

Pullahoma, Tenn.,

30th Jan. 1864.

Dear Bro. Tourgee,

Your letter was a joyful surprise, the perusal of which filled my heart with gladness, and the thought of which comes up as a perfect God-speed, to cheer and encourage me. Do you know?— I always prized your friendship very highly; and when I had waited very long without hearing from you I began to fear that we had at last drifted apart, on this great sea we are traversing, and that we might never be within hailing distance of each other again. I began to fear this, and it seemed to me I had met with a great loss. The missing ship has been heard from at last, and I am gladly grateful.

But I was selfishly sorry, to hear that you had been compelled to leave the army, — for I was just on the eve

of hunting you up. When our Corps left the Potomac last September, (and having reached Louisville, filed off towards Chattanooga, I made up my mind that we were thenceforth to serve "sub Rosey", (and I indulged my soul with anticipations of finding out my soldier-brother Tourgee. Arrived at Sterenson we were ordered back, almost to Murfreesboro', on account of Wheeler's raid. That over, once again we crossed the Cumberland Mountains, (and once again were ordered back. So I didn't get to see you. Since the first of November I have been on duty, — either in the little paradise of Shelbyville, or in this purgatory, — Pullahoma. (I am here, an "Assistant Topographical Engineer" on a Brigade Staff, (Gen. Ruger's) — in good health, and doing "as well as could be expected." This is by way of explanation.) Being much more

at liberty here than I was in my company, I was making arrangements to go down to the front soon, and look for you, — but nothing but a Leave of Absence or a Discharge can take me where you are now.

Did "Quietus" ever find you out? He is clerking for the Q.M. of Gen. Crook's (2nd Cav.) Div., — but I have not been able to set eyes on him either, since I came to this department.

I wonder if you ever received the letter I wrote you last Summer. I was in hospital then, and lost a participation in the battle of Gettysburg. And I had been home — and to Rochester. How quickly one outgrows his school-romance. I found R. a dull place, and was glad to get home again. — Our Class was not very furious for fighting, it must be confessed. You (and I were all, of the old stock, that went to the

wars. One new comer, Hutchinson, who entered in the Senior Year, went out also, as a Lieut. in the 108th N.Y. — And truly can I say, with you, that I would not exchange places with those we left behind, though I shall come back to find them entered upon a successful practice, and myself where I stood when I stepped out of college, or even worse off. Though I should be ever so prosperous — and wealthy, — and honored, in after years, it would ever be a most bitter humiliation, if in remembering, or in recounting to others, the story of our nation's greatest struggle for its institutions, I should have to confess that I, a young man, refused to answer my country's call, — shared no danger, made no sacrifice, endured nothing, dared nothing in the glorious, the holy cause! Let us indulge in a little self-glorification, — let us be

proud of ourselves, or at least proud in the good fortune that has enabled us to do something personally for the vindication of the honor, — and the majesty, — of our Country.

None can say that you have not done your duty. When you went into the service the second time, I was astonished. No such repeated evidence of your patriotism could have been asked or expected, — you seemed to me, almost reckless. And I must honor you for a devotion, which I fear would fail me, if I were called to pass through all that darkened your path.

Things are "all quiet" in this department at present. By the aid of the Guerrillas we, in the rear, monopolize what little excitement there is. It must be rather dull down at the front. Corps HQ Qrs are at this place, and I see Gen.

Slocum, your old Colonel, almost every day. We think, here, that he is one of the best generals, and one of the best men, in these United States. But Gen. Hooker is down on him, and seems to take care that he shall have no chance to win any laurels.

I do not wear chevrons now, but my shoulder-straps are plain, and I ought not to expect any bars there unless I go back to my company and earn them. It's a very nice thing to be a staff-officer on many accounts, but after all, he only is the soldier who has a share in the fight, — who has a command and takes it into battle. My Captain got wounded at the first fire at Chancellorsville, — and I felt larger through that day, in command of my company, than if I had been the highest staff officer in the army, and waiting around, a General's errand-boy.

I hear nothing from our classmates now, — except now and then a letter from some unexpected quarter. Thus — Aaron Clark wrote to me some time since, — inquired about you, — was, somewhere in Canada, teaching, — but wanted me to direct to Waterford C.W. "as usual." I am going to give up my position as Class Historiographer, — nobody knows less about the boy than I, and certainly my chances of surviving the rest are not preeminently good.

I trust that this will find you well, and doing well. God keep, and prosper, you! — and as I utter this prayer sincerely I want you, if ever at any time I can be of any service to you, to let me know it. — I cannot expect you to write often, but write when you can; — be sure your letters are always gladly received; and shall be promptly answered. Direct to me

at "Hd Qrs 3rd Brig, 1st Div, 12th A.C., Nashville,
Tenn."

With kindest regards to yourself
(and) lady

Your Bro.

R.M. Tuttle

CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY NY HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2013

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