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Frazar Augustus

ADJUTANT STEARNS.

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TO THE

Gallant and Noble Commander,

COL. WM. S. CLARK:

TO THE RESOLUTE AND PATRIOTIC OFFICERS AND PRIVATES
OF THE 21ST REGIMENT OF MASS. VOLUNTEERS;
TO THE BRAVE CITIZEN AND REGULAR SOL-
DIERS OF THE GREAT ARMY OF THE
UNITED STATES; AND TO ALL YOUNG
MEN OF LOFTY AIMS AND EN-
DEAVORS EVERYWHERE; THIS
BRIEF MEMORIAL OF A
YOUNG OFFICER IS
RESPECTFULLY
INSCRIBED,
BY HIS FATHER.

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ADJUTANT STEARNS.

When a young man of promise has suddenly fallen in the presence of the nation and in defence of its liberties, and all hopes of his future usefulness, in ordinary ways, have been destroyed; if there was anything in his character and life or in the circumstances of his death which, if known, might be of benefit to the world, that sensitiveness of friendship could hardly be justified which should withhold from young men of his own age, and especially from his fellow-soldiers, some fitting memorial of him. Here is the reason, if any apology is needed, why the following biographical notices of Adjutant Stearns are submitted to the public. It

might be thought they would come with better grace from some one whose intimacy of relationship might not be suspected of giving too high a coloring to the narrative. But if proper allowance is made for parental partiality and tenderness, perhaps, in the case of one so early called away, no person could give a better impression of his real life and motives than his father.

Frazar Augustus Stearns, who fell in the battle of Newbern, March 14th 1862, was born in Cambridge, Mass., on the 21st day of June, 1840, and was twenty-one years and about eight months old when he died.

He was carried to the house of God, on the afternoon of the Sabbath, August 1st, of the same year, and, unconscious himself of the great transaction, was solemnly baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Parents often enter into engagements for their children with men, why should they not with

God? Many Christians take great delight in such consecrations. They lay their child, in the opening of his immortal being, upon the arms of eternal love, and ever after, pleading the Covenant for him, when the dark days of his history come, they look upon his baptism as the bow of promise which spans the cloud.

Of the christian names given him on that occasion, Frazar was the maiden name of his mother, Rebecca Alden Frazar, daughter of Samuel Alden Frazar, Esq., of Duxbury, Mass.

Frazar, the subject of this notice, was a descendant of "the Pilgrims." Among his ancestors were Governor Thomas Dudley, and Captain Edward Johnson, the author of that quaint old history entitled "The Wonder-working Providence of Zion's Saviour in New England." Of the blood of the young Plymouth pilgrim, John Alden, three currents flowed in his veins.

While a child, Frazar gave indications

of some of those traits of character which were conspicuous in his after life. He was uncommonly truthful, conscientious, and high minded. Though of a sensitive and impulsive nature, with quick, strong passions, he was filial and affectionate in disposition, kind and amiable among his associates, and generally magnanimous in his treatment of them.

When a small boy, under the influence of parental teaching and the unconscious education of a Christian home, he became the subject of deep religious experiences. After much reflection for one so young, he made up his mind, not only to trust in Christ as his Saviour, but to serve him henceforth with entireness of heart. With characteristic earnestness and decision, he repeatedly signified to his parents his desire to confess Christ before men. On account of his extreme youth, he was kept back for a time; but as his purposes seemed fixed, and his conduct not more inconsistent than that of the majority of older professors, it was thought that the risk of denying him longer, would be greater than that of complying with his request. After careful instruction, he was accordingly, on the first Sabbath of September, 1852, admitted to the full fellowship of the Church, in which he had been baptized in infancy. It was an impressive scene and drew tears from many eyes, when that small boy — no older than his Saviour was when he heard the doctors in the Temple and asked them questions, — stood up with a few older persons, in the presence of a large congregation, and entered into covenant with God and the Church.

The independence of the child, whose modesty and natural reserve no one would call in question, seemed the more remarkable, as his older brother and sister, though not unthoughtful, had never at that time felt prepared to own in public the God of their fathers. His feelings on the subject

appear, in part, from a little note which he handed to his sister some weeks before he joined the Church, and which happens to have been preserved. The grammar will be excused as he was then only twelve years of age.

"DEAR E.:—

"Father told me, some time ago, that he supposed you was without any good hope in Christ; and I write to you that I may if possible help you. Do give your heart to God, if you have not already; read your Bible much, and pray for a new heart, and ask 'Him who rules all things' to create in you a right spirit. If you felt you wanted advice, I advise you to go to father; for I have, and he has done me a great deal of good. He says he wants Willie and you and myself, when I join, to join the Church together; and he has been waiting for that time to come. Remember me in your prayers, and I shall remain your affectionate brother,

"F. A. S."

The expediency of admitting persons so young into the full fellowship of the Church must be judged of by circumstances. It can be done safely only after much instruction and much prayer. The danger is that they may not understand themselves, or may not have that "faith," as well as knowledge, which is necessary "to discern the Lord's body," or may become the occasion of scandal, by those youthful inconsistencies which will be likely sooner or later to appear. But our Saviour gives a caution also, in the other direction: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." "And whoso shall receive one such child in my name receiveth me." Doubtless the lambs are safest in the fold, if only lambs they are, and you can depend on the discretion and fidelity of the shepherds who have the immediate guardianship of them.

His early education was derived chiefly from the common schools and the High

School of Cambridge, to which, in some respects, no schools in the world were probably superior. The zeal of some of his teachers, in imparting to him the first rudiments of knowledge, especially in elementary arithmetic, when he was not more than six or seven years old, and which inspired him with a taste for mathematics, and laid the foundation of his after success in the study of them, will always be remembered by his friends, as it was by himself, with gratitude. In these schools, his proficiency gave satisfaction, and he left them, after having completed their courses, in August, 1854.

In the early winter of that year, Frazar removed with his parents to Amherst, Massachusetts. Not long after this event, separated from his old companions and some of the religious influences which had been around him, though his conduct as a Christian had not seemed particularly defective, he became for a short season the subject

of religious depression. The following note will explain his feelings. He was now in his fifteenth year.

"Dear Father,—

"I cannot live any longer in such a condition. I must do something—I know not what. O what would not I give, if I only had a Christian's hope! but I am afraid all is lost. I have strayed and wandered far from God, and I fear. How can I be saved after what I have done? I have solemnly avouched the Lord to be my God. I have covenanted in the presence of many witnesses to live no longer for the world, but for Christ above; and how have I fulfilled that vow? What have I lived for? I have given up to the enjoyment of this world, and to its temptations. I have made, at times, resolutions; but these have been broken; and last of all I have been a disgrace to the Church and to Christ. How then can I be saved? Could I but have a hope in Christ, I would devote myself forever to his service;

but I am afraid all is lost. Do tell me what I must do? Pray for me, and ask God to grant me a hope in him.

"Your affectionate son,

"FRAZAR."

On conversing with him, it appeared that while he had not wholly neglected religious duties, he had become remiss in them, had failed "to be watchful," had not lived in his religion, had given away in some instances to temptation, and was wholly dissatisfied with himself. Of such a state of mind, the Christian, who has often felt himself like Paul to be the chief of sinners, needs no explanation. But if any read these lines who are ignorant of the Christian's hidden life, let them understand. It is not the experience of Christians that the soul leaps, at once, to its highest sanctification; "the old man," especially in the child, must have its development as well as "the new man," and these will be repeated, and perhaps severe conflicts between them, and alternations of

success, till "the new man" gets the final victory and "he that overcometh inherits all things." It was only after he had been through the Slough of Despond, and held fast in Doubting Castle, and suffered the oppressions of Giant Despair, that Bunyan's Pilgrim reached "the land of Beulah, where the air is sweet, and where the sun shineth night and day." So "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," is rarely enjoyed as a permanent state by any Christian till he has passed through many inward conflicts and perhaps discomfitures.

About midsummer of this year, 1855, an event occurred than which hardly anything could have distressed him more deeply. It was the death of his mother. A woman of a strong mind and a large and loving heart, her influence over her children, and especially over Frazar, who inherited her quick sensibilities, was of course very great. As he loved her exceedingly, her long sickness and uncommon sufferings, though submis-

sively borne, were a constant source of depression to him. And when she gave him her parting counsels and a mother's last kiss, and he saw her dying, though with the peace of God in her soul, it was almost more than his young spirit could endure. For a long time afterward the sadness of his desolated home oppressed him.

The next spring, he was sent to Phillips' Academy, in Andover, to prepare for college. His desires for a more extended education than he had yet obtained had become strong, indeed, at times, intense. The following notes reveal his feelings on the subject, and give some glimpses of the intensity of his character.

"Dear Father, —

"I want to make a request of you, and I do it in writing because I can better tell you all the whys and wherefores.

"In regard to my studying, I feel as I never have before; something within me says, *Act;* and as Sheridan said, 'It is in

me and must come out.' I feel more and more, every day, the truth of the saying, 'Knowledge is power.' I am determined yet to make 'something or nothing;' that is my motto, and, father, you shall yet hear from me in other ways than as your son.

"The other night you asked me how I should like to go to Andover. I jumped at the thought, my heart leapt within me. I resolved soon to let you know. It is not a thing I have *hastily* thought of; but I have thought it over and over and over again. For more than a month before, I had thought of it and turned it over in my mind. I have weighed it in *every* scale, and have long since come to the determination, if you will send me to Andover two years, to go to college."

Speaking of some difficulties in the way, and how he had planned to overcome them, he continues:

"Havn't other folks done so? and can't I do the same? I *will* do the same, can't or no can't. It *will* be done, it *shall* be done.

Where there's a will, there's a way. I have the will; the way will follow."

A little time after, he writes:

"Dear Father,—

"I *can't* study *here*. I can't do it. You don't know how much I have tried, but it is no go; *do* let me go to Andover, and you will be thanked by me. Here I have all the interruptions you can imagine. Oh, father, father, my heart aches and is weary. Perhaps I *have* kept a merry face,—a merrier face than any of the rest; but I have often done so when within all was loneliness and sadness. I did not like to let *you* know that I was discontented or unhappy, but I am sick at heart, my heart *gnaws* after knowledge, and I must have it; but I can't get it here, at home. I must go to Andover. I *must* have knowledge; and if you wish to make me happy, send me."

His course at Andover, though pleasant

to himself and profitable, was short. On account of over-exertion, with some other students of the Academy, in an effort, under a fever of young patriotism, to procure from the woods and erect a liberty pole — followed by a rapid walk to Boston to attend the celebrations of the Fourth of July — and of a cold which supervened — his health was so much impaired that, at the end of three months after he left home, he was obliged to suspend his studies and return to Amherst.

After several interruptions in his studies at home, he so far completed his preparatory course as to be admitted into Amherst College as a member of the Freshman class, in August, 1857, at the age of seventeen.

From the time he united with the Church in Cambridge, in 1852, till he entered college, his moral and religious life was marked with but few noteworthy indications. Notwithstanding some afflictions, he seemed generally happy. He entered with great

avidity into youthful sports, without being addicted to the vices which are often connected with them. While he was sensitive and proud-spirited, and could not brook an insult, his filial and affectionate nature could be appealed to with success, and the law of parental control was never resisted. Everything low and mean was his abhorrence, and, even from his earliest boyhood, he always expressed the utmost indignation at vulgarity and profaneness.

As, owing to special circumstances, he had entered college after preparations too hastily and imperfectly made, he did not reach his ideal, in the classics, during the Freshman year. "Indeed," says Professor Tyler, from whose address at the funeral I am allowed to quote, "his taste was rather for the mathematical and physical sciences and their practical applications. He began early to collect minerals, and under the personal influence and friendship of the accomplished Professor in that department, he not

only studied them scientifically, but admired these exquisite productions of Nature's handiwork as an amateur. He was particularly fond of chemistry, and it was in the laboratory that he first formed that attachment for the Professor, afterwards his Major and Colonel, which grew with every subsequent year, and ended only in that gallant charge which cost one of them his life and the other a pang little short of that which separates soul from body."

In the winter and spring of 1858, during that remarkable revival of religion which followed the great financial crash of 1857, when the whole country was roused to reflection, and as the result of which more than ninety-six thousand hopeful conversions to Christ were enumerated, Amherst, in common with other colleges, and Frazar, in common with his fellow-students, was deeply moved. In the early part of that season, he not only seemed to participate personally in the religious quickening,

but to take the deepest interest in its influence upon others. As the work went forward and he was led to examine more searchingly the foundations of his own hope in Christ, he began to doubt whether he had really experienced that great change which the New Testament speaks of as a new birth, a new creation, a resurrection from the dead. The suspicion that he might have deceived himself, and have been living in a delusion, excited and grieved him, and awakened in him some terrible doubts respecting the genuineness of revivals and even of Christianity itself. This state of mind was not a little aggravated by the influence of one or two somewhat talented but sceptically inclined associates, who had learned enough of pantheistic speculation to complicate themselves in its meshes, but not enough to detect its sophistries or turn back again to the old foundations of Christian peace. His sceptical questionings were not, however, welcomed and rejoiced in, as they often are by irreligious men; but they took the form of fear approaching desperation, not unattended by rebellion of spirit, lest he might be disappointed in all that he had hoped and believed. His religious life was like a harp not broken and destroyed, but unstrung and discordant. All the dangers of "drawing back unto perdition" which the Apostle foresaw when he said, "Cast not away therefore your confidence," now threatened him. Nor was it till sometime afterward, when he had been taught by experience "that there is small chance of truth at the goal, when there is not child-like humility at the starting-post," that he was enabled to escape the regions of unrest and plant his feet on the firm earth again. All this, however strange it may seem to the mere worldling, will be understood by the Christian who has learned in the school of a divine discipline that the crown of thorns precedes the crown of glory.

Towards the close of his first year in college, he was visited with a grief which, though for the most part hidden in his heart, made an ineffaceable impression upon it. It was the death of a young friend with whom he had been as intimate from his early childhood as a brother with a sister. Beautiful and interesting, — an only child, — consumption had marked her for a victim. She died at the age of eighteen in sweet submission to the Divine will, peacefully trusting in Jesus, and looking forward with confidence and joy to the heavenly rest. Though she had never been to him, perhaps, much more than as a sister, when she was gone and her society could not be had, a sense of bereavement came over him, and the nightshades often afterwards hung upon his spirit; and when the first days of mourning were over, like Dante's Beatrice, she became a sort of pure angelic presence to him, strengthening his faith and hallowing his life.

