Reminiscences: In War Times

T is a long cry from the dear, peaceful and beautiful lawn and halls of resplendent Fordham to the once terrible battle-fields of Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland. But in April, 1861, there was more than one of the followers of Ignatius Loyola, from the faculty at old St. John's, more than one of its alumni, who sprang at the first call to do battle for the Flag of the Union. In the ranks as soldiers or as commissioned officers of the regiments, they helped to swell the columns of the great Army of the Potomac. In all its varying career of alternate defeats and triumphs, advances and retreats, for more than three years of continuous battles from Bull Run to Gettysburg and Appomattox, it was said of it in praise, "it never knew when it was whipped." Who that has ever seen its glorious battalions march to the firing-line, with sturdy, elastic step, will forget its boundless self-reliance and unabated courage, its resolve "to do or die," and its confidence of winning victory from the best troops that ever gathered under a great military leader? For surely such was General Robert E. Lee, the Commander-in-Chief of the ever-ready Army of Northern Virginia. With consummate skill he led them and grappled with us in the fierce, deadly conflicts that made the world pause in admiration and surprise, as we gave battle in the Southland under McClellan, Meade and Hooker, with an army of the best disciplined and bravest troops that the sun ever shone upon. Like two great giants these armies came together time and again in almost savage contact, giving as well as receiving sturdy blows, which shook the very earth beneath their martial steps, in charges and onslaughts with volleys of rifle-fire and plunging shot and shell dealing death and destruction in the ranks of both. The world will long hold up in the historian's narrative of the war as examples of military prowess, the accounts of their vigorous and unyielding encounters, as they clashed in battle's magnificently stern array, "and shared in the pomp and pride and circumstance of war."

Father Peter Tissot, the faithful Chaplain of the 37th Regiment, N. Y. Vols., known as the "Irish Rifles," in 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 3rd Army Corps, Army of the Potomac, held the rank of Captain of Cavalry and was entitled to pay and allowances of the rank in the Army. He served under Major-generals Philip Kearny and D. B. Birney. General
Kearny who was an ideal of energy and nerve himself and pronounced the very "incarnation of battle" said of him, that he was the model Chaplain of the Army of the Potomac. Without any intended disparagement of the many other worthy and distinguished Chaplains of the Army of the Potomac, and there were many of them of other denominations, it was generally a matter of comment among the troops that Father Tissot was always during an action when the 37th Regiment was in it, found performing his priestly duties at the front on the line of battle. There he heard confessions as the wounded fell, and administered the Sacraments to them under fire. He passed from one penitent to another to absolve him. When death was imminent or the soldier was wounded so badly that he was judged to be in extremis and could not live long, he administered the last sacraments, amid shot and shell as well as heavy rifle-firing as though it was of no moment to him. He was always promptly at the post of duty when needed. He never seemed to think of danger but always escaped any injury to himself, despite his exposure. Let me draw a mental sketch of Father Tissot with a physical framing that marked him as a lofty, superior, refined character—French to the core. He had that inimitable spirit of his nationality, which has everywhere proclaimed the heroic race, from the dawn of civilization to our day, as seen in the trenches even now about Verdun. Repressed and self-restrained he was an illustration of the born soldier in the best sense. He gave almost superhuman evidences of firmness and reserve power. He was of that type that has stamped itself indelibly upon the world's history since the day of Caesar and the war of historic Gaul. This impression is made by an unswerving, unalterable, and ever reenacted moral courage, fascinating and persistent in the dramatis personae of time's greatest achievements. Of firm, well knit, and graceful physique, with set features of resolve and determination, his manly face breathed the undisturbed atmosphere which indicates a great soul and lofty principles, and asserts its influence gently but irresistibly and beneficently over the human race. His equanimity and self-poise won ready acquiescence with those he sought to persuade. It spoke insinuatingly but with gentle might, a something to be understood and acted upon. It had for aim and rule the best traditions for the guidance of men whether in court, palace, forest or field.

