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HISTORY OF THE WAR.

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Author of a History of Virginia.

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At sunrise the main body, under Pegram, were on the slope of the mountain, and, looking down, saw Beverly and the valley of Tygart's river beneath them. Several of the officers urged that they should now venture down into the valley, and endeavour to reach Beverly; but Col. Pegram felt it to be his duty, if possible, to join Gen. Garnett, whose command he believed to be in danger, and to need reinforcement. He knew also that the enemy were near, in great force, and his pocket telescope revealed a body of men moving between his position and the town. It was afterwards ascertained that this armed body was Capt. Lilly's company retreating in safety, and that if the whole command had marched down, they would have reached Beverly and escaped, as the advance guard of the Federal force did not enter the town until one o'clock. Such are the sad *contretemps* of war—so near together are often safety and disaster, escape and captivity! Yet Pegram's decision was right. It was better to suffer in the path of duty, than to swerve from it with the doubtful prospect of advantage.

The march was continued during the day, slowly and cautiously, through the mountain, in the direction of Laurel Hill. The rugged paths and heavy undergrowth, still impeded it; hunger and fatigue began to tell upon the strength of the men; at

seven o'clock in the evening, they reached the valley river, having marched only twelve miles in eighteen hours. Col. Heck asked and obtained permission to go down into the valley and see if the road from Beverly to Laurel Hill camp was clear. He ventured down with a citizen, and at a house, three miles from the main road, he learned that no enemies had been seen. On his return, Col. Pegram decided to move towards the road without delay. Again the weary march commenced; the men were obliged to wade the river three times, following the meanders of their heavy and difficult path; as the rear companies were making the last crossing, several shots were fired: whence they came, the officers could not learn; it was very dark, and this random fire was probably from unfounded apprehensions of the enemy's presence. A Lieutenant and nearly all the men of the Lee Battery disappeared, and it was afterwards found that they had made their way safely to the roads beyond Beverly and escaped.

Col. Pegram, having obtained a horse at the nearest house in the valley, rode forward towards Leedsville church, which was on the road between Beverly and Laurel Hill. He learned from the people living in the neighbourhood, that Gen. Garnett had retreated towards Tucker county, followed by a heavy Federal force, and that the enemy were three thousand strong at Leedsville, and were extending their lines on every side. The prospect of escape was now growing more gloomy every

a Capt. Cowan's Narrative, MS.

To the parents of the youthful patriot,
MELZAR G. FISKE,* who fell mortally
wounded, at the battle of Malvern Hill,
near Richmond, July 1st, 1862; by their
friend and Pastor, Rev. I. W. K. **HANDY,**
D. D.

Father! Mother!—dry your tears;
Cease your noble boy to mourn;
He, in glory, now appears,
From a world of evil torn.

Murmur not, at God's decree, —
Righteous in its true intent;
Wisely, let your hearts agree,
To His purpose, kindly meant.

Left he not his happy home,
In the cause of Truth, and Right?
Felt his soul a wish to roam
Save to break the Despot's might?

Lov'd he, well, his native South—
His was not a childish freak,
Days ago, his truthful mouth,
Highest motives did bespeak.

Full of indignation, he;
Fir'd with manly sense of wrong;
Justly prizing liberty—
Name, and praise, to him belong.

Patriot boy, thy work 'is done!
Dashing, foremost, in the strife,
Thou the victor's wreath hath won,
Sacrificing precious life!

In the sacred fane of Truth;
On thy Country's altar bright,
Thou hast offer'd up thy youth,
Gifted mind, and garner'd light.

Strange! that such a slender lad—
Gentle as the smiling day,
Such a dauntless spirit had,
Thus to join the fierce array.

Doubtless, for *this* work he came—
Gift of Heav'n to parents glad;
Shall they, now, th' Almighty blame,—
In the *finish'd* work be sad?

Weeping parents! lift your eyes!
See your brave and Christain boy!—
Hark! those shouts in Paradise!
'Tis your **MELZAR**, crown'd with joy!!

A PAGAN LEGEND OF CHRIST.

Publius Lentulus, assumed by some to have been pro-consul of Judea prior to Herod, is reported to have seen the Saviour and to have written the following letter to the Roman Senate: "At this time appeared a man who is still living, and endowed with power. His name is Jesus Christ. His disciples call him the Son of God; others regard him as a powerful prophet. He raises the dead to life, and heals the sick of every description of infirmity. This man is of lofty stature and well proportioned; his countenance severe and virtuous, so that he inspires beholders with feelings both of fear and love. The hair of his head is of the color of wine, and from the top of the head to the ear, straight and without radiance, but it descends from the ears to the shoulders in shining curls. From the shoulders the hair floats down the back, divided into two portions, after the manner of the Nazarenes; his forehead is clear and without wrinkle; his face from blemish, and slightly tinged with red; his physiognomy noble and gracious. The nose and mouth are faultless. His beard is abundant—the same color as the hair, and forked. His eyes are blue and very brilliant. In reproving or censuring, he is awe inspiring; in exhorting and teaching, his speech is gentle and caressing. His countenance is marvelous in seriousness

* Melzar Gardner Fiske, was the son of D. D. Fiske, Esq., Editor of the "Daily Transcript," Portsmouth, Va. He was a youth of only sixteen and a half years; amiable; handsome; of fine attainments; and a christian. He entered Mercer University, at Penfield, Ga., soon after the commencement of the war; but feeling it his duty to assist in the defence of his native State, against the aggressions of her enemies, obtained an honorable dismissal from that institution; returned to Portsmouth, and immediately tendered his services, as a volunteer in the army. He was an accomplished soldier, having been for several years a Cadet at the Military Institute, under Prof. N. B. Webster, A. M., and was the youngest member of company K, 9th Regt. Va. Vols.—"Old Dominion Guard." This noble boy died in one of the Richmond Hospitals, on the 3d day of July, 1862, from severe wounds received, in charging a battery, at the battle of Malvern Hill. During that terrible contest, he was noticed in the very front rank, loading and firing, even after he had received two shots—one in the arm and another in the leg. After his fall, he displayed the same heroic bravery—evinced more concern for the death of his Captain, than on account of himself.

His remains have been temporarily deposited in Hollywood Cemetery.