An event occurred early in his Sophomore

year which was neither particularly creditable to himself nor to other parties concerned in it, though it grew out of honorable feelings and a high-minded intention. He had always expressed the greatest contempt for that petty tyranny which is so often practised by Sophomores upon Freshmen. Most of his classmates, actuated by the same spirit, with more magnanimity of intention than wisdom in the manner of execution, had undertaken with him to break down the prestige of this old custom of barbarism. In carrying out their plans, as might have been anticipated, they came into collision with the class above them. "A point of honor" was in question; and on this the college spirit effervesced. Many of both classes were, for a time, not only strangely excited, but greatly imperilled. One of the wildest storms ever known in Amherst College was raging, when a college officer appeared on the ground and secured a calm.

Sometime afterwards, for his heroism in defending what they considered "their honor," on this occasion, at the hazard of his life, his classmates proposed to present him an elegantly mounted revolver; but he declined the perilous gift. They gave him a beautiful writing-desk, which he gratefully, but reluctantly accepted. He never, however, looked upon it with entire complacency, as it reminded him of a scene which he was only too willing to forget. He used to say that "he should thank God to the latest day of his life" that in the great excitement of that hour "he was withheld from committing any act of violence."

About the middle of the first term of the Sophomore year, he was attacked by one of those long and dangerous typhoid fevers which, when not fatal, often seem to wreck both body and mind. In one of its crises, the physician, though he expressed himself hopefully, was constrained to say that he should not be surprised if he were entirely

prostrated before noon, and dead before night. Those who know the hearts of Christians will not wonder that enough of his dangerous condition should have been intimated to him, to open the way for free conversation as to his hopes of the future. Nor will they think it strange that such hearts should be filled with gratitude to God when they found him then in full possession of his reason, calm, sustained by a firm trust in Christ, and something like "an assurance of hope." The way thus opened, select passages of Scripture and hymns which contain the essence of the Gospel, in its simplest form, such as,

"Just as I am, without one plea,"

were read to him; prayers also were offered occasionally with him, and conversations followed, which not only gave much consolation to anxious hearts of love, but seemed to inspire him with fresh courage and peace. It is pleasant to remember that amidst the mental wanderings of that long sickness, the unconscious revelations which he then made

of his character, were all elevated and beautiful. He was forming patriotic plans for the pacification of the country, and the removal of the evils which even then seemed impending; he was engaged in important mechanical inventions; he was composing music; he was discovering splendid minerals; he was making vast sums of money, not so much for himself as for richly endowing and furnishing the college and making presents to his friends. At one time, he thought that he had delivered an address which was received with approval. "Father," he said, "how did you like it?" Being answered somewhat evasively, but in the line of his own fancies, he responded, "I always thought I should do something to please you."

On religious subjects, he was trustful and submissive. "What are those words," said he to his sister, during the sufferings of a very sick night; "They shall hunger no more, nor thirst; what are they?" The

passage was repeated to him. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." "Beautiful, beautiful," said he in a voice sweetly subdued, "I almost wish I was there."

This protracted sickness not only prostrated his physical nature, but after a while enfeebled his mind. He became in some respects almost a child again, and could best be entertained with hearing the books which he had read in his childhood, and in listening to childish tales which had long since ceased to interest him.

At this point the pen stops, and the writer asks himself, with surprise at the exhibitions he has given, — Was this opening life, which had seemed generally so joyous, the subject of uncommon trials? And the answer must

be, that while there was much youthful happiness in it, there was also the discipline of much sorrow. It was a mixed scene, — great gorgeous clouds, black and golden.

Nor was this lot, though hard, to be deprecated. Suffering, when not too mighty for us, is educational. Great characters are rarely formed without it; great Christian attainment is usually conditioned upon it. Though a happy young life may seem most pleasant to us, difficulty and affliction are doubtless its best teachers. We admire the wheat in its greenness, still more when its heads bend together with ripened grain; but it must be cut and threshed and ground and bolted before it is fitted for its highest use.

After he was supposed to have recovered from this sickness, in the words of Professor Tyler's address, "he attempted to resume his studies; but he could not command his faculties. For once and for a season, his will was baffled, and that in

the realm of his own mind. He returned to his favorite pursuits in the laboratory and the mineral kingdom; but these did not satisfy: he must have a complete college education. He took to horticulture; and succeeded admirably in raising vegetables, but not in restoring his health."

After several efforts at study, as a last experiment, Professor Henshaw of Rutger's College, then at Byfield, Mass., was induced to undertake to aid him in reviving his lost knowledge and preparing him to reënter college. Though several months had now passed since he began to call himself well, he was really unfit for study. His mind was often in a whirl of confusion. His plans of life were unsettled, and his religion, just now, did not sustain him.

Indeed, while at Byfield, he went through another of those terrible experiences which had so strongly shaken him in 1858. Much may be attributed to imperfect health, but much more to the workings of an earnest

religious nature, in the earlier conflicts of its sanctification. God ploughs deep furrows, when he would produce great sheaves. Had he been older and known more of Christian experience, he might have condemned himself less bitterly for unwelcome doubts, and have waited more calmly, in the way of obedience and prayer, for light.

His state of mind was thus expressed: "You say," he writes, "I have no better friend on earth than my father. If I thought otherwise I would not tell you what I am going to now. I am very unhappy, and have been for some time. Those old doubts have been coming up in my mind, and until they are solved I shall be unhappy. You tell me to 'rejoice evermore,' and 'pray without ceasing.' I can do neither, for I seem to believe nothing. O! the misery, — the agony I endure you cannot imagine; and sometimes I wish I had died when I thought I believed, rather than live to become (as I fear I shall) an

infidel. I would like to believe if I could. I know some will call me fickle, changeable, and ridicule me; but I am coming home to you like the prodigal son, and hope that you, at least, will not reproach me. Meanwhile, ask the Saviour you believe in, if he be true, to convince me."

Professor Henshaw writes concerning him, "His mind, I should think, is in a very nervous, excitable condition. I have had several conversations with him on his religious state, and find him troubling himself with doubts regarding the truth of Christianity and the reality of Christian experience. Perhaps his troubles are mainly owing to his sickness, his depressed feelings, and the absence of his former lively joy in Christ. I think, however, he has been affected somewhat by the freely expressed doubts of some of his associates in college and other places. I think he is honest in his doubts, and I have striven to aid him in resolving them. He seems to be now

taking the right direction, but is in a very dangerous state of mind. I can but hope the result will be a deeper experience, a more thorough knowledge of himself and of the deceptiveness of the heart, and higher Christian faith and joy. He has evidently had seasons of deep depression, increased by his lonely situation here; and I should not be surprised if he had manifested a good deal of the hero in his struggles against them."

This state of mind could not long continue. The letter to his father marked a crisis in his feelings. He had hardly expressed them when he began to find relief. And though he did not immediately reach the firmest rock of faith, he ceased to sink in the slough of unbelief.

His second letter, written but a few days after the first, reveals the point of transition from conflict and trouble to the beginnings of peace.

"Dear Father, —

"Ere this you will doubtless have received a letter from me written while I was in a most intense agony. I say *agony*, for until a person *feels* that he has nothing to live for, that he has no God, no religion, he does not know what agony is. This you will readily see has been my trouble — has caused these fluctuations — has made me discontented and unhappy. But it was more than I could bear, or *any one*, for any length of time. I thought once that I was going *crazy*. I truly thought so. What I could do I did not know; for I had nothing to live for, and wished only that I might die. I began to grow sceptical as I grew better from my sickness, until at last I seemed to believe *nothing* of the Bible, except that a God exists. I began to investigate the matter, and finally came to the conclusion that although I might be rejected, although I might be cast off, yet while *life should last* I would in future do all

in my power to advance Christ's kingdom. I found that I never should be happy as long as I disbelieved the Gospel; and may God forgive me for doing as I have done! Why, I have been in a perfect hell for hours at a time, when, as I say, I began to think I should go mad. I do not think I shall ever be troubled so again, for in future, I am resolved to carry all my doubts to the Lord. I will study as hard as I can, and at the same time keep in good health.

"This I am resolved upon, — that if prayers to God, and effort to do the will of God, are powerful with Him, they shall no more be neglected by me; and although there are many things which I can't explain even now, I can say, 'Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.' You, I feel assured, will pray for me; pray especially that God will give me strength and *grace* to overcome temptation, — that He will give me love to Him, and a desire

and willingness to do his commands. I can't say that I feel full of religious faith and hope; but a strong, earnest purpose to do the will of God, I *do* feel. I had rather have the smallest hope I ever had that I was a Christian, than to live my life over again for a month past.

"Can you wonder I was unable to decide upon anything? How could I? — for I had no God to go to. And may He be merciful to me as I need mercy! Please write me when you find it convenient, and remember me in your prayers."

It had been made evident by repeated experiments that successful study could not be realized in him without some radical revolution of his physical system. Accordingly a sea voyage was planned for him to Bombay, in which city his elder brother had previously established himself in business. Frazar entered into this arrangement with great delight. He sailed from Boston, in The Sabine, Captain Hendee, on

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the 15th of October, 1859, just one year after his attack of fever, and landed in Bombay, March 6th, 1860, having been out 144 days, or nearly five months. This long voyage did for him more than the most sanguine of his friends had dared to hope. It completely renovated his constitution, and established his health. It restored and strengthened his intellectual powers, and almost new-created his moral and spiritual being. It was not a voyage of idleness. Though he had shipped as a cabin passenger, he preferred to participate in the work of the vessel; and no man on board, the captain said, worked harder. He studied the vessel in all its parts and powers. He made himself master of all the routine duties of the sailor. He studied navigation, and learned as an officer to work the ship. He kept a nautical journal with scientific accuracy and fullness. Partly to perfect his knowledge of the ship and partly for the exercise of his mechanical talents, in this and on the return voyage, he constructed a model vessel, which he afterward bequeathed to his father as a keepsake, and which is a beautiful memorial of industry, ingenuity, and filial affection.

But the spiritual advantages of the voyage were far greater than all the others. He had time for reflection, he had time for the study of the sacred Scriptures, he had time for prayer, and under the Divine teaching his mind worked itself clear of those old terrific doubts, and his heart opened itself to the full sunshine of God's love. Out in the solemn solitudes of the ocean, where he could often be alone with the great deep, and the clouds, and the blue expanse, and the starry night, and the storms, and the Maker of them all, he consecrated himself anew to Christ, and learned that "believing was simply trusting." The great battle with unbelief was fought out, — the enemy in his heart had

been effectually routed. He moved ever afterward, in the spiritual realm of his being, comparatively speaking, as a conqueror. Not that the Christian warfare had ended, for that ends rarely except with life; but the hostile forces gained no more important victories, and could not longer greatly disturb his peace.

In mid-ocean, he writes to his sister, January 4th, 1860.

"Let us both look forward to the time when you and I shall meet again, not merely as brother and sister, but as fellow-laborers in Christ. I might have been far different from what I hope I am, if you had treated me differently. Thanks be to God, I hope and believe that here amid the endless strife and wild confusion of the ocean, He has opened my eyes. And my daily prayer is, to be made more sensible of my utter sinfulness and my entire dependence on *Him*.

"I do not know whither the Lord is directing me. But wherever He says, I will go, with His grace to help me."

After reaching Bombay, he writes again:

"As for myself, I *hope* I have found the way to eternal life. As yet it seems faint, and the light but very feeble; but I do not deserve any more, and am thankful for only a little. I have been searching for a long time for what is the easiest thing in the world to find, and I hope to come all right and grow in grace."

His brother and sister in Bombay were greatly surprised by his altered appearance. His robust, sound health, his spirit and courage, his manly bearing, his elevated views, and most of all his unpretending but earnest piety, delighted them. He spent two months in India, where everything was new and strange to him, with the greatest pleasure and profit. Soon after he had shipped for home, his brother writes: —

"We easily imagine your anxiety, for '*we* had a brother once,' and never shall I

forget his smiling face when he first made his appearance with us. He has left, too, such pleasant remembrances, such gladsome feelings, — for we are sure that Frazar is fast anchored to that Rock from which there is no parting asunder again. You cannot realize the *holy*, happy change in him. As father says, God *did* have a 'plan,' and has carried him safely through the Slough of Despond."

As he was about leaving Bombay for the home voyage he writes:

"My Dear Father, —

"I start on or about April 15th. But, taking example of so worthy a person as my father, I shall divide my letter into several topics. 1st. Health; it was never better, and I, with the blessing of God, shall come back a strong, healthy man. 2d. Spirits, — not ardent spirits, but mental. My spirits never were better. I am no longer of a dull, moping disposition, but am disposed to see the world as it is, and

to make the best of everything. 3d. My plans for the future are what I told you in my last letter, subject, of course, to the will of God. Lastly. I hope I am at last all right in religious matters. I trust I have learned to put faith in Christ and God, which is in truth believing. I have the greatest faith that I shall be able to rely wholly on Him, for consolation here below and mercy above."

His voyage out was attended with one of the heaviest gales ever known in the Indian Ocean; and a storm, if possible, still more terrific struck the ship on its return, a few days before reaching its American port. But these perils of the deep were among his pastimes, and gave health to his body and sublimity to his thoughts. He was welcomed home, about the last of August, 1860, to overflowing hearts of love, and with profound gratitude to God.

"On renewing their acquaintance with him after his return," says Professor Tyler, "his teachers and friends were not more delighted with his manifest physical renovation than with the scarcely less visible enlargement of his mind, elevation of his views and improvement of his character, thus forming at least one exception to the maxim of the Latin poet, '*Qui trans mare currunt, locum, non animum mutant.*'

"During an absence from them of two years, he had almost forgotten his classics. But he resumed the study of them with the resolution to make himself a scholar. Greek now became to him another language from what it ever seemed before. Not content with the studies and instructions of the regular course, he had commenced some private lessons with the Professor, with the intention of laying broader and deeper the foundations of his knowledge of that wonderful language. And though he had to begin almost at the be-

ginning again, I have no doubt, he would have mastered the difficulties had not the call of his country soon filled his ear and rendered him deaf to the remonstrances of the Muses.