Father Tissot's darkened olive complexion framed well set eyes, that sparkled with merry twinkle of humor, and anon became fused in serious thought; they were the fit concomitants of a broad intellectual forehead,
domed by a classic, well tonsured head, set upon finely knit shoulders of grace and strength. His stature was slightly above medium height. All proclaimed him the scholarly gentleman, possessed of a polished elegance of manner at times almost apologetic owing to his refined and retiring way. Under the spur of sprightly conversation, I have seen his ascetic and fascinating face light up with expression that shone like burnished gold, in his glow of inspired zeal a replica of the early Crusader. But at Fordham, supple and daring in his movements, woe betide the unwary antagonist who lacked agility as he met him. Athletic bouts of college days whether in tennis, football or games of speed and endurance were rough in those days, half a century ago. Especially so was the Southern football game. These traits he carried into the field but his contest there was to be with an unseen, intangible new opponent. Acute dyspepsia had challenged him with the odds sorely against him. His ordeals were most trying, but well he bore them. He showed this in long trials of endurance. The battle-field is a great testing arena of endurance both mental and physical. Though he had to deal with a thousand rough, robust, impulsive but well meaning soldiers of the fighting Irish blood in the 37th N. Y. Vols., they became gentle, submissive and as reliable as well trained children, after they had been disciplined by him. The salutary and restraining influence of the Catholic Church is the great stay and solace of the true soldier. It is the best guide for the performance of his military duties. How often I have looked at our Chaplain with fear and apprehension lest he should faint or breakdown, as I have seen him inflexible and actively alert going the rounds of the camp, or on the march or on the firing line when "the purple battle rain" had flowed most freely, and death had been met in all its fierceness and distress, "on the tumult covered sod!" This was the more remarkable in that from the chronic dyspepsia from which he was never free he was hardly able to eat anything substantial and hence did not look like his former self.

I had two butchers and a color-sergeant in my Company to which was entrusted the important custody of the colors,—a beautiful silk American Flag and an exquisitely embroidered green one with a glorious Sunburst and "Erin-go-bragh" worked on it, presented by the Irish citizens of New York City. With them were a brace of expert foragers who could not be excelled. Our mess was well supplied through the aid of these favored sons of the Company with what the country afforded, as we advanced our lines. One
of them was appointed right general guide. When the Regiment halted
to make camp or bivouac he could stick his guidon into the ground and be
off over the countryside in front, before anyone else could reconnoitre it.
He was able thus to pick up some special supplies for our needed provender,
as the Officers had to furnish their own food. When we had anything
specially good, I would send after dear Father Tissot and tempt him if
possible to eat with us. One night in front of Yorktown, after a hard
day's rapid march, camping on the historic field, where the British Lord
Cornwallis surrendered to Washington in Revolutionary times, one of my
butchers had procured by seizure, a young sheep and dressed it. I asked
Father Tissot to join us in eating the tender, savory chops as we sat before
the big fire where we cooked the relished mouthfuls. After he had eaten
some of them which we had prepared for him I asked him how he liked
them. He said he was delighted. I have never forgiven myself since for
adding "what would you say if you knew that they had been obtained from
a farm without asking by your leave or paying for them?" He had eaten
freely of the meat, when I said this, and his appetite was satisfied. But I
saw that, as I asked the question, his face assumed an expression of anno-
ynce and he quietly strode away from our camp fire and disappeared in
the night. We found the farmer afterwards who owned the sheep
and paid him for it. So we informed Father Tissot and he accepted un-
reluctantly my invitation to help us eat the balance, which he did with great
relish, as he was enjoying at the time a temporary relief from the hated
dyspepsia.

