

THE WORLD.

BY PERTINAX.

Who contemplates this world of ours,
And thinks of all its wondrous changes,
Its patent and its latent power
That through all nature's vista ranges.

The broadening plain, the rushing river,
The valley and the mountain top,
All things but man on forever;
The natural forces never stop.

The ocean wide, the mountain lake,
The awe-inspiring summer storm
The varying changes that they make
As they their wondrous parts perform.

an is a puny strpling here,
The sport of every wind that blows;
The changes in each coming year
Are man's hereditary foes.

The mind that set this world in motion
And gave to every force its laws,
That set the boundaries to the ocean,
Is Herbert Spencer's "great first cause."

I view the sky so bright and clear,
I see the beauties of the sod;
The great first cause that I revere
Is king of heaven and earth, our "God."

A REMARKABLE ESCAPE.

Among the many gallant officers whom the State of New York gave to the Union army was Captain John F. Porter, of the Fourteenth Regiment New York Volunteer Cavalry. It was not my good fortune to meet him until April, 1864, although we were both serving in the Department of the Gulf, and on the same day, June 14, 1863, each of us had an experience before the Confederate citadel of Port Hudson, the memory of which will be life-long. Mine related to the sanguinary and unsuccessful assault, when the columns of Grover and Weitzel were hurled against those impregnable fortifications; his to a captivity there begun, which, with his subsequent experience in Richmond, and his daring and wonderful escape, will make a narrative which the whole unpublished records of individual heroism in the great struggle may be well challenged to excel. He bears the remarkable distinction of having been the first Union officer who escaped from Libby Prison. Captain Porter is as modest as daring; and, well knowing that the narrative would always remain unpublished if he were depended upon to write it, his old friend and comrade prays him to take no offense if he essays the task, putting the narrative in the first person, as its intense interest seems to demand.

Early on the morning of June 14 I was sent out with my company up the Jackson road, to watch for the appearance of the enemy's cavalry, it being expected that they would take advantage of our assault on the works to make a dash at our lines. About two miles up the road we were suddenly surrounded and taken prisoners by a battalion of gray-coats who dashed out of the woods on both sides of the road. I regret that the limits which are prescribed for this account will not permit me to relate the hundred interesting incidents of that day, when I was held a captive, with my company, almost in sight of the Union attacking columns, and listened to the clamor of the assault; nor the incidents of the following two weeks, as we were slowly transported to Richmond in close and filthy cattle-cars. I find it necessary to save space by beginning, at once, with my confinement in the Libby; first mentioning that before we were searched there in the woods, near Port Hudson, I was fortunate enough to be able to secrete beneath the buttons of my coat three double eagles that were in my pocket. To these three gold pieces, and the forethought that suggested their concealment, I was finally indebted, in a great measure, for my escape.

At the time when the doors of the old tobacco warehouse closed upon me almost two hundred Union officers were inside it, of every grade, from Brigadier down. They had been captured in every part of the military situation, represented every loyal State, and all arms of the service, and had collectively fought in the greatest battles of the war, up to that time. Those of the number who are best known to fame were General Neal Dow, Colonel Streight, and Lieutenant Colonel Irvine. We were confined in large rooms up-stairs, with guards in the halls, guards outside, and a regular visit and roll-call twice a day by the commandant. What I saw and heard in that place would fill a book. That I suffered, I need not say; bad food, and little of it; bad air, filth, vermin, and the dreary, irksome confinement, need hardly be named in proof of that. Yet our captivity was somewhat lightened by the friendships that grew up within those dreary walls. Those of us who were confined in the same room could talk together, although subject to constant watch. Some of us worked very cautiously for a long time to remove several bricks from the partition-wall between us and the next room, when we could stealthily converse with its occupants. In this way I discovered some old friends, and cheered myself and them by giving and receiving information from home.

During the first few months of my imprisonment, there was very little whispering among us on the subject of escape. The season progressed; and when General Meade withdrew from Mine Run, we understood that there was to be an investment of Richmond that winter. Then our hopes and our talk turned to that will-o'-the-wisp, "exchange." Ah, how many poor hearts grew sick and weary, how many brave men have died, waiting for that hope deferred! Time passed; there was no exchange; we realized that we must not put great faith in the ability of our Government to liberate us. After this, over our miserable rations, or in the darkness of winter nights, as we lay shivering on the cold floor, sustaining our drooping spirits with what fortitude we could command, we began to consult together about the chances of escape, and to watch narrowly by day for some way to accomplish it. Our wits were sharpened by hunger and suffering, and still more by that yearning for liberty that is all in all to the poor prisoner; and every plan that offered the faintest gleam of hope was examined and discussed, before one was finally adopted.

