



A COLONIAL SURVIVAL.

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

SOME foreign writers are much troubled over the alleged "sensitiveness" of Americans to their criticisms. Mr. Rudyard Kipling is especially voluble on this subject, reminding us of Martin Chuzzlewit's American newspaper man who insisted with such complacency that the aristocratic circles of Britain "quailed at the name of Jefferson Brick." Mr. Kipling is a writer of note, and what he says attracts attention; and sometimes if a remark is very silly, it will for the moment attract more attention than any other, although it is not attention of a flattering kind. If Mr. Kipling's master, Mr. Bret Harte, should suddenly describe London as a "cesspool," where Lord Salisbury habitually bought the House of Lords at so much a head, and where life was unsafe because of the multitude of Jack-the-Rippers who infested the streets after nightfall, unmolested by the police, his description would be about as intelligent as Mr. Kipling's recent sketch of New York, and while it would doubtless excite comment, the chief "sensitiveness" aroused would be in the minds of the writer's friends.

Sensitiveness may be shown as well by inordinate indulgence in criticism as by resenting it overmuch. If of two families

in a neighborhood one is perpetually gossiping about and criticising the other, with a querulous, jealous insistency in fault-finding, it is in reality the gossiping family, not the other, which betrays the greater sensitiveness. The newspapers of both the United States and England are on a common—and low—level in this respect; but a comparison of the upper class of American and English magazines will show that there are in the former very few pages dealing with English morals and manners, whether for blame or for praise, whereas the latter teem with foolish and abusive articles about the United States. These articles are rarely read here unless they contain some unusually flagrant absurdity, in which case they are greedily seized by the jaded editors of the comic press and clipped into material for the "funny" columns. Our corresponding writers have no such morbid desire to criticise England's shortcomings. We are not interested in them. We have plenty of problems to solve for ourselves, and it is these that interest us; moreover, taking us as a whole, we care but little for foreign criticism of our methods of solution.

The attitude of foreigners towards us is a matter of slight consequence. What

really does concern us is the queer, strained humility towards foreigners, and especially towards Englishmen, shown by certain small groups of Americans. We respect Englishmen; but we are a different people. It is right that others should worship at their own shrines; we ourselves worship at ours; but why should a few of our number run after strange gods, ignoring their own?

The men who actually do the things best worth doing in American life are, as they always have been, purely, and usually quite unconsciously, American. The paths in which we have done the best work are precisely those where our work has been most original and our workers least hampered by old-world conventions and ideas. Our statesmen and soldiers, our pioneers and commonwealth builders, and the architects of our material prosperity have struck out on their own lines, and during the last century have done more than has ever been elsewhere accomplished in the same space of time. These men live for their work. They strive mightily, and they fail or succeed as chance and their own strength direct; but whether they succeed or fail, they live in and for their own land, their work is indissolubly connected with her well or ill being, and the praise which gives them heart, and the blame which may or may not cast them down, come from their own countrymen. In these respects they but typify the nation; for, as a rule, our people are American in fact as well as in name.

Yet there are small groups, as already said, to whom all this does not apply. The vulgar rich who lack refinement naturally turn to countries where their wealth, whether inherited or acquired, can buy them certain kinds of recognition which it cannot here; and so do their antitypes, the refined, fastidious people of weak fibre, the artists and literary men of more cultivation than intellect, and more intellect than character. We bring forth some rich men with souls so wedded to things material that they can see nothing of the higher side of American life; exactly as we produce some educated men who lack the virile qualities that he must needs possess who would swim in the bracing but turbulent tide of democracy. Thus it comes about

that the brainless woman of fashion or of would-be fashion flees to London or Paris as naturally as the émigré novelist himself. These permanent exiles are too feeble a folk to deserve more than an allusion; besides, if they live abroad permanently, they simplify the solution of our difficult national problem by eliminating therefrom certain unimportant but objectionable factors.

The persons who continue to live here, but who are deeply imbued with foreign ideas, are more capable of working evil, if only by the fact that their mental attitude renders it impossible for them to be of weight in our life, and to do the good they otherwise might. They chiefly harm themselves; but, of course, they harm us all when they make of no avail the talents that could be used for the common welfare. The raw conceit of the vulgar "spread-eagle" American, screaming foolish defiance at Europe, and boasting with vainglorious ignorance of everything, good and bad, in this country, is distasteful to others and harmful to himself and to those who believe him; but it is on the whole rather preferable to the attitude of self-depreciation and apologetic servility habitually adopted in relation to their own land by some of our people, who though they dwell here are in reality by education and instinct entirely un-American.