"I cannot bring this brief record of his college life to a conclusion," he adds, "without adverting to an incident which marked its close, and formed a fit transition to the career of honor and self-sacrifice upon which he was soon to enter. Having been appointed one of the speakers from the Sophomore class in the prize declamations at Commencement, he won the first prize. A classmate who was poor, not only gained no prize, but in consequence of having labored to the very last moment, in lighting the audience-room, lost his memory, and broke down in the midst of his piece. Stearns insisted that but for the exhaustion consequent upon this exertion, his classmate would have been a promising competitor for the honor, and so constrained him to receive the prize.

This fact was confided at the time only to a single friend, and probably never would have gone further, had it not been for the young hero's early death.

"The fall of Fort Sumter," continues the narrator, "which roused the nation from its fatal slumber, started young Stearns, like the sound of a trumpet; and on that dark and portentous Sunday, when so many ministers preached and so many congregations heard the Word under the fearful foreboding that the flag of secession already darkened the capitol, the ardent and generous young men of the college thought it no breach of the Sabbath to enroll a company, if needed, for the defence of Washington; and at the head of this list of young patriot warriors, was written in his own hand, the name of Frazar A. Stearns. With the passing away of the immediate danger ceased the call for immediate action; and the students consented to relinquish the proposed military company,

for a general drill of the college. But Stearns never ceased to revolve the question of duty to his country; and after the disaster at Bull Run, he came to his father with the news, saying: 'We have been beaten, and now there is a call for Frazar A. Stearns.' His father of course counselled against precipitation, and expressed his belief that the time had not come for young men to enlist, who were in a course of education. Frazar acquiesced for a season; but the fire only burned in his bones. As he conversed from time to time upon the subject, his arguments grew clearer and his convictions deeper; till at length his father and friends were constrained to feel that he had a call from God which they dared not resist, and to give him the hand, saying: 'If such are your motives and convictions, go, and God be with you!'

"A fact, mentioned by his physician, illustrates the spirit with which he went to the war, and his intention to go, not merely

to hold office and win renown, but to make himself useful in every possible way to the men under his care. Not long before his departure, he came to the doctor and spent hours in talking with him about the wounds and diseases of the soldier, his fatigues on the march, and his dangers in the camp, as well as the various forms of death or wounds in battle; and he went to the war with a knapsack of medicines, and what is better, with a head full of practical wisdom, as well as a heart full of sympathy, fully resolved, when necessary, to be the medical as well as the military and moral adviser of the men who should be intrusted to his charge.

"It should be added, that his patriotism was not a sudden impulse produced by the excitement of the war. From early youth he had taken a deep interest in the history and prosperity of his country. And as those perilous times drew near, which foreshadowed the rebellion and the war, his

mind dwelt so much upon those perils, that amidst the dreamy wanderings of his long sickness in 1859, he proposed plans, not unworthy of a sound and mature understanding, for the national safety. Especially he urged with great earnestness 'that his father should write articles for the most patriotic papers, and to the most judicious men of the country; not the extreme or the party men, but to the honest, fair-minded, and good, to bring them together for consultation, and try to have the right men sent to Congress, who would take up the slavery question honestly and kindly, and propose that the government and the nation should offer to bear a reasonable part of the expense of emancipation.' Thus ready and anxious for peace, and even compromise, was he then, who, when the rebellion broke out and the time for compromise was over, drew his sword and threw away the scabbard.

"He hoped and expected to return. But

distinctly contemplating the more than possibility of a different issue, he arranged all his letters and papers, made an inventory of all articles of value or interest, and left written directions for their disposition if he should be killed in battle. Meanwhile he had been most assiduously training himself in Amherst and Boston in the use of the bayonet and the revolver, and in the sword exercise, that he might be fitted for any emergency and all his military duties."

During the year thus hastily reviewed, Frazar seemed, for the most part, a singularly happy man. His health was good; his mind sound and growing; his heart and conduct mainly right. His old religious doubts were gone; a final conquest had been achieved, in this part of his being. Whatever he might do, how much soever he might wander, there could be no more darkness impenetrable, for Christianity is true, and Christ is the light of the world,

and there would always be hope in him for the penitent. Conscious of being essentially at peace with God, his days passed pleasantly along, and the sunshine was within and all about him. Notwithstanding his excitable temperament, it is not remembered in the family that he so much as once lost his temper or uttered an unkind word. Though he would express indignation towards mean conduct, when he met with it, he was generously forgiving, and his charity seemed childlike. He was so gentle, too, in his bearing, that except for a certain determination in his look, a stranger would hardly suspect that the warrior was in him. Nor did the condition of the country, and the question of his own duty in reference to it, greatly disturb his composure. It gave depth, earnestness, and power to his spirit, roused his anxieties, and nerved him to high resolves, but did not depress him. His friends at home will never forget how much they enjoyed his

society that year, how much they confided in him, hoped for him, and loved him; — they will only wonder that a life so beautiful should not have conveyed to them a more distinct presentiment of its brevity.

It must not be supposed, however, that he had no inward conflicts, that there were no outward compliances, and no occasions for self-reproof. In a strong nature like his, when the ideal standard of duty is bright and high, and the conscience is quick and exacting, the temperament susceptible, and its impulses imperious, there must be many battles and perhaps some reverses before the crown of final victory is obtained.

A few extracts from a correspondence with an intimate friend will show something of his ideal of goodness, his struggles to reach it, and his bitter self-condemnation when he failed of it.

"I cannot be satisfied with being *part* good and the rest *bad*. I must be good,

all good, wholly given up to the interests of eternity, or *bad*, growing worse as I grow older. But, thank God! I am never happy when doing wrong, never satisfied, but there is *always* a longing, *groaning* in me after something better, purer, holier; something which shall be to me in place of friends, riches, worldly honor. I may be saved so as by fire; but nevertheless I *believe* I shall be saved, and God is only trying me for my own good and his glory."

"I pray God, — *first*, that I may obey Him; next, that I may gratify the *highest* expectations of my friends for *their sakes*. There are great temptations in college; but none too strong for Jesus to overcome for us."

Speaking of his intention to study closely, he says: "If I cannot get excitement from my books, I'll get it somewhere else, for my nature craves it. But I find I am all right when I can trust God and make Him superior to everything else."

"'A man's foes are they of his own household.' My greatest stumbling-blocks are my best friends, in college."

Communion — "I felt as an outcast — as one who had no right to be there. But God is merciful, and He must hear me at last, if I only keep trying. I have always known my duty, and when I have sinned, it was against greater light than most. God grant that I may overcome, and make Him the first object of my choice!"

"Do not think I am so good. It makes me feel *mean*, as though I ought to let you know how wicked I am. I am a poor fellow, at the very best, continually shifting around, inconsistent and unsteady."

"The students here are getting more sober, *I* think, than they have been; and I, for one, hope great things for myself and others in the day of prayer. Pray for me: pray that I may feel my need of a Saviour; not only become intellectually but spiritually convinced. Pray that I may have strength

given me to break away from every evil habit, and trust in Jesus Christ. It's a long time, now, since I had anything to do with 'those fellows,' to associate with whom is for me spiritual death. Don't misunderstand me, or think that I am *now* what I ought to be. Far from it; but I know that I never can be a true Christian while I associate with them."

"Our prayers must be answered; for what says the holy Word of God? and, as a friend once remarked to me, God's word never fails. No; 'God's word never fails,' but is the same monument of love it was thousands of years ago, and will continue to be till God shall call his children home.

"I can't tell you how I *long*, sometimes, to see my blessed mother. Many a time, the thought of how sweetly she died has kept me from distrusting God. And yet I know that my mother was as quick in her feelings as myself — impulsive and outspoken. But it is God that works in us; and I am not at

all afraid but if we really trust Him, we shall come out all straight. The trouble is, we don't really trust God; we only think we do."

"I've been a poor 'wandering sheep' all my days. Continually, I am making up my mind to try and do nearer the right; and every day and hour, I seem to be doing nearer what is wrong. I know that for me to serve God, I must do so with my whole heart; and yet I only give Him a small part of my thoughts. How shall I ever become a minister? is the question I often put to myself; and then the old temptations to make money and to do anything rather than be a minister, are constantly coming up. Shall I ever conquer?"

It may here be said that his mind was for a while greatly exercised by the question of a profession. He was never much encouraged by his friends to choose the ministry, from the conviction that his tastes,

temperament, health, required for him some more active, physical employment. But it was a question which he had to decide for himself, and at one time he had nearly made up his mind to enter the ministry. Yet it was with great self-distrust as to his ability for this high calling, and a deep sense of unworthiness. He writes: "I am going to try to be a minister, and you can imagine with what humiliation I say this. *I* a *minister!*"

"I've always been unhappy, when I have determined not to be a minister; and in every case when I have broken away from my covenant vows, I can see a reason. A minister's life is a hard one, as a friend of mine remarked the other day, a thankless one. But it is a happy life. It is just as plain to me as anything can be, that by being a minister I shall serve God and be happy; otherwise, I shall be wretched all my days. And if I pray and trust in God, however much I may have wandered

from him, I know he will help me. I have, as I hope, given myself heartily and entirely up to Him, and mean to try and obtain his blessing. I am determined to let nothing stand between me and serving God. If I thought that anything, however dear, would interfere with my hope in Christ, I would pray God to give me strength to cast it from me."

"I have great hopes for Amherst College. God grant we may have a powerful revival! I am selfish in this wish, for I need quickening and sanctifying."

"I hope 'the boys' will come back from vacation steady and determined to do well. College is a hard place, at best, to keep straight in; and when the 'Christians' get 'fast,' what can you expect the rest will do? I think that professors of religion in college can't be too careful of their actions and words. Many is the time I have wished I could undo the past. But past is past; and all that is in our power is to try and do

right every day. I often think, if my mother had lived I should be a much better fellow than I am, and should have avoided many *sins*. Don't you think it is hard to do right? But one feels so much better when he knows he is doing his duty."

"You see how hot-headed and hasty I am. I am a poor stray sheep, at best, as I often say; and I sometimes think if I get to heaven, it will be because God is merciful, and I am to be taken away when I 'have a fit' of serving Him. Don't think I mean to speak irreligiously, but that is just the expression of my actions."

The extracts which follow express some of his tastes and feelings with regard to his studies. One of them will show also that the old question of the ministry still troubled him.

"I am beginning to be very fond of Greek. You know I used to hate it; but now I like what was once a tedious study."

"I am writing on the poetry of mathematics. Do you like mathematics? If not you must think this absurd. It is one of my weaknesses to be fond of mathematics and the sciences."

"I thought I had settled the old question that has been troubling me all my life, four weeks ago. I thought, vainly as it seems, that I had fought the battle and conquered. Alas! I trusted too much in my own strength, and find the battle is only half fought, and the toughest of it is yet to come. You won't think me egotistical if I tell you just what I think.

"The great barrier to my religious happiness has always been a desire to be a scientific man; and when I shall have graduated to devote my life and all my energies to chemistry. I can't explain to you how passionately fond of it I am; not as a person is fond of music, or as many say they are fond of languages, history, mathematics; but as a part almost of my very

existence. I feel as if I could do anything, bear anything for its sake.

"My ambition has not been to be a Professor in some college, or a lecturer, or a writer on the subject; but I have thought I would give my whole life to it, and try to *be something in chemistry*. Would to God I could see my way clear! How many times I have wished I could know it to be my duty to be a chemist. This is the question I thought I had decided, — *to be a minister*. I knew I wasn't good enough; and I knew, too, if I waited until I was, I should never be one. So I made up my mind, as I thought, trusting in God. I fear I didn't trust Him enough. Chemistry has been a golden stumbling-block to me, not one year, or two, but five. I love the science with no boyish enthusiasm; but for its own sake, — for *itself*. Sometimes I almost feel as though I could pray God to *let* me become a chemist. Am I wrong to feel so?"

His views in reference to the war and his own duty respecting it, were remarkable for a young man, hardly twenty-one. He not only had clear notions of the great national issues, of the importance of a nation, and the terrible consequences of successful rebellion, but felt that he himself had a special call to fight, and die, if necessary, for his native land. He revolved the matter and conversed upon it, in a calm, cheerful, but earnest and martyr-like spirit. He took up the dread work of war, not for honor, not for pay, not for adventure, but animated by a sublime patriotism, under the influence of those high inspirations which stirred the hearts of the old warriors of Israel, and which, under Providence, "organize victories." A certain sacred enthusiasm, which seemed to come in upon him from without, bore him on steadily from the beginning till it had conducted him up to the altar of sacrifice.

No opposing argument could be advanced

which he had not considered. He studied himself, and believed that he had adaptations for the military life; that he had courage, self-control, power of command and influence over men, and that he could inspire them, at least some of them, with elevated sentiments of patriotism, and perhaps with something like sacred enthusiasm. He thought the country was in need of educated men, of moral and religious men, of officers who would act from principle, who would feel for the privates and take care of them, who would work hard to make them soldiers, and perhaps Christian soldiers. These views often came out in confidential conversations. When asked how he felt in view of the possibility that a cannon-ball might send him into eternity in an instant, he answered, "I hope of course to escape and to return home; but I have thought of all this, and if it should be God's will, I think I am ready." When young Ellsworth was killed, he said, "It is a glo-

rious death. I should be willing to have stood in his place, if I could save the country."

Extracts from his letters will show some of his views on this subject, and exhibit his character in other respects.

"About going to the war — at present there is no necessity, for troops are volunteering faster than they can be supplied, or officered, or sent off. But *when there is need of me, I shall not hesitate to go* at a moment's warning. I think it will be my duty.

"If God tells me to go and fight, or even *die*, for my country, would you tell me not to go? It is not such an awful thing to die, though to the flesh it may seem hard. The end of life is not to live, but to do what God wants us to do; and it matters not whether He wishes one to die here, or abroad, or on the battle field, or at home, so long as one is doing his duty."

