

Chapter XIX

The Confederate Chaplains

Mr. Henry Gache S. J.

This services in and around Richmond —
He attends the Federal prisoners — At the
desire of ^{Bishop} ~~the~~ ~~Arch~~ he joins the army as Chaplain
of the 10th Louisiana — He visits the camps on
the Peninsula — His forbearance, goodness and
kindness subdue his enemies — A grateful grateful
Father Gache's account of scenes around Richmond —
Interesting incidents and one episode — How a
soldier ~~was~~ ~~was~~ ~~was~~ employed in the "Fortress
Delegation" — His account of the treatment of the Federal
prisoners in Richmond and Lynchburg —

The Rev. Father Gache is
~~the~~ ~~gentleman~~ ~~is~~ a Frenchman by birth
and was a most zealous and devoted
attendant on the sick and wounded
of the Confederate army in and around
Richmond during the war. He also
ministered to the Federals' sick and
wounded in prison and hospital
and has had a trying and varied
experience in the discharge of his
duties as chaplain. He is at present
pastor of the Church of the Holy Family
Georgetown. ~~He~~ I am sorry that ~~the~~
sketch of him is not fuller, but from
the limited notes and information ~~see~~
I have access, I could not make it
more general.

On the 26th of July 1861. Father Gache,
at the desire of his bishop, the Most Rev.

Dr Odin, of New Orleans, La., accepted a Commission as chaplain to the Confederate Service and was sent immediately with his Regiment, The 10th Louisiana, to Richmond Va. From Richmond the Regiment was ordered to the Peninsula and was stationed near Williamsburg awaiting the approach of M^r Clellan. There he remained until the retreat from Williamsburg which took place in April 1862. During this period his Ministry was not very fruitful; however, he was able to keep the men alive to the sense of their religious duties and heard Confessions, administered the Sacraments and celebrated Mass in the humble little chapel improvised for the purpose. The Regiment was made up of men of all nationalities comprising Americans, Irish, French, Germans, English and even Spaniards, Italians and Greeks, the majority of whom were Catholics, but I must say not very diligent or zealous ones. Father Gache, finding his services too restricted, got permission from General Magruder to visit all the Camps of the Peninsula, so he was then the only chaplain with the whole army, and as there were several Catholics in all the Regiments, he thought he could

he of more service with a loving Commission than if tied down to one particular Regiment. He next visited the different hospitals in York town, Williamsburg and elsewhere. His welcome visit was very welcome to the Catholic patients and he cheered many by his consoling words and by administering to them the Sacraments. The poor fellows were glad to see him and to make their Confessions and to use his own words - "For many that Confession was a passport to Heaven" as they died soon after without having another chance of seeing a priest."

At first he found too many Protestants ready to mock and jeer at him, but after a time they learned to treat him with ~~some~~ respect. In fact, his forbearance, meekness and kindness to all induced many of them to become Converts, for it often happened that those that come to mock his Ministry, melted and prayed. He will give you one ~~very~~ interesting instance of this. One day Father Gaché was visiting the Louisiana hospital, in New Orleans, which was under the care of the good Sisters of Charity. One of the Sisters said to Father Gaché, "Father, you have a Convert here who will be delighted to see you." "Why, Sister," replied the priest,

I was not aware that I had a Convert here. The steward told ^{him} me that a young man had been sent there very sick, a few months before. Some time after his arrival, he said to the sister in charge of his ward. Sister, I would like very much to see Father Gach, could you send for him?" "Are you a Catholic?" asked the sister. No, but I will tell you, I belong to the 10th Lt Regiment, and when I was sick on the Peninsula he used to come to see me very often. I was at first rather averse to him, but he did not abate his attentions to me. His manner, for bearing and goodness have made such an impression on me, that I am convinced that his religion must be the true one; therefore, I do like to see him to beg his pardon and to be received into his church, as ^{Father Gach} I was not in Richmond when he consented to be baptized by another priest, but on his return there he was overjoyed to see him. This young man became a good practical Catholic.

He was a fine looking young man and ~~had~~ had attracted Father Gach's attention by his general bearing so superior to that of his comrades. And he did all he could to make himself as comfortable as circumstances would ^{permit} allow.