Often this un-Americanism is perfectly unconscious. The man honestly takes for granted certain things that are not so. He does not know about his own country; he is entirely ignorant of our real life; and consequently in dealing with certain aspects thereof he speaks very foolishly, and usually from the standpoint of the foreigner, his knowledge being gained not from observation and thought, but from reading foreign books. This is especially true about our politics. Unfortunately the college-bred man of scholarly traditions and little practical experience who writes about our politics often seems to know next to nothing of the subject; his training in the theory of politics has been gained solely by the study of foreign books, most of our colleges being, in this respect, not yet emancipated from English ideas, or else having a trend towards German, which is worse. Now, our politicians themselves, who have done remarkable

and admirable work—work which, in spite of many shortcomings, is infinitely better than any their critics could do—are very little influenced by foreign views. In fact, they are sometimes too little influenced, showing an unwise and undignified dislike to adopting anything foreign even if good. In consequence it comes about that, whereas our political thought develops entirely on our own lines and whereas those who do the actual work of politics do it in a purely American manner, a great many of those who write about it write from the foreign standpoint, and hence the bulk of their criticism is so ignorant as to be inept.

The various plans to have Congress made into a "responsible" body like the British Parliament are instances in point; this particular change being impossible anyhow, and if it were possible highly undesirable. A smaller, but funny, instance is afforded by a recent article in Scribner's in which the writer bemoans the fact that relatively to England there are so few cultivated and scholarly politicians in America, quoting Morley, Gladstone, Balfour, and Rosebery as samples of men whose like, for literary ability and achievement, is unknown in the United States.

That this is a curiously mistaken view, five minutes' thought ought to convince anyone. Morley, it is true, stands by himself—as does Bryce, for that matter, if the writer had thought of him—but it is even less safe to draw a general rule from such an exception than it would be to generalize on the superior culture of American diplomatists, from Lowell, Motley, Irving, Hawthorne, and Bancroft. It is said, and is doubtless true, Mr. Balfour possesses trained literary skill and originality of mind; but his speeches and writings certainly do not show more of either than do, for example, those of that most trenchant thinker and master of English, ex-Speaker Reed. Lord Rosebery has written an excellent little popular biography of Pitt; that it does not rank with Congressman Lodge's somewhat similar biography of Washington is perhaps not to be wondered at, for Mr. Lodge had by far the greater subject; but it is certainly not unfair to compare it with Lodge's volumes on Hamilton and Webster, and ex-Secretary Schurz's *Life of Clay*, all

three of which deal with statesmen who come more in Pitt's class. Schurz's masterly outline sketch of Lincoln may be left out of consideration, as it is in many respects entirely unique. Mr. Gladstone's wide range of scholarship, and extensive—possibly more extensive than profound—acquaintance with many different branches of learning, none would deny; yet it is perhaps not unfair to say that his speculations attract attention less for their own merits than because of the fame their author has won as an orator and politician. In all these particulars he shows a striking similarity to Charles Sumner. It is much better for a statesman to do original literary work which can be done by him alone than to try to excel in beaten paths of learning where he must inevitably meet many superiors. It cannot be doubted that fifty years hence Mr. Gladstone's writings will attract very much less attention from scholars and students than Mr. Blaine's *Twenty Years in Congress*; while they are of course not to be mentioned in the same breath with such a true classic as Grant's grandly simple record of his own life.

I am well aware of the general undesirability of comparisons; in this case, be it remembered, I do not make them: I merely point out how badly they were made by the writer in Scribner's. There is little value in the criticism even of a man of intelligence when, like many men of education rather than action, he is in unconscious thrall to the colonial spirit and tradition, and has not the least real knowledge of American politics and politicians. There is much in our political life to censure as well as much to praise; but both censure and praise must be bestowed intelligently to be effective. Criticism is undoubtedly necessary, though less so than many other things—the men who criticize most severely are rarely those who work effectively to destroy the evils complained of—but excessive and indiscriminate scolding, fretting, and fault-finding are even more injurious than excessive and indiscriminate laudation.

