

Chapter XXVII

The Sisters of Mercy, of Charleston -
 - Their attendance on the Federal prisoners -
 - Their best donors - Their influence on the
 soldiers - Funerals and incidents in hospital -
 - Reconciled to death - The Sisters provided
 with a general pass - Letters from Federal
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 to of their services and kindness - Protestants
 and Catholics alike bear testimony in their
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SISTERS OF CHARLESTON

The Community at Charleston consisted of a Superior and about nine Sisters. Their charity and zeal in ministering to the wants, and affording material aid and consolation, to the Federal prisoners in the Stockade and the sick and wounded in the hospitals, have been confirmed by the generous testimony of several officers and men, Protestants as well as Catholics. They made no distinction between Federals or Confederates in their attendance, and many an anxious parent North, was indebted to the Sisters for the information, privately conveyed, that their boys were living. In many cases they managed to send letters from prisoners, or portraits, to their friends in the North, or in other prisons.

About the time of the attack on Fort Fisher great poverty, and in many cases actual want, prevailed in Charleston; still, the Sisters, from their own scanty stores, and what they could get from the charitable, and Northern sympathizers, always managed to soften the hard fare of corn bread given to the Federals, by fresh bread and new milk. They often cheered and revived many a sick and wounded soldier with good nourishing diet, such as mince meat, pies, soups and the like. Though the times pressed hard on themselves, they managed to keep all the time three cows, the milk of which went to the inmates of the prisons and hospitals. They collected all the clothes they could and when a ragged prisoner was brought in, they immediately clothed him from their store.

We must recollect that the Sisters had neither public nor Government funds at their disposal for the relief of prisoners. Their liberal supplies of bread, meats, wines, soups, clothing, and the like, were all supplied from their own limited stores, and from what they could collect from the Union sympathizers and charitable people of Charleston. Foremost among the liberal and charitable donors was an Irish Catholic family, Mr. John Kenny and his wife, of Queen street. These almost exhausted their means in supplying the hospitals with soup, meats, and fresh bread, which was grateful to poor fellows

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whose allowance was only corn bread. When wounded prisoners came in, Mrs. Kenny tore up her own and her husband's linen to make lint and bandages, often stripping off the linen they had on for that purpose. Mr. Kenny's brother, John Donaghue, was equally charitable. A Mr. Johnson, a Protestant gentleman, was equally generous in furnishing clothing and soup for the prisoners on the Race Course.

When their own supplies were exhausted, these and other charitable persons went around with the Sisters to collect clothing and provisions; and as they well knew the parties to whom to apply, they were generally successful. Among those whose purse and heart were always open to the claims of the Sisters, we should mention a Protestant gentleman, Mr. James McCarter, now living in Newton, New Jersey. He liberally supplied with money both the Sisters and Mrs. Eliza Potter, who was a daily visitor at the Queen Street Hospital for six or eight months after it was opened.

It is remarkable what influence the quiet, unobtrusive gentleness of woman has even upon the hardest natures. Men, who in camp could swear as hard as Uncle Toby's profane soldier in Flanders, soon become docile; and should an expression savoring of the profane escape them, in presence of the Sisters, they would humbly apologize. No child ever looked for the presence of his mother more earnestly than did the patients in hospital to the daily visits from the Sisters; and gratefully and thankfully did they receive from them the cooling fruits and nourishing meats and broths which they helped them to. One of the soldiers went by the sobriquet of "Good for Me," from the fact that when a Sister was feeding a sicker patient with anything nice, the fellow would whine out, "Wa-al, I reckon; Sister, a little of that would be good for me." After the attack on Morris' Island, the sergeant of a New York regiment, named Carrigan, was brought into hospital, badly wounded in the shoulder. He was attended by one of the Sisters, a Southern lady, with strong sympathy for the cause of her people. While the wound was dressing he was insensible, but recovering consciousness, he looked up and exclaimed, "I tell you, we'll take that d—d Island yet."

A fine strapping Michigan soldier named Francesco, greatly prejudiced against the Catholics, quietly watched the Sisters day by day going around on their errands of mercy. One morning a Sister was giving him some wine; seeing the Rosary hanging by her side he said:

"Wa-al, I reckon you belong to some society?"

"Yes, to a religious Order."

"Something like the Freemasons, I reckon?"

"Not exactly; our society is a Roman Catholic religious Order."

"Wa-al, them Roman Catholics are bad people,—very bad people!"

"What makes you think so, friend?"

"Wa-al, I have often heard so and I have read so in books, too."

