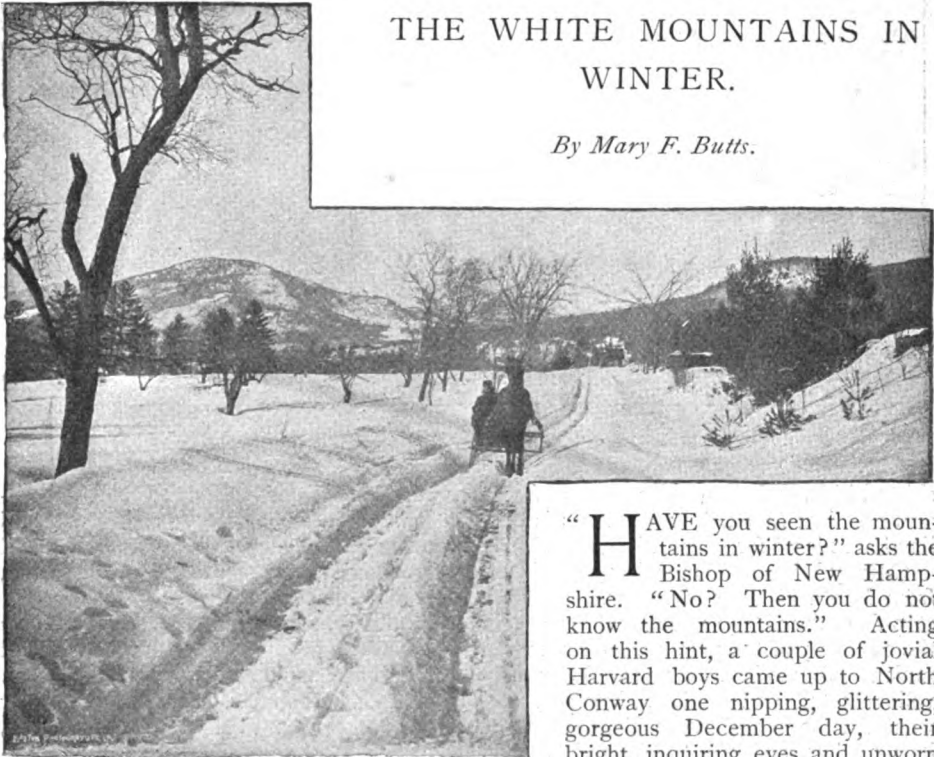


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THE WHITE MOUNTAINS IN  
WINTER.

*By Mary F. Butts.*

“**H**AVE you seen the mountains in winter?” asks the Bishop of New Hampshire. “No? Then you do not know the mountains.” Acting on this hint, a couple of jovial Harvard boys came up to North Conway one nipping, glittering, gorgeous December day, their bright, inquiring eyes and unworn faces looking out from depths of

fur, and their wide-awake brains covered with the latest thing in toboggan caps. Mt. Kearsarge, the symmetrical, majestic cone, — a wondrous winter beauty, its white brow lifted to the blue, — was their objective point. Good taste had those fine fellows, to choose a lark with the grand old giant; to press his sides with their snowshoes, and climb upon his ermined shoulder! What a far-away, unpeopled, Aladdin world they entered that day! what paths of mystery they threaded! what silences were invaded by their gay young voices!

A vast treasure-house of beauty are the winter mountains. One tall pine, out of the hundreds, clothed in the fairy feathers of the snow from topmost point to lowest bough, sets one wondering, adoring; while a ride over a logging road just after a snow-fall is something to remember a lifetime. No words can describe the effect of all that starry wealth, encrusting every green needle of the multitudinous boughs, powdering the little hemlocks and pine trees till they bow to the earth under the brilliant burden.

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## COLONEL SHAW AND HIS BLACK REGIMENT.

By Archibald H. Grimké.

THE hero, unlike the poet, is made, not born. He is the fair flower of circumstances, the child of occasion and opportunity. It was slavery and civil war which summoned from the "vasty deep" of the commonplaces of life that skyfull of immortals who now encircle the central figure of Lincoln. One of the brightest of the lesser lights of that brilliant throng is the young soldier whom we here name.

