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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MAY 1, 1862.—*Resolved*, That there be printed, in addition to the usual number, for the use of the Senate, fifty thousand copies of the report of the joint committee on the conduct of the present war, without the documents.

Mr. WADE submitted the following

REPORT.

The joint committee on the conduct of the present war beg leave respectfully to submit a report, in part, as follows :

On the 1st day of April the Senate of the United States adopted the following resolution ; which was referred to the committee on the conduct of the war :

Resolved, That the select committee on the conduct of the war be directed to collect the evidence with regard to the barbarous treatment by the rebels, at Manassas, of the remains of officers and soldiers of the United States killed in battle there ; and that the said select committee also inquire into the fact whether the Indian savages have been employed by the rebels, in their military service, against the government of the United States, and how such warfare has been conducted by said savages.

In pursuance of the instructions contained in this resolution, your committee have the honor to report that they examined a number of witnesses, whose testimony is herewith submitted.

Mr. Nathaniel F. Parker, who was captured at Falling Waters, Virginia, testifies that he was kept in close confinement, denied exercise, and, with a number of others, huddled up in a room ; that their food, generally scant, was always bad, and sometimes nauseous ; that the wounded had neither medical attention nor humane treatment, and that many of these latter died from sheer neglect ; that five of the prisoners were shot by the sentries outside, and that he saw one man, Tibbitts, of the New York 27th regiment, shot as he was passing his window on the 8th of November, and that he died of the wound on the 12th. The perpetrator of this foul murder was subsequently promoted by the rebel government.

Dr. J. M. Homiston, surgeon of the 14th New York, or Brooklyn regiment, captured at Bull Run, testifies that when he solicited permission to remain on the field and to attend to wounded men, some of whom were in a helpless and painful condition and suffering for water, he was brutally refused. They offered him neither water nor anything in the shape of food. He and his companions stood in the streets of Manassas, surrounded by a threatening and boisterous crowd, and were afterwards thrust into an old building, and left, without sustenance or covering, to sleep on the bare floor. It was only when faint and exhausted, in response to their earnest petitions, they having been without food for 24 hours, that some cold bacon was grudgingly given to them. When, at last, they were permitted to go to the relief of our wounded, the secession surgeon would not allow them to perform operations, but intrusted the wounded to his young assistants, "some of them with no more knowledge of what they

attempted to do than an apothecary's clerk;" and further, "that these inexperienced surgeons performed operations upon our men in a most horrible manner; some of them were absolutely frightful." "When," he adds, "I asked Doctor Darby to allow me to amputate the leg of Corporal Prescott, of our regiment, and said that the man must die if it were not done, he told me that I should be allowed to do it." While Doctor Homiston was waiting, he says a secessionist came through the room and said, "They are operating upon one of the Yankee's legs up stairs." "I went up and found that they had cut off Prescott's leg. The assistants were pulling on the flesh at each side, trying to get flap enough to cover the bone. They had sawed off the bone without leaving any of the flesh to form the flaps to cover it; and with all the force they could use they could not get flap enough to cover the bone. They were then obliged to saw off about an inch more of the bone, and even then, when they came to put in the sutures (the stitches) they could not approximate the edges within less than an inch and a half of each other; of course, as soon as there was any swelling, the stitches tore out and the bone stuck through again. Doctor Swalm tried afterwards to remedy it by performing another operation, but Prescott had become so debilitated that he did not survive." Corporal Prescott was a young man of high position, and had received a very liberal education.