Father Guich devoted more of his time to ministering to the soldiers in the field than to those in hospital. He was always well received both by the officers and men. A large number of Catholics and even several Protestants, availed themselves of his ministrations among them. The Catholics, proud being indifferent, became zealous and attended Mass and went to Confession regularly. Men exposed to all the dangers and vicissitudes of battle, must naturally turn their attention to God. Death is continually staring them in the face and the most hardened feel that they are liable every moment to be hurled into the presence of their Creator.

At first, those who attended their duties, were laughed and sneered at as cowards by their comrades; but when they found that these men were the best in action, a better feeling prevailed.

He found himself unable to meet the demand for his spiritual services during and after a battle for the hundreds of Catholics, that lay wounded eagerly called on him to administer to them the last rights of the Church.

Under such circumstances he did the best he could, and by unceasing labors,

he was able to console the last moments of many a brave fellow. The very presence of a priest was an encouragement to them and reminded them of their duties during the seven days fight around Richmond he was taxed to the utmost for both in the field and in the hospitals. There was constant demand for his services now often, after throwing poor penitents under the wheels that, had he to hurry to the field hospital in answer to the call of some dying soldier.

A young South Carolina Protestant once said to him: "Father you don't know me?"
"No indeed!"

"Well, I thought so, but I know you, for during the seven days battle I have often watched you, on your black horse, riding from line ^{to line} attending to the wounded, cheering and consoling them; do you know Father, you made such an impression on me that I was often tempted to call on you and at least, ask your blessing and benediction, but false pride prevented me, though I admired and revered you none the less." Oftentimes, while riding through the lines, soldiers would step forward, saying "Father, we have no time to make confession will you give us your blessing?" I found a private letter from one such ^{at the} ~~the~~ following ~~contents~~ extracts.

(Mrs page to you in) 284
I had occasion to read a great service to a poor man of a
Cannonbury Regiment, who had fallen mortally wounded at an age
Station. He was left with many others on the battle field his breast
to and right arm were shattered by a piece of shell and he was in such
a condition that I cannot understand how he was alive. I asked him
if he was a catholic; "No," he said, but my wife and my children
are catholic. Did you ever baptize you not think to be a catholic; "Yes
Will, if you wish to become a catholic, you have us here to be
for you are very badly provided, and I am afraid you will not
be much longer. Have you ever been baptized? "No, Sir;
my parents were baptists, they did not care to have me baptized
when I was a child. Did it never occur to you to be baptized
yourself? "I wish to be baptized now, yes, very well
I will procure you that favor. Having ascertained by some ques-
tion, put to him, that he was sufficiently instructed, I baptized
him with the water of his baptism. No doubt he died a
short time after, for he was very low, and his wound bleeding very
much. But my duty would not allow me to stay any longer
with him, and I never heard anything about him afterwards.
I have thoughts very often of his poor widow and child. I
would have been very glad to be able to inform them of the
blessing which all mighty God conferred upon him, perhaps in
consideration of their prayers. That poor man was a Presbyterian
by birth, but he had some very good friends in this country.
I have said that the presence of a priest in the army was
an encouragement to the soldiers, some times it was also it
restrained them from evil. The next day after the fight of
Malvern hills, while riding from one camp to another, I
saw a man, said to be a Presbyterian, who had alighted from his horse
to go in to a garden and steal some cabbage, just as he was

Wm. Fisher 285 (This page crossed out) (This page crossed out)

who had attracted my attention by his refinement, superior to that of most of my condition. I never saw a word of controversy to keep; he visited him often, spoke to him kindly, gave him bed clothes, when necessary, etc. nothing else. I had not seen him since I was in the army. I thought I had more success than in hospitals. I was always welcome by officers and men, & good numbers of Catholics always avail themselves of my presence among them to make their confessions and receive Communion. Persons not acquainted at all with military life, would suppose that it is on the eve of a battle, or during a battle, that a military chaplain is most busy. Such is not the case, in the beginning, the idea of an imminent battle would bring some men to confession; but after some time our soldiers were used to it, and it had no effect on them or very little. There was however there was always a certain number who went to confession before they went to fight, and I can say that those ones were not cowards, they were not seen running away before the enemy, but to the battle field, there was never much to do there. There was too much confusion, too much excitement. Still the presence of a priest was the encouraging element. He reminded the men of their duty. Once I was going south Carolina, who came back to me and said: Father, if you will, show me, but I know you very well. During the several days battles about Richmond, how many times I looked at you riding on your black horse from the right to the left wing of the army, as to say to us, here I am boys; if there is anything on your conscience, which troubles you, come to me, I will give you the relief you need. Did he add, how much I would have given to be allowed to hear the confessions and to you to talk to you. Not being deprived of that consolation, I rather enjoy blessing, in my mind, and made an act of contrition. Sometimes while he was thus riding, some young men, generally in old papers, of some of our colleges, would come to me and talk and say: Father, I have no time to make my confession, and

