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AT CHICKAMAUGA.

"This is satanic!" George Burton was studying for the ministry when the war broke out. He intended to return to the theological seminary if he lived to get back, so Captain Gates of the Third rifles did not regard his first lieutenant's exclamation as at all profane. Sniffing the sulphurous battle odor drifting up from Chickamauga creek, the captain responded:

"Well, old fellow, it certainly smells like it. How are you off for water?" "Haven't even a canteen. Lost it in our countercharge. Look out, cap! Here she comes!" And the lieutenant pulled the captain closer to the earth on which both lay.

"Hug your mother, boys!" This from the men to the right and left. Behind a hastily constructed breastwork at the base of Snodgrass hill the ragged remnant of the Third rifles flattened themselves, face down, as a shell from Bragg whizzed to the earth 50 yards outside and burst with a molten glare and a splintering roar. The dust of four weeks on the red, rough mountain roads had turned the uniforms to a rusty tan. The faces were so brown as to give the light eyed men a wild, uncanny look. In the past 48 hours ammunition had been served six times, and rations—not at all. Three times this Sabbath afternoon of Sept. 20, 1863, Longstreet's veterans, with their hats slouched over their faces like men facing a cutting wind, with the cries of maddened eagles, had rushed against the hill, and each time Thomas' remaining artillery roared defiance from the slopes, held by six shattered brigades of the Army of the Cumberland.

As each charge had been preceded by a fierce cannonading of the Union position, the increasing roar put the rifles on the alert. "Let 'em come again, hang 'em!" "Think we're recruits, eh?" "We ain't to be druv!" "Not much. When we're ready to leave, they won't be in no humor to follow." "Wish they'd hurry up and have it over!"

There were other and more forceful expressions from the men peering between the logs through which protruded the muzzles of their rifles. Two young men, lying on their faces to the right of the lieutenant, varied the monotony of dodging shells with a pack of irreputably dirty cards. In lieu of money they used buttons cut from the coats of dead men in blue and dead men in gray. Each player had buttons of one kind, and as they were evenly matched in skill they forgot in their mimic contest the deadly struggle going on to the right and laughed as if in the barn at home.

"Don't go to sleep, boys! They'll be here soon!" The captain's warning was called out by the gradual cessation of the artillery fire over the river. Meanwhile the guns on Snodgrass hill were so silent as to lead some of the men to fear the ammunition was exhausted.

"Wait, boys, till the Johnnies show up, and you'll see Pap Thomas ain't the man to keep guns to the front unless he's got powder fodder to feed 'em," said a grimy sergeant beside the two card players, who were now blowing the dust from the hind sights of their rifles. After an anxious wait and a sigh of relief at the failure of the enemy to try the red experiment again, the captain sat up and said to his lieutenant:

"I think, Burton, the worst is over for today. Thank God, the sun will be down soon!" "He looks red enough to have washed in the Chickamauga. Hello! What's up in the woods out there?" asked Burton. "I see nothing unusual," said the captain.

Since the failure of the last charge on the center the enemy had been keeping up a close and persistent attack on the right. From this point came the incessant roar and ring of cannon and rifle, cutting through which yells and defiant cheers could be heard. Across the front cottony heaps of powder smoke rolled, glowing luminous and crimsoned as if being blood dyed.

"Can't you see the black smoke blending with the white over there?" And the lieutenant pointed to the woods in front. "Yes; but what of it?" "You know what it means." "Like all smoke, it means fire," laughed the captain. "That's it. It means the woods are on fire. They are as dry as punk. Just think of it, cap!" "I think we have in all our wounded. What matters it to the dead?" "Nothing, cap; but the enemy! My God! There are at least 200 wounded men in gray along the edge of that timber! Look at that splintered oak about a hundred yards to the right." "I see it, and I've noticed through my glass that there is a young officer lying wounded at the foot. He'll crawl in if the fire comes near him," said the captain as he scratched a match on his rusty sword scabbard and lit his pipe.

A few minutes and mourning wreaths of black smoke draped about the barked trees and drifted across the face of the setting sun, hurrying the night. Tongues of flames hissed out from the earth. Snakes of flames licked up the powder dry leaves and coiled up the shot riddled black jacks. To the right and left and back and forth the fire fell and rose and roared in red rage under the whip of the increasing wind. Now and then a shell hurled over from Bragg's center and burst before or on Thomas' hill.

If Lieutenant Burton had said, "This is hell!" he would have been nearer the truth than at first. Now many men said it, and all thought it. "They ain't a-comin'!" "They got enough last time." "Longstreet's found; he's out west now!" "Well, his crowd are good fighters." "Not a bit better'n Bragg's!" shouted a Missourian, who was known to have a contempt for the eastern men on both sides. Meanwhile unmistakable cries for help and shrieks of agony came from the heart of the conflagration. A horse, with helpless hind legs, drew himself to the edge of the timber and with his fore legs pawing at the ground in front he looked appealingly at the men. See our Straw Matting—Paton & Co.

ingly at the line of heads above the breastworks.