One of the incidents of our imprisonment, which occurred before our plan of escape was matured, I can never recall without a quickened pulse. All the Captains among the prisoners were one day ordered into a room together—some fifty of us. There we were met by Major Turner, the commandant, who produced a cigar-box containing paper slips, each bearing the name of one of us. He informed us that two of us were to be selected by lot for immediate execution, in retaliation for the hanging of two Confederate Captains as alleged spies, by General Burnside. What our emotions were upon this announcement, I shall not attempt to describe; who could

describe them? The first name drawn was that of Captain John W. Sawyer. The brave fellow stepped aside, folded his arms, and looked at Turner with a defiant smile. The commandant looked at the next slip, drawn, and hesitated.

"What the deuce is this name, anyway?" he said.

We stood waiting in sickening suspense. "Let's see," he continued. Captain—B—Is that B?—No, J.; J. F.—, and now what next—P?—

My exact initials! Had the halter been that instant put round my neck, and the trap sprung beneath my feet, my mental tortures could not have been greater. There was no other among the fifty with those initials; I knew it, for I had listened attentively to the roll-call that preceded the drawing. But I forbore to say more of my feelings in that moment; the agony of a lifetime was crowded into them.

Major Turner went on with his efforts to read the name.

"There's an F. in the middle, plain enough; that next capital looks like a P—but no, I'm d—d if that ain't an F., too. Now I have it: Flynn. Captain Flynn, stand out there!"

The corrected name was B. F. Flynn. The two doomed Captains bade us farewell manfully as they were taken away by the guard; and we were returned to our confinement.

The names of Flynn and Sawyer ought to go into history; and if mental suffering, the dreadful anguish of soul endured for their country, can count anything in the making of heroes, they surely should be honored as such. Though they were never executed, they lived for weeks in the hourly expectation of the summons to go out to their death. Bravely did they endure it! On leaving the prison they were taken before General Winder, the commandant of the city, who ordered them confined in irons. This they suffered for several weeks, until the Richmond authorities were informed by our War Department that two Confederate officers of high rank, including one of the Lee family, who were then prisoners, were held as hostages for these men, and would certainly share their fate. Then the irons were removed, and the day of the execution was indefinitely deferred. They were at last returned to the Libby; and it was a joyful greeting that their old comrades gave them.

Another remarkable incident which happened before any attempt at escape was made, was the release of Lieutenant Colonel Irvine, of the Tenth N. Y. Cavalry. It was as unexpected to him as to any of us, and happened in a singular way. John Morgan's Adjutant General had been some time before this captured in Kentucky, and taken to Washington. His name I do not remember; but he was a Lieutenant Colonel, and was fortunate enough to discover old friends among high military authorities at Washington. On his word of honor that he would procure the exchange of a Union officer of like rank for himself, or, failing in that, would himself return to captivity, he was released from the Old Capitol Prison, and sent by flag-of-truce to Richmond. The result was the release and exchange of Lieutenant Colonel Irvine. I shall not attempt to paint the scene when one of the prison officers entered one morning in January, and, calling for Colonel Irvine, communicated the good news, and bade him get ready to leave at once. We crowded around him; we wrung his hands, some with tears in their eyes, congratulating him on his good fortune, and bidding him not to forget us.

"You may be sure I will not," the good-hearted and brave man replied. "I'll not let them alone in Washington till they do something for you."

None of the inmates of the Libby at that time have ever doubted that the Colonel did all that man could do for us. Upon his urgent request Secretary Stanton made him a special agent of exchanges, and he traveled several times from Washington to City Point to effect our liberation. It was no fault of his that his negotiations failed. One day a letter was handed into our room from Colonel Irvine, written at City Point. He told us how he had labored for us, and that he saw no present hope. "But keep up your courage," he concluded, "and await the logic of accomplished events."

