encountered the enemy he sent a dispatch to Gen. McDowell, who also commanded a separate detachment, saying that the rebels appeared to have driven the main army back, that he had determined to retreat, and counselling him to do likewise,—which doesn't appear much like being subject to McDowell's orders. Upon this point Gen Pope remarks with great feeling, referring to his unsoldierly idea of decamping at a moment when he believed the Union army, of which he was the main support, was about to suffer defeat. Pope says that Porter might have attacked the enemy in his front, or hastened to the relief of the main body. His orders were explicit. "How could *he* know (says Pope) for what purpose he was ordered to attack the enemy? How could *he* know that the General Commanding expected his attack to be successful? How could *he* know that his attack was not ordered that he might prevent the enemy from re-enforcing by troops from *his* front other parts of their line which were being too hard pressed? How could *he* know that his attack was not intended to draw forces from other parts of the enemy's line of battle so that an attack elsewhere could be pressed with success? In fact the order sent him contemplated and provided for his repulse in its last paragraph. In truth I feel askamed to offer an argument on such a subject to any military man."

Gen. Pope also challenges Porter's evidence as to the enemy's strength. He shows by Longstreet's reports that the troops used to defeat him were withdrawn from Porter's front. In view of all the facts, we are inclined to believe with Gen. Pope that "the more the question is looked into the worse it will be for Porter." We understand that Gen. Sherman and even Gen. Thomas, are in favor of a remission on the general ground that he might be put on an equal footing with pardoned rebels. The question arises, would this be just. If it be true that Porter was a secret betrayer of his country in an hour of peril, shall we accord him equal leniency with men who fought openly? If he deliberately plotted the overthrow of an entire army at a most critical moment, from any motive whatever, does he not merit the most remorseless execution of his sentence?

We unintentionally disturbed our friend of the Long Roll, by asserting that ours was the only soldiers' paper published east of Ohio. We have heretofore considered Friend Allen's paper more local than general in its character, and published as the organ of the soldiers' orphans' Home. In its new dress and enlarged form it presents a fine appearance and we readily acknowledge it as a "soldiers' paper" of excellent character.

Mr. Riggs, of the Meriden Recorder, having outgrown the limits of that thriving town, has commenced the issue of a sprightly penny daily called the Daily News, in this city. He seems determined to push things and make it a success here, and it has certainly improved with every issue thus far.

The March number of Demorest's monthly is early at hand, and is as full of useful and beautiful things as ever. It has boundless attractions for the ladies.

Our thanks are due to General William W. Belknap for a copy of the Army Register just issued, which is noticed more fully elsewhere.

The Chicago Soldiers' Friend is now published monthly for sixty cents yearly.

Every loyal and patriotic citizen of Hartford—and indeed, of the whole state, for that matter—ought to encourage, to the extent at least of their individual subscription, that most entertaining and valuable publication, the SOLDIER'S RECORD, published in this city by Mr. W. F. Walker. It is ably edited, is the best and most complete soldier's paper in the country; and we do not see how any patriotic family can get along without it.

Hartford Daily News.

A Persian poet says: "Night comes on when the ink-bottle of heaven is overturned." Another calls the evening dew "the perspiration of the moon."

'N' FOR NANNIE AND 'B' FOR BEN.

"N" for Nannie, and "B" for Ben;
I see them now as I saw them then,
On the bark of the oak tree wed.
She sat waist deep in clover white,
And the liquid gold of the June sunlight
Swept over her sweet young head.

And I stood carving the letters twain
That time and tempest have all in vain
Striven to blur and blast;
They live in the oak tree's dusky grain
Stamped as their memory on my brain,
Changing and fading not.

O! the vows that I vowed that day,
Their broken shreds in my bosom stay,
Wounding hour by hour.
Could I be false to one so true?
Dared I be cruel, my love to you—
Nannie, my lily flower?

Ere the snow had whitened those letters twain,
In the old church porch you hid your pain
As my bride and I passed by:
Your eyes were brave but your cheek grew white
The cheek I should have pillowed that night,
Where it never now may lie.

Little Nannie, you now are at rest,
The buttercups growing over your breast,
Close by the grave yard gate;
But ah! I live to rue the day,
Gold tempted my steps from love away,
And mine is the sadder fate.