The same witness describes the sufferings of the wounded after the battle as inconceivably horrible—with bad food, no covering, no water. They were lying upon the floor as thickly as they could be laid. "There was not a particle of light in the house to enable us to move among them." Deaf to all his appeals, they continued to refuse water to these suffering men, and he was only enabled to procure it by setting cups under the eaves to catch the rain that was falling, and in this way he spent the night catching the water and conveying it to the wounded to drink. As there was no light, he was obliged to crawl on his hands and knees to avoid stepping on their wounded limbs; and he adds, "It is not a wonder that next morning we found that several had died during the night." The young surgeons, who seemed to delight in hacking and butchering these brave defenders of our country's flag, were not, it would seem, permitted to perform any operations upon the rebel wounded. "Some of our wounded," says this witness, "were left lying upon the battle field until Tuesday night and Wednesday morning. When brought in, their wounds were completely alive with larvæ deposited there by the flies, having laid out through all the rain storm of Monday, and the hot, sultry sunshine of Tuesday." The dead laid upon the field unburied for five days; and this included men not only of his own, the 14th regiment, but of other regiments. This witness testifies that the rebel dead were carried off and interred decently. In answer to a question whether the confederates themselves were not also destitute of medicines, he replied, "They could not have been, for they took all ours, even to our surgical instruments." He received none of the attention from the surgeons on the other side, "which," to use his own language, "I should have shown to them had our position been reversed."

The testimony of William F. Swalm, assistant surgeon of the 14th New York regiment, who was taken prisoner at Sudley's church, confirms the statement of Dr. Homiston in regard to the brutal operations on Corporal Prescott. He also states that after he himself had been removed to Richmond, when seated one day with his feet on the window-sill, the sentry outside called to him to take them in, and on looking out he saw the sentry with his musket cocked and pointed at him, and withdrew in time to save his life. He gives evidence of the careless, heartless, and cruel manner in which the surgeons operated upon our men. Previous to leaving for Richmond, and ten or twelve days after the battle, he saw some of the Union soldiers unburied on the field, and entirely naked. Walking around were a great many women, gloating over the horrid sight.

The case of Dr. Ferguson, of one of the New York regiments, is mentioned

by Dr. Swalm. "When getting into his ambulance to look after his own wounded he was fired upon by the rebels. When he told them who he was, they said they would take a parting shot at him, which they did, wounding him in the leg. He had his boots on, and his spurs on his boots, and as they drove along his spurs would catch in the tail-board of the ambulance, causing him to shriek with agony." An officer rode up, and, placing his pistol to his head, threatened to shoot him if he continued to scream. This was on Sunday, the day of the battle.

One of the most important witnesses was General James B. Ricketts, well known in Washington and throughout the country, lately promoted for his daring and self-sacrificing courage. After having been wounded in the battle of Bull Run, he was captured, and as he lay helpless on his back, a party of rebels passing him cried out, "Knock out his brains, the d——d Yankee." He met General Beauregard, an old acquaintance, only a year his senior at the United States Military Academy, where both were educated. He had met the rebel general in the south a number of times. By this head of the rebel army, on the day after the battle, he was told that his (General Ricketts's) treatment would depend upon the treatment extended to the rebel privateers. His first lieutenant, Ramsey, who was killed, was stripped of every article of his clothing but his socks, and left naked on the field. He testified that those of our wounded who died in Richmond were buried in the negro burying-ground among the negroes, and were put into the earth in the most unfeeling manner. The statement of other witnesses as to how the prisoners were treated is fully confirmed by General Ricketts. He himself, while in prison, subsisted mainly upon what he purchased with his own money, the money brought to him by his wife. "We had," he says, "what they called bacon soup—soup made of boiled bacon, the bacon being a little rancid—which you could not possibly eat; and that for a man whose system was being drained by a wound is no diet at all." In reply to a question whether he had heard anything about our prisoners being shot by the rebel sentries, he answered: "Yes, a number of our men were shot. In one instance two were shot; one was killed, and the other wounded, by a man who rested his gun on the window-sill while he capped it."

General Ricketts, in reference to his having been held as one of the hostages for the privateers, states: "I considered it bad treatment to be selected as a hostage for a privateer, when I was so lame that I could not walk, and while my wounds were still open and unhealed. At this time General Winder came to see me. He had been a officer in my regiment; I had known him for twenty odd years. It was on the 9th of November that he came to see me. He saw that my wounds were still unhealed; he saw my condition; but that very day he received an order to select hostages for the privateers, and, notwithstanding he knew my condition, the next day, Sunday, the 10th of November, I was selected as one of the hostages." "I heard," he continues, "of a great many of our prisoners who had been bayoneted and shot. I saw three of them—two that had been bayoneted and one of them shot. One was named Louis Francis, of the New York 14th. He had received fourteen bayonet wounds—one through his privates—and he had one wound very much like mine, on the knee, in consequence of which his leg was amputated after twelve weeks had passed; and I would state here that in regard to his case, when it was determined to amputate his leg, I heard Dr. Peachy, the rebel surgeon, remark to one of his young assistants, 'I won't be greedy; you may do it;' and the young man did it. I saw a number in my room, many of whom had been badly amputated. The flaps over the stump were drawn too tight, and in some the bones protruded. A man by the name of Prescott (the same referred to in the testimony of Surgeon Homiston) was amputated twice, and was then, I think, moved to Richmond before the taps were healed—Prescott died under this treatment. I heard a rebel doctor on the steps below my room say, 'that he

