

WHEN TRUTH GOES TO WAR

BY CHARLES ANGOFF

THE inhabitants of the late Confederate States of America, in this Coolidge Golden Age, are universally admitted to be among the most amiable people of Christendom. Every now and then, true enough, they put a sudden end to the earthly woes of a troublesome black man or flog a white woman for being unbearably aphrodisiacal, but that is surely not often. Life in Birmingham, Charleston, Richmond, Atlanta and the other eminent Southern cities is now almost as safe as it is in New York, or even Chicago. The Southerners' love of liberty and of the principle of equality before the law is nearly up to the level of the Bostonians'. In the amenities they are unsurpassed. They receive the stranger with a hearty and lavish hospitality, and fête him with all their celebrated victuals and their no less celebrated stimulants, now contraband but still plentiful. They are polite, charming and gentle, whether cold sober or in their cups.

But it is only a little more than sixty years ago that they were engaged wholesale and deliberately, if the sworn testimony in the archives of the United States is to be believed, in acts of ferocity that would have shamed Zulus, Turks, Bolsheviks, or even Prussians. Spurred on by their Kaiser, the late Jefferson Davis, they carried on like Pennsylvania State police or head-hunters from the Borneo jungle. They had hordes of blood-sweating Hindenburgs, Ludendorffs, von Tirpitzes, and Crown Princes. They practised every crime known to the books, and invented multitudes of new ones of their own. That was during the lamented Civil War, now

half forgotten, which began on June 10, 1861, and ended on April 9, 1865. The evidence, like that of the celebrated Bryce report on the atrocities of the Hun in Belgium, is set down in cold and indelible print, and constitutes a part of the official history of the United States. No patriotic Union man, in the years between 1861 and, say, 1875, ever doubted it for an instant. To doubt it in those days, indeed, would have been equal to spitting on the flag.

A committee from the great State of Rhode Island, headed by Governor William Sprague, investigated the behavior of the Confederates in the middle of the war, and issued a lengthy report thereon. It bristled with damning accusations against them, and ended with the dreadful indictment:

They have crowned the Rebellion by the perpetration of deeds scarcely known even to savage warfare. . . . The investigations of your committee have established the fact beyond all controversy. . . . The crimes, in all their details, exceed the worst excesses of the Sepoys of India.

This verdict was substantiated by the ethnologist and expert on savage practises, John Russell Bartlett, then Secretary of State of Rhode Island, whose pamphlet, "The Barbarities of the Rebels," had an enormous circulation in those trying days. He said that the Rebels were "heaping upon the living and the dead indignities such as even Attila would have blushed to commit." The war correspondent of the Cincinnati *Commercial*, another high authority, summarized the official facts thus:

The Rebels seem more perfidious than Spartans. They regard none of the obligations of honor which bind the rest of mankind. They take oaths but to violate them; give pledges of the most solemn character that they may deceive those who

credit their representations. They prove themselves a race of Cretans, as well as Spartans, in their dispositions to steal and violate their pledges of honor. If the ignorant only were guilty there would be hope for them, but the most flagrant acts of infamy are done and encouraged by leading people.

The Northern journals of those days were filled with reports on these Rebel atrocities. The more opulent of them had correspondents on the field who specialized in the revolting but fascinating subject. Among these were the *Boston Traveller*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Cincinnati Commercial* and the *New York Tribune*. But the paper that beat them all in presenting atrocity news was *Harper's Weekly*, which had the sub-title of *A Journal of Civilization*. It reaped a huge profit from its moral diligence. Throughout the duration of the war its average circulation was 100,000, and its sales often reached the colossal figure, for those days, of 200,000. It nearly always accompanied its elaborate and colorful news of the crimes of the Confederates with sketches of returned Union prisoners, showing them with their legs and arms cut off, and their eyes gouged out. In the case of amputated legs it often had the amputated portion placed on a stool directly below the stump. Its editors thundered that "these cruelties were not the result of accident, but of a deliberate purpose." Its cartoonists portrayed the Confederacy as the Christian Devil, with the regulation horns, tail, and talons.

The Battle of Bull Run furnished *Harper's* and the newspapers of the time with some of their best atrocity stories. The following was sent in by the correspondent of the *Belvidere, N. J., Press*, who accompanied the aforementioned Governor Sprague to the field of carnage when he went there to recover the remains of murdered Union soldiers:

A Negro girl came down through the woods from a house nearby on the hill, and watched the proceedings. Suddenly she came up by the side of the graves, and asked if they were not digging for Colonel Slocum's body. On being answered in the affirmative, she said, "You're too late. The Georgia regiment have dug him up many weeks

ago to procure his bones for trophies, and his body has been burnt for this purpose." She pointed out the place where the cannibal rites occurred, and there, in the midst of coal and cinders, the horror-stricken party saw verified the woman's almost incredible narration.