He was born October 10, 1837, in Boston and in troublous times. The slavery excitement had risen everywhere above the danger point. At Washington, Calhoun was making his tremendous assaults on the right of petition and the principle of national unity. The administration was violating the postal privileges of the Union. At the North the agitation had broken into riot and bloodshed, whelming in widely sundered places the rights of popular assembly and free speech. It was but two years before that date that Boston had dragged Garrison through its streets. It was scarcely a month after it, when the town of Alton, Ill., shot Lovejoy for defending the freedom of the press. The choleric temper of the free states on the slavery question was made still more explosive by the industrial disturbance, which visited the country in 1837, and which left in its track the ruins of unnumbered private fortunes and a splendid public prosperity. East and West, North and South, the passionate cry of financial distress mingled wrathfully with the uproar of the moral conflict. The dragons' teeth of a terrible day sprang up amidst this violent eruption of the conscience and misery of America, and grew by the side of a generation which was to uproot them with the hot ploughshare of war.

Such was the world into which Shaw was born. He came into it by the door of wealth, through one of the best and oldest families of New England. The wealth and respectability of the North fifty years ago were intensely and intolerably pro-slavery. To this rule there were, however, exceptions not a few. This was especially true

of Massachusetts, many of whose "first families" were bravely and earnestly anti-slavery. Prominent among the faithful were found the Shaws. They too loved the Union much, yet they loved the slave much also. From his father and mother the boy learned his lesson early and well, laying up in his thoughts the truth of human brotherhood and equality, of man's inalienable claim to ownership of self, and in particular of the negro's to freedom and his sympathy. Thus inoculated, the lad's quick intelligence was not slow to take in the situation, to grasp the significance of the social forces then filling the land with hate and strife.

As a child he was gentle and singularly affectionate and clinging. But within him lay also fire and will. He was readily amenable to love, though to force he became as readily intractable. With an irascible temper he possessed the tenderest of hearts,—twin qualities, which nature never leaves wholly out of the composition of heroes. His mother excited all the ardor of the one, while whatever was unreasonable and tyrannous stirred all the wrath of the other.

At the age of thirteen he was taken abroad, where he remained five years, studying in Switzerland, Germany, and Italy. He was a wide-awake little man, interested in books, art, and music; interested also in the world of realities about him. But the momentous events which were agitating his country four thousand miles away interested him most. His precocious interest in the slavery question, as we look back at it now, was certainly prophetic of noble things. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *The Key*, and whatever concerned the slave he read with eager sympathy. It was not mere reading which he did; the boy also reflected on what he read. As he reflected on the evil and its invincible strength his innocent soul seemed to experience a sort of despair. "I don't see how one man could do much against slavery," he once wrote. Had the boy been measuring his single arm against that invincible strength? Was that confession a sob of disappoint-

ment that in himself he was so weak? What did he mean, what was he thinking, what feeling after,—and he so young? I have heard that, when a mere slip of a boy, he told his father's colored butler that when he, Master Robert, grew up, he meant to fight for him,—the colored butler, and the colored butler's race. The story may be apocryphal; but that he was visited by thoughts, impulses, strange for his age, there is no doubt. That the slavery question had got firm hold of him appeared again and again in his letters—cumulative evidence that he was much occupied with the subject. Sometimes the transition in them from other topics to this one comes to the reader with the force of a shock. He could not let it alone, or it would not let him alone. In the same letter he writes with a boy's irrepressible spirits and keen sense of his ludicrous appearance at a fancy ball in character costume, gladness and laughter ringing along the lines; then further on, with the matured gravity of a man, he passes to some retold horror of "a slave having been burned alive in Alabama." Pain and pleasure, joy and sorrow, lay together very close in the pure-souled youth. Year after year the boy was becoming father of the man.