wished he could take out the hearts of the d—d Yankees as easily as he could take off their legs.' Some of the southern gentlemen treated me very handsomely. Wade Hampton, who was opposed to my battery, came to see me and behaved like a generous enemy."

It appears, as a part of the history of this rebellion, that General Ricketts was visited by his wife, who, having first heard that he was killed in battle, afterwards that he was alive but wounded, travelled under great difficulties to Manassas to see her husband. He says: "She had almost to fight her way through, but succeeded finally in reaching me on the fourth day after the battle. There were eight persons in the Lewis House, at Manassas, in the room where I lay, and my wife, for two weeks, slept in that room on the floor by my side, without a bed. When we got to Richmond there were six of us in a room, among them Colonel Wilcox, who remained with us until he was taken to Charleston. There we were all in one room. There was no door to it. It was much as it would be here if you should take off the doors of this committee room, and then fill the passage with wounded soldiers. In the hot summer months the stench from their wounds, and from the utensils they used, was fearful. There was no privacy at all, because there being no door the room could not be closed. We were there as a common show. Colonel Wilcox and myself were objects of interest, and were gazed upon as if we were a couple of savages. The people would come in there and say all sorts of things to us and about us, until I was obliged to tell them that I was a prisoner and had nothing to say. On our way to Richmond, when we reached Gordonsville, many women crowded around the cars, and asked my wife if she cooked? if she washed? how she got there? Finally, Mrs. Ricketts appealed to the officer in charge, and told him that it was not the intention that we should be subjected to this treatment, and if it was continued she would make it known to the authorities. General Johnson took my wife's carriage and horses at Manassas, kept them, and has them yet for aught I know. When I got to Richmond I spoke to several gentlemen about this, and so did Mrs. Ricketts. They said, of course, the carriage and horses should be returned, but they never were. "There is one debt," says this gallant soldier, "that I desire very much to pay, and nothing troubles me so much now as the fact that my wounds prevent me from entering upon active service at once."

The case of Louis Francis, who was terribly wounded and maltreated, and lost a leg, is referred to by General Ricketts; but the testimony of Francis himself is startling. He was a private in the New York 14th regiment. He says: "I was attacked by two rebel soldiers, and wounded in the right knee with the bayonet. As I lay on the sod they kept bayonetting me until I received fourteen wounds. One then left me, the other remaining over me, when a Union soldier coming up, shot him in the breast, and he fell dead. I lay on the ground until 10 o'clock next day. I was then removed in a wagon to a building; my wounds examined and partially dressed. On the Saturday following we were carried to Manassas, and from there to the general hospital at Richmond. My leg having partially mortified, I consented that it should be amputated, which operation was performed by a young man. I insisted that they should allow Dr. Swalm to be present, for I wanted one Union man there if I died under the operation. The stitches and the band slipped from neglect, and the bone protruded; and about two weeks after another operation was performed, at which time another piece of the thigh bone was sawed off. Six weeks after the amputation, and before it healed, I was removed to the tobacco factory."

Two operations were subsequently performed on Francis—one at Fortress Monroe, and one at Brooklyn, New York—after his release from captivity.