"The question is coming nearer and nearer to *me*, — will you go and do your duty to your country? The news to-day, though not of a positive character, looks *very, very* dark. God grant the future may brighten! But we must not disguise the fact from ourselves, that this is to be a long war. Neither can we look away from the fact that, as time rolls by and the war progresses, the troops will become disabled, and there will be a call for more men. Where are they to come from? My trust is not in Abraham Lincoln, not in General Scott, but in God, for the right *must* win. But young as I am, I foresee a long and tedious and bloody war. Remember me in your prayers. Pray God to give me a trusting and believing heart."

"I am very wicked, and God only knows the extent of it. It seems as if I was living wholly for self, without any consideration of those around me. Oh! that I had never uttered an expression but of loyalty

to God! But I have often, and do still, by my example deny Christ. May God in his infinite mercy help me to see my way *clear* through all this trying time! I am going to try and trust God as I never did before. I hope you will pray *very earnestly* for me, that he will come and BLESS me *now*. I cannot stand this pressure of excitement; something must give way, and, if it continues, God only knows what; still *I* shall be prepared to go whenever my country calls me."

"When I am called I shall go; but I hope most devoutly now, that I shall not be called till I have graduated at Amherst."

"I fear the worst is not yet come. We may expect gloomy times before long, and I, for one, am going to put myself in training, so as to serve my country when the time comes for it.

"Have you heard the war news? I'm sure you have, and of the fighting too. I

can think of nothing else; and I hope God will give me grace to go and fight, if it be His will. You ask me, if I am tired of life? No! not quite yet; but if I could be assured of falling at peace with Heaven, I would be willing to go *now*."

Having received a commission as 1st Lieut. of Company I, in the 21st Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, he was ordered on the 21st of August, with his regiment, to Washington, and was soon stationed at Annapolis. While at Annapolis, he attracted the attention of Gen. Reno, who offered him a position as aide-de-camp. But after reflecting on the subject of his duty in reference to it, he politely, but firmly, declined the flattering offer. He said in his letters home, that he had made up his mind to stick by the regiment; that his company actually needed him in it; that he was determined to fight for his country; to deserve promotion before receiving it. He adds: — "I

have left everything to fight for my country. If, in the course of events, I should prove a good soldier, fit to command men, and an able officer; and if God in his great mercy should spare my life, my successes would then, of course, be measured, at least in some degree, by my advancement. A good officer is always known; and if you will excuse me for saying so, the qualifications of a good officer are, besides courage, intelligence, energy, good breeding, and a certain knack and power in commanding men."

A portion of his correspondence while at Annapolis may be of interest.

"NAVAL ACADEMY, Annapolis, Sept. 4th, 1861.

"MY DEAR FATHER,—

"Yours of the 30th ult. came to hand last night, just as I was preparing to turn in. I assure you your letters are hailed with the greatest interest, and read over and over again. When you have five minutes leisure, remember that you have

a son who has left a good home and everything which can make life pleasant, for the discomforts of the camp. Remember that he is comparatively among strangers and in the midst of profanity and vice. Remember that he has gone to save his country, and that there are chances that you all will never see him again, or be able to minister to his comfort, other than by writing a line now and then. I don't write with the *blues*. I havn't them. I'm twice the *man* I was when I left you; but I *do* anticipate news from home, and I say then, if you have time, write me if it be *every day*.

"I am getting along finely, and the men appear to like me. I am very pleasant, but not familiar off duty, and *very strict on duty*. The men take an interest in drilling, with one or two exceptions, and those I "*put through*." You know me well enough to know that I can tolerate anything but indifference and laziness."

" Sept. 14th.

" What will become of our country, is a question which I ask myself daily, *hourly*. To this there seems at present no solution; no one but the Almighty can foresee the result. I am glad I came here, glad for many reasons. I am glad because I hold it to be my *duty* to fight for and devote all my energies to my government. When I left home I thought it was not the duty of students to *enlist*. I can't say I think so now. We are in *absolute need* of more men at once, and to the number of 200,000. How shall we get them? By raising three regiments in Massachusetts, another in Rhode Island, two or more in Connecticut, and waiting the pleasure of the people to enlist? No! We have had play long enough. If we ever expect to overcome, we must gird on the sword. I believe it to be the duty *of every man* who is fit to bear arms, to come forward and offer himself to the government. The old excuse

is no longer valid. There are *not* enough men. Our cities are menaced, and our very homes threatened, merely because we are willing to *pay money* but not enlist ourselves. I want to see the North *aroused*. God grant it may be so."

" Tank Station, Annapolis, Sept. 25th.

" My Dear Father, —

" I have received *all* your letters and am *very*, *very* grateful to you all for writing so often to me. I am daily greeted by a letter as the cars pass by my picket, which I take to my tent and eagerly devour. Monday we received information that a troop of thirty cavalry were coming down from Baltimore to try and cross our pickets. Of course it put us on the '*qui vive;*' and, after giving out thirty rounds of ammunition, I told the men they would be obliged to be awake all night, and if we had a fight I expected every man would stand by me. I told them to be *cool* and not get excited, and obey every order implicitly; that, while I expected every

man would do his duty, and not flinch, the first man whom I detected turning his back I would shoot. If the cavalry had come our company would have done themselves credit. But farewell to all hopes of glory. They didn't come, and I must say I was *very much disappointed*, for I *expected a fight*. I hadn't the least fear, and never went into a thing more coolly in my life. I had everything so arranged that I could tell by means of scouts when the enemy were within two miles. And if the signal had been given, I was going to barricade the road, put six men to cut off their retreat, the rest behind trees, &c., where they couldn't be seen, and I am confident we should have captured the whole of them. At any rate, they wouldn't have gone by easily. I am not boasting; not a bit of it. A man ought not to be cowardly in such a cause; and how can you terrify one who can look *death* in the face, and has made up his mind that his life is his country's, and *expects* death at every turn?

If I can save my country better by *dying* now than living, I am ready for it.

"Meantime pray for me without ceasing, not that I may return safely, but that God may bless me spiritually."

"TANK STATION, Oct. 3d.

"DEAR FATHER,—

"I received yesterday two letters, one from you, the other from N——, dated September 30th. N—— says she don't believe I appreciate your letters half as much as you do mine. If anybody could see me watching for the mail train and see the expression of my countenance when I get a letter, I think that idea would be speedily done away with. I frequently walk a *mile and one half* for the sake of getting the letters two hours sooner. But I don't think it necessary to tell you that I like letters from home; you all know it, and I am sure will write to me as often as you can.

"I think we shall winter at Annapolis. On many accounts I am glad, and on others

sorry, — glad, for we shall then be in a condition to do *good* service, and shall not be likely to get cut to pieces, — sorry, because we shall not see fighting until Spring. I would give anything to be in the coming campaign. But *cui bono?* I must accept the cross and do my duty here.

"Now why I advocate and call so loudly for everybody, particularly the best portion of our community, to enlist and come down here is, I believe that under God, this war is to be *virtually decided* in one year's time: of course it will take longer to right everything, but it will be a war, not only with arms, but to be *waged with words*. And the more Northerners that can pour down here, and the better their position, so much the quicker shall we reassure the South and save our country. That's the reason I say to one and all, 'Come and help us.' Come and let the South know who you are, and by *demonstrating* the utter absurdity of their fears, save the Union. If all the *colleges* would organ-

ize themselves into a brigade, and their *presidents* go as *chaplains*, and their *professors* as *officers* or *privates*, the effect throughout the South would be *electrical*. Thousands would spring up to welcome them, and some to *pray* with them on Southern soil. And now, my dear father, let me say to you, I think, under God, you have a duty to perform: when the call comes, do *you* set the example and go as chaplain of some regiment. Thousands would follow you into the field; and, whether you should live or die, your name would ascend on the lips of the nation, and your soul would go up to God filled with his Holy Spirit.

"Said a gentleman to me the other day, one of the most influential men in the State, 'Mr. Stearns, I was really *sorry* when I heard that *Massachusetts* men were coming to guard this road. I thought them the worst people in the world, and I was actually *dreading* their approach. But,' he says, 'so far from realizing our expectations, we have found

them the *best* men, — *gentlemen*, *kind*, *social*, *full of fine feelings*, highly mindful of *our feelings*, *respecting our property;* and I know of three or four gentlemen who have completely changed their opinions on their account.' Said he, 'We don't know you, and I want, when you go back to Massachusetts, that you should remember us and we you."

"Tank House Station, Oct. 6th.

"My Dear Mother, —

"I have just received a letter from father, dated October 3d, also his sermon. I hope that he will continue to preach such sermons until the North become sensible of their danger. Preach, I say, at all times and in every pulpit. Preach that the great mass of the Northern people *must* become aroused before they can hope to compete with the South and the leaders of Secession. Let every man and boy who can, take up arms and go to the war, trusting to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Oh, that I could see the country awake to their danger; that I could see

them all on their knees praying to God to forgive their sins and help them in the right! As father says, the North can never succeed until they humble themselves before God. Would that I had the pen of an angel to write and stir up the people! Would that any poor words of mine could induce any one, large or small, high or low, to join in the struggle!

"The war now before us is not like that of the Revolution. We must give, not only our treasures and our sons, but *ourselves*. I want to see the whole country awake. It seems as though they were all *dead* or asleep. Fremont is in Missouri, and the cry comes from there, 'more men.' Anderson is in Kentucky, and the cry comes from *there*, 'more men,' *now at once*. From all sides comes the cry, 'more men, *more men* of self-sacrificing spirit, — *men who know how to die*.' No! they prefer to fight by sitting in their arm-chairs, by drawing around their chimney-fires, by poring over books and clas-

sics, by making money, by encouraging trade, by self-indulgence and *not* by self-denial, by anything, in short, but giving themselves up to the struggle, *body and soul*, saying, 'Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?' What would rouse the country quicker to a sense of its danger than to see all its educated men going to fight the battles of the Lord? God grant something may be done by somebody and that speedily!"

In answer to the suggestion of some one that many soldiers, perhaps most who die, may die ingloriously, he adds:

"I am very sure I am quite ready to die an *ignominious* death, as a private or officer, or do anything for our beloved country."

"Tank House Station, Oct. 21st.

"My Dear Father,—

"I thank you for the good opinion you entertain of me. I shall strive never to disgrace you; but just now what I want is 'grace,' and I ask you all not to pray that I may return safely, but that I may

find God as I have never done before, that I may depend on Him in all my ways, that I may learn of Him, go to him with all my troubles and perplexities. I feel the need of God, and I know I have not yet found Him as I can if I have faith given me to pray. I *cannot* bear all my cares *alone*. I must have some sustaining hand to guide me. I am searching after God. I want you to tell me how to find Him. Write me a good long fatherly letter, and let it be soon. I feel with the strength He can give us, we can all go forward, whether in battle or otherwise, our lives being in the hands of God."

"November 17th.

"My Dear Father, Mother, Sisters and Brother,—

"I must write, I think, to you in a body, until we go off; for you must know that I am going off, on the next expedition under Gen. Burnside. Last night Col. Morse informed us that we had received orders to

go: we were perfectly crazy. Gen. Burnside is a splendid man, and I can go anywhere with him; we are to have *rifles* and everything which heart could desire. In fine we are to be admirably accoutred in every respect, and are all of us wild with delight. We shall have some fighting in old Carolina. Six months hence, if I live, I shall have passed through stirring events. Much love to all."

"ANNAPOLIS, Dec. 22d.

"MY DEAR FATHER, —

"I have received all your letters, and thank you for writing so frequently and giving me such good advice. I left off, I think, in E.'s letter telling her about our new guns, and how proud our poor fellows are of them. They have served longer than any regiment about here, and know pretty well how to take care of guns. I am sure they will use them well; for they know how, and are *proud* of them. I have a Frenchman in the company. 'Oh!' he

says to me, '*mon fusil est tres joli.*' Well, I am getting to be a boy myself with talking about the guns. The fact is, I am delighted, and as much of a boy as any of them. I have had forebodings about our going into battle with bad guns. I have seen our regiment cut up terribly as those at Ball's Bluff. I have seen them fighting nobly, *throwing* away their lives, for those abominable rebels. But, thank God! we shall at least die like men. Burnside's expedition is to sail in a week or two; and he says, whoever goes with him will see hard fighting. Why *can't you come and see me before I go.* You have only one son fighting for his country. *You know the chances* — perhaps I may never see you again. It will take only four days.

"Your affectionate son."

"ANNAPOLIS, Dec. 29th.

MY DEAR FATHER, —

We are just this minute in receipt of exciting orders from Gen. Burnside. They are

— the colonels of the different regiments will be prepared to march with three days' provisions, at twelve hours' notice. We are on the eve of great events. At any rate, I will venture to say that we are being introduced into new things, and we *shall* see what will astound the world. A great nation, *free and independent*, literally so, will be born, and the world shall rejoice."

The request of Dec. 22d, "Come and see me before I go," could not be denied. Though the journey, undertaken in ill health, was the occasion of a fever and many weeks of nervous prostration, it will of course never be regretted. It gave opportunity not only of witnessing something of camp life and the movements of a division, but for conversations and sympathies, and last words, not then known to be the last — which can never be forgotten. These were brought to a close by the ordering of the regiment to go on board The

Northerner, which they did on the 6th of January, 1862.

Lieut. Stearns, who had now been promoted to the office of acting adjutant, writes again:

"Off Hatteras Inlet, Jan. 15th.

"My time is greatly occupied. My duties are constant and heavy. We are going into North Carolina. You may expect great events in the next two or three weeks."

"Steamer Northerner, at Hatteras, Jan. 21st.

"If I am spared, expect me home to graduate. If not, remember that I could not possibly have an *easier* or more glorious death.'

The public have all heard of the severe trials of this expedition on its way to the field of action. The terrific gale — the almost impossibility of getting over the bar — the wreck of several vessels. The steamer Northerner was at one time aground, and

twelve others with her. She was also twice badly stove by other vessels running into her. This caused the young Adjutant great care and labor, and excited in him for a short time, the fear that the expedition might fail to realize the expectation of the public. But his confidence soon returned, and he used it efficiently to aid the courage of others, and to help on the important results which soon followed.