Father Nash, my old Professor of Classics, with Father Queillet, and
other Jesuit Fathers ramifying from Fordham, were Chaplains in other
nearby Regiments in the Army of the Potomac and were neighborly visi-
tors. Of the old alumni of the Fifties, like myself, we had Colonel Jim
McMahon, my hard-slogging adversary in the matches then popular in the
Gym and who sent me many a time unsteadily holding the bannister, as I
went to the dormitory at bed time. We both resembled each other very
much and were of a size, being rather tall and muscular youths and de-
lighted in our strength. I was often taken for him to my discomfiture for
"going out of bounds." He was quick, strong and full of reserve strength
and aggressive impulse, besides being a hard hitter and stayer. He was
Colonel of the 163rd N. Y. Vols., in the Army of the Potomac and near
us in camp. In the hard fight at Charles City Crossroads he was ordered
to charge, and take the Rebel rifle-pits, behind which were the "Texas Rangers," whom we also had confronted in our first fight at Williamsburg, where the bayonet was also used by us, following up the gallant assault of Duryee's Zouaves, 5th N. Y. Vols., who just preceded us where the opposing sides crossed steel, and were killed in the same rifle-pits where they fell transfixed on the weapon points of each other and falling were spiked one by the other in a death thrust, as they rushed together. It was one of the worst sights of the war witnessed by us as we came upon the killed down before us, with their death-lock grimly decorated by their spotless jaunty white turban headgear, and bright, showy Zouave uniform, which was never fit for fighting in the field, nor in rough campaigns, as it is too showy. But to return: Colonel McMahon was killed in charging gallantly at the head of his splendid Regiment. His color-bearer was killed just as the Regiment charged in Battalion front and as he fell the Colors went down with him. Seeing this Colonel McMahon rushed to the spot, and, seizing the Flagstaff bore it swiftly to the point of attack on the earth fortifications of the enemy. Still waving the Stars and Stripes as he gained the summit of the enemy's rifle-pits, he planted the standard on the top of the works and shouted to his men to march forward and continue the charge. Of course he was a conspicuous mark for the enemy's fire which was directed against him immediately, and he fell mortally wounded in one of the grandest, bravest and most picturesque charges of the War. It was a thrilling and ennobling picture, which Fordham may well be proud to remember.

His brother, General Martin T. McMahon, another distinguished alumnus of Fordham in the Fifties told me after he had gone under a flag of truce to recover the body of Colonel Jim, as we affectionately called him, that he found him after great difficulty, and on examining the body when it was prepared for interment on the field he counted eighteen different wounds, by Minie Rifle balls, so that he was actually "riddled with lead." General Martin T. McMahon served on McClellan's staff and afterwards on Fitz John Porter's and Hooker's. He fortunately escaped being wounded and having been much exposed in special service on the Staff had many close calls. Colonel James McQuade, afterwards General, another Fordham boy of the just-before-the-war period, and a great favorite in the Army on account of his humor, breezy disposition and inclinations as a rhymester, and his brother John McQuade, served with con-
spicuous gallantry and efficiency on Staff duty in the Army of the Potomac. For a time Captain John McMahon, also a Fordham boy of much talent and elder brother of Major-general Martin T. and Colonel James McMahon, served on the Staff in the first months of the War, but failing health caused him to retire and he passed away in civil life.