Revolting as these disclosures are, it was when the committee came to examine witnesses in reference to the treatment of our heroic dead that the fiendish spirit of the rebel leaders was most prominently exhibited. Daniel Bixby, jr., of

Washington, testifies that he went out in company with Mr. G. A. Smart, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, who went to search for the body of his brother, who fell at Blackburn's Ford in the action of the 18th of July. They found the grave. The clothes were identified as those of his brother on account of some peculiarity in the make, for they had been made by his mother; and, in order to identify them, other clothes made by her were taken, that they might compare them. "We found no head in the grave, and no bones of any kind—nothing but the clothes and portions of the flesh. We found the remains of three other bodies all together. The clothes were there; some flesh was left, but no bones." The witness also states that Mrs. Pierce Butler, who lives near the place, said that she had seen the rebels boiling portions of the bodies of our dead in order to obtain their bones as relics. They could not wait for them to decay. She said that she had seen drumsticks made of "Yankee shinbones," as they called them. Mrs. Butler also stated that she had seen a skull that one of the New Orleans artillery had, which, he said, he was going to send home and have mounted, and that he intended to drink a brandy punch out of it the day he was married.

Frederick Scholes, of the city of Brooklyn, New York, testified that he proceeded to the battle field of Bull Run on the fourth of this month (April) to find the place where he supposed his brother's body was buried. Mr. Scholes, who is a man of unquestioned character, by his testimony fully confirms the statements of other witnesses. He met a free negro, named Simon or Simons, who stated that it was a common thing for the rebel soldiers to exhibit the bones of the Yankees. "I found," he says, "in the bushes in the neighborhood, a part of a Zouave uniform, with the sleeve sticking out of the grave, and a portion of the pantaloons. Attempting to pull it up, I saw the two ends of the grave were still unopened, but the middle had been prised up, pulling up the extremities of the uniform at some places, the sleeves of the shirt in another, and a portion of the pantaloons. Dr. Swalm (one of the surgeons, whose testimony has already been referred to) pointed out the trenches where the secessionists had buried their own dead, and, on examination, it appeared that their remains had not been disturbed at all. Mr. Scholes met a free negro, named Hampton, who resided near the place, and when he told him the manner in which these bodies had been dug up, he said he knew it had been done, and added that the rebels had commenced digging bodies two or three days after they were buried, for the purpose, at first, of obtaining the buttons off their uniforms, and that afterwards they disinterred them to get their bones. He said they had taken rails and pushed the ends down in the centre under the middle of the bodies, and prised them up. The information of the negroes of Benjamin Franklin Lewis corroborated fully the statement of this man Hampton. They said that a good many of the bodies had been stripped naked on the field before they were buried, and that some were buried naked. I went to Mr. Lewis's house and spoke to him of the manner in which these bodies had been disinterred. He admitted that it was infamous, and condemned principally the Louisiana Tigers, of General Wheat's division. He admitted that our wounded had been very badly treated." In confirmation of the testimony of Dr. Swalm and Dr. Homiston, this witness avers that Mr. Lewis mentioned a number of instances of men who had been murdered by bad surgical treatment. Mr. Lewis was afraid that a pestilence would break out in consequence of the dead being left unburied, and stated that he had gone and warned the neighborhood and had the dead buried, sending his own men to assist in doing so. "On Sunday morning (yesterday) I went out in search of my brother's grave. We found the trench, and dug for the bodies below. They were eighteen inches to two feet below the surface, and had been hustled in in any way. In one end of the trench we found, not more than two or three inches below the surface, the thigh bone of a man which had evidently been dug up after the burial. At the other end of the trench we found the shinbone of a man, which had been struck by a musket ball and split. The bodies

at the ends had been pried up. While digging there, a party of soldiers came along and showed us a part of a shinbone, five or six inches long, which had the end sawed off. They said that they had found it among other pieces in one of the cabins the rebels had deserted. From the appearance of it, pieces had been sawed off to make finger rings. As soon as the negroes noticed this, they said that the rebels had had rings made of the bones of our dead, and that they had them for sale in their camps. When Dr. Swalm saw the bone he said it was a part of the shinbone of a man. The soldiers represented that there were lots of these bones scattered through the rebel huts sawed into rings," &c. Mr. Lewis and his negroes all spoke of Colonel James Cameron's body, and knew that "it had been stripped, and also where it had been buried." Mr. Scholes, in answer to a question of one of the committee, described the different treatment extended to the Union soldiers and the rebel dead. The latter had little head-boards placed at the head of their respective graves and marked; none of them had the appearance of having been disturbed.