From that moment the thoughts of all of us were turned more ardently toward our plan of escape. It was a good plan, and met with a surprising degree of success, considering the difficulties under which it was prosecuted. But I soon discovered that the plan of my comrades could not be mine. Long before I saw the outside of the prison, the famous "underground tunnel" was commenced; in fact, I worked at it frequently myself by night, being willing to give my comrades the benefit of my labor while I was with them, though the work was not likely to be of any use to me. At the time of my capture I had received a wound from a carbine-ball in the leg which was so slight as to give me no trouble till some weeks after I reached the Libby. Something aggravated it—bad air or water, or the debility of the system under confinement—and it became sore and inflamed. This lasted for some time, and then the leg grew better; but my night-labors with the others on the tunnel developed its weakness, and I perfectly realized that I was not vigorous enough to take my chances with them in the wild and desperate flight, and that I should surely lag behind and be recaptured by the cavalry patrols. An effort "on my own hook," therefore, before the general break, was what I decided upon.

But what hope could I possibly have of getting outside the prison, past all these guards? And what hope of evading recapture, if I did?

I suppose that, considering the condition of my leg, any of my comrades would have pronounced my chance of escape the very poorest of the lot. It so appeared to me; and, looking back now upon the wonderful combination of circumstances that helped me through, it seems as if it was an attempt that could not succeed once in ten thousand times.

I was standing by the grated window, one day, looking out into the yard, waiting till one of the sentinels below should see me and order me away, when a lady passed on the other side of the street, followed by a negro. She saw me at the window, and with a quick motion of her hand put aside her shawl, giving me a glimpse of a small Union flag in the bosom of her dress, instantly covering it again. It was a pleasant and unusual incident; but I did not dream of hearing more of it. Less than a week after, a negro was allowed to come in among us to sell fruit; and I recognized in him the same who was following the lady. We had many opportunities to exchange money with the guards, and I had long before broken one of my gold-pieces. I offered the negro purveyor a Confederate bill; he looked me in the face, and with a

significant grin handed me a large sweet potato. The guards were always watching us at such times; but this transaction, which was certainly a mystery to me, did not excite their suspicions. When both guard and negro were gone, I examined the potato. Contained in a cavity in the center of it was a small piece of writing paper, folded into the smallest possible compass. It was closely written, and without signature; stating that the writer was an Union woman who had tried to attract the attention of prisoners at the windows when the sentinels were not observing her. Minute directions were given for finding her house; and the writer stated that, although she could not help any of us out of the prison, if the officer to whom this note might be delivered could succeed in getting out and coming to her, she would promise him the safest concealment.

Upon reading this unexpected message of hope, a plan took instant and definite shape in my brain. It was simply to collect together articles enough to make the uniform of a Confederate soldier, put them on, and, with such other disguise as I could assume, to walk boldly out of the prison!

It was not so difficult to obtain this kind of clothing as might be supposed. As our uniforms in which we were captured wore out, and as cold weather came on, those of us who had money were accustomed to purchase garments of the Confederate gray from the negroes or guards to whom we had access; and the necessity of the case was so apparent that there was neither suspicion nor interference on the part of the officers of the prison. I made my plan known to some of my comrades, and with their help, and the use of my cherished gold-pieces, it was not long before I had a complete uniform for a Confederate private stowed away behind the bricks at the corner of the room. Next I bought a razor and a pair of scissors—for even these could be got with money, of the hucksters that were occasionally admitted to the prison. On the night before the morning that I had fixed for my bold attempt, I lay down with the bundle of clothing under my head, and tried in vain to sleep. Long before daylight I was up; nobody else was astir in the room, but I heard the guards tramping back and forth in the halls. I went to the window, and, trusting a great deal to the sense of feeling, I sheared off my luxuriant hair, beard, and drooping mustache, and with the aid of a small piece of soap and some water that was left in my can I made a lather and shaved my face. Then with some ink lent me by a comrade I dyed my eyebrows; and taking off and concealing my old clothes I put on the gray uniform, buttoning the coat up to the chin, that I might look like an orderly without arms. Stationing myself near the door, I waited with fast-beating heart. Presently the morning allowance of food was brought in, a sergeant and several soldiers entering to see to its distribution. A guard stood at the door with musket and fixed bayonet. I walked straight up to him, remarking, "There's enough here without me." He stepped aside and allowed me to pass without a word. With a firm step I walked through the hall and descended the stairs. I observed that he looked after me carelessly. In the hall below I passed another guard; he looked at me, but said nothing. Acting in exact pursuance of the plan I had marked out, I stopped at the prison office at the end of the lower hall, and asked the clerk the time.