~~in fact, for now gave the Sisters fifty dollars for the use of the Federal prisoners. Father Fillion and Father Moore were unscrupulously kind to the prisoners. Father Fillion visited the sick at Florence every week and contracted for them of which he died in the Spring of 1864. Mr. P. F. Kelly was also most attentive to the Federal officers and soldiers in hospital and in prison, and also contracted for the discharge of his duties from which he died in January 1864.~~

"Most likely, but we are not to judge from all we hear and read, particularly from those prejudiced against the Catholics; tell me, can you give an instance, yourself, of the wickedness of Catholics?"

"Not 'zactly, but there is a Catholic fellow in the next bed and he swears terribly."

"Now, you shut up!" said the fellow in the next bed, "I am not a Catholic, but a North of Ireland Presbyterian."

"Wa-al! really, Sister—do hear that—there may be some Catholics like you, I'll not think so hard of them after your kindness, for you're really good!"

"Friend," mildly replied the Sister, "do not judge harshly of those you know nothing about; there are some bad Catholics, no doubt, but many better than I am. Our holy religion teaches us love and charity to all. If we follow the teachings and precepts of that religion, we make no distinction between black or white, race or color, Protestant or Catholic, Jew or Gentile, but distribute our charity alike to all."

Another prisoner says, in a confidential whisper, to the attending Sister:

"Sister, aint you Union?"

"How do you know?"

"Well, you are so kind and good to us poor fellows, I know you must be Union; but, 'Sister,' in a more confidential whisper, you need not fear telling me, you know."

I tell you Shingley, if you had a spark of
 maternal feeling in you, you ought to be ashamed
 of yourself to treat your own flesh and blood
 in that manner - your own child. Oh, you
 ill natured, spiteful, graceless creature
 of a woman, ~~but then I thought you~~
~~thought the child to die~~ but what child
 you care for baby while you had Sarah
 Jane to let juggling with all the time
 don't tell me you don't, look at the state
 of the house and poor sick baby, and
 Sarah Jane, this next morning, looks
 as if she's 'bout to drop or worse a case.
 Oh dear the dear my life will last between
 you. I must call in the doctor to prevent me
 from my own husband and his wife mine
 of a - what will I call her?
 don't tell me that you are all good nursing
 the baby, Shingley, I don't believe it Shingley,
 if you took care of the child it would not be
 necessary to send an assistant
 don't tell me that your husband is learned
 from your neglect, ~~to show~~ why dear you neglect
 it then, to nurse baby indeed, you Shingley,
 Sarah Jane gently looks at you and I notice
 that the brazier thing looks sicker than ever
 Baby and I both when I went, I thought he was
 the poor suffering dear, but he is worse now
 and whose fault is that Shingley?
 My fault that would not stay at home and
 take care of my child and house
 - you are a hangover Shingley really would
 would they not from asserting our rights
 and bringing us under foot
 You little know, Shingley, you Sarah Jane little
 people, the great work we have done at the Convention

"Did I ever ask you, friend, whether you were a Catholic or Protestant?"

"Never!"

"Have you seen me, in my attendance on the prisoners, making any distinction on account of religion?"

"No, Sister, I am a Protestant, and I am sure I would not be on my legs to-day, but for you, God bless you!"

"Well, my friend! what I have done for the Federal prisoners, I would do for the Confederate. Charity has neither politics nor religion. We try to alleviate the sufferings of the afflicted according to the teachings of our religion and Our Divine Master, and from Him alone we expect to reap our reward."

A fine young soldier named Markham, who was suffering from pulmonary disease, was removed from the stockade to the hospital; there was something so gentle and unobtrusive about him that the Sisters took a special interest in him. He gradually sank and the racking cough increased to a painful degree, yet he never complained nor murmured. As the Sister sat beside him to help him to his soup or medicine, he loved to converse about home, about his mother, brothers and sisters, until his large luminous eyes would become dim with tears. The doctor told the Sister that his end was approaching, and that it might be well to break the news to him. So, in giving her rounds, she quietly sat beside him and taking his hand, asked,

"How do you feel to-day?"

"Oh, much better, Sister, the cough is nearly gone, and if I only get a little stronger I'll be all right."

"My dear friend," replied the Sister, "symptoms are often deceitful, we should not be deceived by them, but prepare for a happier exchange, for this world is all vanity."

He raised himself gently in the bed and fixed his dark eyes on the Sister, as he asked,

"Oh, Sister! are you trying to break the news to me that there is no hope? If so, do not be afraid to tell me, I can bear it—but then, I feel so well!"

"My dear, life and death are in the hands of God; you appear to be so good a young man, that I am sure you have no fear of meeting your Maker and Savior."

He lay still for a moment, with his hands clasped over his face, and the tears trickled through his fingers.