For I'd give the rest of my life to-night
To see you sit in clover white,
The sun on your locks of gold,
And carve once more as I carved them then,
"N" for Nannie, and "B" for Ben,
On the bark of the oak tree old.

MALVERN HILL.

It is no wonder that Lafayette, in the days of the Revolution, selected Malvern Hill as his headquarters, because of the "unexampled beauty of its location." Without a doubt the battle field is one of the most beautiful spots in Virginia. At the time your correspondent visited the place the green acres of wheat were waving before the wind. The buds were appearing on the trees, the apricots, cherries and peaches in full bloom, and birds of brilliant plumage sang delightful songs of spring from every branch. Far away the James glittered in the sun, disturbed at intervals by the wheels of Richmond steamers. How strange to think that these high bluffs were the scene of such a conflict!

NO APPEARANCE OF WAR.

The sabres, the bayonets, the muskets and the cannon are gone, and have left no sign. In the deep ravine where thousands fell,—where crushing cannon and mutilating cavalry rode roughly over a pavement of human bodies, the little brook laughs on toward the valley, clear and undisturbed as though there never had been war. In the line of woods where the groans of the wounded and the yells of Hooker's Division, made wild echo that fatal evening, to-day the twitter of the robin, the blue bird, the mocking bird, and thrush, drive from the mind all thoughts of war. They show us the spot where four hundred dead Confederates were found nearly piled together in their charges on Sedgwick's line. But now a beautiful spring bubbles out of the sand, and brilliant May flowers grow there. War! There are no indications of war. Everything is peace. The forest, which was to scarred and battered, between the hill and Willis's Church, has been cut down, and rich grain speaks of prosperity and peace.

LIBBY PRISON.

Libby Prison has not changed materially in its outward look, having the same dingy appearance. Inside, however, it has undergone great changes. Partitions have been built, doorways walled up, cells for close confinement torn out, and each apartment fitted up for the uses for which it was built. The cellars are filled with bales of cornstalks and boxes of merchandise, while the upper stories are filled with all the variety of goods found in any commission warehouse. In one a man is employed as a clerk who was a prisoner there for over a year.

In tearing down the walls little notes to friends, knapsacks, &c,, were stowed away to be recovered if the prisoners ever returned. Nearly all of these have been destroyed or sent away to the friends to whom they were addressed. We are searching now for a workman who is said to have found $50 in greenbacks behind a brick in the wall, and with it a note to a friend in New York, saying that the money was for his daughter, if he (the prisoner) never lived to see them, and closed his eyes with the words, "Great God, must I starve here?" It was eviden ly a part of an uncompleted letter, and was stowed away for safe keeping till the writer could finish it.

CASTLE THUNDER.

The balcony around Castle Thunder, on which trod the sentinels, has been torn down. The outside has been painted crimson and the inside renovated and changed. It is now used as a tobacco manufactory, and over a hundred hands are employed drying, pressing and rolling tobacco. It is surrounded by ruins, and it is a matter of surprise, that, in the great conflagration when the city was destroyed, Libby and Castle Thunder should be omitted.

BEST BOOK FOR EVERY BODY.—The new illustrated edition of Webster's Dictionary, containing three thousand engravings, is the *best book for every body* that the press has produced in the present century, and should be regarded as indispensable to the well-regulated home, reading-room, library, and place of business.—*Golden Era.*

O, when there is so much sadness in this world, so much despised love, unrequited love, unworthy love,—surely the one bliss of love deserved and love returned ought to outweigh all else, and stand firm and sure whatever outside cares may lay siege to it. They cannot touch the citadel where the two hearts—the one double heart—has intrenched itself, safe and at rest forever.

EIGHTEENTH REGIMENT C. V.

IN THE WAR FOR THE UNION.

SPRING CAMPAIGN.