~~getting up over the fence, he saw me coming at some distance. I'm not
 sure, but I think he came out of the garden, and he came to me with a two dollar note
 in his hand saying, "Father, I want to give you this, by which I mean
 me from committing a sin. I was going to steal cabbage, when
 I saw you, and your presence made me overcome the temptation.
 I know that the devil made me to drink too much some time ago,
 and in order to preserve himself from that other sin, he took his male
 which I gave to it for a year or so, and he was a very good man, and the
 care of it was his business. He was being treated in a way of a
 and that it is in the hospital, that the largest number of good men
 were taken in charge of several military hospitals successively, and I
 had to take care of many hospitals during the last two years of the
 war. Of all the sick soldiers with whom I came in contact, and
 who died while I was with them, I remember only three who
 refused to the service of my ministry at their last moments, and
 they were all free masons. All did not ^{actually} become Catholics, for a good
 number of them were, according to all appearance, ^{potentially} in good
 faith, ^{too} but that I might speak to them of Catholicism, but they
 listened with pleasure and attention to all my little exhortations,
 they repeated with fervor all the acts and prayers which I said
 for them. Such as the Lord's prayer, the Hail Mary, the Agnus
 Dei, the acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition. The larger
 number however ^{and} became ^{potentially} Catholics, and received at least the
 Sacrament of Baptism. But it was in the hospitals entrusted
 to the Sisters of Charity, or to the Sisters of Mercy, that ~~the~~
^{the most} good was chiefly ^{effected}, and it is to the influence of those
 good Sisters that it was due. In fact the body of captives who had
 been it, can imagine how efficacious was the presence and the con-
 duct of the Sisters, to soften those rough natures, and to bring them
 down and console them during their stay in the hospitals of
 (the French and the English) and such more as they were
 sent to the hospitals.~~

(The page not used) - 8 - (in original)

A young Pennsylvanian who knew very little about reli-
gion, and who most probably had uttered more curses than prayers
was brought one day to a hospital under the care of the Sisters
of Mercy, in Montgomery White Sulphur Springs, Va. The Sis-
ters received him as usual very kindly, and bestowed upon him
all the attentions which his condition would require. One of the most
dear friends he had, he burst into tears, and said to you, said the
letter, Do you suffer more now? No, no, he answered, I cry because
Why do you cry then? I cry because for the last six months I
had not heard a kind word. It is true it is that the kind atten-
tion and diligent life of these Sisters of Charity removed their
prejudice, and disposed those men to become Catholics, that many
of them joined the Catholic Church, merely because it was the
Church of the Sisters of Charity. On one of these days, one I
found a poor man very sick, nearly on the point of death. According
to my custom, I asked him if he was baptized, and if he was
aware that without baptism he could not be saved. He told me
that he had never been baptized, and that he had heard that bap-
tism was necessary for salvation, but that he had never paid
much attention to him. He having explained the matter to him
that is, having explained before him the effects, and the necessity
of baptism, he requested me to baptize him. God
know what I am, I told him, I am a Catholic priest, and
I suppose you wish to be baptized in the Catholic Church.
Oh, no, he answered immediately, I do not want to be a Catholic.
In what church then do you wish to be baptized? In the Church
of the Protestants. The Church of the Protestants is the Catholic Church, is
it not? Certainly, said the Sister who was then in charge of that ward, and that morning
my patient asked her, is it true that you are a
Protestant? Most certainly; if I was not a Catholic I could

A young Tennesse soldier, who knew very little about Religion, and who had probably never attended any place of worship, was one day brought into a hospital under the charge of the Sisters of Mercy in Montgomery, White Sulphur Springs Va. The Sisters viewed him with their usual kindness and bestowed upon him all the attentions his condition required. While one of them was dressing his wound he burst into tears "Sister I hurt you?" she asked.

"No, no," he replied.

"Then, why do you cry?"

"I cry," said the poor boy; "because for the last six months I have not had a kind word spoken to me?"

Thus we see the salutary effects of kind attention and edifying behavior on the human mind. The kindness, meekness and devotion of the Sisters removed the prejudices of many and disposed them to become Catholics merely because it was the ^{Religion} ~~Church~~ of the Sisters.