"Nearly seven," he replied, looking at the clock, and then indifferently at me.

He did not know me, and never suspected that the man before him was other than what he seemed to be; and yet—so astounding were the incidents of my escape—I instantly recognized in this clerk an old friend of ante-bellum days in New York city, who had come South, where his sympathies lay, when war became imminent! I thanked him, and, turning to leave the office, met Major Turner at the door. I promptly saluted him; he returned it, and on I went, between the muskets at the outer door, past the sentinels; and the relief-guard, some of whom were waiting for their breakfast near by—nobody challenging me, nobody appearing to imagine that I was other than an orderly from the prison, going on some early errand. In two minutes I had turned corners enough to remove me from sight of the Libby. I hurried along with no other thought than to get outside the city as fast as possible, forgetting for the time both the weakness of my leg and the promise of the Union lady. Near the eastern suburbs of the city I stopped at a negro quarter; and, knowing from previous experience the fidelity of the blacks to the Union cause, I did not hesitate to disclose myself to a venerable dandy, and ask for directions.

"You'll neber get out dis way, sah," he said, with a grave shake of his woolly head. "De rebels hab all de roads out heah, and dey'll find you out an' cotch you, suah."

I pressed on; but the negro's warning was speedily verified; and, had I been less circumspect in my reconnoitering, I should have probably reached the Libby again before noon of that day. On that road, on two other roads that I tried, I discovered at a distance mounted patrols or infantry guards. I sat down on some abandoned earth-works, and reflected. My leg was getting painful, and I was in the midst of enemies. If I should succeed in passing the pickets—and this was not certain—I had not the strength nor the endurance to lurk in the woods daytimes and prosecute my escape nights, as would be necessary. There was nothing at the end of this but recapture, and the Libby again. This was no course open to me but to turn back into the city and seek my unknown friends. I did it with a heavy heart; yet, as the sequel proved, I was then taking the path that led to home and freedom.

I found the lady's house with little difficulty, and was welcomed in a way that left no doubt of her fidelity to the Union cause. During the next month, that noble woman concealed me, watched over my safety, and at last provided for my transit to our lines, in the manner presently to be described. But so surprising were the discoveries that I made while in this refuge, and so novel will their relation be to most people at the North, that I will pause a moment to speak of them. This lady was one of a large number of Unionists in Richmond, who, at the greatest risk to themselves, were constantly engaged in helping the cause. They transmitted important news to Washington, and sought every opportunity to aid our prisoners. Her house was the headquarters of a branch organization of a loyal league, which she told me embraced the names of several thousand in the city. All of them, of course, were not active; but all were sympathizers. I know it to be a fact that these men had arms concealed in their cellars and garrets; and in the previous spring, during the Chancellorsville campaign, when Stoneman was nearing Rich-

mond with his cavalry, they anxiously waited the certainty of his coming to rise, arm themselves, open the prison doors, and take possession of the city for him. But a premature disclosure of themselves would mean instant death; so they were bound to great caution. Those were strange times—and stranger than anything I have yet related, but still absolutely true—during my sojourn at this house I was introduced to one of its visitors, a man in thorough sympathy with the national cause, who was a high official in one of the Confederate bureaus. At his suggestion I accompanied him one day as an orderly, riding a horse which he provided for me, on a tour of inspection of the defenses of the city. The party included a board of engineers and several prominent Generals of the Confederacy. In view of what happened to me afterward, I shudder to think of the risk then needlessly taken. But my official friend was sure that my disguise was absolutely impenetrable; and the information which I acquired during that day's ride was of great value to our cause. At least Secretary Stanton told me so when I afterward gave him all its details.