In the spring of 1856, he returned to the United States, and in the fall following entered Harvard. But he did not graduate. For a clerkship in a mercantile house in New York, he gave up his degree in his junior year. Highly valuable as a run through a college curriculum may be to many minds as a preliminary for the real race of life, it is not so to all. Those there are, indeed, who require other than the regulation training for doing the things which they were born to do. Shaw, I think, belonged to this class. But it happened that the gospel of ledgers and the acts of trade were not better adapted to his needs. The head and heart of the young clerk had been touched to finer issues than were wont to proceed from counting-rooms. What those issues were he himself had not then discovered. He knew that he was not happy, felt out of place in his position, but he never shirked its duties. Men of his mould, with their unsung epics in the blood, are much more liable than others to suffer detriment when for any reason they are chained to unsuitable occupations. For they are nothing if not earnest. En-

thusiasm is the only door through which they enter into excellence, usefulness, happiness. Whatever, therefore, the hands of one of these are set to do should be such as his heart approves and rejoices in. However, the one thing needful, which Shaw could not find as a merchant's clerk along the highways of trade, he fortunately found as a citizen on the battle-field fought over by freedom and slavery. The slavery conflict, with its mighty plot and passions, kept aglow within him the solar heat of generous and aspiring qualities. From his stool he studied the situation and watched the rising fury of the tempest. Now he saw it bursting over Kansas in ominous blood drops, or smiting down Sumner in the Senate Chamber, or slaying John Brown on a martyr's gibbet in Virginia. Amidst these terrible acts of wickedness, it is no wonder that the despair of his youth returned upon him. The invincibility of the slave power seemed undeniable. Of what avail was one man's puny strength against its omnipotence? Had not slavery and the Union become one and inseparable? The contest against the allies looked to him, as it did to tens of thousands at the North, a hopeless struggle, so long as the compromises of the Constitution existed. The young clerk, therefore, became a dis-unionist; he was ready, with Garrison and Phillips, to purge that instrument of its hateful slave clauses, in the gulf of dis-union. But in 1860 another and final change poured over his spirit.

What had previously seemed remote and even impossible was brought, through the madness of the South, not only within the limits of the directly possible, but of the directly probable as well. With this epochal revulsion, his old despair of ever divorcing the Union from slavery vanished, and he began to make ready for the country's emergency, when it should speak to him out of the darkness and summon him to its service. He saw then clearly enough how "one man *could* do much against slavery." The individual may be often impotent in the arena of politics; on the theatre of war he is never that. And war then was imminent. The individual bears to the war-power the relation which the horse bears to steam-power: he is the unit of its measure. It is the multiplication of the strength of one horse, or the ability of one man, which in any given in-

stance hoists a burden, or wins a battle. The strength of slavery was by its own precipitate folly resolved into a problem in arithmetic. The strength of freedom was determinable by the same method. It, too, was a question of numbers. In moral warfare, one with God counts a majority; a true idea is more than a match for ten thousand false ones. But in physical conflicts, other things being equal, numerical superiority triumphs: God is on the side of the strongest battalion.

Directly after the election of Lincoln, Shaw enlisted as a private in the New York National Guards. The secession of South Carolina a few weeks later emphasized the utility of this step. A few months later still, the roar of cannon in Charleston Harbor announced that the South had made her appeal to might. President Lincoln made his first call for volunteers. Among the foremost to respond were the New York National Guards. At the time Shaw's parents were abroad. He longed to see them, and they were soon to return; but the date fixed for the departure of the regiment did not permit the satisfaction of his longings. These brave, tender words he left behind: "Badly as I feel at going before you arrive, it seems the only way unless I give it up altogether, which you would not wish any more than I. . . . I want very much to go, and with me, as with the others, the only hard part is leaving our friends." His term of service expired under the presidential call at the end of thirty days; but instead of retiring, he immediately reenlisted in the volunteer militia of his native state. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Second Massachusetts, and in July, 1861, marched again southward. The heart of the young man was in the new life, and he began to do with his might its exciting work.