The latter part of the month of April, was spent in preparing for the spring campaign. It was the general impression that an early movement would be made up the valley, and the Eighteenth would participate. Accordingly, Major Peale and Adjutant Culver were very busy in work of preparation. Co. I under the command of Lieut. Lilley had been sent to Falling Waters, on the Potomac, to guard that point against the incursions of scouting bands of the enemy. On the evening of the 26th of April, Maj. Peale received orders to move early the next day with the remaining nine companies. Accordingly, on the morning of the 27th, the Eighteenth started on the road to Martinsburg. The day was cloudy and chilly, and the road was rough and hilly for the first few miles. Hence their progress was slow and difficult. However it was a change, and on the whole the days march was a lively and pleasant one. At noon the "raw recruits" were quite amused at the novelty of eating their rations, for the first time, by the road side. It did not take them long, however, to become initiated into the preparations for making coffee, breaking and splitting rails to make fires for culinary purposes. Of course rations relished well with "minute coffee," to men who were as "hungry as bees." At night fall, the regiment had marched twelve or fourteen miles, two thirds of the distance from the Ferry to Martinsburg. In the mean time the clouds had passed off and it was clear and cold. Camped for the night in a beautiful wood lot, at the right of the road, near the house of Dr. Magruder. The doctor and his wife professed to be friendly to the Union cause, while their two daughters gave unmistakable signs of being in sympathy with Jeff. Davis whom they thought to be a very fine man, and a "heap smarter than Abe Lincoln." However several of the officers were "kept over night," furnished with good beds, supper and breakfast free of charge. The evening was spent in pleasant conversation on national affairs, Yankee and Southern phrases, and singing. The young ladies played the piano and sung finely, and among others sung a few national and "secesh" songs, with fine effect. Their guests left early the next morning with many thanks for their pleasant and hospitable entertainment, promising certainly to call, if they should ever come that way again. Of course, seeking such comfortable quarters, while most of the rank and file lay out doors, shivering in their blankets, was not very *soldierly* and perhaps a little *selfish*, however the act was thought to be pardoned in this case, as Surgeon Harrington was nearly an invalid and the new chaplain had not become acclimated nor accustomed to "sleeping out in the cold." Arrived in Martinsburg about 10 o'clock, A. M. on the 28th, and went into camp on the east side of the town. Here it was ascertained, that the Eighteenth was to join the force which Gen. Siegel had been collecting at this point, for a forward movement up the Shenandoah Valley. The day was full of care and work both on the part of the officers and men. From every point their came news of startling interest. It was evident that the campaign of 1864 would be earnest and decisive. The enemy everywhere was as defiant and persistent, to appearance, as ever. Gen. Bank's ill success in Texas and some reverses to the Union troops at other points, raised the expectations of the rebels, and their papers were full of exagerated statements with regard to the great things Gen. Lee and other rebel commanders would do toward the ultimate defeat of the plans of Gen. Grant. A united and simultaneous forward movement was expected. The enemy was to be engaged at every point, to prevent reinforcements being sent to Lee at Richmond, or Johnson in Tennessee. Gen. Siegel was to approach Richmond in the rear, and detach a portion of Lee's army from the defence of that stronghold of the enemy. The magnitude of this plan, however, it would seem, was most fully estimated from the small force at Siegel's command. Up to this time perhaps it was not generally known that another advance would be made, "on to Richmond," by the way of the valley, and many of the men, remembering their unpleasant experiences of the previous year in that direction, were not so jubilant and confident as they would have been under other circumstances. It seemed to them next to madness to think of sending a force, of only ten thousand men all told, into a hostile country, with every conceivable advantage in favor of the rebels, and where at almost any point a force twice or three times as large as their own, could be thrown against them, and that too, when they were a long way from their base of supplies and re-inforcements. Before leaving Martinsburg, the general conviction among those who were acquainted with previous valley movements was that Siegel's force was altogether too small for the purposes intended, and the campaign at the start was considered extremely difficult and uncertain. The remark was often made, "we want at least 50,000 men for such a campaign." What can Gen. Grant be thinking of, to send such a little handful of men on such a hazardous expedition. Most writers on the late civil war have been pleased to speak of the movements of Siegel and Hunter as "miserable failures," as though the blame of not accomplishing all that was intended, was to be ascribed entirely to their want of tact or bravery. Now all such statements show either culpable ignorance or unpardonable spite, on the part of the writers. The valley campaign of 1864, was not a miserable failure, but on the other hand, considering all the circumstances in the case, the difficulties encountered, and the inadequate means to counteract them, the results were all, and more than those best acquainted with previous valley operations anticipated, as the sequel will abundantly prove. The writer well remembers a conversation which indicates that at the start, the expectation of great success was not indulged, generally, either by officers or privates.