About ninety years ago Mr. Thomas Moore, of mild anacreontic pretensions, made a tour of the United States, was unfavorably impressed therewith, and redounded his impressions to rhyme. But in

his rhyme he mentions one incident of his tour with approval. In Philadelphia he met several persons who received him with an eager humility which even his exacting nature found satisfactory. They were nice, educated people, still colonists in everything but name, and like their modern representatives they were entirely out of touch with American life. They considered American politics "low," they were quite blind to the grandeur and importance of the drama being played under their very eyes, and they possessed a trusting faith that anything really good must come from the other side. Now they were perfectly right in deeming themselves second rate; their error lay in their failure to see that the causes which made them second rate were individual, not national. Mr. Thomas Moore sang of them, with much condescension, mentioning how pleased he was to describe to them, as they humbly listened, some of the famous Britons "whose glory, though distant, they long had adored," and how they in turn sighed to think that America would pass away without leaving "one relic of genius" of the same kind (Washington being just dead and Hamilton still alive); and he praised them because they offered in their love of (British) literature and politics such a contrast to ordinary Americans, who formed an "ignorant and corrupt rabble" (Jefferson, Madison, Gallatin, Clay, and others of the same sort being the types and leaders of this rabble). Think of the beings who could expose themselves to the degradation of such praise!

Yet it must surely have been a spiritual descendant of one of these deferential admirers of British Mr. Moore who last winter wrote an essay on *The Praises of War* in one of the numbers of the *Atlantic Monthly*.

With the general purpose of the essay in question I am in hearty accord. But in this particular essay the praise of war seems a little unreal, for the essayist delights only in battles that are won by the expenditure of nothing more violent than rose water. Every man who has in him any real power of joy in battle knows that he feels it when the wolf begins to rise in his heart; he does not then shrink from blood and sweat, or deem that they mar the fight; he revels in them, in the toil, the pain

and the danger, as but setting off the triumph. What can be said of an essayist who makes believe to praise the virile, fighting instinct, and yet shrinks with a plaintive cry from Rudyard Kipling's *Grave of the Hundred Head*, on the ground that it is not "picturesque" (which it is—and grim and thrilling, also) and that it "emphasizes the desirability of peace"? So it is with our essayist's funny mistaken objections to the *Erekmann-Chatrian* romances, which contain, among other matters, one of the most exciting and life-like descriptions of Waterloo ever written. Finally this wonderful essayist, still nominally praising the rugged poetry of war, actually exalts Præd's slight cavalier verses at the expense of the thunderous roll of Macaulay's *Naseby*—which is like preferring Rossetti's *Staff and Scrip* to *Marmion*. However, the essay is right in some points; it cannot help being, for it contains dutiful exaltation of whatever has been already praised by various bright, but by no means over-sized, contemporary Britons; and these contemporary Britons often praise what is good.

In prose and verse there are many immortal tales of prowess. No grander epic of war has ever been written than the *Nibelungenlied*, save possibly one or two Norse sagas. As regards mere fighting, the Homeric poems, so superior in other respects, cannot be compared with it. The heroism of the death struggle in *Etzel's Hall* is unmatched in either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. Achilles was fearless because he was invulnerable; but the doomed Burgundians fought with the foreknowledge of death in their eyes. Hector ended his career by cowardly flight; but not one of the heroes of the iron German war-song flinched from his fate as it came upon him. Odysseus, when he slew the wooers, was helped by supernatural powers; Athene turned aside the shafts of his opponents, and his courage faltered when he thought he was left unaided. But in all the crowd of warriors who held the hall of the Hunnish king, or thronged to storm it, there was not one who trusted to aught save his own stout heart and strong hand, not one who feared to front the death he had dared.

No description of mediæval fighting surpasses Chaucer's account of the tilting in the *Knights' Tale*. He brings before

our eyes the scene as "the heralds left their pricking up and down"; as trumpet and clarion rang out, and "east and west the spears went into rest," so that the onlookers could speedily tell "who could joust and who could ride"; while, as the spurring, galloping knights smashed together, the shafts of the lances were shivered, and the spears sprang "twenty feet on high."

Turning to modern writers, there is much good fighting in two very blood-thirsty and long-winded novels recently translated from the Polish by Mr. Curtin; their aboriginal author, like Southey's Admiral, has a name that no one can speak, and no one can spell. The last stand of the German mercenaries when surrounded by the Cossacks in the reeds, and the night battle outside the fortress when the crooked Tartar sabres rang vainly on the breastplates of the Polish nobles, linger long in the mind. No higher praise can be given some bits of this fiction than to say, as can truthfully be said, that they almost remind one of Napier at his best; of the storming of Badajoz, of the light artillery at Fuentes d'Onoro, of the unconquerable infantry who crowned the hill at Albuera.