A potent wonder-worker was the war. To turn boys into men, clerks into heroes, a glance or a touch of the mighty sorcerer sufficed. His fresh responsibility and experience did for Shaw what the earth does for grain buried in its bosom. They wrought in him the miracle of germination; they developed all the seminal forces of character in the quiet clerk. It did not take long to make of him an alert and rigid disciplinarian, and on occasion a stern superior. But under this military precision

and sternness he wore, as a talisman, his tender heart. Brave as a lion in the discharge of duty, he was like a girl before another's trouble. He possessed the requisite nerve to deal out, one December night, condign punishment to three disorderly soldiers. Yet during the same watch, he did not have the requisite courage to treat himself to toast and coffee without first suggesting to his sergeant to take a nap, because, as he naively confessed, "there wasn't enough to give any away." But shunning the Scylla of the sergeant's "hungry eyes," he wrecked his appetite on the Charybdis of the pitiful outcries of a drummer asleep in the tent and dreaming of his far-away family.

At Cedar Mountain he received his baptism of blood, doing duty as aid on General Gordon's staff, and conducting himself with no ordinary discretion and gallantry. Riding over the ground the morning after the battle, he saw the havoc which death had wrought among his companions in arms. Here, in one part, was Cary, calm and beautiful, the hot blood gone out of him forever; there, at other places, were Williams and Abbot and Perkins, who had run their swift race and kept the plighted faith of their true hearts; while in another spot was Goodwin, who a few brief hours before he had seen climbing the hill to the thick of the fight and the end of life. They were stark and still under the southern sun, with naught in their faces or on their lips but the speechless eloquence of self-sacrifice and patriotism.

Five weeks later he was an actor on the hard-fought field of Antietam. He had risen then to the rank of captain. Throughout that great struggle he behaved with the utmost bravery, wishing once, in the sublime frenzy of battle, to close quarters with the foe. But as at Cedar Mountain, so at Antietam, his good fortune did not desert him; he escaped unharmed. Alas! it was not so with his comrades. The havoc among them was again frightful.

Nature delights in the contest of extremes. True to her eternal instinct, the mighty spectacular performer wrought at the close of that awful September day, on earth and sky, this marvel of beauty and benignity: "The crickets chirped and the frogs croaked," the weary young soldier wrote, "just as if nothing unusual had happened all day long; and presently the

stars came out bright, and we lay down among the dead and slept soundly until daylight." But the sight which the returning sun revealed appalled him. All about him while he slept were faces of friends and of foes, staring at the blue sky and the autumn stars, without a thought or a hope or a smile. Not one note of the frogs' song or the crickets' flute did they hear. What desolation was flying on the wings of the wind to thousands of homes North, and to thousands of homes South, from that scene of horror! Shaw began to long, not for himself nor the dead, but for the dear ones waiting in agony at home, that the war would speedily end. At moments, when sorrow and sympathy pierced him like a knife, it seemed that nothing could justify such destruction of human life and human happiness. But when the paroxysm had subsided, he knew that the peace which he sought was a righteous peace, — the slaves freed, the Union saved, — to achieve which was worth a hundred Antietams.

Abraham Lincoln, entangled in the machinery of constitutional interpretation, and solicitous of preserving undisturbed the *status quo* of vested rights, determined, in the beginning, to save the Union with slavery. The policy was altogether lawyerlike and regular, — but on the tented field, alack! most ineffective and disastrous. A nation fighting for existence cannot stop to square its conduct with constitutions; it will be governed by its emergent needs and by its common sense. Luckily for America, no man knew better than Lincoln how to adjust an administration to military necessity, to trim and tack on an ever-changing sea of experience and fact. His was preëminently a practical mind, on whose throne reigned the god of common sense. He saw plainly enough, after two years of buffeting in the gulf of disunion, that if he would save the ship of state from destruction, he would have to catch in the shoulder of his sails all favoring winds. He proceeded to invoke the powers of emancipation and colored troops.