"Shoot him, Dixon! Shoot him!" cried the captain. One of the young card players threw his rifle over the top log. He had often hit a postage stamp offhand at that distance. A flash, a crack, and the poor creature's head fell forward. But such methods could not be used on the men staggering out of the blazing jungle. Nearly all these were in gray. Helpless they lay in the woods, praying for night and the coming of friends, but their only hope now was to reach the lines of the enemy. Some hobbled out, using muskets as crutches; others, with worse shattered limbs, dragged themselves slowly along on back or face. A few, stung to momentary strength, ran and reeled to the works, shouting as each fell: "Don't fire! Surrender!" These were carried inside where they cried piteously for water. On that part of the line the fury of two days of unsurpassed struggle and carnage was forgotten for the time. Had the charging enemy appeared, as was expected shortly before, the Third rifles and the veterans to the right and left would have set their teeth and rejoiced in the death they wrought.

Familiarity with suffering intensifies the sympathies of the true soldier, and the gaunt, bronzed defenders of Snodgrass hill were of this class. The hate of years was burned out by these roaring, dancing flames, and, uncaring for the color of the uniform, an awful anxiety for the men in the furnace took its place. Nearly every man dropped outside the breastwork, and these the rifles, unheeding the still crashing trees, carried in. Lieutenant Burton was the most active in this work. He was about to pick up a young soldier with singed black hair and a splintered knee when the man cried out:

"Don't mind me, but for God's sake save the major!" "The major?" repeated Burton. "Yes; Major Shepard of Benning's brigade!" "Where is he?" "Over there, shot through the breast!" And the young Confederate pointed back to the oak.

"One thing at a time, my friend," said Burton as he tenderly lifted the man and carried him inside the breastworks. It was touching to see how the stronger of the wounded held back to help and cheer the weaker. In this way men in gray at present, helping the blue.

"Cap!" "Well, Burton?" responded the captain, looking questionably at his lieutenant and mopping the white his brown, powder stained face with a grimy handkerchief, for though the previous night had been frosty this one promised to be hot and cooled by the shimmering heat waves rolling up from the woods. "I'm going to try it!" said Burton, his lips set and a resolute glint in his big gray eyes.

"Try it?" "Yes, Gates." Burton buttoned up his blouse, turned up the collar, pulled his black felt close about his ears, then unbuckled his sword and let it fall.

"But what are you going to try?" asked the puzzled captain. "I'm going to carry that wounded rebel!" "The one by the tree?" "Yes." "Hold up, George! The man must be dead by this time. It's hot as the hob of a furnace over there. Then the enemy's shells are falling short. They are killing their own men. I'm ready to help all we can, but you mustn't be reckless, old fellow. It isn't like you." "If I don't try it, Gates, I'll never know another happy hour. Here goes!"

The captain reached out his hand to restrain his friend, but with the bound of a stag he had cleared the breastworks. The man saw him dashing down the lurid slope, understood his purpose and cheered to give vent to their feelings rather than by way of encouragement. The two men who had been playing cards begged the captain to let them go to the lieutenant's help, but he refused. By this time all the rifles were on their feet. It was dark to the right and left, but the light of the torch trees flashed on their bronzed faces in a way that intensified the battle expression. Midway Burton came to a sudden halt. That he was not coming back beaten was evident. He tied a handkerchief over his nose and mouth and dashed on again.

The branches of the riddled tree under which the wounded Confederate lay had caught fire, and a rain of sparks was pouring down. How Burton felt or what he said to Major Shepard of Benning's brigade is not known. It is certain, however, that the occasion was not conducive to extended talk. We know from the fact that every faculty of the regular was centered in his merciful mission. Strong as an athlete and active as a gymnast, Burton soon had the man on his back and was facing the lines. Captain Gates waved his hat as his friend drew near, and the rifles leaped on the breastworks and cheered as if on a charge. Those of the Confederates who could do so straightened themselves up to look, and, forgetting their sufferings in Burton's splendid effort, they shouted:

"Three cheers for the Yank!" Two-thirds of the distance was cleared, and the rifles began to breathe easier, when an ominous roar rolled from over the river. A devilish scream came down from the sky, whose black vault was penciled by a curved streak of sputtering sparks that all understood. "Here she comes!" "She'll fall short!" "Down in front, boys!" "My God, Burton! Drop him and run for your life!" This last from the captain, who, with his hands trembling on the logs and an awful agony in his eyes, bent toward his friend. Down 15 feet in Burton's front the shell crashed. For fully two seconds it seemed that it would not explode, but still, like a little fire mountain, the crackling sparks shot up from the fuse. The lieutenant stopped and seemed about to turn to the right, when there came a flash and a crash, and arrows, black or blazing, shot out in every direction. An instant and the wind had swept the smoke to the left, but the man in blue and the man in gray on his back had vanished.