He aroused himself, as if ashamed of his weakness, and said:

"I assure me, Sister! it is not the thought of death that thus unmans me, but it is so hard to die without seeing my dear mother and family." After a time he became quite reconciled, and talked freely of his approaching end.

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The able letter signed R. W. which appeared on Friday's Lead was a regular bombshell fired among the politicians and Sluggish Newspapers of the City. The letter woked up to the fact that the public mind was agitated on the subject but had not the judgement to see how until the Lead threw its genial light upon them.

Some of the Democratic papers wuggle, and in their wrath ask, what right the Lead have to interfere with them? It has the right of a fearless progressive Journal that is alive on public questions, and fears not to handle them, whether Democratic or Republican. I am sure the Lead is more alive to day, by men of all political parties, than any other Journal in the City of New York and therefore has a right to discuss both sides of the question. I thoroughly agree with R. W. that it is full time that Mr. Belmont should be deposed. In addition to the convincing arguments I would state that August Belmont in his plea for obtaining the fund funds asked that

"You ought to have a minister and make proper preparations, if you will tell me what minister you desire, I'll send for him."

"The truth is, Sister, I have been brought up in no denomination, and have never had any religious instruction, but, I would like to belong to your religion."

"My young friend, I am a Roman Catholic, and great many who do not understand our Holy Religion, are prejudiced against it."

"Was not the world prejudiced against Our Saviour? I know your religion must be good, otherwise you could not be what you are."

The Sister brought him the priest, who baptised and prepared him for death. A Sister remained continually by him, joining in prayer and other acts of devotion, and in two days, he yielded his pure soul into the hands of his Maker.

The following letter from the Secretary of War, though not in chronological order here, will show that the services of the Sisters were not limited by race or color. There were strong extenuating circumstances in favor of Benton. He committed the murder while in a state of intense excitement, caused by the murdered man and his friends. The Sisters having learned the full particulars of the case, laid them, in a forcible manner, before Secretary Stanton, who favorably considered them, and granted a pardon to the prisoner.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, Dec. 16, 1863.

Mother M. Teresa, Superior, and Sister M. Xavier, Convent of Our Lady of Mercy, Charleston, S. C.

LADIES:—In reply to your communication of October 16th, 1863, addressed to Breve

Major General R. Saxton, Assistant Commissioner, regarding the pardon of Samuel J. Benton, colored, 54th Massachusetts Volunteers, imprisoned in Fort Delaware for the crime of murder; I have the honor to inform you that the release of Benton was ordered by letter from this office.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

E. D. TOWNSEND,
Ass't Ad-Gen'l.

So great was the confidence in the Sisters and so thoroughly did the Confederate officials appreciate their services, that they had a pass to go within the lines at all times and places.

The following is a copy of the pass given to the Sisters at Charleston:

Headquarters, Department of
South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.
CHARLESTON, S. C., Oct. 1, 1864.

The "Sisters of Mercy" have permission to visit the "Federal Prisoners of War" confined in this city, without distinction, until further orders.

By command of
Major LANE JONES,

J. F. LANE,
Major and Department Inspector.

A French officer, being placed with some negroes, after arrest, felt very indignant and became very excited. He wrote to the Sisters to come to his relief.

CHARLESTON JAIL.

Sister M. Xavier, Convent of Mercy.

DEAR SISTER:—I should be very glad if you would be kind enough to come to see me immediately, in the jail.

Yours, very respectfully,

L. DUVERGE,
Captain U. S. V.

The Sister did go immediately, attended to his wants, got him better quarters, and finally succeeded in getting him out.

We make the following extracts from letters received from officers, who were prisoners in Charleston, to the Sisters, after their release, thanking them for their care, attention and services.

These gentlemen are, I believe, all Protestants, and therefore, their testimony, to the kind charitable offices of the Sisters, must have the more weight.

The first pass the Sisters of Mercy, Charleston, issued was for Sister M. Xavier and was a general permission to visit the Union prisoners without restriction.
See date June 18th - 1862

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SISTERS OF MERCY, CHARLESTON.

GEN'L. POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, }
WASHINGTON, April 6th, 1869. }

Sister M. Xavier.

Madam:—Having, by accident, been referred to a speech of Hon. F. A. Sawyers, in support of the appropriation for the Sisters of Mercy of Charleston, S. C., I have taken the liberty of penning a brief testimonial of my appreciation of the valuable services rendered by yourself and the Sisters to our suffering and emaciated soldiers, who, like myself, were confined as prisoners of war, at Charleston, S. C., during the Summer and Fall of 1864.