That such heinous acts were common at Bull Run was shown by the sworn testimony of Surgeon William E. Whalen, of the Fourteenth Regiment, New York Volunteers:

One afternoon Captain Withington and myself took a walk over the battlefield. This was some ten or twelve days after the battle. As we walked around I saw some of our men still unburied, and some entirely naked. . . . Yet I saw a great many women, ladies I suppose they call themselves, walking about the field at that time, apparently entirely unmoved. . . . In going over the battlefield subsequently I noticed that some of the graves had been disturbed by pushing rails down under the bodies and prying them up. Many of the Negroes said that they had seen the soldiers doing that. The object, as I was informed, was to make drinking cups of the tops of the skulls, and rings of the bones.

According to the Northern historians of the time the same sort of ferocity went on during and after all the other battles of the war. Lieut.-Col. C. W. Blair, commander of Fort Scott, for example, reported that all of the dead of his command were found "shot through the head, showing that they were taken prisoners and then murdered." Major B. S. Henning, of the Third Wisconsin Cavalry, reported that his soldiers "were told in every instance that if they would surrender and deliver up their arms, they would be treated as prisoners, and upon doing so, were immediately shot down." Private Jesse Smith, of Major Henning's command, was shot through the head after being taken prisoner, but, by a miracle, did not lose consciousness. In a sworn statement he said that the Rebel who shot him rolled him on his back and then jumped on it and tried to dance on it, in the meanwhile uttering the most blasphemous imprecations. He also reported that "some unarmed citizens who were with us were killed, and their bodies were stripped of their clothing. . . . A woman and child were shot at the camp. It was done premeditatedly and not by random

shots." Brigadier-General James A. Garfield, later President of the United States, corroborated all this testimony. He issued an official order charging that the Confederates had "brutally murdered several of our soldiers, who surrendered themselves prisoners of war. They have fired into passenger trains filled with unarmed men, women and children. They have fired into a boat loaded with our sick and wounded, with its hospital flag flying, and, after having burned the boat and carried off all the medical stores, they have left the sick and wounded to perish on the shore, in a drenching rain."

II

All this was done by the Rebel hordes in the field, but the citizens not in uniform, it appears, were just as bad. According to the Northern newspapers of the war years, all of them, including the women, seem to have lost the last vestige of humanity, and become as raving hyenas. Here is an example of their hellish activities, supplied by "a gentleman of the highest respectability in Illinois" to the *Albany Evening Journal*, and later spread upon the official records of the United States:

The Secessionists here recently undermined a railroad bridge, and scores of men, women and children were killed or maimed for life. A more cowardly set of savages does not exist. You can hardly realize the ferocity with which slavery inspires the owner of a Negro or two. Even woman, when she owns a slave, or one is owned by the family, seems in many instances to have cast aside her feminine nature and to have become savage. A woman of wealth, the owner of quite a number of slaves, when a band of Cherokee Indians came to the south of Missouri, where she lives, to join the Secession Army under McCullough of Texas, that woman, or rather fiend, publicly offered the Indians a large reward if they would bring her "Yankee free-soil" scalps, enough to make a counterpane for her bed.

And then this gentleman related the following most terrible incident:

Last June a beautiful and accomplished girl, a native of Western New York, employed as a teacher in New Orleans, was dragged on Sunday morning to Jackson Square and placed *ad nuditate naturæ* in the presence of hundreds of spectators,

including scores of well-dressed women. To the latter the poor girl made a heart-rending appeal, that they would save her sex from such an outrage. But they replied only by jeers and insults, telling her it was no more than every Yankee woman deserved. The unfortunate girl was tarred and feathered and then banished from the State, without receiving the salary due her. You may rely upon the truth of this statement.

In dealing with those patriots in their midst who showed any sympathy with Mr. Lincoln's efforts to save civilization the Rebels, if we are to believe history, exhibited even more cruelty than in their dealings with unarmed and sick Yankees. An eye-witness, writing in the highly reliable *Harper's Weekly*, summarized the matter in these words:

These human bloodhounds, in hunting Union men, will often hang children in the hope of extorting a confession as to the whereabouts of their parents. I have seen young women treated in the same inhuman manner, while wives are subjected to every cruelty, for no other offense than fidelity to their husbands, by these red-handed monsters.

In Texas, then still wild and woolly, the Confederate Ludendorffs naturally reached the acme of their barbaric art. The field correspondent of the Boston *Traveller* was on the spot and saw everything with his own eyes. He jotted down his observations in his notebook, rushed to New Orleans, and from there, in some mysterious manner, sent the following dispatch to his paper. The celebrated New York *Tribune* reprinted it, and all the other patriotic Northern papers did likewise.