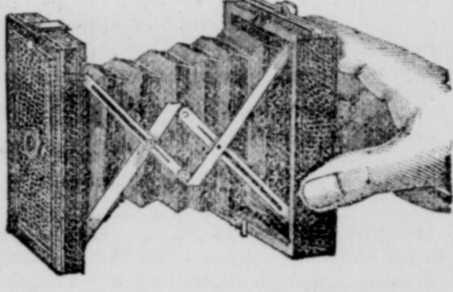
"Where are they?" cried the captain. "Out there to the left, sir!" And a man pointed to a heap near the shell crater. Without an order the two card players leaped the breastwork. They were followed by two others, and these carried in the lieutenant and the man he had sought to rescue. The young Confederate's brain had been plover through by a piece of shell, and, forever out of pain, he lay in the light of the nearing flames with a peaceful look on his fine face. "Did I save him, cap?" asked Burton, when consciousness returned and a circle of tear stained faces was about him.—Providence Telegram

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- The building of a new vestry.
- The erection of a new chimney for the furnace—the removal of the boiler from its present position to the western end of the church, and the necessary excavation in basement.
- Renewing the church ceilings.
- Re-seating the body of the church.
- Painting the whole of the inside of the church.
- Stingling the mail roof.
- Sundry repairs to doors, windows and floor.

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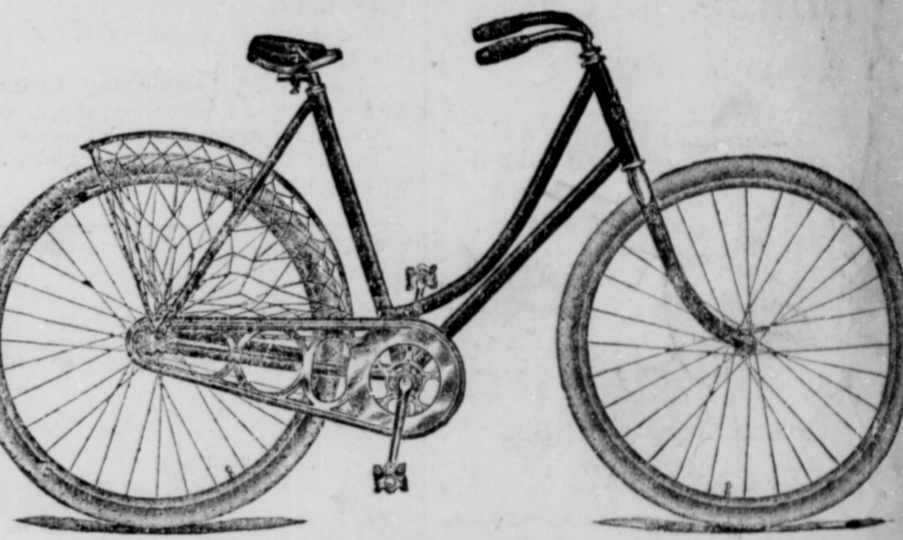
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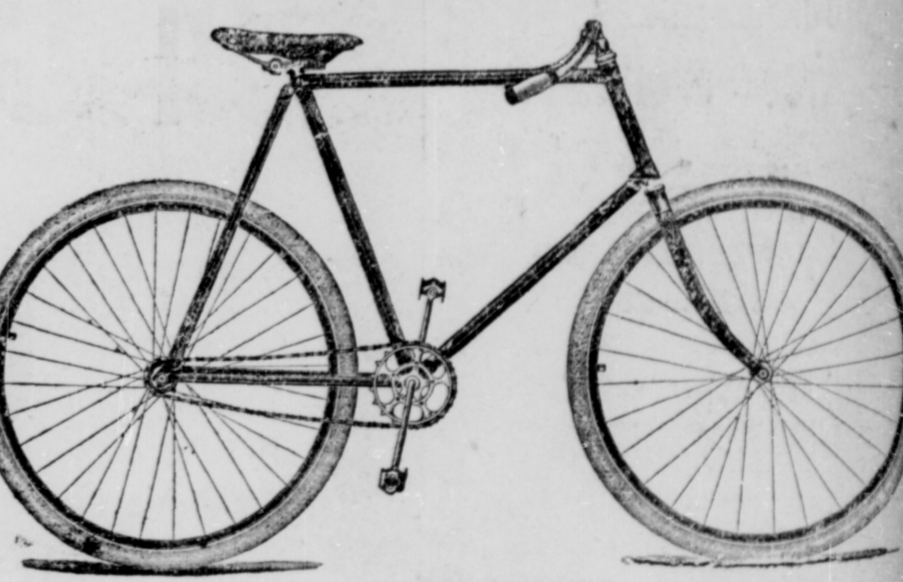
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