Father Gaike, on one occasion, found a soldier very sick; according to custom he asked him if he were baptized and if he was aware that without baptism he could not be saved.

He said that he had never attended
 the religious duties, but that he had heard
 that baptism was necessary to salvation
 and would therefore wish to be baptized.

"I am a Catholic priest," replied Father
 Guehin, "do you wish to be baptized in
 the Catholic church?" "Oh, no!" he
 replied, "I don't want to be a Catholic."

"In what church then do you want to
 be baptized?"

"In the church of the Sisters" was
 the immediate reply.

"But, my dear friend, the church of the
 Sisters is the Catholic church."

"Is that so?"

"Certainly, with the Sisters themselves."

Just then the Sister in charge of
 the ward happened to pass by, and
 turning to her he asked, "Sister,
 is it true that you are a Roman
 Catholic?"

"Most certainly!" she replied; "if
 I was not a Catholic I would not
 be a Sister of Charity."

(30) Sep 28th 1864 (This page goes in)

~~not a bit of a Christian~~ I declare, said the young man, I thought
the Catholics were the worst people in the world. I never heard any one
speak well of them - This was enough to convince him. He was baptiz-
ed ~~in a church~~ after, and he died the following night. One ~~was~~ had the
brother of a baptist preacher ~~his son~~ as it was evident that he could
not live, the sister who nursed him, asked him if he would not like to be
baptized and become a Christian. ~~He said~~ she knew that he had never
been baptized. He answered yes. As his Rev. father had come to
see him, and was present, the sister asked him if he wished to
be baptized by his brother, or by her Chaplain, ~~that is by~~ ^{either} ~~her~~. He an-
swered that he preferred to be baptized by ~~me~~ ^{a priest}. ~~And so he was~~
And I must say that his brother did not seem to be the least dis-
pleas'd with it. ~~at it was a most~~ ~~very~~ ~~good~~

But the greater good perhaps effected by the presence of the Ca-
tholic Chaplains and Sisters of Charity or Mercy in the army, was
the removal of sectarian prejudices from the minds of thousands who
had never seen Catholics before, and knew nothing of them, but as had
they had heard from protestant preachers, or read in protestant books
~~written against us~~. The change effected in that respect among the
evangelists is a great cause of blessing that it has been remarked
by every body. Let me give you some instance of it. One evening
I was going from Lynchburg to Rich mond, with a young lady who
had become a catholic under ~~my~~ ^{his} direction and who had requested ^{him}
to take her to Rich mond to be confirmed by Bishop McGill.
We were on the rail road & cars, of course, and we were talking in
tone of voice loud enough to be heard by ~~our~~ ^{their} neighbors. The
young lady asked ~~me~~ ^{for her faith} a number of questions on religion,
which I tried to solve the best manner ^{that} I could. After two or three
hours of talking, I felt tired and ~~we~~ ^{they} stopped, as to indulge a
little in sleeping. ~~Our~~ ^{Other} neighbors, who seemed to have taken
an interest in ~~our~~ ^{the} conversation, to which they had listened with

to which they had listened with attention without making a remark, but as soon as the priest and his companions appeared to be asleep, they commenced talking among themselves and to make their comments upon their conversation.

"Who are they?" asked one of his companions.
 "I really don't know, but I am sure she is the gentleman's daughter for she calls her father" was the reply of another. It is evident from their conversation that they are Catholics for they are all the time speaking of the Catholic Church as their church and the true one" remarked another.

"Well," said a weather ^{beaten} man with the bearing of a veteran soldier, "I'm dog gone but I think they are right; before the war I was strongly prejudiced against Catholics. I looked upon them as little better than infidels and heathens, but since I have changed my opinion."

During the war there were several Catholics in my regiment, and I had an opportunity of studying them and I must say, that I have found them more sincere and honest and affectionate to their families than those of any other denomination.

Just think how the Sisters of Charity attended the poor fellows in hospital, I tell you boys, but for them I would not be alive to day. When laid up with wounds in hospital they cared me as kindly as my own wife or sister could, and never asked what Religion I was belonged to. I ask could they do all the good they have done, could they be what they are if their church was not the true church?

"I agree with you"; said another veteran, "I too have been in hospital and the kindness and attention of the Sisters have made such an impression on me that I intend bringing up my family Catholics; for if there is any good in Religion at all, it is in theirs."