When the news of the battle of Roanoke Island reached his friends, they examined the papers, in common with thousands of other families, with palpitating hearts. Not finding his name among the list of the dead or wounded, they breathed more freely for a time. The next day, the papers said: "Adjutant Stearns, in the head, slightly;" "Adjutant Stearns, in the head and neck, not badly." Hopefully, but very anxiously, more definite information was waited for. At length, nearly a week later, came a

hurried line, in pencil, from his own well-known hand.

"February 10th, 1862.

"DEAR FATHER,—

"We are in possession of Roanoke Island. I am well, though slightly wounded. I shall be over it in a few days. I received a ball, in my forehead and in my neck, both slight. I was very fortunate.

"Your affectionate son,

"FRAZAR."

His conduct in this battle was the subject of commendation by his superior officers and by the press. Lieut. Col. Maggi, commanding the 21st, says of him, in his official report, after complimenting the whole regiment in the highest terms: "I shall mention two — Capt. T. S. Foster and Lieut. F. A. Stearns, acting adjutant — not because they fought more bravely, but because they were, by the force of circumstances, obliged to stand for a longer time in a more dangerous position than any others.

"The last two had been, during all the fight, coolly and bravely at my side, from the beginning till the end. Both have been wounded: the first, by a bullet in the left leg, and the second slightly, in the right temple and in the neck."

The special correspondent of "The New York Tribune," in his account of the battle, says: "Gen. Reno mentions with great praise the behavior of Lieut. Stearns, of the 21st Massachusetts, who, wounded twice, in the head, each time returned to the field, and in this condition fought with his regiment till the end of the day."

Some days later than this, Major Clark, who had been promoted, and was now the lieutenant colonel commanding, writes of him: "Lieut. F. A. Stearns is acting as my adjutant, and is a very valuable officer, — intelligent, faithful, and brave as the bravest. In the battle of the 8th February, he was prostrated by a bullet which struck the visor of his cap and his forehead; but

immediately sprang to his feet, the blood streaming down his face, and rushed forward with his comrades to the charge upon the battery. During the same terrific volley from the enemy, a rifle ball passed over his right shoulder and through his coat collar, cutting a shallow wound, about three inches in length, on the back of his neck."

His own account of this battle will be read with interest:

"This is the first opportunity I have had to write a letter, having been somewhat used up by the fatigue and exposure consequent on the battle of the 8th inst. I am happy to begin by telling you all at home, dear ones, whom I think of so often, that I am now in my usual good health.

"Friday, the 7th of Feb., early in the morning, we were ordered to be in readiness to embark on board The Patuxent, which is a light-draft vessel, drawing only about six feet. At about 12 A. M., we were on board, after filling our haversacks with

three days' provisions, and our stomachs with a good dinner. The men were in fine order, gay, lively, even frolicsome; every gun ready, and in good order, and, above all, a good colonel at our head. The gunboats had been shelling the fort on Roanoke Island all the morning. We passed by Gen. Burnside's boat, and our men gave him three rousing cheers with a good will. The pilot guided us skilfully and carefully to the land. The boat glided up a cove, until we ran aground only a boat's length from shore. We brought up a boat and made a bridge, and all our men passed safely over on to the land, without wetting a foot. The Colonel immediately placed one of our skirmish companies in advance, and then ordered the regiment to be formed upon the shore, which was a marsh like those in Duxbury. We were the only regiment which formed regularly on the shore. The 25th was already there, and also part of one brigade. This was about 4 P. M. of the 7th inst. After we

had landed, Gen. Reno, our brigadier-general, came up, and said: 'Col. Maggi, you will go ahead and take possession of the road leading to the batteries of the enemy, and your regiment will be on picket to-night.' So forward we went, and advanced up the road, which led us through a dense wood of pine and cypress and tangled undergrowth, throwing out our advanced guard on either flank. At last, we came to a pond, by which we could not pass. It was here that one of Company G was shot by a rebel picket, at about 7 P. M. We found the enemy were near, and concluded it was best to stop for the night. So Gen. Foster, of the 1st, and Gen. Reno, of the 2d Brigade, coming up at this time with a battery and one piece, we posted ourselves for the night, within sight of the rebel camp-fires. Being on picket, not one of the regiment could sleep. No fires could be built, and beside these discomforts, a heavy rain continued to fall at intervals during the whole

night. The men never so much as complained, nor did they act imprudently, but were as silent as they should have been in the presence of the enemy. At light, on Saturday morning, the 8th inst., we began to build fires, and soon came an order from Gen. Burnside to allow the 1st Brigade to pass our lines. This made us feel very unpleasantly, because it always belongs to the regiment which has stood on picket to first have the honor of engaging the enemy. But of course we had to submit, and Gen. Foster passed through at the head of his brigade. Soon the fire opened, and we could hear the shots right in advance, and see the wounded being borne back. Our men never flinched. Gen. Reno came to Col. Maggi, and pointing to a dense, almost impenetrable cypress swamp, said: 'Colonel, you must flank the battery.' Col. Maggi led the way; I followed; then Capt. Foster, leading his company. After an hour of almost superhuman effort, cutting bushes

with our swords, and wading to our middle in bogs and water, two companies got on to the flank of the battery, and began the fire. Our Colonel was everywhere cool as he is sometimes excitable, and as brave as a lion. Seeing the men were shooting to little purpose, he ordered them to cease firing, and then in a loud voice told them to fire only when they could see their mark.

"For two hours and a half, these two companies kept up a scattering but well-directed fire. At about 1½ A. M., Major Clark came up with the rest of the regiment, and Gen. Reno ordered us to charge bayonets. We did so, crossing over one hundred yards of exposed ground. It was here the bullets poured in like rain. We were ordered to halt, fire, and, lying down behind a little natural elevation, to load. Then we were ordered to charge bayonets, and rising up, we could see the enemy running. I never in my life saw a sight so magnificent. I

never was so thrilled. As our noble men advanced with bayonets fixed, at a short quick step, a low involuntary cry burst from their lips. It was no war-cry; it was a cry of exultation, of joy, which came leaping from a thousand hearts, swelling into a perfect storm of cheers as we entered the battery, which consisted of two thirty-two pounders and one twelve pounder, supported by about 1500 men. The 51st Regiment was close behind; also Hawkins's Zouaves. But WE turned the battery, and Gen. Burnside said so to Col. Maggi. Old Massachusetts' flag was soon floating on the battery, and with proud hearts we once more formed into line to pursue the enemy.

"It was during that murderous volley that most of our men were killed; and I received two slight wounds, one in the neck and one in the forehead, which knocked me over. But I was soon up, rejoicing at my good fortune, and never felt the wounds till twenty-four hours after."

"Feb. 19th.

"MY DEAR ALL:—

"I left off in my last letter just where we entered the battery of the enemy. There were three guns, two of them twenty-four or thirty-two pounders, the other a sixteen pounder, — all brass pieces. After a few moments of congratulations, we formed line and started in pursuit of the enemy. All along the road was strewed in confusion, guns, knapsacks, blankets, canteens, and everything which belongs to the equipments of a soldier. We sent out skirmishers, but the enemy were too much demoralized to make a stand. After marching about four miles, we came to a large open space, and sent out a detachment to reconnoitre a farm-house a few rods distant. There we took about eight or ten prisoners, — one of them an aid of Gov. Wise's son. After resting here about an hour, and drying our clothes, which were soaked through and through, we started again. We took about one hun-

dred prisoners on the way, dressed in gray coats, some of them wounded, others limping. After a march of about three miles more, we came to a row of barracks, and then found that the whole of the forces on the island had surrendered, — some two thousand in number. This number was after increased to some three thousand or more, by the gun-boats and detachments coming over from the main land. You may imagine that we were well satisfied with our undertaking. You may well believe that, tired though we were, and wet and hungry, our hearts were full. About forty-four of our regiment were killed or wounded, — five killed, and the rest wounded, of whom two have since died.

"I cannot but hope God will grant that I may return in safety home, and live to praise His name in Amherst. The bullets whistled all around me, — the cannon shots flew over me, — and yet none hit me until the very last. Then, as if God wished to

show me how kind he was to me, I was hit twice, first by a ball which passed within one fourth of an inch of my spine, made a little furrow in my neck, and passed through my shirt, vest, coat, and overcoat. The other, a buck-shot, entered my cap, passed through and hit me on the right forehead. A stunning sensation, a feeling of faintness, and I sank down on the ground. Then I revived, and crawling a few steps, I found I was all right, though the blood was streaming down my face. I thank God that I was permitted that day to do something for my country.

"I never felt my wound until twenty-four hours after the battle, when it caused me some trouble for two or three days; but it is now quite well. God grant I may see you all, dear ones, again, and that together we may thank Him for preserving you from any harm, and me from the bullet and cannon-shot, and more still, from the moral pestilence of camp-life. Pray for me that my faith may be strengthened, — that my pur-

poses may all be changed for righteousness.

"Elizabeth City has been taken by our forces, and we are now awaiting orders.

"We hope to go soon to Newbern, or somewhere in the vicinity, but cannot tell as to our whereabouts. But remember one thing, wherever I go I am in God's hands; and though I have been very remiss in the past, I cannot but hope He will forgive my short-comings, and guard me in future, spiritually as well as physically.

"Our men, although up all Friday night before the battle, fought like tigers. The reason was: 1st. Because every officer knew his duty and did it. 2d. Because the men were *well fed* and *care* taken of them. 3d. Because they had a Colonel who knew what he was about, and is a gentleman besides. God grant this unhappy war may cease! *He* seems to be doing the work now, and I must hope that *He* will achieve the victory for us; but we must give

Him the credit. As when He told Gideon to leave most of his men behind, so now He seems to be working for us. *He* is our best Major-General; and where can the enemy find such an one, though educated at West Point and trained by years of actual experience?"

Writing to his little brother, he says: —

"I am well, and thank God for it. When we first arrived I was very, *very* tired. It was Saturday night of the 8th February. I was *wet*, *hungry*, *dirty*. After building up a roaring fire, and pulling off my boots, — which came off rather hard, for you must remember that I had stood in the swamp three and a half hours, over my boots in mud and water, — I turned in, with hardly a thing to eat, and slept pretty well. In the morning I felt stiff and sore, and very much perplexed to find that my boots were as stiff as shingles, and one of the boot-legs nearly burned off.

"I hope to see you all again, but not before this terrible war is finished. *Then*, if God spares my life, I hope to live at home once more, and *graduate*. I have a contraband, — a first-rate boy, — who refused to go off with his master when taken prisoner. Poor negroes! I cannot but pity them. Let us settle this war, and then by some method *free* the slaves. I have more faith in God every day, and less in man. He can bring us out of all this trouble, and He alone. I don't put my trust in men; but I hope I do in God. *He must prevail.* It is an axiom. How can God's word fail? Be a good boy, W. Remember to read your Bible every day, and pray every morning and night. You want to be a brave boy, I know. Well, you can be as brave and braver than any who fought on Roanoke Island on the 8th. It takes *more courage* to say No, when a naughty boy asks you to do wrong, oftentimes, than to face a battery. Good night. God bless you all. A

kiss for each of the girls and mother. Love to father.

"Your affectionate brother,

"FRAZAR."

Writing to one of his sisters, he says: —

"March 8th.

"Our arms are *all* victorious, and our cause just and holy; while the enemy are dispirited, tired of fighting, and begin to see that they are in the wrong. Give *God* the glory, for He has done it. We shall rise out of our ashes a greater and nobler nation than ever before.

"My love to all. If I ever see you again, how many things I shall have to tell you! But if not, God grant I may fall fighting bravely, our arms victorious to the last! Love to all my friends. I prophesy that four months from now, — by the 4th of July, — peace will be proclaimed; and I hope that soon after I may thank God with you for our success."

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The following is the last letter the young officer ever wrote to his friends at home. It breathes the same spirit of courage, generosity, and resignation which has appeared so characteristic of him. It was written on board The Northerner, only five days before the fatal battle at Newbern: —

"Steamer Northerner, off Roanoke Island,
"March 9th.

"My Dear Mother, —

"The bearer of this note is ——, a private of Company H, who is on a furlough of sixty days, on account of a wound received at Roanoke Island on the 8th February. You will, I know, take good care of him, and do everything possible, for *my sake*. Just think you are helping me, and I know you will try and do everything in your power for him. He will tell you all about the fight at Roanoke, and the particulars of that glorious day.

"We are going to-morrow morning at daylight somewhere, — where, exactly, I

don't know. If Newbern, we shall probably meet with resistance; and the same if our destination is Weldon, or Winton, or any of those places in the vicinity of the railroad in the northern part of North Carolina.

"I am well provided for in every respect, and am as comfortable as can be; and thank God for it! My health is very good, and I am taking good care to keep it so. God only knows what a day may bring forth. He only can tell what may happen to me on the morrow; but always remember that *any hour* or *any moment* may bring you news that I am killed or dangerously wounded. If either, then God's will be done; and I hope I may always be prepared for any issue.

"These are horrible times, when every man's hand is against his neighbor. But I have hope. Let the North pray more; let them give the glory to God and not to man, and these days which are rolling by shall be

full of glorious victories, which are soon, *very soon*, to bring on peace."

When the news of his death reached Amherst, by telegraph, March 18th, his friends were all taken by surprise. Of course they had feared such a result, and had supposed it might come suddenly. But he had just passed through the exposures and perils of Roanoke. It was thought, also, that the same regiment would not immediately be put foremost again. No rumors of the battle of Newbern had been made public. Letters of a hopeful character had been received from him the evening before. Anxious hearts of love were just then beginning to beat with more than common freedom. The news, prudently and tenderly announced by Professor Tyler, broke upon them like a thunderbolt. But God sustained them. How the dear boy had met his death, — whether instantly, or after protracted agonies, — whether life had

rushed out through ghastly wounds, or had flowed gently away, — whether there were dying messages, or no parting words, — could not be known for some days longer. There was room for excited imagination to depict scenes which cut the heart. But help was divinely given. God be praised! It had been the prayer of the winter, through wearisome weeks of sickness and anxiety, "to be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness." While prayer for the preservation of the child could not be heard, since God, in his wisdom, had better purposes, prayer for inward strength was signally answered; for, "when sufferings abounded, consolations did much more abound." Indeed, the religion of Jesus furnishes but little encouragement to prayer against afflictions, but much for power to bear them. When Paul besought the Lord thrice that the thorn in his flesh might be removed, the

answer was: "My grace shall be sufficient for thee." And when one greater than Paul prayed, with an earnestness reaching to agony, that the cup might pass away from him, that bitter cup would not pass away, but an angel was sent to strengthen him. Christ himself said to his followers: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." If men were wise they would pray less for preservation from trouble, and more for cheerful submission and power to endure it. A German poet has said: "The way to Heaven lies over Golgotha." We must take the way if we would reach the city. By higher authority we learn of the white-robed ones above, — that "these are they who came out of great tribulation."