On my arrival at Charleston, S. C., with the "immortal" six hundred, who were placed under fire of the Union guns on Morris Island, I met you and your noble Sisters in the hospitals and prisons, administering to the wants and comfort of my fellow prisoners, by furnishing them, not only with proper food and nourishment, &c., but even with clothing to those who were destitute. I also witnessed the noble sacrifices you made in nursing our sick during those dark days, when the yellow fever was carrying off our best officers and men—and when Confederate officers were too much alarmed to even furnish water for the sick and dying—and I know full well, that but for your untiring devotion to our helpless and unfortunate officers and soldiers, thousands to-day would have been sleeping the sleep that knows no waking.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN E. MICHENER,
Late Captain 85th Pa. Infantry.

MILITARY PRISON, COLUMBIA, S. C., }
December 6, 1864. }

Sister M. Xavier.

Dear Sister—I have been sick ever since my removal from Charleston to this place, and I now beg to remind you of your promise, to use your influence to get my name on the exchange list, as I am told there will be an exchange of prisoners next week. I sincerely thank you for the money (dollar) which I received through Father McNeal. I assure you, it was very acceptable, and I hope, if I live, to repay you for all your kind favors.

Gratefully and respectfully yours,

JOHN DUNN,
1st Lieutenant, Co. I, 164th Regt. N. Y. Vols.

The writer of the following was a brave officer and worthy gentleman, and though a Protestant, bears honest testimony to the kind offices of the Sisters.

NEW YORK, June 7th, 1867.

I hereby certify that on the night of the 17th of June, 1864, I was captured by the enemy, in an attack upon their works, in front of Petersburg, Va., and, with many others, was soon after taken to Macon, Ga., general rendezvous for officers, prisoners of war, from whence (in August) was taken to Charleston, S. C., and confined in Roper Hospital, on Queen St., and immediately under fire from our batteries. During my stay there, the building was several times perforated by shot and shell, and the Orphan's Asylum, standing on the opposite corner of the street, was almost demolished. Being very sick, I was taken to general hospital at Rikersville, near Charleston, which was filled

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with officers and men of our army and navy, the great majority of whom were dying for want of stimulating food and proper care. It was at this time that I met the Sisters of Mercy, from Charleston, who almost daily visited the hospital, not only cheering us with words of consolation, but substantially administering to our wants, by bringing us food and clothing, procured by them at their own expense, and furnished to us gratis. They saw that our letters were deposited in the proper channel, through which they would reach our friends at home, and attended to the delivery of letters and boxes which came from the North for us, and, in fact, exerted themselves in every conceivable way to render us comfortable and happy. I most cheerfully pay this tribute to the Holy Order of the Sisters of Mercy of Charleston, S. C., who were instrumental in many instances in saving the lives of our officers and men, and whose repeated acts of kindness were so grateful to us—as they were disinterested on the part of the Sisters.

JOHN S. HAMMILL,
Late Col. of 66th Mich. Vols. and Bryt. Brig.-
General U. S. Vols.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, }
July 12, 1865. }

Lady Superior.

Madam—Probably you do not remember seeing, last Summer, at the 1st South Carolina Hospital, a Federal officer, who told you "he had not spoken with a lady in two years." Doubtless, among so many poor, half-starved wretches, no particular one would be likely to make so much impression as to cause you to remember him; but, madam, I assure you, your kind looks and words sank deep into many a heart, and often have I heard both officers and men bless you and the good Sisters of your Order. I was twenty months a prisoner, and the only kindness I saw displayed towards us was at the hospital in Charleston, S. C. I was sent with the rest of the officers to Columbia, and from thence we became a sort of advance guard to Sherman, as we were run about from place to place as he advanced, till at length we were set at liberty on the 1st of March, 1865, at Wilmington, N. C., and once more stood under the protecting folds of our dear old flag. I immediately returned to my regiment, the Sixth Michigan Cavalry, at Petersburg, Va., and served with it until the 21st of June last, when I was mustered out of the service, at Fort Lavenworth, Kansas, together with my whole company. I am now prosecuting my old profession (that of a lawyer) in this place. I beg you will pardon me for thus trespassing on your time, but I wished to testify my appreciation of your kindness to us in the hour of need. I am not of your Church, and have always been taught to believe it to be nothing but evil; however, actions speak louder than words, and I am free to admit, that if Christianity does exist on the earth, it has some of its closest followers among the Ladies of your Order. If not contrary to your rules, and if agreeable to yourself, I should be happy to receive an acknowledgement of the receipt of this.

Very respectfully your obd't. servant,

S. H. BALLARD.

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The first pass given to the Sisters of Mercy, Charleston, was from General Beauregard himself, dated June 18th 1862, and granted them general permission to visit the Union prisoners without restriction.

