VIRGINIA
SEP 29 1965
STATE LIBRARY

The Soldiers' Journal.

Dedicated to the Soldiers' Children.

VOL. 1.} RENDEZVOUS OF DISTRIBUTION, VA., JAN. 11, 1865. {NO. 47.

THE SOLDIERS' JOURNAL,
IS PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING, AT
RENDEZVOUS OF DISTRIBUTION, VA.,
ON THE FOLLOWING TERMS:

Subscription for One Year, - - - - - $2,00
" " Six Months, - - - - - 1,00
Single Copies, - - - - - - Five Cents

PAYABLE INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

POSTAGE ON THE JOURNAL is Twenty Cents a year—payable quarterly, in advance, at place of delivery.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

None other than the persons whose names appear in our list of Agents are authorized to receive subscriptions for THE SOLDIERS' JOURNAL.

Original Poetry.

TO MY MOTHER IN HEAVEN.

BY MAY MORRIS.

Dost hear me Mother, say dost hear thy child?
Art looking now, from heaven, with face so mild?
Or, is thy angel form still hovering nigh
To wipe the flowing tear and catch the sigh?
O could I feel it so: my heart 'twould cheer
In these last moments of the waning year!
'Tis almost gone! ah yes! 'tis nearly fled
And many loved ones numbered with the dead!
Many long years have flown since that sad day
When, freed from earth, thy spirit passed away!
Mother! how much I've missed thy pleasant voice!
Which, oft when young, did make my heart rejoice
And now, tho' many long, long years have flown
I weep—am sad—I feel that I'm alone!
No Mother have I had to guide my youth,
To teach me Wisdom's ways—the way of Truth!
Tho' nurtured by a sister's gentle care—
Thou wast not here!—no, *vacant was thy chair!*
O hadst thou been, to thee would I have fled,
And on thy bosom leaned my aching head!
To thee, have poured the feelings of my soul—
No fear of shame would *there* my thoughts control!
But I have kept them *pent within my brain*,
None know—none felt! I did not e'er complain—
Nor will I now with murm'ring voice repine,
All things are governed by that hand, divine!
Soon shall I meet thee, Mother, in that bright world above,
Far from the chilling breath of Earth—where all is Peace and Love.

GLEAMS OF LIGHT FROM HEAVEN.

In realms of glory Jesus dwells,
But comes to meet us here;
Each heart with glowing rapture swells,
Away, away, all fear!

Our faith illumes the pilgrim's way,
And gives us clear insight,
Full gleams of everlasting day,
Bright shining on our right.

Those gleams now cheer us—O our God!
They guide us home to Thee;
We'll sing Thy glory on the road,
Though sharp our conflict be. J. R. J.

CAMP CASEY, VA., Jan. 1, '65.

"I think in the lives of most women and men,
There's a moment when all would go smooth and even,
If the dead could only find out when
To come back and be forgiven."

For the Soldiers' Journal.

A SKETCH.

BY MISS ABBY M. FOSTER.

'Twas pitiful—that proud, manly form bent low in the attitude of despair; the hands clasped above the bowed head, while the clustering curls fell in matted locks over a broad, pale brow, where the cold drops stood, and the blue veins swelled, in the intensity of agonizing thought.

The surroundings were well in keeping with that motionless figure, which, seemingly, had drank life's bitterest cup to the dregs. The dim light flickered and went down in its socket; the moon hid herself, as if in sorrow; the wind sighed mournfully through the dark corridors, and rattled, with a strange, wierd sound, the heavy gratings, for it was a prison, and proud Herbert Grey occupied a prisoner's cell. Hour after hour passed on, and still he moved not. Lost to all outward sense, yet the spirit's vision was never so intensely clear, as picture after picture passed before it like the changing scenes of a panorama. Far down the vista of the past he saw a pale mother cradling her infant upon her breast, and building her hopes into bright castles that seemed not all of air; for her boy should be great and good, she thought, and repay, in the glory of his manhood, all her ceaseless cares. Then memory took up the pencil, and pictured a fair boy, full of childhood's generous impulses; but even here he saw the germ of that deadly Upas that had poisoned all his after life.

The guardians of his childhood saw in the flashing eye, and frequent bursts of anger, only a brave spirit, but the clear glance of retrospection showed the passionate temper that should have been curbed. Then came the vision of an ambitious youth; outstripping his competitors in the race for knowledge; wearing his laurels proudly, and giving promise of intellectual greatness and a glorious future. He saw here, too, the manifestations of that imperious spirit which brooked not opposition and scorned control, and he remembered now—oh, how keenly! the anxious look of that pale mother, as she sometimes laid her hand upon his arm in restraining tenderness, in his moments of passion. And now the pictures grew darker. There glowed the red gleam of the wine cup, and there were midnight revels, where bacchanalian songs and profane jests disturbed the night—degrading the mind and polluting the tongue; and now, blackest picture of all, he saw the murderous hand he had raised against his dearest friend and companion, in a moment of frenzy, when his deep potations had sent the fiery blood coursing like burning lava through his veins. He saw the insensible form he had struck down, borne away, wearing the cold, frigid look of the dead. Dead! the word seemed echoed through every chamber of his soul. With a strange calmness he looked at the hand that had done so dark a deed, as if he would find some pretext for charging that with the crime, and avenging it; but it looked fair and white, as before. It was only the innocent instrument of his own reckless passion. Of his arrest and hurried removal to the prison, he remembered nothing. Two pictures, alone, remained vividly before him, as if traced with a pencil of fire. One, the motionless form of his comrade; the other, imaginary, but none the less real to him, the look of his mother when she should hear of his downfall. One hope still remained, and one prayer rose from the depths of his soul, too deep for words. The prayer that Heaven would yet save him from the actual guilt of murder; the hope that the blow had not fallen so fatally as it seemed, and that those pallid lips might yet speak, to forgive; and in the darkness and silence of that prison cell he vowed, should this prayer be answered, to consecrate his life to the work of reform. He knew that the way would be long and rough, over which his bleeding feet must tread ere he should reach the goal of safety, where he could stand as a beacon light for others, but he shrank not.

And while this tortured heart was passing through the bitter discipline which was to refine it of all its grosser elements and bring out the fine gold, how the uncharitable world mocked, and shrugged its shoulders in pharisaical self-righteousness, and thought "hanging too good for him;" and with what nonchalance those human fiends who dealt in liquid fire, poured out the sparkling poison for just such as he, and remarked that "he was a wild, dissipated fellow," and they were "not at all surprised at the tragic event."

And how the self-styled moderate drinkers, whose grosser natures were only stupefied, though ten times the quantity gurgled through their sluggish veins, turned off their brimming beakers, and expatiated upon the excellence of our prison discipline, and its reformatory influence—as if the reform began at the *effect*, instead of the cause—as if a man who would build a church, should commence at the steeple.

That prayer from the lonely prison cell, went up to the ears of the pitying Father and was answered, and that life consecration accepted.—Ten thousand angel harps may have rung forth in pæans of joy, over the victory, but the cold world only doubted and sneered. He learned to blame them not, but, in the spirit of the crucified Nazarene, to say, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." He came forth from the prison, when it was found that he was not guilty of crime in the eye of the law. The friend restored, forgave, and joined in the crusade against the hydra-headed monster that had well nigh destroyed them both; and the tears of that once almost broken-hearted mother have long since turned to tears of joy, as she sees her proudest hopes realized. Her son *is* great and good, and up and down the hills and vales of our beloved land his voice is heard in clarion tones, proclaiming the principles of that glorious cause whose watchwords are, Love, Purity and Fidelity.