The most terrible cruelties inflicted by savages are mild compared to those of the barbarous Texans. A Mr. James, traveling through Texas from California, was seen talking with some Negroes, and was charged with being a Yankee Abolitionist, endeavoring to have niggers run away. He was hung in the town of Orange, on which occasion Dr. Huson, a physician of the place, was particularly active, mutilating the dead body, and while so doing, giving vent to the most horrid sentiments. Dr. Huson cut out his heart and placed it in a glass pickle-jar filled with Louisiana whiskey. . . . After they actually tried out all the fat from the flesh and divided it among each other [*sic*] for the oiling of their firearms, one of the doctors, not Huson, secured the head and carried it home, telling his wife to boil it until all the flesh should drop off. [She refused] but her husband compelled her to place the skull in a large copper kettle and boil it for several hours.

This very trustworthy correspondent then went on to relate how the skull was later taken to a fashionable ball and how "a candle was placed in each eye socket. Most of the guests looked on with exaltation and satisfaction to behold the Yankee head. [One of those present then said], 'Yankee candle-sticks are a decided improvement over the old-fashioned ones.' Females," ended the veracious reporter, "mingled in this wicked and horrible orgie."

The same alert correspondent also noted in Texas how "an old man, nearly seventy, who was suspected of Union sentiments was hung, his wife being compelled to witness the murder." The bloody Rebels then burned down the poor man's house. How they finally disposed of the widow he did not report. No doubt they shot her and cut out her heart, and then boiled it.

The correspondent of the *St. Louis Republican* also witnessed some terrible things in Texas. He reported that in a little town near Piedruales there was a group of poor and half-civilized Germans who were scarcely aware that a war was going on. They were asked to pay the Confederate war taxes, and were a bit hesitant in their response. So the Rebel authorities considered them Union spies, and a company of Confederates headed by Captain Duff was sent against them. They fired fourteen shots into one Frederick Degener, ransacked his house, and burned all the other houses in the neighborhood. All those who tried to run away were summarily hanged.

Similar treatment was meted out to suspected Union sympathizers in Tennessee. I will give only two examples. The first was related by the Hon. Frank Moore, a patriot who kept in touch with all the authentic news sources of the war time, and later put his materials together in a many-volumed collection. He told how there resided in Carter county two families, named Hetherly and Tipton, who were on the most friendly terms. The Hetherlys joined the Union forces, and the Tiptons

joined the Confederates. After an absence of a year the elder Tipton returned home, and immediately set to work to clear the neighborhood of Unionists. Thus:

Learning that one of the Hetherlys was lurking in the vicinity, and failing after a thorough search to discover his whereabouts, he took Hetherly's widowed mother from her home in the night, carried her to an adjoining wood, and putting a rope around her neck, threatened that if she did not instantly reveal her son's hiding place, he would hang her. This she refused to do, and Tipton, as good as his word, had her suspended from a tree until life was nearly extinct. When she came to, he told her that unless she told him where her son was concealed he would surely kill her. But the old lady was not to be intimidated, and again and again was she strung up . . . and was finally left lying on the ground more dead than alive.

In Southeastern Tennessee, now the Baptist Holy Land, numerous bodies of young women were discovered on the streets, "shot through the breasts." In Kentucky, according to the *Cincinnati Commercial*, the two sons of a Union sympathizer were strung up before his eyes. In Monroe county, Ala., according to the able field correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, then as now a great paper, the houses of a number of Federal sympathizers were burned over their heads, and the people in the neighborhood were notified that if they dared to harbor them their own houses would be burned in the same fashion. In West Virginia things were just as bad, but there the females took the lead in hunting down the Unionists. An eye-witness, writing in the *New York Evening Post*, spoke of the "ferocity of the female Secessionists," and added, "The men are brave and bitter, the Southern women ten-fold worse." Commissary Packham, of the Thirty-fourth Regiment, Ohio Volunteers, had the same opinion of the Rebel ladies. He reported that there was a Mrs. Gilkinson, to whose house in West Virginia a number of loyalist prisoners were taken by their Confederate captors, and confined there during the night. In the morning some wished to send them to Richmond, others to Logan Court-House, and still others proposed to kill them on the spot. "Mrs.

Gilkinson," continued Commissary Packham, "to the eternal shame of Southern female fiends, wished one of the prisoners to be killed on her own porch, so that she could dance in his blood!"

But all these butcheries were on a retail scale, and hence of little moment. An affair on a wholesale scale was the so-called Fort Pillow Massacre, still mentioned in some of the Northern school-books. A celebrated expert on the atrocities of the war period, the Hon. Thomas L. Wilson, editor of a book called "Suffering Endured for a Free Government, or, a History of the Cruelties and Atrocities of the Rebellion," made up in the main of official reports, called it "one of the bloodiest pages of history." As an afterthought he added, "Barbarism has characterized the Rebellion from the beginning to the present hour [his book was published in 1865], in every State, county, town and village and hamlet. It originated in barbarism, has been persecuted with barbarism, and may its overthrow be the overthrow of barbarism and give place to a higher civilization and a purer civilization!"