After all, there are none to whom we so readily come back as to our own old favorites. Cooper, of course, is a writer to be read and reread again and again. His land fights are good; but his sea fights are unapproached. There is nothing else in naval fiction like some of his boat attacks and single-ship actions, such as the frigate's running fight and hair-breadth escape in *The Pilot*; while the vividly dramatic description of the cruising, the manœuvring, and the final grapple between the rival fleets in the *Two Admirals*, commemorates, as no other description in either history or novel begins to commemorate, a typical pitched battle at sea, in the days of the white-winged ships of the line.

Longfellow's stalwart *Saga of King Olaf* is by far the best long war-poem of our day; a striking contrast to Tennyson's *Idyls* with their amiable curates-in-mail, and still more to the rather tedious epics Mr. Morris composes in that odd tongue which he presumably considers an archaic variant of English. The heroes of Longfellow's *saga* stand before our

eyes quick with burning life. Best of all is the ending of the *saga*, which tells of Olaf's fight when his fated ships were ringed round in the fiord by the fleets of his foes. We can fairly hear the singing of the war horns across the level flood, the clang with which the sails come down, and the rending and splintering as the dragon ships crash together.

Turning from the Norse sea rovers to our own fighting men of the seaboard, the frontier, and the wilderness, many a name stands out, from *Leather Stocking* and *Long Tom Coffin*, through *Yuba Bill* and *Tennessee*, to *Pee Guthrie*—he who "danced Tucker" at the infare, to the undoing of many, and who was known to his "few and unappreciative neighbors as a tarrysyin' critter, full of grudges, who shot drestful straight." There are good poems about each of our earlier struggles; such as *Holmes's* fine home-spun *Ballad of Bunker Hill*, *MacMaster's* verses telling how the old Continentals stood against "the strong battle-breakers," and *O'Hara's* mournful *Bivouac of the Dead*.

And this brings us back to the essay in the *Atlantic*; for towards its close, in speaking of the "doggerel" produced by certain great struggles the writer instances particularly "the melancholy verses wrung from poetic patriots" by our civil war. Now this is simply colonialism gone crazy. Probably no one capable of feeling a generous thought of love for country can really judge quite dispassionately the songs which recite the great deeds done by the men of his own land. We Americans hold very high the memory of the men who "proved their truth by their endeavor," in the days of *Lincoln* and *Grant*, of *Lee* and *Jackson* and *Farragut*. It may be true that we cannot estimate what is said or sung of these with the absolute indifference of pure criticism; and of necessity it must appeal to us as it cannot appeal to others. Nevertheless, making every allowance for this feeling, it may still be safely said that on the whole no other contest has produced such poetry as our own civil war.

Foremost of its kind stands the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*: struck at white heat out of a soul possessed, a soul which saw as in a vision the watch-fires of the circling camps, the fiery gospel writ in

burnished steel, and the awful terror and glory of the coming of the Lord. In My Captain, Whitman touches his highest mark, and embodies the cry of a mighty people, flushed with triumph, and mourning for the leader under whom the triumph had been achieved. The great war for righteousness so stirred the souls of men that even in calm Whittier the fighting spirit woke; in *Laus Deo* his voice rings like the challenge of a trumpet, joyous in its stern exultation.

Lowell's war poetry differs as widely from all these three poems as they differ among themselves; and in its way it is the highest of all.

Wut's words to them whose faith an' truth
On War's red techstone rang true metal,
Who ventered life an' love an' youth
For the gret prize of death in battle?
To him, who, deadly hurt, agen
Flashed on afore the charge's thunder,
Tippin' with fire the bolt of men
That rived the Rebel line asunder?

Come, Peace I not like a mourner bowed
For honor lost an' dear ones wasted,
But proud, to meet a people proud,
With eyes that tell o' triumph tasted I
Come, with han' grippen' on the hilt,
An' step that proves ye Victory's daughter I
Longin' for you, our spirits wilt
Like shipwrecked men's on raf's for water.

Come, while our country feels the lift
Of a gret instinct shoutin' forwards,
An' knows that freedom ain't a gift
That tarries long in han's o' cowards I
Come sech ez mothers prayed for, when
They kissed their cross with lips that quivered,
An' bring fair wages for brave men,
A nation saved, a race delivered I

And this is one of the poems which our Atlantic essayist includes under the head of "doggerel"! In all the poetry of war, of all countries and of all ages, there are not three finer verses.