This being lost, a new one was issued by Mayor Lay (not Lane as stated) giving them similar privileges. Among those who contributed to the relief of the prisoners was General Thos. Jordan, who gave the Sisters fifty dollars and told them to call on him again should their funds get low, and requested them to report to him should they witness any bad treatment of the Union prisoners.

The Rev. Father Fellion and Rev. Dr. Moore were particularly kind and attentive to both the spiritual and temporal wants of the prisoners. Father Fellion, beside the Stbeade at Florence every Tuesday, remaining among the prisoners until Friday. In the zealous discharge of his duties there, he contracted camp fever on the 14th of February 1864 and died a martyr to the cause of humanity and Christianity on the 21st, two days after the occupation of Charleston. The kind and charitable Rev. P. O'Neil, who was an attendant at the Rickersville hospital and the Race Course, had died, like the good shepherd, tending the stricken flock of Christ, on the January previous.

Not one of the then inmates, who read this, no matter what his creed or his politics may have been, can forget the kind, sympathetic priest, whose genial smile cheered him, whose advice and counsel consoled him, and whose timely aid relieved many a pressing want.

In order to make some of the following letters intelligible, I must state that the Sisters have made application to Congress for the compensation for the injury done their Convent during the bombardment, and been refused.

We trust that the friends of those they relieved and ministered to in their hour of sickness and suffering, will bring such influence upon their representatives in Congress as to induce them to reconsider their vote and to do justice to the Community that have freely given their time and means to the relief of the suffering Union prisoners.

(now Bishop of Birmingham)

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(now Bishop of Birmingham Ala.)

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We narrate the following among the many incidents occurring to the Sisters during their ministrations to the sick and wounded.

One of the Sisters brought peaches for one ward and grapes for another, not having sufficiency of both for each ward.

She said to the men, while distributing the grapes, "Don't carry any of these into the next ward, as I have no more of them."

While distributing her peaches in the next room, she found a poor Michigan invalid actually blubbering, and on looking round she saw a one legged soldier from New York named McCarthy, leaning on his crutch at the door, and tempting the poor fellow with the luscious fruit. "Ah," said the invalid, "if I could only get enough of them, how happy I'd be; I need not be drinking bad water."

A prisoner named Boyden, from New York, lost his right hand, and was very weak from loss of blood. As the Sisters were going to the Hospital, they met the Bishop, who asked if they had seen Boyden, and told them to "give him stimulants and see that he did not get a chill, for if he did he would certainly die." Previous to this warning, the Sisters feared to give stimulants to wounded men. Afterwards, whenever the Sisters came, Boyden would ask them if they had any of the "O be joyful?" At first they were at a loss to know what he meant, but he explained by saying, have you not got a bottle in your basket?

After a while Boyden learned to write with the left hand and the first note in his journal was about "the ladies in black," as he called the Sisters of Mercy.

A colored soldier was brought into the hospital badly wounded in the arm and knee. When the Sisters came his wounds were still unwashed, and he said not a word, as none of the nurses noticed him. The Sisters asked one of them why he was not attended to, and took cloths and water, commencing to wash and dress his wounds.

After a while the poor fellow was made as comfortable as the case would admit. On asking him where he was from, he said, "Bernuda, Madame."

"Why you are an English Subject, how came you here?"

"Ah! Madam, they gave me fifty dollars."

"Why I would not give that arm for five hundred," said the Sister.

"Madam," said he, "I would not give it for five thousand dollars."

Poor fellow, both the leg and arm had to be taken off, as there was no chance to save his life otherwise, and he got on apparently well for three weeks, but afterwards died of jaundice. He was decidedly the most intelligent man in the room and a regular Othello in symmetry.

The Mother Superior gave a shirt to a prisoner, who was in the Hospital, and the nurse could not imagine what caused his great uneasiness, when he allowed her to send it to the wash-kitchen; at last he told her who had given it to him, and added that it should be kept in his family while there was a shred of it together.

When the first shell fell near the Queen-street Hospital, the men who were badly wounded begged the Sister to ask the Doctor to have them removed out of the range of the shells. She did so, and the Doctor said he had already made a requisition to that effect. But when going through the ward he said, joking, "What, you Yanks are you afraid of your own shells?" They were all in a great way to know who had asked the Sister to beg the Doctor, saying, "how it will be in all the newspapers that we were afraid of our own shells." Sister asked them if they did not think their own shells as loud as any others?

Two men were on one occasion brought to Hospital from some stockade or prison, and they were so ill that they were laid in the piazza. While two of the Sisters and one of the convalescents were trying to revive the two poor patients, a Confederate officer (Capt. Simons) went over them, saying to the Sisters, "I could meet these men in the field but I cannot stand this." It was not a rare thing to see the officers, on guard at the Race Course, shed tears, while they accompanied the Sisters in their rounds among the sick in the Stockade.