We have now reached a point where the pen of filial and fraternal love will help us in our descriptions no more. The spirit which directed its movements has passed away. There is an inward history of last hours

which can never be written. The anticipation of the battle, — the struggle against sickness, — the degree of the presentiment of what was coming, — the preparation for any event, — the excitement of the conflict, — the sudden bullet-shock, — the fall, — rushing memories, — thoughts of dear ones at home, of heaven, of sainted spirits already there, of Jesus as the Saviour, — thoughts of God the Father, and the breathing out of the soul into His bosom, — all this, with the first openings of eternity, may be imagined; but nothing of it can be known.

The remains reached home, under the care of Lieut. Sanderson, on the afternoon of March 19th; and the funeral solemnities were attended, on the following Saturday, at the village church.

"From every town in this vicinity," says our weekly journal, "people came to witness the last rites of sepulture to the brave young officer. Long before the hour appointed, the church was filled to overflowing

excepting the reserved seats. . . . Rev. Professor Tyler pronounced the discourse, and Rev. Professor Seelye offered the funeral prayer. . . . The body was inclosed in a black casket, which was draped with the American flag, and his sword rested against it. Beautiful evergreens and flowers nearly covered the coffin, — the tribute of classmates and distant friends. The exercises were listened to with breathless silence by the large congregation; and each one seemed to feel that they had an interest in the sad bereavement."

The tidings of his death, as they flew over the country, not only called forth much sympathy and mourning, but many testimonials of his bravery and moral worth. A few of these will be given.

"The battle had raged," says the correspondent of the New York Tribune, "for something less than an hour, when the 21st lost one of its noblest officers, in the person of Adjutant Frazar A. Stearns, the young

man who bore himself so bravely in the difficult and dangerous charge on the right of the enemy's battery on Roanoke Island. Poor Stearns received a bullet in his right breast, and fell dead in his place. He was the son of the President of Amherst College, and possessed the love of his commanding officer and the whole regiment. Lieut. Col. Clark, who is in command of the 21st, was affected to tears when relating the circumstances of his untimely death, for he felt almost the love of a father for the young man."

"It was during this charge," says the Amherst Express, "that Adjutant Stearns fell. He was near Col. Clark, and received a bullet in his right breast. Edward Welch, a corporal, immediately went to his assistance, and raised his head. He called for water twice, which Welch administered to him from his canteen, and with the words "My God!" upon his lips, breathed forth his spirit. Thus died one of the most gal-

lant and heroic officers of the 21st, — one who had distinguished himself by his bravery on all occasions, — who was universally beloved and esteemed by officers and men, — a noble Christian hero and soldier. Col. Clark was affected to tears, and was almost unable to proceed in his charge for the moment; but the soldier triumphed over the heart, and we doubt not that his feelings in his successful charge were animated somewhat by his bitter sense of loss. Young Stearns was a professing and practical Christian, and entered on his calling from a sense of duty, believing that in this sphere he could do more for his country and his fellowmen than in any other. He was beloved in college and in the regiment. He was dignified, kind, and gentlemanly. With no inflated ideas of his own importance, he nevertheless occupied an important position, and so executed his trust as to receive the repeated praise of his superior officers. Our town has lost one whom they were proud to

honor. His family have lost a faithful and dutiful son, a loving brother; the church a consistent member, and the army a noble officer."

"The most serious loss to our regiment," says the correspondent of the Boston Transcript, "was that of our Adjutant, F. A. Stearns, of Amherst, of whom I can truly say, a braver soul, or a more noble-hearted, high-minded man, never fell in battle. Just budding into manhood, with the flush of youth still on his cheek, he offered his life in behalf of his afflicted country, and to-day the 21st Regiment of Massachusetts mourns the sudden death of one whom they loved, not only as an officer, but as a brother."

"The son of President Stearns, of Amherst," says Rev. Horace James, Chaplain of the 25th, in the Boston Congregationalist, "a brave, accomplished, and enthusiastic officer, fell early in the fight. His sun goes down in splendor; but his regiment and all his friends will feel most sadly his loss."

The following is from the New York Binghamton Democrat: — "Adjutant F. A. Stearns, killed at the battle near Newbern, North Carolina, was one of the noblest offerings on our country's altar which this war has called forth. In presenting himself for service, he seemed actuated by the truest patriotism, — the settled conviction that this crisis demanded sacrifices, and that he was ready to be offered.

"Lieut. Stearns was prominent in the attack on Roanoke Island, and though twice wounded, refused to leave his post during the whole day, participating in the brilliant charge which decided the conflict. For his gallantry he received the highest compliments of his superior officers. At the battle of Newbern we find him with his regiment, leading the advance of the flanking column on the enemy's batteries.

"Thus ever brave men die, — always in the advance, courting danger, forgetful of self, thinking only of success. How full of

results was this young hero's life! — how much more was it filled up with usefulness and duty than the lives of most who reach man's maximum! There was no affectation in his fervid patriotism, no absorbing ambition for military renown in his desire to meet the foe; but a quiet determination and an iron firmness wonderful in his years. He went to the war because he felt it his duty, — because he could not stay away, — and brought to the service talents of the highest order, and a character mellowed and controlled by religious culture. He was a Christian officer, loving the approval of conscience more than the plaudits of men. He has gone in the freshness of early manhood; but his memory will be precious. Beside the names of *Ellsworth*, *Winthrop*, and *Hidden*, his own shall stand recorded. His death is a national loss, but his example a national blessing. His spirit shows the worth of liberty, and his silent corpse its price."

The Newark Daily Advertiser says of him: — "Lieut. F. A. Stearns was a young man of rare excellence and promise, characterized by great firmness and energy, a dauntless courage which never calculated danger when a duty was to be performed, a high sense of right and unflinching adherence to its obligations, intellectual endowments of a superior order, and social qualities which won the affection and admiration of all his associates. He was, withal, a truly devoted and exemplary Christian."

The following extract from the sermon of Rev. Mr. Murray, of Cambridge, the Sabbath after the funeral, is taken from the Cambridge Chronicle: — "Adjutant Stearns has had a brief career as a soldier; but thinking of this, we are only moved to say, — 'So short, and yet so glorious! So soon ended, but so well ended!' He had left academic shades for the tent and the bivouac, the teachings of calm philosophy

for the stern lessons of war. Those of his early mates and school-fellows here, who knew him best, testify that there were in his make, and were there conspicuously, that high, generous bearing, that spirited and manly tone, which in the soldier are fundamental traits, as they are crowning ornaments; not only the pedestal on which the military character must stand in columnar erectness, but the Corinthian capital which shall adorn the column. At Roanoke his soldierly bearing, his personal valor, his service in the field, were so marked as to draw attention and commendation from his superiors. Struck down by missiles from the foe, he sprang to his feet with only a more resolute soul and a more gallant bearing, to lead forward his men into the deadly breach. He bore honorable wounds into the battle of Newbern, where he fell almost within the intrenchments of the enemy. No lingering hours of torture were appointed him. Death did its work speedily,

and spared his friends the agony of knowing or fearing that he had undergone long, long hours of intolerable, hopeless suffering, uncheered by any voice from home, untended by any sister's hand, unwatched by any father's eye. And it were better so, if fall he must, that he should fall when honor crowned that brow most thickly, and when death had fewest pangs.

"I recall to-day, with strange and mournful interest, the charge his father gave me, when, nearly a year since, I assumed the pastorate of this church and society. As if urged by some presentiment that himself should stand in sore and bitter need of the consolations of the Gospel, he charged me to bear on my heart, as its peculiar care, those households who had parted with sons or brothers for the service of their country on the field or on the quarter-deck."

Commemorative resolutions were passed by several societies and public bodies with which he was connected; but our limits

will allow only of a single extract from a memorial adopted by the class in college of which he died a member: — "The classmate whose loss we mourn was one whose career in life it afforded us peculiar pride and interest to trace. As a student, he was an eminent scholar, and was distinguished by a strong, practical mind, which won for him an extraordinary degree of respect and influence in the college community. He was characterized by a liberality of heart, an integrity of purpose, and above all, by a pious zeal, which attracted, strengthened, and secured the affection of the worthy and the esteem of all. On leaving the scene of his college distinction, he entered the service of his country with the most honorable motives and the most noble heroism, carrying with him the best wishes and the highest hopes of those who are now called to lament the death of him who was to his college so bright an ornament, to his country so devoted a soldier.

Upon those who were united to him by the strongest bonds of relationship, the severest blow has fallen. Though we would not invade the sanctuary of domestic grief, nor for a moment check the flow of tears, made sweet by the valor and virtues of the departed, yet we feel that their loss is our own, for the angel of death has taken from us our most beloved and admired member."

Monday morning, March 24th, 1862, in the Senate of Massachusetts, Mr. Dodge, of Middlesex, offered the following resolutions: —

"*Resolved*, That the thanks of the people of Massachusetts are due, and through the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled are gratefully tendered, to the officers and soldiers of the 21st, 23d, 24th, 25th and 27th Regiments of Massachusetts Volunteers, for their heroic deeds at the battle and victory of Newbern. In the hands of these men

the honor of Massachusetts will always be safe.

"*Resolved*, That we deplore the irreparable loss of Lieut. Col. Henry Merritt and Adjutant Stearns, and the gallant men, their companions in arms, who on the field of that victory laid down their lives to save the life of the nation. The people of Massachusetts will imitate their virtues. In all our hearts their memories will ever be cherished."

In support of the resolves, Mr. Dodge addressed the Senate as follows: —

"Mr. President, — I can speak from personal acquaintance of only one of the noble men commemorated by the resolutions I have offered. Adjutant F. A. Stearns was for many years a resident of Cambridge. At the time of his death he was twenty-one years of age, and a member of the Junior Class of Amherst College. He was the son of the President of that institution. When news came of the fall of Fort Sumter, he

desired to enter the service of the country, with the volunteers then called for; but as more were offering than could be received, the sacrifice seemed to his friends not then necessary; and he yielded his wishes to theirs, and remained at his studies until the disastrous defeat at Bull Run. His resolution was then taken. He became, with the consent of the friends who had before objected, a member of the 21st Regiment. The spirit in which he took the sword is shown by a remark made by him at the time. A friend said to him: 'You may fall in battle, as others have done.' He replied: 'If I knew I should fall it would not change my determination; what is my life compared with the life of the nation?' He was with Gen. Burnside at the taking of Roanoke Island, and was present and assisted in the bayonet charge upon the fort which resulted in its capture. He was slightly wounded in that battle, and his name was mentioned with honorable distinction in the report of his superior officer, as Senators will remember. At Newbern he fell, while again aiding in a bayonet charge.

"He was a man of singular nobility of character; noble in daily life, in purpose, and in aspiration. He has fallen in the morning of life, with all life's highest hopes opening before him. Loving hearts were waiting for him at his home; but the doors of that home were to open for him again only to receive his lifeless remains. Now, as we are speaking, the last offices of affection are being performed. Kindred and friends, with hearts wellnigh broken, are following him to the grave. May God console them in their great sorrow, for no earthly consolation is adequate! Mr. President, this war is fearfully costly, — costly in treasure; but how vastly more so in the lives of our young men, freely offered up to sustain it. But it will be sustained. The people of these States are descended from heroic ancestors; they have

heroic blood in their veins, and are capable of heroic deeds. We have heard, all our lives, of the spirit of '76; but it is surpassed by the spirit of '62. The war will be sustained at whatever cost. If more lives are demanded, we may be assured from the past they are ready to be offered. The government our fathers left us will be upheld at whatever loss of treasure or life is necessary for the purpose."

The following is from the official return of Lieut. Col. Clark, who commanded the 21st in the deadly fight at Newbern, and gives a clear and graphic account of the battle: —

"HEADQUARTERS, 21st Regiment, Mass. Vols.,
Camp Reno, near NEWBERN, N. C.,
March 16, 1862.

"CAPT. EDWARD M. NEIL, *Ass't Adjt.-General, 2d Brigade.* CAPTAIN: —

"About nine o'clock on the morning of the 13th inst., the 21st Massachusetts Volunteers, seven hundred and forty-three strong,

landed at the mouth of Slocum's Creek, and by order of Gen. Reno, advanced about two miles through the pine woods along the south bank of the river Neuse, toward Newbern. Coming out upon a large open field, the regiment stacked arms to await the arrival of the General with the rest of the brigade. Company G, under Lieut. Taylor, formed the advanced guard, and discovered, a short distance into the woods beyond the cleared space, a large number of wooden barracks, which had been evacuated about two hours before by rebel cavalry, whose equanimity had been disturbed by shells from the gunboats. An advance of some four miles brought the regiment to Croatan, where we found a very extensive earthwork running at right angles to the highway, one thousand rebel infantry having just deserted it. The colors of the 21st were placed without opposition upon the parapet and heartily cheered by officers and men. Near this work a halt of an hour was made for

dinner, during which the pioneers tore up the track of the railroad connecting Newbern with Beaufort. From this point the regiment was ordered to move forward upon the railroad track, and Company D, under Lieut. Barker, was sent forward as advanced guard. About a mile of advance brought the regiment to a place where the highway crosses the railroad, and a half a mile to the right of the latter, on the river Neuse, a deserted earthwork was discovered by Lieut. Reno, aid-de-camp to the General. Company H, under Capt. Frazer, with the colors, was detached from the regiment, and under charge of Gen. Reno, visited the work, and waving the Star Spangled Banner bearing the honorable inscription, "Roanoke, February 8, 1862," and the spotless white colors of Massachusetts, with the noble motto, "*Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem*," gave three hearty cheers and hastily rejoined the advancing regiment. Proceeding along the railroad about a mile further, the advanced guard came upon a building containing several tents, a complete set of artillery harness, and a few boxes of ammunition for six and twelve pounder guns. Lieut. Barker, with Adjutant Stearns, then made a reconnoisance to the right of the railroad and found an extensive encampment also recently evacuated by rebel cavalry. Here were large quantities of clothing, commissary and hospital stores, over which a guard was placed. One mile further on the regiment biouvacked for the night, throwing out a picket guard of two companies on the front and left, the right being guarded by the 24th Massachusetts Volunteers, and the rear by the 51st New York Volunteers. The rain which commenced to fall about ten o'clock of the 13th inst., continued in showers through the night, and on the morning of the 14th inst., mist and fog enveloped everything. Notwithstanding every precaution on the part of both officers and men, very many of the rifles were rendered quite unserviceable

by the moisture. In some the powder became too wet to ignite, and in very many of the Enfield rifled muskets the rammers were almost immovable from the swelling of the stocks. It is a great defect in this weapon that the friction of the wood along the whole length of the rammer is relied upon to keep it in place; since it is quite impossible that the rammer be well secured when the musket is dry, and sufficiently loose for service when wet.