Fort Pillow was situated in Western Tennessee, and at the time of the massacre was held by Union men. The Confederate general, Nathan B. Forrest, founder of the original Ku Klux Klan, stormed it and captured it. What follows is from the official report of the Joint Committee of the United States Congress on the Conduct and Expenditures of the War. It is based on the sworn testimony of escaped and paroled Union men:

The atrocities committed at Fort Pillow were not the result of passions excited by the heat of conflict, but were the results of a policy deliberately decided upon and unhesitatingly announced. . . . The Rebels placed women in front of their lines as they moved on the fort . . . while the flag of truce was at the fort, in order to compel our men to withhold their fire out of regard for the women. . . . After the fort was taken there followed a scene of cruelty and murder without parallel in civilized warfare, which needed but the tomahawk and scalping knife to exceed the worst atrocities ever committed by savages. The Rebels commenced an indiscriminate slaughter, sparing neither age nor sex, white or black, soldier or civilian.

The officers and men seemed to vie with each other in the devilish work. Men and women, and even children, wherever found, were deliberately shot down, beaten and hacked with sabres. Some of the children, not more than ten years old, were forced to stand up and face their murderers while being shot. The sick and wounded were butchered without mercy, the Rebels even entering the hospital building and dragging them out to be shot, or killing them as they lay there unable to offer any resistance. . . . Numbers of our men were collected together in lines or groups and deliberately shot. Some were shot while in the river, while others on the bank were shot and their bodies kicked into the water, many of them still living but unable to make any exertions to save themselves from drowning.

Some of the Rebels stood upon the top of the hill, or a short distance down its side, and called to our soldiers to come up to them—and as they approached, shot them down in cold blood. . . . One man was deliberately fastened down to the floor of a tent, face upward, by means of nails driven through his clothing and into the boards under him, so that he could not possibly escape, and then the tent was set on fire. Another was nailed to the side of a building outside the fort and then the building was set on fire.

III

Such reports naturally caused painful feelings in the North. The newspapers printed them at length, and orators went through the land spreading them. It was seen by everyone that the war upon the Confederates was a war for civilization itself—that the world would become uninhabitable if by any chance they should prevail. Thus the atrocities promoted recruiting, though not, of course, to an extent sufficient to avoid the necessity of drafts. Of especial potency were the reports of barbarities practised upon Federal prisoners in the Confederate military prisons. The worst of these, according to the sworn testimony on file in Washington, was Andersonville. This prison was situated near a small town in Georgia of the same name, and normally held about 10,000 prisoners, but the Confederates, callously regardless of the health of their captives, filled it with Yankees to the count of 32,000, and at one time, in fact, had nearly 45,000 there. The best account, from the point of view of picturesqueness—and truth, of course—of this bastille that is left to posterity is the one

written by Sergeant Samuel S. Boggs, of the Twenty-first Illinois Infantry, and entitled "Eighteen Months Under the Rebel Flag." Sergeant Boggs anticipated that some of his readers—most of them, no doubt, Confederate spies or sympathizers—would find it difficult to believe all he said, so he assured their qualms in this manner: "Of course, we know that it will not do to portray [Andersonville] in all its horrors, lest we destroy the credit of the whole story; hence we must hold back much of the worst part." So what follows is only part of the horrible truth:

We had nearly all been prisoners from seven to nine months; our clothes were worn out, a number of us being entirely naked. Some would have a ragged shirt and no pants, and some had pants and no shirt; another with a soldier cap on his head and not another stitch on him; their flesh wasted away, leaving the chaffy, weather-beaten skin drawn tight over the bones; the hip-bones and shoulders standing out so a hat could be hung on them; the faces and exposed parts of the body coated to the thickness of an inch with a smirky black soot, from the tense black smoke of pitch pine we had hovered over since we had been in Andersonville; our long matted hair was stiff and black with the same substance, which water alone would have no effect on, and soap was not to be had.

The land about the prison building was most horrible:

The ground was all taken up, except along the borders of the swamps, where the human filth was from three to ten inches deep, and from the frequent rains had become liquid and flowed out over the quagmire, where it fermented like yeast. Millions and millions of flies swarmed over it, and this mess of putrescent filth became a lake of rolling, squirming maggots.