These four are great poems; there are so many that are good, that it is rather difficult to choose among them. Several of Bret Harte's—John Burns of Gettysburg, the Sanitary Commission, and the Reveillé—and perhaps Whittier's Barbara Frietchie and Longfellow's Sinking of the Cumberland come close to the masterpieces. For virile strength few poems surpass certain of Stedman's, such as his John Brown of Ossawatonic, and his Abraham Lincoln, give us a Man! Boker's dirge for Kearney is very good in a differ-

ent way. The best of the many poems dealing with Sherman's March to the Sea is that which begins:

Our camp fires shone bright on the mountains
That frowned on the river below.

In Timrod's unequal poems there are many good lines, and so with Haynes'; while both "Maryland" and "Stonewall Jackson's Way" have in them some of the elements of permanence. Brownell's are too long, but in them are many stanzas which for rugged strength and spirit are unmatched among poems dealing with war at sea. There is a fine rush and surge in his River Fight.

How the guns, as with cheer and shout,
Our tackle men hurled them out,
Brought up in the waterways
. . . As we fired, at the flash
'Twas lightning and black eclipse
With a bellowing roll and crash I

Even better are some of his verses in the Bay Fight, as when he hails the frigate:

Ha, old ship! do they thrill,
The brave two hundred scars
You got in the River wars?
That were leeches with clamorous skill
(Surgery savage and hard) . . .
At the Brooklyn Navy Yard I

And when he mourns the sinking of Craven's monitor:

The Dahlgrens are dumb,
Dumb are the mortars;
Never more shall the drum
Beat to colors and quarters—
The great guns are silent.

It is hard not to quote from Forsythe Wilson and John R. Thompson, to leave unnoticed the first two clanging stanzas of Durivage's Cavalry Charge, and not to mention many other poems over which one would willingly linger. Yet I must in closing allude to one, little known, and by a nameless author, which is like, only finer than, the best songs of the Covenanters or of Cromwell's Ironsides. It opens somewhat like this (I quote from memory, for it is long since I have seen it):

Where are ye marching, soldiers, with banner, gun,
and sword?
We're marching south to Canaan to battle for the
Lord!

What captain leads your armies along the rebel
coasts?
The Mighty one of Israel, His name is Lord of Hosts,
To Canaan, to Canaan the Lord hath led us
forth
To blow before the rebel walls the trumpets
of the North ;

and closes with a burst of fierce exul-
tation, half of the warrior, half of the
zealot :

When Canaan's hosts are scattered, and all her walls
lie flat,
What follows next in order? The Lord will see to
that !
We'll break the tyrant's sceptre, we'll build the peo-
ple's throne,
When all the world is Freedom's, then half the
world's our own !
To Canaan, to Canaan the Lord hath led us
forth
To sweep the rebel threshing-floors, a whirl-
wind from the North.

The Atlantic essayist's ignorance of
these poems is not surprising ; for it is
an ignorance which extends to all the
mighty feats of arms in which Ameri-
cans have borne a part during the century
and a quarter of our national life. The
essay closes with a list of heroes ranging
from Sir Walter Manny, who, " stuck full
of ladies' favors," fought at Crécy, to a
gallant young British soldier who carried
the colors of his regiment at the storming
of Sebastopol, was first to gain the redoubt,
and was there killed ; and they are intro-
duced with the remark that their acts
belong to all nations and all ages, as well
as to all time. This is true enough ; but
it is safe to say that the man who has in
him real fighting blood is sure to be
more deeply stirred by the deeds of his
own people than by those of any other
folk, though to these likewise he may
pay glad and sincere homage. Every
man to his own ! We Americans cannot
but feel our blood run quickest at the re-
cital of the prowess of our own forefathers.
Of course, if this feeling does not exist by
nature it cannot be cultivated—there can
be no self-conscious simulation of Ameri-
canism ; but the man in whom intense
love of country is wanting is a very
despicable creature, no matter how well
equipped with all the minor virtues and
graces, literary, artistic, and social.

The battle pictures etched most deeply
on our souls are those of our own land.