"It is a noteworthy evidence of discipline and courage on the part of the men, that more than fifty of them went into the battle having only their bayonets to work with; and it was very hard to hear them in the thickest of the fight, while standing helpless in their places, beg their officers to give them serviceable muskets, and to see them eagerly seize the weapons of their comrades as fast as they fell beneath the leaden storm from the enemy's earthworks. Private Sheehan of Company E, left his company to secure the musket of a man whom he saw killed in Company K, and when asked by Major Rice, why he did not take the gun of one who had been shot in his own company, replied, that it was like his own, good for nothing. About seven o'clock, A.M., Gen. Reno ordered his brigade forward, the 21st Massachusetts in the van. The advanced guard, consisting of Company G, was led by Corporal Stratton, who deserves much credit for his coolness and intrepidity in pushing on through swamps and thickets and along the track of the railroad, both on the 13th and 14th inst., every moment exposed to be fired upon by a concealed foe. Adjutant Stearns directed the movements of the first two squads of the advanced guard in the most admirable manner during the entire march from the place of landing to the field of battle. As it was known that the defences of the enemy were thrown across the highway to the right of the railroad, the regiment proceeded cautiously

through the woods on the left of the railroad and parallel with it. After advancing about half a mile, a locomotive was seen coming down the road, and Gen. Reno at once ordered us to file to the left and advance into the forest, which was no longer a level, open, pine wood, but the ground was broken into hills, separated by deep ravines, and the timber was of oak, white-wood, and and other decidious trees, and of the largest description. The 1st Brigade, under Gen. Foster, having advanced on the highway, came first upon the enemy; and the battle was now raging fiercely upon our right and along the whole line of the earthworks from the river to the railroad. The smoke from the rapid firing of more than thirty cannon and several thousand muskets was driven down upon us by the wind, and mingling with the dense fog, so completely shut out the light of day (never more anxiously longed for,) that it was impossible to derive any information respecting the position

of the rebels, except where it was indicated by the noise of battle. Our skirmishers now reported that we were opposite the right flank of a battery resting at this point on a deep cut in the railroad, and upon several buildings and brick walls in Wood's brick-yard, which was across the road from our position a few hundred yards distant. The regiment was at once ordered to form in line of battle facing the railroad, and Company C, under Capt. J. M. Richardson, was sent forward to reconnoitre. As rapidly as the difficult nature of the ground would allow, the other companies formed on the right by file into line, and as soon as the remaining companies of the right wing were ready, I moved forward with the colors to the support of Company C, who were already engaging the rebel riflemen in the trench upon the opposite side of the deep cut in the railroad. At the moment of their arrival at the cut, the enemy were busily engaged in mounting two thirty-two pounder pivot guns

to command the railroad, and in removing ammunition from the cars which had just come in from Newbern. with reinforcements. At the first volley from Company C, the enemy in great astonishment fled from the road and the trench to a ravine in the rear of the brickyard. Gen. Reno now ordered the color-bearer, Sergt. Bates, to plant his flag upon the roof of a building within the enemy's entrenchments. He immediately rushed forward several rods in advance of his company, and amid a perfect shower of Minnie balls clambered to the roof and waved the Star Spangled Banner presented to the regiment by the ladies of Worcester. At this moment, the noblest of us all, my brave, efficient, faithful adjutant, 1st Lieut. F. A. Stearns, of Company I, fell mortally wounded, the first among the twenty-five patriotic volunteers of the 21st who laid down their lives for their country at the battle of Newbern. As he was cheering on the men to charge upon the enemy across

the railroad, he was struck by a ball from an English rifle fired from a redan at the right and rear of the central breastwork on which we were advancing. The fatal missile entered his left side, and passing through his lungs went out just below the collar-bone on the right breast. Corporal Welch, of Company C, noticing his fall, returned and remained with him during the battle. He lived about two and a half hours, though nearly unconscious from the loss of blood, and died without a struggle a little before noon.

"Gen. Reno, with companies C, A, B, and H, of the right wing, dashed across the railroad up the steep bank and over the rifle trench on the top into the brickyard. Here we were subject to a most destructive cross fire from the enemy on both sides of the railroad, and lost a large number of men in a very few minutes. The General supposing we had completely flanked the enemy's works, returned across the road to

bring up the rest of his brigade, but just at this time a tremendous fire of musketry and artillery was opened from the redans hitherto unseen and which were thirteen in number, extending from the railroad more than a mile to the right into the forest. The General being now obliged to devote his attention to the enemy in front of his brigade, ordered the left wing of the 21st, under the command of Major Rice, not to cross the railroad, but to continue firing upon the rebel infantry in the first two redans, with whom they were already engaged. These consisted of the 33d and 16th North Carolina regiments, and were the best armed and fought the most gallantly of any of the enemy's forces. Their position was almost impregnable so long as their left flank, resting on the railroad, was defended, and they kept up an incessant fire for three hours, until their ammunition was exhausted and the remainder of the rebel forces had retreated from that portion of their works lying be-

tween the river and the railroad. Having been ordered into the brickyard and left there with my colors and the four companies above named, and finding it impossible to remain there without being cut to pieces, I was compelled either to charge upon Capt. Brem's battery of flying artillery, or to retreat without having accomplished anything to compensate for the terrible loss sustained in reaching this point. Accordingly, I formed my handful of men, about two hundred in number, in line, the right resting on the breastworks of the enemy, and commenced firing upon the men and horses of the first piece. Three men and two horses having fallen and the other gunners showing signs of uneasiness, I gave the command 'charge bayonets,' and went into the first gun. Reaching it, I had the pleasure of mounting upon the first of the Newbern guns surrendered to the Yankees. It was a six-pounder brass field-piece, manufactured at at Chicopee, Mass., brought from Fort Ma-

con and marked U. S. Leaving this in the hands of Capt. Walcott and private John Dunn, of Company B, who cut away the horses and attempted to load and turn it upon the enemy, I proceeded to the second gun, about three hundred paces from the brickyard. By this time the three regiments of rebel infantry who had retreated from the breastworks to a ravine in the rear when we entered the brickyard, seeing that we were so few and received no support, rallied and advanced upon us. The 35th and 37th North Carolina regiments, supported by the 7th North Carolina, came up from the ravine in splendid style, with their muskets on their right shoulder, and halted. Most fortunately, or rather providentially for us, they remained undecided for a minute or two, and then resolved on a movement which saved us from destruction. Instead of giving us a volley at once, they first hesitated and then charged upon us without firing. I instantly commanded my men to spring over

the parapet and ditch in front, which was ten feet wide and five feet deep and half full of water, and retreat to the railroad, keeping as close as possible to the ditch. As the enemy could not fire upon us to any advantage until they reached the parapet, nearly all of those who obeyed my orders escaped unharmed, though thousands of bullets whistled over us. On the railroad I found Col. Rodman, with the 4th Rhode Island, waiting for orders, and informed him of the situation of things in the entrenchments of the enemy and urged him to advance at once and charge upon their flank, as I had done. Soon after, Col. Harland, with the 8th Connecticut, came up; and then the two regiments advanced along the railroad to the brickyard and charged by wing. As soon as the enemy saw them within their lines, they instantly retired again to the ravine without firing a gun. It is some satisfaction to those who were obliged to retreat from the battery after once driving the ene-

my from it, that no one of the five brass pieces stationed in this part of their works were ever fired by them after our charge."

Col. Clark also writes, —

"HEADQUARTERS, 21st Mass. Volunteers,
Camp Andrew, near NEWBERN, N. C.,
March 23d, 1862.

"PRESIDENT W. A. STEARNS, D. D.: —

"REV. AND DEAR SIR, — Ten days have passed since the death of our beloved Frazar, and I have had neither time nor heart to write you. Yet I have done respecting him and his friends just what I would have had done for me and mine, if I had been in his stead. His noble and manly body was prepared and packed in the best manner our circumstances would allow, and sent by the first steamer to Amherst, under the charge of his friend and brother officer, Lieut. Sanderson.

"By the last steamer, I sent to the College, in charge of Capt. Frazer, a beautiful brass cannon, — the identical one upon

which I mounted when we drove the rebels from their battery with two hundred men, putting three thousand to flight.

"The following order respecting it was issued by Gen. Burnside: —

'HEADQUARTERS, Department of North Carolina,
'NEWBERN, March 16th, 1862.

'SPECIAL ORDER, No. 52.

'The commanding General directs that the six-pounder brass gun taken in the battery where ADJUTANT STEARNS, of the 21st Massachusetts Volunteers, met his death, while gallantly fighting at the battle of Newbern, shall be presented to his regiment, as a monument to the memory of a brave man.

'By command of

'BRIG.-GEN. A. E. BURNSIDE.
'LEWIS RICHMOND,
'Assistant Adjutant-General.

'LIEUT.-COL. CLARK, commanding.'

"Frazar conducted himself with admirable prudence and bravery on the fatal

day, as he had on the preceding day and at Roanoke, though at the latter place he was unnecessarily exposed. He never recovered entirely from the excessive fatigue and excitement through which he passed at Roanoke, and at the time of our landing here was scarcely fit to leave the ship. I advised him to remain behind, but he would not think of it." After speaking of his being unwell the night before the battle, Col. Clark proceeds: "The next morning he seemed quite refreshed, and started out resolutely to meet the rebels, who were already opening the fight. As he was about to go forward with the advance-guard, I rode up to him and gave him positive orders not to expose himself unnecessarily, and not to get in front of the second line of skirmishers, so that he might not come within gunshot of the enemy until the battle was fairly begun. He was shot while passing in front of a breastwork, behind which were concealed three hundred riflemen,

upon the very spot over which Gen. Reno and myself, with two hundred men, went into the central portion of the fortifications. There was at this place a perfect storm of bullets, as it was the key to the enemy's entire works, and they did not like to lose it.

"Ever since the battle of Roanoke Frazar has been, up to the time of his death, unusually serious, and spoke as if he expected to be killed in the next fight. He even went so far as to prepare a statement of the duties of his office, and gave it to me, saying: 'When I am dead, this will save you and the next adjutant much trouble.' All his papers were also arranged with special care, and his things packed as for a journey. Of course we all hoped better things; and as he had been wounded, and so narrowly escaped with his life, on the 8th of February, we thought it would be the turn of some other officer, before him, to suffer. Alas! 'Death loves a shining mark!' and took from us the

one most universally and most highly esteemed.

"He set us an almost perfect example in all his conduct. His faithfulness, efficiency, and bravery, were only surpassed by the spotless purity and complete correctness of his private life. He never uttered an oath, nor a word of a low or indelicate character; he abstained habitually from tobacco in every form, and from ardent spirits, wine, and beer. In short, he always behaved like a real gentleman and a sincere Christian. To me the loss is quite irreparable. However, I surrendered myself, my family, my friends, my all, to the disposition of the Great Ruler, who directs us in all our ways, when I left my peaceful and happy home to fight the battles of freedom, and I will trust Him to the end.

"And who shall estimate your loss? But your consolations are neither few nor small. Your son lived and died a Christian, in the full assurance of hope and faith. He fell

while fighting gallantly in the act of charging upon the enemy, in a most severely contested battle, and on a field where the Union forces won a most glorious victory. . . .

"With the greatest regard,

"Very respectfully yours,

"W. S. Clark."

In a subsequent letter, Col. Clark says: — "Gen. Reno esteemed our beloved Frazar as highly as we all did, and more than once the tears have rolled down his cheeks as we have spoken together concerning his spotless character and noble conduct, and remembered that we should not look upon his like again. I send you an official copy of that portion of his report relating to Frazar. You will recollect that the General is a man of few words, and that individuals are rarely named in such reports."

These are the words: — "It is with the deepest regret that I have to announce the death of 1st Lieut. Stearns, Acting Adjutant of the 21st Massachusetts, — one of

the most accomplished and gallant officers in the army."

The extract which follows is from a letter of an Irish private of the 21st, to a countryman of his in Amherst, and is the spontaneous outgushing of a large, Irish heart, who could have had no expectation that such words of his would come under the eye of the relatives of his admired officer: —

"Among the dead is our 1st Lieutenant, F. A. Stearns, the noblest soldier that the world ever afforded; I fear too brave for his own good. He was beloved by all that knew him in his own regiment, and in fact as far as he was known in the army. I am sorry to say that I have lost the best friend that I had in the army. I carried him off the battle-field. I tell you, Mr. ——, that that was a hard thing for me. I carried him to the beach, to go on board of the boat to go home. I carried him over a river, where I was up to my arms in water. The rest of the boys were strangers; and I tell

you that I was not, for when he was living he was a dear friend to me. Lieut. Sanderson is gone home with him. Gen. Burnside presented the 21st Regiment with a cannon, for great valor on the battle-field. We send it home, to be erected as a monument over Lieut. Stearns, the star of the regiment."

Another private of the 21st, a stranger, — God bless him for his tender thoughtfulness — says:

"In helping to arrange the body of your brave and noble son who fell at Newbern on the 14th inst., in order that it might be sent home, it occurred to me that a lock of his hair would be prized highly by his *mother*, if by no one else. I, therefore, have cut a lock, and in this you will no doubt find it. Words cannot express the great estimation in which your son was held by the officers and men of the entire regiment. We all sympathize with you in your great affliction."