The Confederate doctors, it appears, did nothing to remedy this appalling situation. All the reports, indeed, agreed that they were fiends in human form. At one time, for example, an infantryman of the Eighth United States Regulars, with a hand shot off, was dragged into Andersonville. He was left lying around for some time, with no medical aid whatever. In the meantime some Confederates of the Atrocity Squad cut off his ears and nose and otherwise trimmed him. After numerous calls the prison doctors arrived, but did they help

the poor wretch? Not at all. They merely burst into hellish laughter when they saw him. "They refused to dress his wounds or even amputate his shattered arm; he was naked in the prison, and finally died from his numerous wounds."

Naturally, many of the prisoners grumbled at this sort of treatment. The punishments accorded to them and similar offenders were of this kind:

There were three kinds of stocks: one in which the prisoner stood on his tip-toes, his hands fastened over a piece of timber, under which his head is crowded forward; another timber forces the small of the back forward. In the second stocks the prisoner sits on the ground, with hands and feet elevated and fastened to a frame-work in front of him. The third stocks was a horizontal frame, the prisoner lying on his back, with hands and feet fastened, the head being fixed in an extending headboard, which is moved outward until the body and limbs are in a painful tension.

The food offered the prisoners was of starvation quality. Says Sergeant Boggs:

A large cook-house had been built, in which corn-bread was made. Here was a large, long box, in which was soured corn-dough sticking to its sides and bottom, over which swarmed millions of flies; a wagon-load of meal was scooped into the box, burying flies and gnats; water was dipped from the filthy branch to wet this meal, then stirred with poles and shoveled into large pans, marked off in half-brick sizes, and when baked sent into the pen, and a half-brick-shaped piece given to each man. [As a result of such food] nearly all the old prisoners now had scurvy; the gums turned black, swelling beyond the teeth and pouching out the cheeks; the teeth became loose and dropped out. They were picked up and put back in the vain endeavor to save them; the mouth became cancerous and the patient lingered and died. In others the limbs turned black and swelled to the greatest capacity of the skin; black, watery sores opened, gangrene set in, and death shortly followed.

The Rebels, apparently, were deliberately out to kill off as many of the prisoners as possible. There was, in fact, conclusive testimony on this point. The alert Northern correspondents reported that General John H. Winder, commandant at Andersonville received a dispatch from the Confederate War Department, asking whether he had any room for more prisoners, and that he replied thus: "Yes, send them on. We are doing more for the Confederacy here, in getting rid of the Yanks,

than twenty of Lee's best regiments at the front." This barbarous pronouncement was rushed by all the Union war correspondents at the front to their papers, which printed it on their front pages and thus stirred the folks back home to fresh patriotism. The Rebels, of course, denied that any such statement was ever made. It was all based, they said, on the testimony of Sergeant Boggs and other such experts in atrocities, who passed it on to the correspondents.

Naturally enough, many prisoners at Andersonville tried to escape. Those who were caught paid a heavy price for their offense. Here is what Sergeant Boggs says he saw done to them:

Their hands were tied behind their backs, a small rope was drawn tightly around each thumb, and the rope was then passed over a log, the ends of which rested on two cabins occupied by the Rebel officer, Lieutenant Barrett and his assistants then pulled on the rope until the victims were raised from the ground, thus twisting the muscles of the arm and shoulders, producing the most terrible agony.

Much the same evidence about conditions at Andersonville was given in two other famous pamphlets, the one by Private Amos E. Stearns, of Company A, Twenty-fifth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteers, and the other by Sergeant Daniel S. Kelley, of Company K, Twenty-fourth Regiment, New York Cavalry. Regarding the first Samuel H. Putnam, a prominent New Englander and a contemporary investigator of note, said, "That his tale is honestly told, there can be no question." The same imprimatur was put on the second by Major Anson G. Chester, military agent at Buffalo.

The one most blamed for these inhuman conditions at Andersonville was the chief guard, Major Henry Wirz. After the war he was brought to Washington, charged with murder, and hanged. A hundred witnesses testified at his trial. One told of one Joseph R. Aschuff, of a Massachusetts regiment, who escaped one day; a score of blood-hounds were sent after him by Major Wirz. They brought him back torn, hag-

gard and bleeding profusely. Wirz at once put him into the head stocks and kept him there for thirty-six hours,

exposed to the sun, bloody, wounded, sore as he was, while his parched throat was relieved with but two drinks of muddy, foul water. . . . Wirz once told him to dry up or he would blow his d—d brains out.

One Thomas C. Alcock testified that "on one occasion a sick man asked Wirz to let him go outside for some fresh air. Wirz inquired what he meant. Then, turning aside and saying to him, 'Any air is too good for a d—d Yankee,' he pulled his revolver and shot him dead."