It was Massachusetts and her great war governor, more than any state or statesman, who executed for the President the scheme to carry Africa into the war. The record left by John A. Andrew of tireless attention and ability in the organization of the three colored regiments sent by the

commonwealth to the front is as splendid as any service of his splendid career. Touching this particular measure, he committed nothing for which it was possible to provide to accident or chance. Picked men for the rank and file, picked men for the officers, was his masterly recipe for organizing the black contingent for victory. Under his direction the successful issue of the experiment became a foregone conclusion.

Searching among the officers of the fifty-three regiments of Massachusetts for a commander for the Fifty-fourth, the eyes of the governor lighted on two cousins, then in the army in Virginia, either of whom, by anti-slavery antecedents, social position, and proved valor in the field, was admirably fitted for the office. These cousins were Robert G. Shaw and Henry S. Russell. The then recent promotion of the latter to the rank of lieutenant-colonel, inclined the executive scales in favor of the former. Shaw was selected. At first he declined the appointment. To his father, who was bearer of the governor's offer, he gave two replies. To the paternal messenger, on the evening of his arrival, he said "Yes"; but sleeping on the subject, he withdrew this answer in the morning and said "No." He was agitated, daunted evidently by misgivings as to his fitness for the office, which attacked him during the sober second thought of the night. Small marvel that he was. Negro troops! It opened a fresh epoch in America, was an unknown sea of hazardous enterprise and discovery, a *terra incognita* of glory or infamy. Could a race of immemorial slaves be made, by military discipline and the hope of freedom, to confront in arms a race of immemorial masters, accomplished in war and oppression, was the riddle which he had to solve who undertook the command of colored troops. At home he had to expect unparalleled scurrility from a pro-slavery party and a copperhead press; from the great body of the Union forces, cold contempt and cruel ostracism; and from the South, the horrors of the black flag or the far blacker horrors of her prisons. It was a "siege perilous," into which none save a Sir Galahad might venture to enter. But he, so brave, yet self-distrustful, was a veritable Galahad of knightly virtue and devotion to duty. And therefore the letter given in the morning never

reached its destination. For in the interval which it took to travel from Stafford Court House to New York, he reviewed his reasons and reversed his decision. "Please destroy my letter, and telegraph the Governor that I accept," was his laconic message.

Shaw was now well across the Rubicon of his doubt and indetermination. From the instant that his feet pressed its farther shore, all uncertainty and indecision vanished. He became resolute, confident, a self-reliant leader of men in pursuit of a definite and dangerous purpose. The die of his fortune, life, honor, he now cast with the Fifty-fourth, and with its success or failure he would thereafter sink or swim. Glory, the cause of liberty and of the Union, buoyed him, braced all the powers, summoned all the faith and enthusiasm of the heroic heart. He was as one under an irrevocable vow. To its accomplishment the stern prejudice and circumstances of the times isolated and devoted him. But his own ardent patriotism and philanthropy isolated and devoted him quite as much. At Readville he drilled with unflagging attention his raw recruits. He breathed into them his own radiant passion for excellence and success. Much more than drill-master he proved to the regiment. He was vigilant husbandman to the good seed dormant in the souls of men long despised and proscribed by public law and public opinion. By the unflinching gravitation of character and example, he drew the manhood of his men to high levels of action. As he disciplined into order their bodies, so he drilled into expression their self-respect. The enthusiasm and the example were quickly rewarded. Surprised and delighted he was with the earnestness and docility of the troops. At the end of five weeks he was able to write that they acquired "all the details of guard duty and camp service infinitely more readily" than most of his former command. Sceptics went, saw, and left at the encampment their sneer and their scepticism. The United States mustering officer, a Virginian by birth, and a scoffer at the capacity of the negroes to make soldiers, surrendered unconditionally on witnessing the martial bearing and skilful evolutions of the regiment. He confessed to their young colonel that he had never mustered into the service better men.