The following is a simple but touching

memorial from the pen of a colored boy, who had formerly lived with the deceased as a servant in his father's family, but was at this time servant of the Assistant Surgeon of the 21st Regiment:

"The death of my brave young master has prevented me from giving you the particulars until the present time. I say that he was brave, because I know it.

"After I came out here, a strong friendship grew between us, and I came to the determination to do everything in my power to promote his happiness; but this resolve never did him much good.

"On the morning of the battle of Roanoke, I met him in the gangway of the boat; we shook hands. He says, 'Charlie, we shall have a hard fight to-day.' I looked up in his face; all I saw was a pleasant smile. I turned away, thinking he was a brave man. In the battle of Roanoke, he was wounded. I saw him the next day, and asked him how he felt during the engagement. He said, 'I had no time to feel.'

"The morning before the battle of Newbern, we walked out on the guard of the boat. I said, 'Mr. Frazar, suppose you should be killed?' He took my hand and said, '*Charlie, I shall.*' I could not stand this, and turned to go, but I felt the pressure grow stronger, and stopped. My throat was full of something hard. My eye fell when I looked at him, and he let me go. I think he had something to say, but he never said it to me. . . . When the sad tidings came to me that he was shot, I took lint, bandages, and wine, &c., and ran to the spot where he was, but all was over. A corporal of Company C attended him as long as he lived. He was conveyed to a shed adjoining the hospital. It is useless to tell the many attempts I made to restore him to life, but all proved fruitless. I closed his eyes, and pressed that cold hand to my lips. I can say no more; but I send you this to let

you know that his old servant closed his eyes.

"P. S. I send his Testament, that his father gave him, by this mail."

Capt. J. D. Fraser, who came to Amherst with the brass gun given by Gen. Burnside to the regiment of Adjt. Stearns as "a monument to his memory," and who saw the body soon after the battle, said, "I never saw such a beautiful countenance on a person who was dead before. As I looked upon him, I told Col. Clark that I should have been willing to have died in his stead."

Rev. George S. Ball, the Chaplain of the 21st, writes:

"He died, let me say, as he had lived, without a stain on his honor.

"There was not a religious service which he did not encourage. When I distributed among the men religious books, he always received them gladly, and often spoke of them afterwards, showing that he not only took them but read them.

"In speaking of his wonderful escape at Roanoke, said he, 'If it had been God's will that the ball had gone nearer my brain, I should not have *rebelled*, for I believe in Providence.'

"His life was an example to all, officers and men. He was not angry ever, though sometimes exceedingly tried. He never uttered a profane word. His language was gentlemanly to all, and his bearing full of the dignity of a soldier and the affability of a comrade and brother.

"Our greatest loss in the battle at Newbern is that of your son. He had the freshness and ardor of youth, with all the courage of a veteran. The whole regiment mourn a brave officer lost, a loved brother dead. But his memory will be kept green in the hearts of us all."

Among numerous letters of sympathy, several have been received from strangers who became acquainted with him while he was engaged on picket duty in Maryland,

all bearing witness to the excellence of his character, "so moral and dignified in his deportment, so energetic and faithful in discharging his duties;" "the uprightness of his life, and the goodness of his heart, and his frank, gentlemanly bearing, won the best wishes of all who knew him;" "whose memory will be ever held sacred and whose loss mourned as a brother;" "who was a gentleman, a Christian, and a soldier;" "for whose safety," a little girl "of only four years scarcely suffered a night to pass without offering up her prayers;" and whose "death drew tears from many eyes." One gentleman writes: "I cannot say that I was not *fearful* of what has taken place. Your son was brave, and, as I often heard him say, was willing to die in defence of his country. I felt satisfied he would be foremost in defence of that flag he loved so much."

"I am reminded," he continues, "of the most feeling and appropriate speech made by him on the night of his initiation in our

division of the Sons of Temperance. He alluded to his friends at home, to the religious training he had received at your hands, and the great temptations to which he was subjected in the army; he said that he had united with us as a protection from the prevailing vice around him; that, exposed to danger, and liable at any moment to be called to appear before his Maker, he had committed his soul into his keeping and had put his trust in God. He exhorted the young men to avoid every wicked practice, especially gambling and taking the Lord's name in vain. He made a request that if any of us should ever visit the place of his home, whether *he* should live to be there or not, we would call at his father's house and tell him that we were *his* friends, and a cordial welcome would be extended to us."

"My only object in addressing you," he concludes, "is to express my admiration of the character of your son, and our sincere sorrow and sympathy."

After what has been said, any extended analysis of character will be unnecessary. "That character," says Professor Tyler, "shone in every feature of his tall, erect, and manly form. It acted itself out without disguise or concealment, in all the incidents of his short but noble and heroic life. It breathes in gentle yet lofty tones from his confidential letters to his friends. It speaks louder than words, more touching and eloquent than actions from his early death, a willing sacrifice on the altar of his country."

There was, it may be added, a marked variety in the leading characteristics of his mind and heart. Mechanical tastes and ingenuity, an enthusiastic fondness for the natural sciences, a love of the mathematics, but chiefly for their useful applications, might seem to designate him as an eminently practical man. The ardor, too, with which he studied the arts and science of war, the high ideals which he had of military drill and discipline,

and the zeal and patient labor which he brought to the work of securing soldierly proficiency, in himself and others, would indicate more of an outward than an inward life. But in contrast with this there was, in his nature, a deep well of emotions and affections. This may be partly illustrated in his love and practice of music. He was susceptible to its power as early as he could distinguish sounds. When not more than four years old he would pick out the notes of simple tunes, on the piano, with delight. Before he was six, an accomplished German teacher, who had noticed his musical susceptibilities and aptitudes, begged the privilege of giving him gratuitous instruction, saying often, perhaps, with the hyperbole of favoritism, 'that child has more musical talent than I have yet found in any person in America.' Under such zealous instruction, continued at intervals, for years, he added proficiency to talent, and would touch the piano with

an emphasis, pathos, and power which not only moved the less cultured, but attracted the admiration of amateurs. Though he had been subjected to the drill of exercises, and had his favorite pieces, he generally preferred, whether in social circles or in private, to improvise his music. When the inspiration was upon him, he would express in subdued or stirring chords, the mood of the hour. One might learn from the sweet, sad sounds of his piano, or its semitonic intervals, or from its jubilant notes, or its slow and solemn measures, the otherwise hidden emotions of his heart. Poetry, too, and passages of eloquent oratory, and works of art, gave him superior pleasure.

His temperament was sanguine, his feelings quick and strong, though he had uncommon mastery over them. He was impulsive, not to say changeable, till he had become settled in his convictions and fixed in his determinations, after which, as in his patriotism, and his religion during the last

year or two of his life, he was immovable. He had a remarkable conscience, both in foretokening wrong and avenging it when committed. This, in his strong nature, laid the foundation for severe inward conflicts till the grace of God had secured him final victory. Sensitive to the slightest imputation of self-approval, rarely alluding to good qualities in himself even among confidants, he was severe upon his own faults, often magnifying them and always condemning them without mercy. Still he was proud, self-respecting, and aspiring. Quick in his resentments, strong in his prejudices, frank and outspoken, he was equally ready to acknowledge a wrong when convinced of it, and to forgive a wrong when it was confessed. The last year of his life was characterized by a large charity for all sins but treachery and meanness. It was from a hearty sympathy that he admired and often called attention to that beautiful passage in the story of Le Fevre, where Uncle Toby, out of the tenderness of his heart, was sur-

prised into the use of a hard word,—"The accusing spirit which flew up to Heaven's chancery with the oath blushed as he gave it in, and the Recording Angel as he wrote it down dropped a tear on the word and blotted it out forever."

The generosity of his heart was always greater than his ability to meet its demands. One of the last things which he said to his father on leaving home, after a few days' furlough in November, which had been granted for attending the remains of a brother officer to their last resting place, was, "I shall now be getting a good salary, and I am determined when I go back to economize as closely as I can in my expenses, and educate the two little boys Lieutenant ——'s death has left orphans. Acts have come recently to light which show that to bless the poor was one of the habits and luxuries of his life. A very intimate associate of his says, he used to have more plans for doing good, in such ways, than any man I ever knew.

Naturally reserved except among a few chosen intimates, and not particularly transparent in his character to ordinary observers, his truthfulness could never be called in question. So many fathers say this that the world look upon it as a commonplace, and smile at parental incredulity. But perhaps the suspecting may believe that a high degree of veracity marked his life, when it is asserted that while he knew how to keep a secret as well as any other man, no member of his father's family can recollect an instance in which he was ever even suspected of a falsehood.

Every one gave him the credit of a strong *desire* to do right, however much he might fail, in practice. Writing to a sister asking his advice, he says, "Do just exactly what your conscience tells you is *right*. There is only one right and one wrong to anything; and you must decide it for yourself, by the help of God. We cannot be too careful in these matters about doing right. Every wrong makes it all the

harder to do right next time. Do, then, just what your conscience tells you is right, and that will be approved by us."

The most prominent trait of his character has been supposed to be courage. If this be so, it was moral courage rather than natural; not the courage of brute violence, not the courage of indifference to danger, but the courage of principle and *will*. He once said, "I hardly know whether I have courage or not. I cannot go into danger without excitement, though I never shrink from it. I once read of a soldier, who, pale and trembling as he marched firmly on right up to the cannon's mouth, was pointed out to Napoleon for his timidity. 'Not so,' said the Emperor, 'he is a brave fellow: he both knows his danger and does his duty.' If anything like that is courage, I have it." Is it not, indeed, the highest form of courage? Such a person is a *resolute* soldier rather than a blindly daring one. When the young Adjutant went to his last battle, he seems to have expected death, but

did not flinch. Had that suspicion been changed into a certainty, it would probably have made no difference with him. He would freely have laid down his life on the altar of his country, and as he did, would have died for it.

This *is* courage; and Professor Tyler says justly, while "all admired his courtesy, kindness, and magnanimity, perhaps nothing was so entirely characteristic of his noble nature as courage and a high sense of honor. Few persons of his age have ever won a better title to the description of the chevalier, who was known as the knight without fear and without reproach."

It is not necessary to say much more of his religious spirit. Deep and powerful, though for a long time militant, in what might seem to the inexperienced a doubtful struggle, when it came to predominate in his character, it gave it strength and balance. It enlarged his life and gave breadth to his views. It inspired him with a heavenly charity, for learning his own

weaknesses, he knew how to pity those of others. It was the inspiration of his patriotism, the enthusiasm of his soldiership, his courage in the day of battle. It made him faithful in his duties as an officer, and gave him a fraternal interest in all the privates of the regiment, and especially of the men under his care.

The New Testament was the daily companion of his life in camp; and the little pocket edition of it, new when he left home, now thoroughly worn by use, bears testimony how often and earnestly he perused it. And its precious promises doubtless cheered him when he breathed out his spirit, and began to be realized by him when that spirit entered on its eternity.

In concluding this notice, the Massachusetts 21st will bear with a stricken father, in saying a word in his own person more directly to them. I visited Annapolis on the first day of the opening year. It was at the suggestion of my child, who wrote to me, "Father, you know the

chances of war." I saw you all once and again, on parade, and admired your proficiency. I also saw much of your young officer, who was so soon to fall. He seemed to care little for himself, but took the deepest interest in you. He had just declined the honorable position of aid-de-camp that he might "stick by the men." I saw him last on the 6th of January, the day you went on board The Northerner. As he marched that morning up and down the whole length of the regiment, his beardless cheeks glowing in the keen morning air, you will not wonder that he should seem to the eye of parental pride, as he did to others, a truly accomplished and noble officer. When you were drawn up on the wharf, just before your departure, having been introduced to you by Lieut. Col. Maggi, in his interesting Italian way, as "The Papa of our Adjutant," it was my privilege to offer a prayer with you to the God of armies and of battles. Since that day I have often heard of your good conduct and your bra-

very; and have felt personally honored in your praises. I had hoped that my boy might be spared; but I gave him up to God and his country when he left my house. He fell doing his duty as a Christian soldier, and I am satisfied. It is said, that after the battle of Newbern, as soon as the smoke had cleared away, and the roar of the cannon had ceased, and silence had taken the place of excitement and confusion, a beautiful bird rose and hovered over your camp, and sang in a strain of the sweetest melody. Thus calmly rise the spirits of Christian soldiers from the awful din of the battle-field, singing with a clearer, more joyous, and more entrancing note, as they ascend to heaven. And why should not friends be satisfied, when their fallen sons and brothers have died trusting in God and doing their duty?

To your gallant Commander, my large-hearted friend and almost brother, Lieut. Col. Clark; to the soldier who kindly ministered to the necessities of my dying child;

to another who bore his dead body away, in his strong arms, with many tears; to another who took a precious lock from his head and sent it home in tender thoughtfulness of his mother; to another who gathered a wreath of wild-flowers and placed them on his pulseless breast; to the colored young man who closed the eyes of his old master after he had tried every art to bring him back to life; to all who performed kind offices for him while still living, and after he was dead; to the regiment whom he loved so sincerely, and who seem to have loved him in return, — I take this opportunity to express my grateful and hearty thanks. God bless them, and reward them a thousand-fold.

Soldiers of the 21st, your young officer died honorably. His character attracted admiration. That character was matured and formed by the religion of the New Testament. The Gospel sanctified its virtues, and gave it breadth, power, and beauty. He was indebted to it for much of his bravery, faithfulness, generous interest in

others, and his cheerful readiness for self-sacrifice. The gospel not only affords soft pillows for dying heads, but has a strength for living men which is above all other strength. It is also full of motives and inspirations to noble deeds. If my child could speak out to you from the silence of eternity, I have no doubt that he would ask you *to study it*. There is nothing which he used to lament so deeply as the profaneness which is common in our camps. God is good and merciful, but He is great and awful, and will not "hold us guiltless, if we take His name in vain." There are large numbers of the bravest officers and men in our armies who get along without swearing. Why should not the 21st banish it from among them? As for myself, I shall never forget your noble regiment, nor the hundreds of thousands of patriotic soldiers who are fighting our battles for us, so long as I remember the name of FRAZAR AUGUSTUS STEARNS.

THE END.

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