Wirz, it appears, took a great delight in seeing Yankee soldiers shot. Before his arrival prisoners were allowed to go to the sides of the stockade and converse with visitors. He would not stand for this, so he had a so-called dead-line built—a line of posts three feet high and some distance from the stockades, beyond which no prisoner was allowed to go under pain of instantaneous death. The guards were ordered to "shoot without warning." One trustworthy investigator described the whole business thus:

It was not necessary to call forth the murderous bullet that the entire person should be exposed or beyond the assigned limits. The protrusion of an arm to dip up water from some spot more undefiled than another, the reaching under to snatch a worthless rag which a breeze had borne beyond the reach of its proprietor, or the half-exposed body of a prisoner whom a struggle with his mates had forced out of the prescribed limits, were enough to secure the shot of the sentinel and the death of the aggressor. With grim cunning he [Wirz] had so placed the railing that a portion of it crossed or intruded upon the little stream which entered from one side and furnished water for the prisoners. And this point was where the water was deeper and purer than at any other point of its course, and necessarily more inviting to the thirsty palates that hankered for it. To reach this water the dead-line had to be intruded on—to do this was death.

IV

Two other Confederate bastiles where, according to the leading Northern newspapers of the time, Union prisoners were tortured to death were Libby Prison and

Belle Isle Prison, both in Richmond. The most thorough and impartial investigation of these dens was made by the Committee of Inquiry of the United States Sanitary Commission in 1864. It was composed of six gentlemen of the highest standing: the president of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, of New York; a professor of obstetrics at the Jefferson Medical College; an ex-dean of the medical department of the University of New York; a judge of the District Court of Philadelphia; a clergyman, and a "prominent citizen." They carried on their research in a thoroughly scientific manner. They went to Annapolis, Md., listened to the testimony of the paroled Union prisoners there, and then issued a statement that "the conclusion is unavoidable that these privations and sufferings have been designedly inflicted by the military and other authorities of the Rebel government, and cannot have been due to causes which such authorities could not control." The same opinion was handed down by the Committee of the House of Representatives of the United States on the Treatment of Prisoners of War by Rebel Authorities. Here is a sample of the testimony presented before the committee of the Sanitary Commission; it was given by Lieut.-Col. Charles Farnsworth, of the First Connecticut Cavalry, and dealt with conditions at Belle Isle:

The bodies of the dead were placed in the cellar of the prison, to which there was free access for animals from the street. I have known of bodies being partly devoured by dogs, hogs and rats during the night. Every morning the bodies were placed in rude coffins and taken away for burial. Officers have marked the coffins thus taken away and have seen them returned for other bodies.

Here, again, is the testimony of Dr. B. A. Vanderkiefte, a surgeon of Volunteers in charge of the Army General Hospital, Division No. 1, at Annapolis, and a trained scientist:

From my experiences of fifteen years of constant medical and military service in Northern Europe, the East Indies and the Mediterranean, as well as in our own Army since September 1861, I affirm that the treatment to which our men have been subjected while prisoners of war in the hands of

the enemy is against all rules of civilized warfare, and that I would prefer to fall into the hands of the Chinese of Borneo, called Anack Baba, who murder their prisoners, than to fall into the hands of the Rebels, where the lives and comforts of prisoners of war are a matter of such cruel indifference, to say the least.

The committee of the United States Sanitary Commission, diligent as it was in gathering testimony, could not, naturally, get it all. One of the witnesses they did not get hold of was the Rev. E. W. Hutter, pastor of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, of Philadelphia. He obtained his information in the same scientific way in which Dr. Vanderkiefte got his. On December 1, 1863 he offered this testimony about conditions at Belle Isle:

The water they [the prisoners] are compelled to drink is in close proximity to the sinks, and is necessarily polluted and poisoned. This the prisoners are compelled to drink, in the very sight of clear and wholesome water, which is running in perennial streams before their eyes. . . . From the gentler sex, ordinarily so noted for the finer and better sensibilities of human nature, not one of our prisoners has received as much as a cup of water—nothing but insults and reproaches. How strikingly this contrasts with the kindness lavished by the ladies of the North on the suffering Rebels whom the accident of war has thrown into our hands! . . . Slavery is a gigantic iniquity, such as has not been paralleled in the annals of crime since the crucifixion of Jesus.

The Rev. George H. Hammer, chaplain of the Twelfth Regiment, Pennsylvania Cavalry, and for a time a prisoner at Libby Prison, made the following report on the atrocities there. He must have been an eyewitness; that he used his imagination is unthinkable.

Col. Powell, of the Twelfth Regiment, Virginia Union Cavalry, was placed in a hospital. A few days after, one of the Richmond papers railed out against him in a most brutal manner, and suggested that he be executed. . . . He was placed in one of the dungeons. . . . Here, with a ball in his back, he remained five weeks and a few days, part of the time without a blanket, rarely receiving any medical care, and sometimes his rations were withheld. While he was confined there the entry-way was frequently blocked up with dead bodies, remaining there for several days, and this during the heat of the Summer. This entry performed another part, being the place where men and women were brought in to receive their lawful allowance of lashes at the hands of prison inspectors. . . . There was a free Negro, nearly white, who was captured while serving in our

Navy. He received 320 lashes. His loud cries and pleadings penetrated every part of the building, as blow followed blow. He was then wrapped in a blanket, saturated with salt and water, and cast into one of the dungeons for a month or so. Such scenes and cries were frequent.