May 28, 1863, the Fifty-fourth entered Boston on its way to the seat of war in South Carolina. The spectacle of colored troops in the city which had mobbed Garrison and sent back fugitives to slavery seemed stranger than fiction. The historic pageant is worth recalling, for it was brimful of tragic beauty and pathos. Nobly picturesque was the fair skin and Saxon hair of the commander against the dark background of a thousand dusky faces. They marched through streets thronged with people, under windows and balconies crowded with the grace, the wealth, and genius of the old town. Boston had "conquered her prejudices," though not exactly as Webster had demanded a dozen years before from the steps of the Revere House. From the balcony of Wendell Phillips's home on Essex Street a cast of John Brown stared down on this startling fulfilment of his vision in 1859. Close beside the bust stood the intrepid editor of the *Liberator*. One hand of the lion-hearted apostle of non-resistance rested — was it in sign of public confession and reconciliation? — on the grand head of the fiery believer in blood and iron. Above the Fifty-fourth the extremes of freedom met, and the spirits of Garrison and Brown embraced and kissed each other. The ghost of the glorious martyr was abroad that May day; and as if suddenly rendered sensible of his presence, the regimental band struck up the tune and the men sang his song, while walking over the spot where Attucks fell, and in the track of Burns and Sims, their stern, multitudinous voices rising and falling, swelling and pealing, with the choral harmony and exultation of "His soul is marching on." Such a rendition, thirteen years after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill, of a black regiment with banners and bayonets, never entered the brain of the authors of the Compromise measures of 1850. It was a nation's Astræa returning from the skies.

In the midst of all this stir and circumstance of war Hymen set up his festal altar. Twenty-six days before the departure of the Fifty-fourth from Boston, Colonel Shaw was wedded to Miss Anne Kneeloni Haggerty of New York. The event served to throw over his death, which so swiftly followed, an indescribable pathos. It was the superlative, last act required to fill the cup of his renunciation of happiness

for the sake of a great cause. He had now nothing more of self, except life, to offer. Family and home, old comrades and companions in arms, then his fair young wife, he resigned for country and the freedom of the slave. Marvellously much he had, marvellously much he gave. The magnitude of his duty grew upon him — filled him with its commanding SHALL and MUST. Such imperious mastery did it organize over his desires, that he questioned at times whether he should so much as look forward to a home for himself and bride. Not until he had done this duty, demonstrated that the blacks had the stuff of soldiers in them, would he taste the delights of domestic life. They had triumphed over their enemies at the North; he did not doubt that they would triumph also over their enemies at the South. The supreme test of battle he was confident would convert his faith into fact. He talked and wrote of it, and longed for it. The stern prayer for battle was ever on his lips and in his letters. It received a partial answer July 16, 1863, on James Island in Charleston Harbor, when a strong detachment of rebels fell suddenly on two hundred of the Fifty-fourth. They did not show their backs, but their faces, to the foe, resisting the onset with the greatest bravery. Seven of their number sealed with their lives the bloody testament that valor knows no race and rises from all conditions of freedom and servitude. The action evoked the approval of the general and the applause of the brigade. These men had certainly shown "to somebody besides their officers, what stuff they were made of." This was indeed a triumph, but it was not enough for their leader. Some enterprise, more difficult and perilous, he hoped would come to him and them, and that it would come soon. Ah! it did come to him and his regiment, and it came soon. The memorable attack on Fort Wagner two days after the conspicuous beginning on James Island satisfied forever his longing.

Those intervening days were fraught with trial for the regiment. The heat of Charleston is in itself no mean enemy to fight. From its sultry throat issue fevers, sunstrokes, death. The country there is fervid as a kiln. The sand in the streets and on the roads and beaches reaches the temperature of lava, is so hot indeed that

were eggs buried in it they would bake to a turn. There is no withstanding such a foe; and the natives, those who can, hie to places of refuge under roofs, to the shadow of trees and vine-clad verandas, to any spot of grateful gloom, where the burning rays cannot find them. But when the blaze is at length extinguished within this fiery furnace, night lets down over the pores and vents of land and sea her thick blanket, through which the imprisoned heat seeks unavailingly to escape. The suffocating atmosphere, surcharged with fire and moisture, breaks irrepressibly into a gray, ooze-like sweat, which no more resembles dew than the mephitic dampness of dungeons resembles mist. Disease and death pursue man implacably by day; they pursue him implacably by night also.