An Irishman, named Finton, who lost a leg at Morris Island, and who was always very cheerful during his tedious imprisonment, was asked by one of the Sisters, "what com-

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pany do you belong to, Finton?" "Faith I'm ashamed to tell you, Sister." "Why so?"

"Because I belong to a mighty mean Regiment." "How is that, what have they done?" "Well, I'll tell you, I belong to the 9th Maine, who burned the Catholic Church in Jackson." "How many Irish were among them?" "Nine or ten." "And why could not so many have saved the Church? What were you all doing while they burned it?"

"Oh! we tried to save it, but we were ordered to be put in irons and carried away, so we were locked up."

A colored prisoner, named Baltimore, was asked, by one of the Sisters, where he lost his arm.

"On the top of *Bultery Wagner*," was his reply. "Why did you go there," said the Sister? "Because the fire was all around," said he, "there was no safety on any side, I had to go forward whether I liked it or not."

A young man from New Hampshire, named Wm. Merrill, who lived sixteen days in the Queen St. Hospital, and died from the effects of a wound above the knee, asked, when near death, one of the nurses, to bring him the Sisters' minister. He had never been baptized. Father Moore was called in, and the young man received all the Sacraments, and died blessing the Sisters for their kindness to him and his comrades. He was only one out of hundreds who, of their own accord, made choice of the Faith wherein they had found Charity.

The following speaks volumes in behalf of the appeal of the Sisters of Mercy for the restoration of their Asylum, destroyed during the bombardment of Charleston, 20 2044 5771

State of Connecticut, County of New Haven, ss.
 I hereby certify that I, F. R. Jackson, (formerly a sergeant in company M, 7th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry), lost my left arm in battle, on James Island, South Carolina, June 10th, 1862, and was then and there taken prisoner by the enemy. I was carried from the battlefield to Charleston, South Carolina, June 19th, 1862, and was there placed in a building known as "Mart Hospital," on King of Queen street (an uncertain which) in which were confined all of the prisoners taken June 16th, who were seriously wounded. Soon after our arrival in Charleston we were visited by Sister M. Xavier, accompanied by another Sister, Mercy, each bearing comforts for us the wounded Union prisoners. Sister Xavier came to the hospital prison daily, accompanied each time by another Sister, and each day went to all our number and gave fruit, corn bread, cake, meat, grub, arrow root, and sometimes chicken and chicken broth. She brought me daily either a bottle of wine or of brandy—generally a bottle of Old Malaga wine. There were eight wounded men confined in our cell, only one of whom, Captain Lawler, was a Roman Catholic. All received the same attentions at the hands of Sister M. Xavier and companion. The great majority of our number were of the Protestant faith, but there was no distinction made between us on account of religion or nationality. The Sisters were day and night unremitting in their attentions to us. They provided for all of our wants, and made our prison life in Charleston a perfect heaven on earth, compared to what we experienced after leaving that place. Sister Xavier often brought interesting books of all kinds. Liniments, medicines, and money were furnished by her to those in need, and nearly all, if not all, were daily supplied with wine, cordials, brandy, or some stimulating liquor. This kind treatment continued without intermission during the two months we were prisoners at Charleston. I have not the command of language wherewith to sufficiently attest the great benevolence and kindness of the Sisters of Mercy who were in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1862, ministering to the every want of our wounded Union prisoners, nearly all of whom, myself included, were Protestants. F. R. Jackson, Formerly Sergeant Co. F, 7th Conn. Vol.

The next letter is from U. S. Consul at St. Thomas.

U. S. CONSULATE AT ST. THOMAS, March 10th, 1860.

To Sister M. Xavier, Washington.

I received your kind letters of Jan. 18th, and February 8d, and as per your request I enclose a letter to Congress, which I hope will have some effect in your favor, and which I recommend you to hand to the Hon. Joseph S. Fowler, member of the Senate, and the Hon. Isaac R. Hawkins, member of Congress, as coming from me, and I must say that I hope you will be able to succeed in your enterprise. I must also embrace this opportunity to thank you for your kindness to me during my imprisonment in Charleston, which I shall ever remember.

I remain, yours very truly,
 JOHN T. ROBISON,
 U. S. Consul.

~~Here are~~ The following letters, ^{were} sent by
the Sisters from Federal officers, who have
been under their care

The first is an extract from a statement of
Lieutenant-Colonel, L. S. Payne, 100 N. Y.
V., now residing at Lockport, New York.