Nor were Andersonville, Libby and Belle Isle Prisons the only places where such astounding atrocities were perpetrated. According to the newspapers of the time, the Rebels did precisely the same things in all their smaller prisons, such as those at Knoxville, Tenn., Charleston, N. C., Millen, Ga., and Florence, S. C. At the prison at Millen, if the witnesses are to be believed, the unfortunate prisoners were forced to eat raw snakes and gopher meat. In the same place those guilty of minor offenses were dragged out to a neighboring cliff in mid-Winter and allowed to freeze to death. At the prison at Florence, S. C., a young Union man died in bed beside his father as the result of medical neglect and starvation. "Some of the prisoners," continued this eye-witness, "went to the officer of the guard and requested permission to bury the body, but this poor boon was refused. Then they asked that the father might see him buried. This he also denied. . . . He [the father] spread the remnant of his handkerchief lovingly over the face of his dead son, folded the hands tenderly, and, with a heart bursting with grief, turned and left him forever, not daring to cast a backward glance lest he should behold cruel hands ruthlessly stripping the body."

At the prison at Chancellorsville the field correspondent of the Springfield (Mass.) *Republican* said he saw how Union men were made to stand in the rain for hours upon hours with little more than a night-shirt for cover. He also saw how Union men, on entering the prison, were robbed of all they possessed. He therefore felt justified in coming to this conclusion: "I have been among Italian brigands, Greek pirates and Bedouin Arabs, but for making a clean thing of the robbing business, commend me to the Confederate States of America, so styled. They descend

to the minutiae of the profession in a way that should be instructive to all novices in the art." Lieutenant Kenyon, of the Twenty-eighth Regiment, New York Volunteers, corroborated his story, and the Rev. Mr. Aughey, who was an eye-witness of the Battle of Leesburg, saw even more atrocious things. Here are his exact words:

When the Federal troops retreated to the river . . . and had thrown down their arms calling for quarter, no mercy was shown them. Hundreds were bayoneted or forced into the river and drowned. The Rebels clubbed their guns and dashed out the brains of many while kneeling at their feet and imploring mercy. I saw one ruffian who boasted that he had bayoneted seven Yankee prisoners on that occasion.

V

The Confederates, of course, persistently denied the truth of all these atrocities. In the matter of Andersonville Prison they pointed out, with a mass of figures, that, because of crop conditions, very little food was to be got there, and that they did the best possible with what they had. The atrocities alleged to have been committed by Major Wirz they denied *in toto*, and challenged any one to offer conclusive proof that they were true. His execution they professed to regard as a monstrous travesty of justice. Finally, they pointed out that they had repeatedly requested the Union government to exchange Andersonville prisoners with them, but that their pleas were invariably refused. They further denied the alleged massacre at Fort Pillow, and produced evidence showing that the Union men under Major Bradford, who was in command of the fort, had committed the worst outrages upon the unarmed men, women and children of the vicinity. They also presented documents proving that General Forrest attacked the fort only when the Unionists had refused to surrender peaceably, and that he did so in a manner sanctioned by the military code. They offered to prove, further, that all the wounded were treated expeditiously by the Confederate surgeons.

The Rebels did not stop at merely denying the atrocities charged against them. They even had the brass to hurl them back at the Northerners. Nearly every one of their State Legislatures passed resolutions calling upon the Unionists not to forget that they were Christians when traversing the Confederate territory, and not to plunder their property and shame their women. As for the treatment of Confederate prisoners in Union hands, their Kaiser, Jeff Davis, said that "the most revolting inhumanity has characterized the conduct of the United States toward prisoners held by them." Evidently he did not keep in touch with the reports of the Committee of Inquiry of the United States Sanitary Commission. Robert Ould, the Confederate agent for the exchange of prisoners (a little exchange *did* go on during the middle of the war), had the cheek to say, "You yourself see the living wrecks who come from Fort Delaware—men who went into the cruel keep hale and robust, men inured to almost any form of hardship and proof against everything except the regimen of that horrible prison. . . . Can nothing be done to stop the fearful mortality at Fort Delaware? Is it intended to fill our land with mourning by such means of subjugation?" Strangely enough, *Harper's Weekly* did not publish this statement.

