

GUIDON LITTLE BUTTONS OF BATTERY D.

"Tales of Ten Travelers" Series.

By EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

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"A little over thirty years ago," musically began the Student Traveler, as our Ten Travelers were all comfortably seated in their accustomed places...

Charlie brought me to something like "Attention!" when I saw to my surprise that it had not been old Charlie's touch upon my shoulder at all...

With similar engaging rallying from Dennis, I took my place at the gleaming twenty-four-pounder and kept it to the end. I do not know what the poet-sung bravery of battle heroes is...

enough to remark in a melancholy tone to some comrades near: "The campaign was too much for Little Buttons. He's going off all in a heap!"

night, beside a small stream. Some were dejectedly munching scanty food; but most had fallen spiritless or from exhaustion beside their pitifully meagre belongings...

shows in my ear by Sergeant McGee's "Little Buttons! Little Buttons! O! o' this 't yer tint, or the devil's own sorra ye'll see!"

Late one sultry July afternoon, as our forces were about going into camp for the night after a severe day's march over the hills of northwestern Georgia...

With an alert glance toward my tired companions, as if to guard so sacred a subject from intrusion, he placed a little ambrotype in my hands. I saw the sweet face of a lass of perhaps sixteen years—almost the image of my own sister...

"Faith, if we'd had Little Buttons at Aughrim—sure that'd over agin Billinacloe—" Sergeant McGee would add with backward prophecy and a wise and solemn smile, "ould Ireland'd be ould Ireland still, an' not be buggared up!"

Contemplation of the monstrous inhumanity, coupled with its certain extinction of my last hope to succor the ill-fated Beatrice, so maddened my childish soul that I would almost have committed murder to have averted it.

What were my plans? I had none. The stars told me the stream flowed toward the blessed Northland. Silent as our water-fowl and reptile companions...

"Over all this blessed, sorrow-sweet dream there never rested but one tiny path of shadow," concluded the Student Traveler, with a quiet sigh.

"Forward!—double quick!" shrilly followed in blaring bugle notes. My place was at the head of the column. The officer of the day had turned in his saddle and was scowling at me.

"In heaven's name, search her out. Tell her of this meeting. Give her the letter. Be to her as though she were your kin!" The infantry beyond had been sent on at a double quick to regain our lost time.

This was intensified and still more deeply embittered by the utter failure of my chivalrous mission for the discovery and rescue of Beatrice. This charge had grown upon me as the sacred Mecca of my childish aspiration.

The point of truce was soon gained. Here cavalry from both forces had been stationed. The formalities of their final separation were trilling. As the flag of truce was fired, the hostile flags moved in opposite directions.

"I do not think that this startled me at first. It simply spurred me to action. I remember that my instant impulse was to in some manner change my apparel.

Soil and dust were the only things that I could see, from occasional glimpses as we passed, the guards, done with their work, deploying into squads and the squads gradually forming in dark blue masses for impatient return to the friendly environments of their own camps.

"Don't give way so, Little Buttons; don't!"—this being my nickname, friendly bestowed by the battery boys, who were really fond of me, on account of my diminutive size.

As I pleaded for a place like this, Captain Cooper smiled grimly, took old Charlie for an extra saddle horse and promptly turned me over to our most doughty fighter, Sergeant Dennis McGee of the center section guns.

Hardly had this been done, when we came upon a belated refugee's camp, outside of Hood's main lines, but close under the Confederate advance redoubts.

Always like a troubled yet gladsome dream have remained with me the events of the morning following. Indistinct were the notes of the revolver. Far and whispered and almost like soundless lip-movings were the

whispering. "Beatrice!—Beatrice!" She seemed merely listening as in a dream for surer token of kinship and affection in the half aspirated calling of her name.

Dim and unreal still, the signal to my guards, who grappled with me to force the placard over my shoulders. Like a whirlwind the maddened struggle tumbled, the breaking of the lines; the wild rush upon the headquarters tent; my own rescue; the rending of the placard to tatters; the sudden vision of a shooless maiden springing from a tiny white tent, clasping me in her arms, crying piteously: "He saved me from worse than death!"

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