The plan of escape which my loyal friends had formed was disclosed to me; and, though burning with impatience to make the trial, I was constrained to take their counsel, and bide my time. They designed to get me a place as driver of one of the wagons of a forage and supply train, which was with a large escort to leave the city for the Lower Potomac region. There were difficulties in the way; but so many and such influential people were interested in the matter, that the good woman was confident of success, from the first. In the meantime she reported to me everything that could be learned around the prison. After much excitement and no little profanity upon the discovery of my escape, several squads of cavalry had been dispatched on the north and peninsular roads. The search had been prosecuted long and far; but not an item of intelligence had been brought back. Of course, the natural inference of Major Turner was that I was probably still in Richmond; and thereafter redoubled pains were taken by my friends to prevent discovery. I was only permitted to go out after nightfall, and then always in my suit of gray, and under the guidance of some one who knew where I could take my exercise without danger.

One morning, the gratifying intelligence was brought me of the escape of Colonel Streight and more than a hundred of my late companions, through the tunnel. They were hotly chased, by the rebel cavalry, over the peninsula; about half of them were recaptured, and the others succeeded, after dreadful fatigue and exposure, in reaching the relief parties that were sent out from Fortress Monroe at the first tidings of the escape. The near approach of Colonel Dahlgren and his little command caused the wildest consternation in the city among the Confederates, as well as great exultation among my good friends. After these occurrences the excitement ran so high, and the scrutiny became so rigid, that the latter declared that I must defer all thoughts of getting away until the departure of another train; and this I reluctantly, and still wisely, consented to do.

At last the long-expected day came. I was furnished with a passport bearing the name of Moses Parish, a real person, who was on the list of drivers, but who was unable to go with the train, on account of sickness. I was to personate him, and all that the forethought of myself or my friends could provide for as to questions that might be asked me on the expedition I did not lack. I was to go with the train as far as it went toward the Potomac, and then take my chances to desert and make my way across the river. It was full of risk—yet what escape from captivity is not?—and I may say that it was with a light heart that I bade farewell that morning to that noble woman and a few others of our loyal friends, and walked over to the rendezvous. The officer in command of the train looked at my passport, and then at my face. I was anticipating a close scrutiny, and I certainly got it. Everybody was suspected!

"Moses Parish, is it? Soldier or civilian?"

"Civilian, sir."

"How about that uniform, then?"

"Picked it up, sir. It was either that or go naked."

"Hum! Who are you, anyway?"

"A Marylander; enlisted in the Yankee army, and deserted and came here through the lines, after Chancellorsville."

"Where did you enlist?"

"At Baltimore."

"Ever lived there?"

"All my life, sir."

I was so well acquainted with that city that I could safely make this answer.

"Ho—you have, have you? We'll see about that. Now, my fine fellow, I happen to be a Baltimorean myself, and if you've been lying to me, I shall find it out."

I saw that I was suspected; but, knowing that I was perfectly equal to the catechism he proposed, I faced him boldly. From Druid Hill Park to Patterson Park, and from Fort Federal Hill to the Battle Monument, he led me all over Baltimore, and was not very long in discovering that I knew quite as much about that city as he did.

"Well, I can't fool with you any longer," he said, testily. "Get up on that wagon; you can drive it, and take care of the mules; but, by —, if we catch you in any tricks, you'll get a ball through you! D'ye hear?"

"Yes, sir—all right!" I cheerfully responded, and climbed up to my seat.

The train left the city, the empty wagons stringing out over a mile of the road, until they were closed up, with three companies of cavalry for escort, and wended slowly along toward the Lower Potomac. There were incident and excitement enough happening every day on this tour to make a story of itself; but I must omit everything save what related to my own fortunes. We crossed several rivers; the water was high, and the crossing was usually made on boats. As we were thus passing the Pamunkey, while I was standing by myself and looking into the water, a resounding slap fell on my shoulder, and a familiar voice exclaimed:

"Halloo, Porter! why, who'd have thought to see you here?"

My forethought had carefully provided for just such an incident as this. For a week before I left Richmond my friends had called me nothing but Mr. Parish, in order to familiarize me with the name; and I had schooled myself not to betray the slightest sign of recognition upon hearing my own name. I turned now, slowly and deliberately. There stood my friend, the wagon-master, with a simulated smile on his face, holding out his hand.

"That's not my name, sir," I said; "but I'm on hand for duty."

"The deuce it isn't! and the deuce you are!" he exclaimed, snappishly. "You needn't deny the truth, sir; you are Captain Porter, of the Yankee army, who escaped from the Libby a few weeks ago."

"No, sir, I am not."

"Well, you're a Yankee out of the Libby, whatever your name is."