"While acting under special orders of Gen.
Gilmore in the attempt to intercept the ene-
my's, communication, between Charleston
City and Cummings Point, on Morris Island,
on the night of the third of August, 1863, I
was attacked by a superior force, wounded
and taken prisoner, with nine of my men,
four of whom were also wounded.

"The wounded of my party were taken to
Queen Street Hospital, Charleston, where
there were a large number. Several hun-
dred of those had previously been at the
bloody assault on Battery Wagner, and in
other operations on Morris Island, where
they had been wounded, and had fallen into
the hands of the enemy.

"This hospital was assigned exclusively to
wounded prisoners, and all citizens were
forbidden permission to visit it.

"The Sisters of Mercy, after much opposi-
tion, succeeded in obtaining permission to
visit the hospital for the purpose of dispens-
ing their truly Christian charity, and reliev-
ing the sufferings of the wounded and dying.
I need not particularize, but I will state that
the attention of these Angels of Mercy to
our wounded soldiers were at this time in-
cessant and unceasing, never failing to call
daily and some one or more of them for
there seemed to be many of them—calling
for oftener, and administering to the severer
cases. In their supplies of palatable food
and changes of clothing furnished to those
destitute, and in all their ministrations, they
made no distinction between rank, color, or
 creed, but their relief was directed to all
alike.

"The excessively hot weather, the insuffi-
cient supplies of medicines and other neces-
saries, together with the little nursing help,
induces me to believe that through the aid
of these kind people the lives of many of
our soldier-prisoners were saved.

"After being transported from Charleston
to Columbia, and since my return home, I
have met with many of the officers and sol-
diers, who had been in Charleston as prison-
ers, and they all universally speak of the
unbounded kindness and goodness of these
Sisters of Mercy of Charleston. The lives,
occupation and mission of these Sisters of
Mercy is truly one of mercy and charity,
indeed.

"The following letter, dated Columbia, S.
C. Prison, October 14th, 1864, by John
Rourke, of Milbank City, Wisconsin, Captain
of Battery L., 1st Illinois Artillery, was ad-
dressed to Mother Teresa, of Charleston.
Captain Rourke and other officers had been
removed from Charleston Prison to
Columbia.

REVERED MOTHER:—The officers, prisoners,
war, who came from Charleston here, are

all well. We would prefer being prisoners in your city to any place in the Confederacy. I hope Confederate prisoners at the North are as favorably impressed with the kind attention of the Sisters there. The night of the day we arrived here it rained very heavy, and as we had no shelter we had to stand up under it in torrents. It was not pleasant, after leaving comparatively comfortable quarters in Charleston. However, it did not seem to impair the health of the officers. I think that two of them died here, one of them, it is said, of yellow fever. I hope the plague will soon subside in your city. I would like to know how Lieutenant Charles Townsell is. You undoubtedly remember him; he roomed with me, and was taken sick the night before I left Charleston, and had to remain behind.

Please tender to Sister Xavier my sincere thanks and well wishes; also remember me to Dr. Moore. Hoping to have an opportunity, some day, to prove my thanks and liquidate the debt of gratitude to you and your co-workers, for your consoling and kind treatment to me, and also to all the sick prisoners of war in your city, I will conclude by wishing you all the happiness and joys of Heaven.

Col. Henry sends his kind and grateful regards to you.

The next letter is from Adjutant Henry F. Kendal, 50th Pa. Vol., who was a prisoner in Columbia, S. C., inquiring after his brother, Lieutenant Joseph B. Kendal, of the same regiment, who was a prisoner in Charleston.

Sister Xavier managed to open a communication between them, which explains the subsequent letter from the brother.

Your kind letter of the 18th, in answer to my request, and your recent efforts in brother's behalf, have again placed me under many obligations. I have succeeded in getting some articles of clothing, which will add to his comfort.

My only regret is that, I am unable, at present, to forward the money he needs. It gives me comfort to think that I will soon be able to supply his wants in this respect. I enclose a letter from brother. I will make application, this morning, to send the articles above mentioned to your care for him.

Yours truly,
Sister Xavier

Camp of the 50th Regt. Pa. Vol.,
Near Georgetown, D. C.,
June 17th, 1865.
Sister M. Xidief, Convent of Mercy, Charleston,
S.C.