Louis Binse went out in 1861 with the "Garde Lafayette" which organized a Regiment known as the "Enfants Perdus." I had a singular meeting with him during the battle-hour at the engagement when Couch's Division of the Regular Army which camped next to ours was attacked and driven in from their lines at the front and into their encampment. We were ordered to go to their support, and everything was so quiet about us that we could not credit that we were soon to go into action. However we were almost at once in the midst of their shelter tents and the men were being driven pell-mell through them under a heavy charge and musketry fire. In the confusion the command was given by our Colonel Samuel B. Hayman, formerly 7th U. S. Infy.: "On the right by file into line, commence firing." We had just swung out of the road and into the Couch's Company streets and we were in it "on all fours." It was a flurry of great excitement, what is commonly called a surprise party. Just in front of me was a neat little fire on which sat a big quart pannikin of coffee just commencing to sizzle into a boil, which a soldier had flatteringly told himself, he was going palatably to dispatch for his noon meal with the bean soup and hard tack near by. In the charge I met Binse Junior; he was in great distress of mind and showed it by his looks and words at once. He was carrying his rifle as though it burned him, and being a mere youthful, handsome boy, was hesitating between a cry and a complaint. When he came towards me he held the rifle up, and I asked him what was the matter. He said pitifully, that in the charge that had been ordered and from which I met him retiring, "I have stumbled and fallen in running and stuck my piece into the sand of this place, and as it is clogged I am afraid to fire it off." As there were two or three wounded men lying near where we were, whose rifles were alongside of them within a few feet of us, but could be of no service to them, almost angrily, I said: "Throw it away and take the gun of one of these wounded soldiers and his ammunition, and commence firing." This he proceeded to do, and I never saw him afterwards, though I heard that he had been wounded. I merely cite this as an illustration of the pluck of another Fordham boy under difficulties.
Now for the romance of war. It is full of it. Once Father Tissot was riding his easy-going dark sorrel horse, as we came up the road, the Regiment marching by companies in columns of "fours right" as we were advancing to go into the hard battle of Fair Oaks, the Colors being under my command, about fifty paces from him. Catching his eye he beckoned me towards him and I called my First Lieutenant to take charge of the Company and walked to where the Chaplain was driving. After saluting him, he said, "We are going into a heavy engagement now, as I heard while at General Kearny's headquarters a few moments ago, and I have noted that you have not been to your duties recently: don't you think you had better do so for you cannot tell what may happen, as there will be surely a hard fight when we get into line." I acknowledged I had been negligent, and excused myself by saying that I had a good deal of company business to attend to, and was sorry that it had occurred, more so as there was no time or place now to attend to it. I was talking with him at his horse's head, holding the bit. "Oh yes," he replied, "you may do so now," and bade me to go ahead. As the occasion was a new one to me besides being unique and romantic, I took off my cap, still holding the bridle of his easy-going horse. He told me to keep on my cap. Then and there in the full uniform of service, going into battle, sword and rifle on as I walked along, I told my story. I went back to my Company after he had given me absolution, and as a memento an Immaculate Conception Medal which I put in my vest pocket. The fight indeed turned out to be long and fierce. My men all well drilled, were ordered to "fire and load lying," to protect them from the enemy's fire; and as the action grew more severe, my Officers and Sergeant begged me to lie down, because they saw a sharpshooter aiming and firing at me steadily—the plan of the enemy being to pick off the Officers. I declined but changed my position while I fired my sporting rifle fifty-three times at close range, as evidenced by my cartridge box contents after the fight.

I give these particulars not through egotism but for two reasons. First because I felt secure that a bullet could not hit me, though the corners of my jacket, and my Zouave pantaloons were several times penetrated by them. Secondly because I wore a large bouquet of May flowers in my buttonhole through the fight lasting the whole afternoon and sent them home by express, to my fiancée as specimens of genuine battle-roses. During the engagement my Immaculate Conception medal which Father Tissot
gave me disappeared and I have never seen it since. The seven days fighting were most severe because continual as the Army of the Potomac fell back on Harrison Landing. It was an additional fight every day, and marching at night with little or no rest except the bivouac at the side of the road or in the fields. One of the most beautiful and picturesque battles was at Malvern Hill where, for the only time, we saw the full panorama of war. On a magnificent plateau or tableland, the infantry, artillery, cavalry, and skirmish line were in plain view simultaneously, and the gunboats on the James River added by their activity to the intensely absorbing experience of us all.