From some private letters of a writer by Father Gosh and placed in the authors hands I make the following extract in evidence of the sufficiency of the Sisters and the respect intended for them by the Soldiers, ^{Protestants} ~~Catholics~~ as well ~~Protestants~~ as Catholics.

I will give another ~~instance~~ ^{affirming} of the influence of the sisters of charity in removing
sectarian prejudice and favorably disposing men towards catholicity.
During the first year of the war, two or three sick soldiers, belonging to a
Company of ~~Leopards~~, were brought by ~~ambulance~~ ^{ambulance} to the infirmary of St Francis,
Dorchester, in ~~Wiltshire~~, ^{Wiltshire}, under the care of the sisters of charity, sisters Julian
Chatain being the ~~supervisor~~ ^{supervisor}. I had just ~~seen~~ ^{heard} ~~who had never been any ca-~~
~~tholic institution~~, and ~~was~~ ^{heard} ~~nothing of catholicity~~ - except the ridiculous charge
~~made against~~ ^{made against} ~~them~~ by protestants, ~~found themselves~~ ^{found themselves} ~~in a~~ ^{in a} ~~quite~~ ^{quite} ~~good~~ ^{good} ~~world~~. But,
having ~~strange~~ ^{strange} ~~ideas~~ ^{ideas} ~~coming~~ ^{coming} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~them~~, they soon discovered that every thing
was right, and that it was good for them to be there. After a few weeks
they returned to their ~~regiment~~ ^{command} in good health, and so much pleased with every
thing they had seen at the infirmary, that they determined to send to the
same place of every member of their company who would get sick.
~~for they did~~ ^{for they did} ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~done~~ ^{done}. But in short time the applications became ~~so~~ ^{numerous}
that the good sisters were unable to accommodate all the applicants.
Seeing this, those brave ~~Leopards~~ ^{Leopards} requested of the ~~authorities~~ ^{authorities} to allow them
to put up in ~~their~~ ^{their} ~~own~~ ^{own} ~~yard~~ ^{yard}, or temporary frame building, exclusively for
themselves. The request was granted, and as long as the ~~Leopards~~ ^{Leopards} ~~regiment~~ ^{regiment}
was within the walls of Dorchester, all its patients were sent there.
~~It is~~ ^{It is} ~~written~~ ^{written} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~specify~~ ^{specify} ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~their~~ ^{their} ~~satisfaction~~ ^{satisfaction}, of their admiration for the sisters,
all I wish to say is this. One night some ~~Leopards~~ ^{Leopards} were on picket duty
on the ~~Chicadeominny~~ ^{Chicadeominny}. And while ~~some~~ ^{some} were on guard, the others ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~occupy~~ ^{occupy}
~~themselves~~ ^{themselves} ~~with~~ ^{with} ~~making~~ ^{making} ~~coffee~~ ^{coffee}, and as they were not well
to do, they were talking at the same time on different topics. The subject
of religion was brought ~~up~~ ^{up}, and as they were all ~~of~~ ^{of} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ ^{same} ~~opinion~~ ^{opinion}, they com-
ed soon to abuse ~~control~~ ^{control}. One of the men on guard, hearing this, ex-
claimed. "Stop, stop, friends! I do not know what catholics are
I know nothing of their Creed, but from the time I have seen the
sisters of charity, at the Francis & Sales infirmary, and I have been
nursed by them, I have felt myself bound in duty not to allow any
~~one~~ ^{one} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~spread~~ ^{spread} ~~against~~ ^{against} ~~them~~ ^{them} ~~or~~ ^{or} ~~their~~ ^{their} ~~religion~~ ^{religion}, ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~I~~ ^I ~~beg~~ ^{beg} ~~you~~ ^{you} ~~not~~ ^{not} ~~to~~ ^{to} ~~do~~ ^{do}
~~the~~ ^{the} ~~harm~~ ^{harm} ~~on~~ ^{on} ~~their~~ ^{their} ~~church~~ ^{church}?"