The January morning behind the breast-
work at New Orleans, when the levies of
tall backwoods Indian-fighters, clad in
their tasselled hunting-shirts, and leaning
on their long rifles, peered through the
lifting fog at the scarlet array of the
splendid British infantry, as it advanced
for the first time to meet defeat ; old
Davy Crockett and his 150 comrades, dy-
ing to the last man among the crumbling
walls of the Alamo, surrounded by thrice
their number of slain foes ; Farragut,
lashed in the rigging of the Hartford,
as, with her great guns leaping and bel-
lowing, she steamed past the forts to try
her oaken stem on the iron-clad hull of
the ram ; Stonewall Jackson dying at the
head of his men in the last of his many
triumphs ; Cushing victoriously steering
his frail craft through the night against
the huge Albemarle ; the little Confed-
erate torpedo boat lying beside the Union
sloop of war on the sea bottom off Charle-
ston harbor, wrapped in the doom she had
brought on her foe ; the mighty wrestle
at Gettysburg ; the stormers scaling Look-
out mountain, in the battle above the
clouds—these, and a hundred others like
them, are the memories which make our
hearts throb quickest.

Sir Walter Manny was a most gallant
warrior, though I question if his appear-
ance was rendered more prepossessing by
his being " stuck all over with ladies'
favors"—he must have looked rather
like a popular cotillon leader at a Phila-
delphia assembly. Far more imposing
in its quiet significance than any possible
" favor " was the scrap of paper, with his
name and address written thereon, which
the private soldier of the Army of the
Potomac sometimes pinned to his coat so
that he might not fill a nameless grave
when, with his usual steadfast and un-
complaining courage, he marched to cer-
tain death.

The brave English lad who was killed
holding fast the colors met a fate honor-
ably common in all great wars. In our
civil war hundreds of color bearers were
shot down under similar circumstances ;
and in singling out for special comment
an instance of the kind, it would seem
worth while to select only one of the most
noteworthy. Recently two such hap-
pened to have been brought to my notice.

One occurred at Fredericksburg, on the

day when half the brigades of Meagher and Caldwell lay on the bloody slope leading up to the Confederate intrenchments (and, by the way, another dramatic incident of this charge has been well sung by John Boyle O'Reilly). Among the assaulting regiments was the Fifth New Hampshire, and it lost 186 out of the 300 men who made the charge. The survivors fell sullenly back behind a fence within easy reach of the Confederate rifle pits; just before reaching it the last of the color guard was shot, and the flag fell in the open. A captain, Perry, instantly ran out to rescue it, and as he reached it was shot through the heart; another captain, Murray, made the same attempt, and was also killed; and so was a third, Moore. Several private soldiers met the like fate. They were all killed close to the flag, and their dead bodies fell across one another. Taking advantage of this breastwork, Lieutenant Nettleton crawled from behind the fence to the colors, seized them, and bore back the blood-won trophy.

The other took place at Gaines Mill, where Gregg's First South Carolina formed part of the attacking force. The resistance was desperate, and the fury of the assault unsurpassed. At one point it fell to the lot of this regiment to bear the brunt of carrying a certain strong position. Moving forward at a run, the South Carolinians were swept by a fierce and searching fire. Young James Taylor, a lad of sixteen, was carrying the flag, and was killed after being shot down three times, twice rising and struggling onward with the colors. The third time he fell the flag was seized by George Cotchett, and when he in turn fell, by Shubrick Hayne. Hayne also was struck down almost immediately; and a fourth lad—for none were over twenty years old—grasped the colors and fell mortally wounded

across the body of his friend. The fifth, Gadsden Holmes, was pierced with no less than seven balls. The sixth man, Dominick Spellman, more fortunate but not less brave, bore the flag throughout the rest of the battle.

In bringing to an end this paper I shall recount an incident recently related to me by Mr. Tanner, ex-Commissioner of Pensions. It occurred at the second Bull Run, where a fragment of shell carried off both his legs. The beaten Union forces left their wounded behind. A day or two after the battle Tanner and five comrades were lying in a little tent—the six men having lost among them seven legs. The victorious Confederates themselves had next to nothing to eat, and their wounded prisoners, if possible, even less. They were tortured by the intense heat of the Virginia sun, by hunger, by the intolerable torment of flies, and above all by thirst. The helpless cripples in the tent were unattended by anyone, and were moaning for water. Just outside the door of the tent lay a poor fellow with a dreadful and, as it proved, mortal wound in his left side; an unkempt private soldier, haggard and ghastly in his bloody uniform. Hearing those in the tent crying for water, this mortally hurt man outside, to whom every movement must have been agony, dragged himself on hands and knees towards some apple-trees not far distant. A few worm-eaten apples lay on the ground, and these he thrust into the pockets of his blouse; then, turning on his sound side, dragged himself back to the tent. He passed the apples in to Tanner, who lay next to the entrance, and the wounded men set their teeth with ravenous eagerness in the acid fruit; but when they turned to thank their nameless benefactor it was too late, for the effort had opened his wound, and he was already dead.