"No, sir; and I beg you won't accuse—"

"O, bosh! don't put on airs with me. Who are you? the truth, mind!"

"Just what I told you at Richmond, sir. My name is Moses Parish; I am from—"

"There, there—enough of that stuff! If you're not a knave, then I'm a fool; we'll try to find out which."

He turned abruptly away. My position was now critical indeed, after what had happened. I might be put under guard at any moment. We crossed the Mattaponi, and, after proceeding some distance toward the Rappahannock, the train turned down the peninsula. It was now or never with me; every hour now removed me further from the Union lines. I resolved that I would desert the train that night.

Everything seemed to favor me. The guards were sleepy; there was no danger to be apprehended by them from our troops, in this locality. I found it easy to slip out with one of my mules. I led the animal to a safe distance, and then, mounting, rode him with all the speed I could get out of him toward the Rappahannock. I reached the river before daylight, and with the help of a sympathizing negro and his boat I had soon put that stream between myself and the train. Then away I sped to the broad Potomac. My flight was without an incident worth narrating, and with the friendly help of another negro and his skiff I was ferried across to "God's country." It is a very distinct memory of that last day of eager hope and harassing fear, that when the boat touched the shore, I leaped from it—I fell prostrate on the sand—I caught up great handfuls of it, and cried aloud, "Maryland, my Maryland!" I laughed, danced, and possibly wept for joy. Safe, safe, thank God!

A cavalry camp in the vicinity welcomed and provided for me all that my immediate necessities required. I felt like hugging every blue-coat of them. With the help of the officer in command, I was able to reach Washington in a few hours; and I had not been in that city a whole day before I was closeted with the Secretary of War, giving him a full account of my experience. I have reason to know that I gave him information that was of great importance to our arms.

But I should really have liked to hear what the rebel train-master beyond the Rappahannock said, when he came around that morning and found me missing!—*James Franklin Pitts in Chicago Ledger.*

When Grant Was Moved.

In the course of a chat with your correspondent an old army officer who was on Grant's staff during the war said that during all the negotiations between Grant and Lee, Grant never once showed the slightest trace of excitement or exultation. "He had the most remarkable control over himself of any man I ever saw. Never but on two occasions have I seen him give way to his feelings. The first occasion was the greeting of the public-school children of San Francisco upon the occasion of his arrival from his tour around the world. Grant was passionately fond of children. Their welcome touched his heart, and the tears flowed down over his face. He made no effort to conceal his agitation. The other occasion was when he was notified that an old comrade who had served with him during the war had been killed in a railroad accident in New York. This was after his first nomination for the Presidency and before his election. He was at his headquarters, on the corner of Seventeenth and F streets, when the dispatch containing the sad news was brought to him. He read it slowly and carefully. Then he leaned on his desk, with his head in his hands, and cried like a child."—*Washington Letter.*

The Preacher's Mistake.

"What's become of Parson Jenks, who came out here to preach?" asked a friend of a Dakota man.

"Well, you see, he made a sort of a bad break, and we just firmly passed him along to some other community. We didn't like his style somehow."

"Why, I am surprised at that; he was considered a very able and earnest worker down in our country."

"Don't know anything about that, but we found it necessary to help him out of the neighborhood on a rail."

"I am astonished! You did a great injustice to a worthy man, I am certain. What were the charges against him?"

"Why, in his sermon one Sunday he got goin' on about the Holy Land, and said they could raise bigger wheat over there than we could in Dakota, and then went on to quote something that I don't believe was ever in the Bible, about the seed falling in some particular kind of sile and increasing a hundred fold. Just as soon as he said it I and Deacon Penny rose right up and went out and got a rail, and Deacon Jones and the members of the choir brought the reverend gentleman out and set him on. I tell you no man can preach to us who goes to reflecting on Dakota's wheat raising."—*Estelline Bell.*

A Mark of Affection.

"You don't love me as fondly as you did before we were married," said the husband of a few years.

"Yes, I do," replied his wife.

"Well, you don't show it as much as you used to," remarked he.

"I don't know how I could show my affection more than I do and still be fashionable," replied she; "just mention one little act. Didn't I give my new poodle your name for his middle name? What more can you ask? I suppose you think I ought to have given him your full name?"—*St. Paul Globe.*

THE locomotive works wonderfully well, considering it is fed only on coal victuals.