasped tightly around the parent's hand, she steps cheerfully and bravely along clinging a little closer when the way is crowded or difficult, and happy in the beautiful strength of childish faith. "Take hold of my hand," says the young convert trembling with the eagerness of his love. Full well he knows that if he rely on any strength of his own, he will stumble and fall; but if the Master reach forth his hand, he may walk with unwearied foot, even on the crest of a wave. The waters of strife or sorrow shall not overwhelm him, if he but keep fast hold of the Saviour.

"Take hold of my hand," whispers the aged one, tottering on through the shadows and snows of so many years. As the lights of earth grow dimmer in the distance, and the darkening eye looks forward to see if it can discern the first glimmer of the heavenly home, the weary pilgrim cries out, even as the child beside his mother, for the Saviour's hand. O, Jesus, my friend and elder Brother, when the night cometh, when the feet are weary, when the eyes are dim, "take hold of my hand."

BIBLICAL RECORDER, RALEIGH, N. C.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 1863.

The Prospect. The next few weeks or months will be productive of results of vast moment to the people of this nation. The enemy seem to have abandoned the plan of an inactive summer campaign with the hope of starving us out, and are gathering their forces for a general and simultaneous movement. From all quarters the indications are that many bloody battles will be fought. On them will depend, to a great extent, the fate of our people and government.

The enemy's cavalry have advanced far down into Mississippi, their forces are drawing nearer to Vicksburg, while a formidable fleet of gun boats, in full possession of the river between that place and Port Hudson, are destroying our defences along the banks, and Banks and his forces below are ready to co-operate with those above. In middle Tennessee, Rosecranz with an army of seventy five thousand men confronts Bragg and Johnston, while Burnside with thirty thousand men threatens the Eastern part of the State by way of Cumberland Gap. Their gunboats swarm on the Tennessee river, and from Decatur, they menace our rear. All things in the west indicate speedy and bloody collisions between the opposing forces.

But all eyes are now turned with intense interest to Virginia where so many bloody dramas have been enacted. It is known that Hooker has called his troops from their protracted inactivity and led them into the field. Crossing the Rappahannock and the Rapidan, he has attempted to flank our lines at Fredericksburg and thus carry out the programme in which his predecessors in office have made such signal failures. True the telegraphs bring us intelligence that he has been defeated and driven back in a preliminary engagement, but we still look with eager anxiety for further news.

We believe that we shall pass safely through this season of trial, as we have done through so many others. With the blessing of God on our brave men and skillful Generals we believe that the enemy will be beaten in every encounter. Let us all hope for this, and continue to pray that it may be so. On the other hand let us be prepared for reverses if they should come.

Southern Baptist Convention. This body meets in Augusta, Ga., on Friday of this week. We apprehend that the attendance will be very small, when compared with that of former years. The demonstrations of the enemy in Mississippi, Alabama, and Virginia, will, we fear, prevent many of the delegates from those states from being present, but we hope there will be enough present for a pleasant and profitable session. We shall probably be there, and before this issue of the Recorder reaches many of our readers, we shall be on our way. We shall try to keep them informed of anything we may see or learn, which is calculated to interest them. Meanwhile we ask of them and of our correspondents the indulgence which absence from our post will render necessary.

SHIPMENT OF BIBLES.—A letter from the Assistant Foreign Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society informs the Corresponding Secretary of the Confederate States Bible Society, that another shipment—making the sixth—has been made by that Society. The first shipment has been received in Augusta.

MINISTER MURDERED.—Rev. J. H. Miller, a Presbyterian minister of Pontotoc, Miss., was recently murdered by four Union men, while on his way to fill an appointment. They robbed him of fifty or sixty dollars, a gold watch and a pair of gold spectacles, his hat and the sermons which he was to preach that day.

For the Recorder. NEAR FREDERICKSBURG, VA., April 20th, 1863.

DEAR BRO. HUFHAM:—You will be pleased to learn, while you hear so much said about the war, its perils, excitements, and bloody, and shocking scenes, that our regiment is for the third time, visited with an abundant outpouring of the Spirit of God. During the past two weeks, I find by a careful examination that one hundred and ten (110) have presented themselves as penitents, and forty-one (41) we trust have been hopefully converted to God. The interest is still increasing. More than one half of the penitents have been awakened during this meeting. A large number of those who presented themselves for prayer during the other revivals have either, professed, died, or have been discharged or sent to the hospital. I think I may safely say that we have had as many as 250 seekers in this regiment from first to last.

It affords me pleasure to know that the 1st N. C. Regiment is also blessed with an outpouring of Divine blessings. The indefatigable Chaplain, Bro. Gaultney informed me yesterday that he