It was here that for the first time I met any of the Fordham boys who were serving in the Southern Army. Dillon of Georgia and Pinckney of South Carolina were among the number, who were even then as conspicuous and notable as they were when at college in the football and athletic games. They had been taken prisoners I heard, and learning where the fiery Dillon was, I decided to visit him and take to him something to eat, because I knew that on account of the long continued marching and quick changes provisions had grown scarce, and difficult to obtain. But I had a lot of Irish stew made and with a couple of canteens of coffee I rode off from our camp to where the prisoners were. A steady, drizzling rain which froze as it fell continuously during the night and morning rendered everyone cold and uncomfortable. Beneath a tree covered with icicles I found Dillon sitting huddled among a group of Confederate soldiers with icicles hanging from their eyebrows and beards, trying to get warm by getting as near the conformation of human balls as possible. Saluting him cheerily as I jumped down from my horse and handling the coffee and edibles as carefully as possible, I offered them with as good grace as possible considering the forlorn condition of us all covered with ice and wet as we were. Dillon stared at me with a blank look, without a word of reply and looked as hauty, and unconscious of my presence as he could. He turned his fine and fiery red head aside to contemplate the cheerless scene from some other angle apparently and dismissed me from his thoughts. I had come on a long and unpleasant ride to look him up and help him, with much danger from a fugitive light-battery that opened on us at intervals, and here was my reward. I put the supplies down at his side and smothering my indignant surprise rode off to the Irish Brigade quarters nearby, expecting to go to Mass there, as it was Sunday, and called on Colonel Cavenaugh in his tent.
While there recounting my strange and unsatisfactory experience the booming noise and shriek of a shell close to us smote our ears as it ploughed its way into the wet soil and icy slush at our feet, near the tent pole between us. Had it exploded there would have been an end of my Sunday morning call. But the wet earth extinguished the sputtering fuse, and we were saved for a morning cock-tail and breakfast. I counted my courteously intended visit a failure and only consoled myself by feeling that I had observed the good manners and camaraderie I had been taught at Fordham.

But to my story of Fordham in War Times. We are on the field of battle! How does it feel? Who can tell truly and fully? I will try to tell part of what a Fordham Alumnus did in war-time fifty years ago and more. Let us look at a battlefield. Sweet and glorious Nature under the Divine hand of Nature's God is there. She has faithfully carpeted the earth with green. Primroses, daisies and buttercups dot it. A fierce July sun pours down. The fields are golden with ripening corn and wheat. The harvest hours are not far away. The limpid streams of a generously endowed land in dear old aristocratic Virginia ripple along their cool banks, giving out musical echoes as they flow by to fertilize the soil. The notes of the quail are frequently heard, with their sharp "Bob White" call. All is serene and charming under God.

But in a few minutes under man and his destructive hand, how shall it be? Here comes the artillery brightly polished, with the grim cannoneers and the riders at their posts. They are lashing the horses and spurring them. They gallop furiously to take position. The troops come at a double quick. They must get rapidly to their places. Horsemen are riding here and there to give Staff orders to the Officers. A puff of smoke curling like a toy balloon rises in the distance. It means much in the battle to come. It began yonder about half a mile away, in the fringe of woods behind that nice clearing, as the field-glasses show it. There a roar, a swishing noise, a screeching; and a hot, mad shell makes its entree to our midst. Then another and another and another. One came close to us in the field of wheat. It explodes with a deafening noise, killing and wounding many. Our regiment halts. The command "fix bayonets" is given with a ring to it, without another word or human sound. Then "forward double quick," amid the same grim silence. We strain to the topmost of our speed to take position on the knoll in front, nearby. It stands like a sentinel. We form ranks in position behind the battery of guns we have already closely
followed to support, which at once goes into action in reply to the challenge of that last shell. Another passes over us. They have not the exact range yet. Our regiment takes ground on the rush, as the command "on the right by file into line" is given. We are in the rear of the splendid artillery piece we have come to support. The next command is to lie down. Then Major Throckmorton, commanding, sets his music-box to play on the enemy in lively metre, as is his wont. Right lustily do its high notes ring savagely true.