The evidence of that distinguished and patriotic citizen, Hon. William Sprague, governor of the State of Rhode Island, confirms and fortifies some of the most revolting statements of former witnesses. His object in visiting the battle field was to recover the bodies of Colonel Slocum and Major Ballou, of the Rhode Island regiment. He took out with him several of his own men to identify the graves. On reaching the place he states that "we commenced digging for the bodies of Colonel Slocum and Major Ballou at the spot pointed out to us by these men who had been in the action. While digging, some negro women came up and asked whom we were looking for, and at the same time said that 'Colonel Slogun' had been dug up by the rebels, by some men of a Georgia regiment, his head cut off, and his body taken to a ravine thirty or forty yards below, and there burned. We stopped digging and went to the spot designated, where we found coals and ashes and bones mingled together. A little distance from there we found a shirt (still buttoned at the neck) and blanket with large quantities of hair upon it, everything indicating the burning of a body there. We returned and dug down at the spot indicated as the grave of Major Ballou, but found no body there; but at the place pointed out as the grave where Colonel Slocum was buried we found a box, which, upon being raised and opened, was found to contain the body of Colonel Slocum. The soldiers who had buried the two bodies were satisfied that the grave had been opened; the body taken out, beheaded, and burned, was that of Major Ballou, because it was not in the spot where Colonel Slocum was buried, but rather to the right of it. They at once said that the rebels had made a mistake, and had taken the body of Major Ballou for that of Colonel Slocum. The shirt found near the place where the body was burned I recognized as one belonging to Major Ballou, as I had been very intimate with him. We gathered up the ashes containing the portion of his remains that were left, and put them in a coffin together with his shirt and the blanket with the hair left upon it. After we had done this we went to that portion of the field where the battle had first commenced, and began to dig for the remains of Captain Tower. We brought a soldier with us to designate the place where he was buried. He had been wounded in the battle, and had seen from the window of the house where the captain was interred. On opening the ditch or trench we found it filled with soldiers, all buried with their faces downward. On taking up some four or five we discovered the remains of Captain Tower, mingled with those of the men. We took them, placed them in a coffin, and brought them home."

In reply to a question of a member of the committee as to whether he was satisfied that they were buried intentionally with their faces downward, Governor Sprague's answer was, "Undoubtedly! Beyond all controversy!" and that "it was done as a mark of indignity." In answer to another question as to what their object could have been, especially in regard to the body of Colonel Slo-

cum, he replied: "Sheer brutality, and nothing else. They did it on account of his courage and chivalry in forcing his regiment fearlessly and bravely upon them. He destroyed about one-half of that Georgia regiment, which was made up of their best citizens." When the inquiry was put whether he thought these barbarities were committed by that regiment, he responded, "by that same regiment, as I was told." While their own dead were buried with marble head and foot stones, and names upon them, ours were buried, as I have stated, in trenches. This eminent witness concludes his testimony as follows: "I have published an order to my second regiment, to which these officers were attached, that I shall not be satisfied with what they shall do unless they give an account of one rebel killed for each one of their own number."

The members of your committee might content themselves by leaving this testimony to the Senate and the people without a word of comment; but when the enemies of a just and generous government are attempting to excite the sympathy of disloyal men in our own country, and to solicit the aid of foreign governments by the grossest misrepresentations of the objects of the war, and of the conduct of the officers and soldiers of the republic, this, the most startling evidence of their insincerity and inhumanity, deserves some notice at our hands. History will be examined in vain for a parallel to this rebellion against a good government. Long prepared for by ambitious men, who were made doubly confident of success by the aid and counsel of former administrations, and by the belief that their plans were unobserved by a magnanimous people, they precipitated the war (at a moment when the general administration had just been changed) under circumstances of astounding perfidy. Without a single reasonable ground of complaint, and in the face of repeated manifestations of moderation and peace on the part of the President and his friends, they took up arms and declared that they would never surrender until their rebellion had been recognized, or the institutions established by our fathers had been destroyed. The people of the loyal States, at last convinced that they could preserve their liberties only by an appeal to the God of battles, rushed to the standard of the republic, in response to the call of the Chief Magistrate.