RESPECTED FRIEND:—I was paroled as a Union prisoner and sent into our lines from Richmond, just three days before it fell. Your letter written to brother Henry, was received while I was at home in Reading, and I at once mailed it to him at Philadelphia, where he is now at College. He is preparing himself for a civil engineer. I wrote to him at the time, telling him to send the letter to me, and I would reply to it as I was very anxious to express my heartfelt gratitude for the many acts of kindness received by me at your hands. I should have written much sooner, but I was then engaged in writing an account of my experience in the Confederacy, and I did not wish to write before I could enclose to you a copy of it. This embraces a short sketch of my eleven months' imprisonment, so I will not speak in my letter to you of my condition after leaving Charleston; it will be a greater satisfaction to you to read the full account.

I entered our lines on the 30th of March, and was taken to Parole Camp, Annapolis, Md., where I remained four days, to get cleaned up, paid, clothed, &c. I then started home on a furlough of 30 days. I was very much troubled on the way. During all my imprisonment, I had never heard one word from home, and numberless questions crowded themselves upon my mind. Would I find my mother alive—my aged grandmother—my dear sisters and brothers? I was also troubled about Henry. I knew he had entered our lines in December of 1864, for you wrote to me, stating that he had been exchanged at Charleston. I afterwards ascertained that he had made his escape before you were able to effect his exchange. I feared that he might have fallen in the late engagement before Petersburg, but it appears that he was mustered out shortly after his return.

I did not write home from Annapolis, to apprise them of my coming. As I jumped from the cars at Reading, I did not expect to see any one I knew, but the first person I saw was Henry, dressed in citizens' clothing. His baggage was already on the cars—his ticket bought, and he just going to start for Philadelphia, but my appearance changed his programme, and he remained in Reading with me for two weeks, before going to College.

Our joy at meeting knew no bounds. For eleven months we had been separated, although at times we were so near to each other. At Charleston, we made repeated efforts to obtain an interview, all to no avail, and had it not been for your kind offices, of mercy I should not have known until arriving at home, whether brother was alive or dead.

Indeed, I feel confident that had it not been for your efforts in my behalf, I could not have survived this winter in that terrible stockade at Florence. When I came to Charleston I was almost naked, so much so that when you came to the camp on the "Race Course" I was ashamed to make my

appearance before you, but you noticed my condition and clothed me. Those clothes kept me from freezing at Florence. How anxiously I watched day by day for the arrival of that most welcome of ambulances, with the good Sisters at the Race Course. It encouraged me to hope and keep up my drooping spirits.

At the depot I could scarcely muster courage to ask Henry "How are all at home?" but when I found that they were all well and hearty, I made all haste in my power to embrace them. Oh! what a happy family we were that night! I had more questions put to me in half an hour than I could answer in a week.

There was no end to the kissing and shaking of hands and Henry manifested his delight by turning summersaults on the floor. My three sisters clung to me at once, while mother laughed and cried alternately. It was the happiest moment of my life—but amidst all this, rejoicing I did not forget my kind benefactress—she, to whom we owed this happy union, and all this rejoicing. I told them all about you and your kind ministrations in my behalf. We all feel that we are under everlasting obligations to you, and mother would give almost anything to see you herself—to embrace you and thank you for your kindness to her "prisoner boys." Grateful hearts, that night, poured fervent prayers to heaven to reward and bless you, who, though of a different religion, have truly acted the good Samaritan.

They had heard of my second escape at home, but after waiting seven weeks to hear from me, they had given me up as lost. At different times I have met soldiers who were prisoners at the Race Course, and it pleases me to hear them all speak in such high terms of the Sisters of Mercy.

You can never know the amount of good you have accomplished, for it cannot be estimated.

I was very much grieved to hear of the death of Father Fillion. He looked so well the last time I saw him at Florence. I hope Father Moore is enjoying good health; please remember me to him, and tell him I often speak of him and the many favors he has done me.

Captain Tallford, of our regiment, who was a prisoner with my brother at the Roper Hospital is now colonel of the regiment. He wishes to be kindly remembered to you. I remained home till the 19th of May when I returned to the regiment as 1st Lieutenant of my company.

I hope our soldiers at Charleston are treating you with the respect due to your noble efforts in behalf of suffering humanity. I should feel bad to hear that they are not doing so. Henry wishes to be gratefully remembered to you. We have often talked together about how we could repay you for your kindness. We thought that you would not accept pecuniary compensation, and then we thought of other plans but could come to no conclusion. For the present, accept the gratitude of a happy, re-united family, for your disinterested goodness and kindness, and may your labors be crowned with everlasting happiness.

Mother often speaks of you and wishes over and over that she could get a small photograph of one to whom she owes so much. Would it be improper to ask you for one for her; if not it would please her so much.

Of 110 of our regiment who were prisoners, but 40 have returned alive.

Will you please write to me?

Sincerely and gratefully, I am your respectful servant.

JOSEPH A. KENDAL
1st Lieut., Co. H, 50th Pa. Vol.

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