Many of the Confederates, after the war, fled the country, and several hundred went to Brazil. Thus the Rev. Ballard S. Dunn, rector of St. Philip's Church in New Orleans, described the blest forgetfulness which relieved the exile there:

He forgets the numerous thefts, rapes, and murders, committed by North American citizens, descended from the same stock, in his own native State. He forgets how many ladies of the South have been violated; and how many refined ladies

have been whipped, and scourged, by ladies and gentlemen of color; protected by those who had the power to have prevented such outrages. He forgets those instances in which ladies have been tied before a slow fire, and their feet roasted, to make them disclose the hiding place of the little purse of gold, until the once lithe and happy creatures are now club-footed and toeless.

To cap it all a committee of the Confederate Congress, headed by Senator C. C. Clay, of Alabama, had the impudence to issue the following report. It was adopted by the Congress in the latter part of 1863.

Our invaders have been utterly regardless of every principle of lawful warfare, every precept of Christian religion, and every sentiment of enlightened humanity. They have not spared even the memorials of our dead or suffered their remains to rest undisturbed. They have robbed many persons of relics of deceased parents, children or other relatives and friends . . . merely to torture the souls of our citizens and satisfy their own mean and malevolent animosity. They have murdered peaceful and unoffending citizens, and have seized and taken many of them far from their families and homes and incarcerated them in prisons of the United States. . . . They rushed by regiments, battalions or companies into our villages and robbed, like banditti, both men and women. . . . Their soldiers have indulged their brutal passions upon women, sometimes in open day and public places, with impunity if not by license of their officers. They have not spared either age, sex, or calling. Even those unfortunates whom the mysterious providence of God has bereft of reason, or of the faculty of speech, or the senses of sight and hearing, have not escaped the demoniacal wrath of our enemies.

All this, of course, was a batch of falsehoods. Only the atrocity charges made by the Unionists, it appeared, were true. As John Russell Bartlett, the eminent authority on savage practises, put it: "Cruelty, brutality, ferocity and inhumanity are the natural offspring of slavery. It gives rise to and matures the demoniacal passions, and a civil war furnishes these human devils with the means of gratifying their propensities."

CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN SCULPTURE

BY THOMAS CRAVEN

IN MARCH of last year the Reinhardt Galleries of New York exhibited twelve bronze statues which were described in the accompanying catalogue as "models in competition for a monument to the Pioneer Woman, to be erected on the Cherokee Strip in Oklahoma by Mr. E. W. Marland." The event, needless to say, passed by without much controversy. The familiar spectacle of an American millionaire throwing away money on art was worth only a few lines in the news columns, and the critics of art, incapable of distinguishing a genuine æsthetic idea from what appeared to be a simple-minded display of vanity on the part of an Oklahoma oil magnate, mumbled their perfunctory notices and went to sleep. No one seemed to be affected by the unmistakable conviction behind Mr. Marland's rustic eloquence. At a dinner given by him in honor of the guilty sculptors he extolled the Pioneer Woman in this style:

The blue-eyed Saxon maid and her dark-eyed Latin sister married their men and set out with them on their conquest of the West. Many a honeymoon was spent with no shelter save the boughs of trees 'neath the canopy of heaven; many a bridal couch was lighted only by the stars; many met their God with the blood-curdling yell of savages in their souls, or in the agonizing pains of unattended childbirth.... We imagine the Puritan woman with her blue homespun dress and blue sunbonnet; we visualize the Mother of the South in her white apron and dainty white bonnet; but instead of arms in their hands for protection, we always see them with children in their arms to protect.

I confess that I was profoundly touched by Mr. Marland's patriotic venture. Here at last was an idea pregnant with the highest sculptural possibilities, an idea indige-

nous to the rich red soil of Ponca City, and susceptible of far nobler treatment than Donatello's famous Padovian memorial to a brutish *condottiere*. The pioneer woman I knew at first hand, and as a boy I had lived within a hundred miles of the Cherokee Strip. In August, 1893, President Cleveland announced that the lands ceded by the Cherokee tribes to the government—the last available public lands in the United States—would be thrown open to homesteaders on the sixteenth of the following September. More than 100,000 expectant wanderers swarmed the Oklahoma border—farmers, tradesmen, prostitutes, gamblers, sharpers and vagabonds of all sorts—and elaborate precautions were taken to prevent the operations of sooners. At noon on the appointed day, a blistering day, dry as a powder-house and black with dust after months of drought, a bugle sounded, then a succession of rifle shots, then wild challenging cries from the parched throats of a multitude of men, women, and children. On foot, on horseback, and in covered wagons, the emigrants raced into the coveted wilderness to claim the choicest quarter-sections, but most of them, to their sorrow, discovered that the most promising situations had already been preëmpted by sooners. Thus the Cherokee Strip was opened, and in such fashion did the pioneer woman set out on her last conquest.

I imagined a vast rise of ground surmounted by a huge figure in bronze—for bronze would be the only fitting material for the pioneer—a draped figure as moving as the Winged Victory, but rough and modern, something stern and sublime to