We are now fairly in it, and battle has begun in earnest. Charging shot answers the screaming shell rapidly in succession. A thick line of the enemy's troops come into sight on our front, recklessly charging up to our cannon's mouths. They cheer as they advance delivering a steady "fire by file" and are answered by our cheer and the steady flutter of our flags. Quickly more troops behind us take a second line, to reinforce us. This is to support us, and the Battery we are selected to defend. Our only present duty is to hold our fire without delivering it. We must wait till the psychological moment arrives to charge, but cannot fire till the order is given. The artillery is now in full play. So are the troops against us, hardly more than a stone's throw away. The infantry to the right and left of us have now been brought into fullest action. They have opened on the enemy in our front, and right nobly they do their work. We breathe again easily for now we know we are royally supported. Crash after crash of bursting shell, with the rataplan chorus of the "fire by file," as it blends with the orgy of death or wounds fill the air, and many have fallen badly hit. The infantry have been ordered to lie down and fire and load lying, taking distances, so as to allow the rear rank to fire also simultaneously. Gaps are made in their ranks and in ours also. Wounded are carried to the rear. The dead must lie until they can be given a soldier's burial on the field, when the action is over. The Colors float out gayly in the breeze. Flag and standard however have not escaped the flying rifle balls. The Regimental standards, with the flag of the Union, are answering, with their joyous waving the sunlight, and the toying wind puffs, and the battle is taking count of the glories of the hour, to be recalled as long as memory will last. The grain has been trampled by the soldier's feet; the artillery wheels have crushed, and the horses have stamped wheat and corn back into the furrows from which they had lifted their proud heads into the sun's fostering rays. Gunners are more and more active now and well
they are tried in their death-dealing work. The fascination, delirium, intoxication of the strife have seized them, their thoughts, nerves and hands. The din becomes deafening. The powder smoke gathers in huge volumes. It floats away—around us, in front and rear, settling like a sea-fog over us. Our lips and eyelids become encrusted, and smarting with the black deposit of the saltpetre and sulphur. Water from the canteen at our sides is sought frequently to slake the annoying thirst that afflicts us. So the roar and din of artillery and infantry firing continues without intermission. It becomes suffocating, and the heat adds with its oppressiveness to the suffering, doubly so to the wounded whose number is steadily increasing all around us. Death and wounds are multiplied momentarily. No one flinches. It is the madness of battle in all its scope and glory. Thank God! nature comes to our aid and stiffens our nerves, strengthening our hearts and minds to make us hold out and endure the awful suffering in and about us. The fight must be kept up, sustained until one or the other side yields or is overcome by losses. Listen! What are those hurrahs? Something out of the ordinary has occurred. The cheers spread and come down to us in surging billows along the line. The enemy's line is broken. They are on the retreat! They cannot hold their front of battle! The command is given to our forces, "Forward, guide right, charge bayonets!" Again the wild increasing hurrah of manly throats and strong lungs is surging toward us and we plunge on in a burst of strength and exultation while the bayonet unerringly does the rest.

"The thunder-clouds close o'er it, which when rent
The earth is covered thick with other clay,
Which her own clay shall cover, heaped and pent,
Rider and horse,—friend, foe,—in one red burial blent."

Still with all the hardships of war experienced by me from having lain on the field of battle three days, where the dead leaves and mast were set on fire at the field Hospital by the enemies exploding shells, where the seriously wounded were laid on the ground, I having been shot through the right lung, with bullet hole in leg, and shell wound in the head, I cannot but look back on my experience as romantic and sentimental, as its close was festooned with the graceful scenes of a marital celebration, within the Chancel rail of the Paulist Fathers' Church of New York. Thence I went to win the Medal of Honor of Congress for special conduct on the field.
Having started with the famous 7th Regiment of New York City as a private, shouldering a musket, I earned the intermediate ranks of Second Lieutenant, First Lieutenant, Captain, Adjutant, Major, Lieutenant-colonel, Colonel, and Brevet Brigadier-general, without using political influence. Detailed in the War Department on Bureau duty with the Provost Marshal General of U. S. as unfit for field service on account of disability from wounds, I was nevertheless assigned at times by the Secretary of War on Special Scouting duty in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania with picked command of Special Scouts; the most important of which missions was the running to earth of the assassins of President Abraham Lincoln.