Shaw and the Fifty-fourth on those last two days could not fly from this foe. They had perforce to face its fiercest rays, march and bivouac beneath its pelting, pitiless beams. Under cover of darkness, July 16, they retreated from James Island to join the troops, concentrating on Morris Island, for the expedition against Wagner. No light labor was the march across James Island to the transports, because of a furious thunder-storm, and the swamp and mud encountered by the way. Early July 17, they landed on Folly Island. Here, though well escaped from one set of troubles, they fell immediately victims to another. The southern sun, "roasting and dazzling" officers and men the livelong day on the beach, was far more exhausting than the swamp and the storm of the night before. They had besides fallen short of rations. Coffee and hardtack comprised the extent of the knapsack store. From this combination of distressing circumstances the regiment was released at midnight, when it embarked for Morris Island, where it landed about daybreak of July 18. At six o'clock that afternoon it drew up before General Strong's headquarters, and began to prepare for action.

The Fifty-fourth was allotted the post of honor, and led the assaulting column at dusk against the great sand-fort. The quick step of the beginning broke later into a brisk run. Had the column reached, without resistance, the base of the outer wall, its momentum would have carried it precipitately up the scarp. The issue, in that event, might have been altogether dif-

ferent. But the night had ears, and the garrison awaited the onset in a state of armed expectancy. The assailants were permitted to approach until their van was well within rifle range, when the parapet started into sudden and tremendous activity. Three murderous volleys burst from the works and swept the head of the column back on its inner lines. Terrible execution they inflicted on the Fifty-fourth. Dead many of the brave fellows dropped on that perilous edge of battle; many more were wounded. This abrupt and bloody check threw into some confusion the ranks of the black regiment. There was in them some consternation also. The opening fire from those defending must always operate as a severe trial and shock to those storming breastworks. Death is never wholly anticipated, nor can it ever be a matter of indifference to the bravest veteran. Then, too, the stoutest soul quakes at the sight and sound of human agony, and on that July night before Wagner it was indeed hideous. The groans and screams of the wounded and dying, mingling with the furious explosions of small arms, combined to produce a scene of indescribable horror. That a body of troops recovers at all amid such appalling circumstances is due to the military principle of order and obedience, drilled as second nature into the rank and file, and to the steadfastness and energy of its recuperative centres. Each commissioned officer constitutes one of these rallying points. A regiment readily overcomes this first sharp shock, recruits its *esprit de corps* and courage, when its line officers rise, with a crisis, to the responsibility and evince themselves to their commands collected and intrepid. But were they to betray fear and irresolution, the incipient terror of the men would speedily cause a stampede. That the confusion and consternation of the Fifty-fourth did not so end was pre-eminently owing to the presence of mind and dauntless front of its young colonel. There are those who attribute to the human voice the marvellous property of making cowards of the fiercest brutes. Be this fact or fancy, it certainly possesses a much more wondrous gift, — the power to recall, in emergent moments, the soldier to honor and duty, to charm courage back to hearts trembling on the verge of a panic.

It was the magic of Shaw's voice which restored to the Fifty-fourth the complete possession of its sanity and valor. Resolutely and rapidly rallying his broken lines, he pressed impetuously forward at their head to the great rebel battery, and up its mighty slope to the deadly parapet, all the while the sand of the scarp and the sand of life were slipping from under their feet. Surer and swifter of foot, he quite outstripped his dusky warriors, attaining in advance of them the grim heights. There for a flashing instant he stood, unflinching and alone, facing his climbing companies and encouraging them by word and gesture to quicken their steps, so that with them he might dash down into the works; and then — he fell — and rose above Fort Wagner and the clamor and carnage of that dreadful hour into the shining throng of the heroes of the Republic. Thick about him his black troops died, and into the same ditch with them his body was flung. United in life, history united them in a common grave and the immortality which together they gloriously won.



Colonel Robert G. Shaw.