(The page not used) (I never did use it)

~~the Catholic Church, otherwise I will defend it with my sword and
striking argument, and the controversy was thereby ended.~~

~~I will now add some remarks about the prisoners of
War. I was in charge of them successively in Lynnhury and in
Acibwood. In both places every facility was given to me to visit
them and to attend to their spiritual wants, and to their temporal also
when I could. ^{at Lynnhury} A good number died of their wounds, and all died
after having received the last sacraments, and perfectly resigned
to their fate. In the hospitals they were treated like the confederate
soldiers without any difference. They suffered no doubt, but in more
than the confederate, and it was not in the power of the authority to
prevent it. Three days after the said of General H. Center, sister
Rose, the sister superior of one of the hospitals in Lynnhury, heard
some men report that there was a federal soldier badly wounded
lying in the woods. They came to ask me if I thought she would send
two men to look for him, and to bring him in, if found alive.
I told her I saw no objection to it. Immediately she dispatched
two men to look for that poor soldier, promising them ten dollars
if they brought him alive. It was then about 6 P.M. about
8 1/2 o'clock our two men came back bringing with them our poor federal
so badly wounded that I had just time to hear his confession
and give him extreme unction, before he died, which happened
about 9 1/2 o'clock. He was as a Greek man, and you may imagine
what comfort it was to him to die in the arms of a Catholic priest
and fortified with the last sacraments. After having had for two days
the prospect of dying alone in the woods, and a
day or two at the South, had a pretty bad reputation.
He and the federal, when taken prisoners and brought to some place
and put in pretty bad figures. I had occasion to see it, especially
after the battle of Red Bank, and others, around Frederick's
and a few days, I think they had seen things by the
the~~

Arthur Gache, writing of the treatment of the Federal prisoners, says.

I was in charge of them ~~attendance~~ on them as chaplain both in Lynchburg and Richmond. In both places every facility was afforded me by the Confederate officials to visit them and attend to their spiritual wants, and also to their temporal when I had it in my power to do so.

In Lynchburg a large number died from the effects of their wounds and all the Catholics, and even some Protestants, who shared my ministrations, were attended by me. That many suffered from the want of sufficient food and equipment I don't deny, but not one bit more than the Confederate sick and wounded. They were treated alike ~~in~~ in hospital and it was not in the power of the Confederate authorities to do better for them. The army was short of clothing and provisions, in fact, in short rations; the hospitals and prisons were full of the sick, wounded, and prisoners of the Federal army, and, under the circumstances, it was impossible to provide better for them. I do not enter into the right or wrong of the matter or whose fault it was that there was not an exchange of prisoners I merely give a statement of things

Coming under my own observations,

as they were. Out of many instances of the kindness of Confederate soldiers towards their captured or wounded enemies, I will merely cite one.

Three days after the raid of General Hunter, Sister Rose, the Superior of the hospitals in Lynchburg, informed me that ~~a~~ Federal she had just heard that a Federal soldier lay out in the woods wounded and asked if there was a possibility of sending a man to bring him in. Two men were immediately dispatched to look for the poor fellow. It was then about six o'clock in the evening and about nine they returned with him. He was so exhausted from loss of blood and exposure that I saw he would not live through the night.

He was a Catholic and an Irish man, and after his wounds were dressed and cleaned, I prepared him for death. I can never forget the joy of the poor fellow at receiving the last rights of his church, and being attended by the Sisters and a Catholic priest.

He died soon after but, what a consolation ~~that~~ ^{that} the poor fellow had not perished alone in the woods. The prisons of the South were not well cared for in a sanitary point of view and ^{this} told very much on the Federal prisoners. I had occasion

294 (296)

17

to observe this particularly after the battle
of the Wilderness; but after a time,
when ^{the} ~~they~~ ^{federal} found that the Confederates
found no better, they became reconciled
to their lot. and bore their trials
and sufferings more cheerfully.

I can never forget how my presence
and consoling words seemed to cheer
them, how warmly they shook hands
with me and how humbly and
gratefully they accepted my ministrations.

(written in ~~the~~ (Not for use))

~~Day when I visited that man, my poor man, seeing that I did not
notice him, sent a message to request me to go and see him, that
he wished to speak to me. I went, and speaking the first I
told him: "Well, my friend, what is the matter? I am told you
wish to speak to me." - Yes, father, he answered; and you
said the other day, I do not know what ways they used. I think
I have better to make my confession? He I made it and the next
day he was discharged.~~

~~However the privations of the prisoners, and their sufferings in conse-
quence of them should not be attributed to the authorities. Had doubt
among the most and inferior officers of the prisons, several do
not always faithfully perform their duty, and thus were cause
that the prisoners suffered. But the great cause of their mi-
series and suffering of the federal prisoners was necessity
and the impossibility in which the Confederate government
was to oppress them with more comfort. Of that to be
certain. And the federal government is more to be blamed
for it than the confederate, because of the refusal of the
Confederates to exchange the prisoners, which is believed
was the cause of their suffering.~~