I was also sent after Moseby, the raider and freebooter of Virginia, when he was reported seriously wounded in the Blue Ridge Mountains near Upperville. I had a detachment of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry, a well seasoned, reliable and dashing body of forty. We were betrayed by a village darkey who came out and sold the men some peaches, causing some delay as we were nearly exhausted for want of sleep on our forced march of eighteen hours steady pull through the mountains without eating or watering. We captured Colonel Moseby’s fine horse and equipments, his saddle bags having just been filled with corn on the cob, ready to take him away for medical treatment. Smoke signals were already sent up from fires started on the mountain sides on our arrival, after which long range rifles all along our line popped at us here and there from the woods. It was in August, and I notified the apparently sleepy farmers leaning over picket fences and scanning us as we rode by that if the firing from cover on our rear did not stop I would order the command to treat them to a dose of Sheridan’s medicine in the valley of the Shenandoah and set fire to the towns of Aldee and Middleburg ahead of us. This had the good effect of stopping the bushwhacking we had undergone for several miles. Of course our further search for Moseby was not successful, as the word of our advance had been sent forward by the peach-pedlar, and the Guerilla Chief was undoubtedly carried away up the mountain sides to a safe retreat beyond our ken or reach. As the whole country was filled with free-lances and rear-guard fighters, and my command was small and liable to be surrounded, we made a slow march back, resting the horses and passing over the haunts of the freebooters, where they usually camped and caroused. But the fire-notice had its effect, and we were disturbed no more by attack from cover, and as to the open, they did not meet us in a fair fight.
The most thrilling of all was the investment of Washington by the Army of forty thousand Confederate troops under General Early, who camped within seven miles of the doors of the White House. I was then appointed Provost Marshal General of the defences of Washington, being for some time previously the Provost Marshal of the District of Columbia. I paroled the prisoners, buried the dead and sent to Hospital the wounded of Early's Army who fell into our hands. I closed the Office of the Provost Marshal soon after the fall of Richmond, having forwarded three millions and a half of bounty money accruing from the filling of the quotas of New England States and District of Columbia, as bounty to substitutes and volunteers for the Army; which vast sums were sent by me to the military authorities at City Point, Va., for distribution to the substitutes only after they reached and were assigned to their posts in the various Regiments. In this way not a dollar went astray and we were enabled by a system of checks and receipts to stop the dishonesty, graft and corruption which had been so prevalent for a long time where large sums of public monies were disbursed in connection with the War.

And now in conclusion what do all this past ordeal and the present popular commotion teach? As we sing the hymns of peace to our God, than which nothing is sweeter, let us add the grave anthem “preparedness.” Let our heritage be made safe. An ever ready, courageous, and liberty-sustaining people can be trusted with the rights and privileges of its hundred millions constituency. They will maintain the security, independence and freedom assured to them by the Fathers of the Republic, and see that the trust will be preserved sacredly and inviolably, an obligatory inheritance. May this be the enduring glory of the American Republic, peace with honor, yet—never unprepared! Both sides in the great struggle of fifty years ago have long joined in a fraternity of interests; shared lavishly with the profits that have accrued to all in the two generations which have sprung up since peace was proclaimed. No government in the world—Republic or Monarchy, Autocracy or Despotism, since Eden's delicious hours marked the calendar, has set such an example or secured such results to a more than twice increased population, in a half century of time, grounded in happiness, contentment and God-fearing intelligence, while sharing with all men her wealth and her blessings. 

Esto perpetua!

JAMES R. O'BEIRNE, '69.

Brig. Genl.