"Well, Tom, what is up now? On to Richmond" was the Ans. Remember Winchester said another. We shan't get farther than Fisher's Hill, remarked another, for a thousand men at that point will stop our whole force. But another more hopeful said, "Boys I want you to remember that we are going to fight "mit Seigel." With others it was quite as important to have an adequate force as to numbers, as a competent leader. However the work of preparation went on, and every one seemed inclined to make the best of the situation.

TO CORRESPONDENTS. Faith Lyle's "Musings' is a welcome contribution to our portfolio of poetry, and we shall be glad to receive similar favors often.

THE HISTORY OF A LIFE.

Daw dawned: Within a curtained room,
Filled to faintness with perfume,
A lady lay, at point of doom.

Day closed: A child had seen the light;
But for the lady, fair and bright,
She rested in undreaming night.

Spring rose: The lady's grave was green;
And near it afterwards was seen,
A gentle boy, with thoughtful mien.

Years fled: He wore a manly face;
And struggled in the World's rough race,
And won, at last, a lofty place.

And then—he died! Beheld before ye
Humanity's poor sum and story,
Life—death—and all that is of glory.

GOLDEN GLEANINGS.

[A man might frame and let loose a star to roll in its orbit, and yet not do so memorable a thing before God as he who let go a golden-orbed thought to roll through the generations of time.]

Rouse to some high and holy work of love
And thou an angel happiness shalt know,
Shalt bless the earth while in the world above.
The good begun by thee, while here below,
Shall like a river sun and broader flow.

But to watch all the long days of life by the river, and carry the burdens, and not know if we are doing the right thing after all, that is what is so hard.

WHEN the Breton mariner puts to sea, his prayer is, "*Keep me, my God! my boat is so small, and thy ocean so wide!*" Does not this beautiful prayer truly express the condition of each of us?

A RETROSPECT.

Looking backward through the year,
Along the way my feet have passed,
I see sweet places everywhere—
Sweet places where my soul had rest.
And though some human hopes of mine
Are dead and buried from my sight,
Yet from their graves immortal flowers
Have sprung and blossomed into light.

There is nothing equal to a cheerful and even mirthful conversation, for restoring the tone of mind and body when both are overdone. Some great and good men, on whom very heavy toils and cares have been laid, manifest a constitutional tendency to relax into mirth, when their work is over. Narrow minds denounce the incongruity; large hearts own God's goodness in the fact, and rejoice in the wise provision made for prolonging useful lives. Mirth, after exhaustive toil, is one of nature's instinctive efforts to heal the part which has been bruised.

We see so blindly here. We press sorrows to our bosoms, when, instead of sorrows they are golden blessings. We weep over the gloomy places we are treading, and see only black darkness, while the very light of His countenance is illuming our way. With closed lips we shut in quivering cries that He hears and pities. We hunger after the pure and true and beautiful, when it lies just beyond us, waiting for our coming,—a purity that nothing can sully, a truth perfect that will never change, the beautiful which is fadeless, imperishable, and passes not away forever.

I tell you the soul shapes to itself a life whether the outer life conforms to it or not. There are persons who have impediments of speech, so that the thoughts that shape themselves in the brain are smothered there, and can never be born in fitting utterance. There are many who have an impediment in life, a something wanting, withheld, that hinders the inner existence from flowing out into visible fact and deed. Flows it somewhere? Is there not budding somewhere all the while, that which God hath reserved for them from the foundation of the world?.

Some persons fall discouraged on the highway of life, because they cannot be this or that great or eminent person. Why not be willing to be themselves? No person who ever has, or ever will live, is without influence. Why not make the most of that? Since you cannot grasp that which you wish, why let what you have slip through your fingers? No person in the world is exactly like you. You have your own faults, but you have also your own excellencies individual to yourself. Give them air. Because you are not a poet, should you not be a good merchant? Because you cannot go to college, should you therefore foreswear the alphabet? Because you cannot build a palace, should you not rejoice in your own humble roof, and that because it is your own? Will not the sun also shine into your windows if you do not obstinately persist in shutting it out? If you cannot have a whole hot-house full of flowers, may you not have one sweet rose?