Every step of this monstrous treason has been marked by violence and crime. No transgression has been too great, no wrong too startling, for its leaders. They disregarded the sanctity of the oaths they had taken to support the Constitution; they repudiated all their obligations to the people of the free States; they deceived and betrayed their own fellow-citizens, and crowded their armies with forced levies; they drove from their midst all who would not yield to their despotism, or filled their prisons with men who would not enlist under their flag. They have now crowned the rebellion by the perpetration of deeds scarcely known even to savage warfare. The investigations of your committee have established this fact beyond controversy. The witnesses called before us were men of undoubted veracity and character. Some of them occupy high positions in the army, and others high positions in civil life. Differing in political sentiments, their evidence presents a remarkable concurrence of opinion and of judgment. Our fellow countrymen, heretofore sufficiently impressed by the generosity and forbearance of the government of the United States, and by the barbarous character of the crusade against it, will be shocked by the statements of these unimpeached and unimpeachable witnesses; and foreign nations must, with one accord, however they have hesitated heretofore, consign to lasting odium the authors of crimes which, in all their details, exceed the worst excesses of the sepoys of India.

Inhumanity to the living has been the leading trait of the rebel leaders; but it was reserved for your committee to disclose as a concerted system their insults to the wounded, and their mutilation and desecration of the gallant dead. Our soldiers taken prisoners in honorable battle have been subjected to the most shameful treatment. All the considerations that inspire chivalric emotion and

generous consideration for brave men have been disregarded. It is almost beyond belief that the men fighting in such a cause as ours, and sustained by a government which in the midst of violence and treachery has given repeated evidences of its indulgence, should have been subjected to treatment never before resorted to by one foreign nation in a conflict with another.

All the courtesies of professional and civil life seem to have been discarded. General Beauregard himself, who on a very recent occasion boasted that he had been controlled by humane feelings after the battle of Bull Run, coolly proposed to hold General Ricketts as a hostage for one of the murderous privateers, and the rebel surgeons disdained intercourse and communication with our own surgeons taken in honorable battle.

The outrages upon the dead will revive the recollections of the cruelties to which savage tribes subject their prisoners. They were buried in many cases naked, with their faces downward; they were left to decay in the open air; their bones were carried off as trophies, sometimes, as the testimony proves, to be used as personal adornments, and one witness deliberately avers that the head of one of our most gallant officers was cut off by a secessionist to be turned into a drinking cup on the occasion of his marriage. Monstrous as this revelation may appear to be, your committee have been informed that during the last two weeks the skull of a Union soldier has been exhibited in the office of the Sergeant-at-arms of the House of Representatives, which had been converted to such a purpose, and which had been found on the person of one of the rebel prisoners taken in a recent conflict. The testimony of Governor Sprague, of Rhode Island, is most interesting. It confirms the worst reports against the rebel soldiers, and conclusively proves that the body of one of the bravest officers in the volunteer service was burned. He does not hesitate to add that this hyena desecration of the honored corpse was because the rebels believed it to be the body of Colonel Slocum, against whom they were infuriated for having displayed so much courage and chivalry in forcing his regiment fearlessly and bravely upon them.

These disclosures establishing, as they incontestably do, the consistent inhumanity of the rebel leaders, will be read with sorrow and indignation by the people of the loyal States. They should inspire these people to renewed exertions to protect our country from the restoration to power of such men. They should, and we believe they will, arouse the disgust and horror of foreign nations against this unholy rebellion. Let it be ours to furnish, nevertheless, a contrast to such barbarities and crimes. Let us persevere in the good work of maintaining the authority of the Constitution, and of refusing to imitate the monstrous practices we have been called upon to investigate.

Your committee beg to say, in conclusion, that they have not yet been enabled to gather testimony in regard to the additional inquiry suggested by the resolution of the Senate, whether Indian savages have been employed by the rebels in military service against the government of the United States, and how such warfare has been conducted by said savages, but that they have taken proper steps to attend to this important duty.

B. F. WADE, *Chairman.*

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