~~Here, dear Sir, I am obliged to stop. My personal
duties are very pressing, and I am very anxious that
I should find a moment to lecture, that I could see my master.
This of course, will be of little use to you; but I had
no time to make it more interesting. And I would not
have written a line, I think, through want of time, had I not
been stimulated by the promise you made to go. I
With much esteem and respect
I remain, dear Sir, Very yours
L. G. Gage, Jr.~~

~~These counter-attacks became less bold, and even cheerful. Had nothing con-
 tributed more to security and cheer than, (I think chiefly of the latter)
 than the presence of a priest. I will never forget the breathing spell
 which my visit, had generally given them, how welcome I was in
 their midst; how warmly they shook hands with me, and how grateful
 they were for the saving of my ministry. A young man ^{from New York}
 after having made his Confession and received Communion, ^{his}
 Father, I am rich, after the war, come to New York; you will see
 what beautiful Church I will build for you. I am sorry that I did
 not write down his name and his direction, ~~and I regret that I~~~~

~~had no opportunity to seal his~~ ~~his good wishes~~
 In Richmond ~~the things were not quite~~ ^{as comfortable as}
 Lynchburg. The hospitals of ~~the patients~~ were more crowded, the regu-
 lation about them more strict, though priests were always allowed
 to ^{visit} see them. The accommodations ^{with in good} however ^{the} prisoners were
 less satisfied, and indeed many ^{number} complained. I remember, once
 I met a poor Irishman pretty sick. I asked him if ^{he} would not
 like to perform his religious duty, (it was at Easter time) he
 answered in a rather rough manner, "No, sir;" - But my dear friend
 you are not unaware that by neglecting your Easter Duty, you
 commit a grievous sin, which ~~detaches~~ ^{is} ~~hell~~ ^{lost}. Well, if I go to
 hell, it will not be much worse ^{in the eyes} than here. ^{Oh my dear,} what
 do you say ^{is} ^{that} ^{there} ^{is} ^{no} ^{other} ^{difference} ^{between} ^{the} ^{place} ^{and} ^{hell},
~~that that of the Discharge, it would be a dreadful one. I~~
~~advised you not make that ^{trial} ^{if} ^{you} ^{would} ^{be} ^{highly} ^{disappoin-}
~~ted" (I think) he left her.~~ ^{the next week} ^{Monday} ^{she} ^{visited}
 I visited the same man. I thought that the best way to bring
^{the} poor man to a sense of his duty, would be not to notice him
~~and so I did.~~ I visited all the other patients around him, spoke
 to them, but I did not say a word to him, nor even look at
 him. What I had anticipated I really happened. ~~What~~~~

The third day, when young my rounds, I did not mind him as usual. He sent the nurse to me to request that I would visit him as he desired to speak to me. I went to him and said, "Well, my friend, I am told you wish to speak to me; what's the matter?"

"Pardon me Father," he said, "for my rudeness to you the other day. Our privations here make us unreasonable."

"I can understand that, my friend," I replied; "and make all allowance for it."

"Father?" he said, after a pause; "you were right, though this place is bad, hell is a thousand times worse, and as one cannot know what may happen, I wish to make my confession."

He made it and I was glad to hear that he was exchanged the following day.

A great deal of the privations and sufferings of the Federal prisoners was owing to the carelessness, negligence and incapacity of the prison officials and nurses. As to the charges that against the Confederate Government in not providing them with better provisions and clothing, I again assert that they could not help it, for they were reduced to the

last extremity themselves
 Their army was suffering from the want
 of supplies, and there were so many
 thousands of Federal soldiers both in
 the prisons and hospitals that it exhausted
 their already straitened means.

Had the Federal Government regularly
 exchanged prisoners with the Confederates,
 much of this forced, but unnatural,
 cruelty might have been avoided." *

* Father Gack writes so fully into the details
 understood by the Sisters and the treatment of
 the Federal prisoners in Richmond, that the
 author prefers giving his bare statement, as
 far as he could to any personal sketch.

~~The author regrets that the Manuscript notes,
 placed in his hands, were not more
 numerous, so as to enable him to give
 a fuller account of the ^{the} gentleman's
 services and experience with the Confederate
 Army - ~~Notes~~.~~