FORT SUMTER.

for making lint and getting—setting forth that she has established a "company"

ordered to leave the city. Soon a lady came with a paper of the dismissal of Miss G. from her place as teacher for spirits; they don't dream that any destinies will be spoiled.

thriving business. Many companies are ordered off to take have her picture taken. The picture-galleries are doing a—

—April 20.

request, I read to Mrs. F. ()

bearing the news of the fall of Fort Sumter, which, at her

covered with loveliest flowers, arranging a floral offering

April 13, 1861—

"Why, what matter? They know that we shall keep the "How can you speak so plainly before them?" I say.

comfort; this war fever has banished small talk. The black other on the paper. One must be made of cool stuff to keep

presiding. Thus we swallow politics with every meal. We sympathize, or cheer. If I dare express a doubt that the path

Southern States, and then his overflowing heart to his

appears first unloads his pockets of papers from all the

story of the disguise in which he traveled to

have each a different plan for saving the country, and now

March 10, 1861.

I fill that office no one shall mention war or politics during

wedding dress is being fashioned, and the bridesmaids and

elegant vehicles, high-stepping horses, and lovely women

grand display and illumination, in honor of the birth of a

Washington's Birthday was made the occasion of another

month has passed since I wrote here. Events have crowded

Feb. 24, 1861

At the soirée we had secession talk sandwiched

carry his pass. Henry chose Mr. D., but he's lost the pass —

run into your room, please, and write a pass for Henry. Put

Phoebe's husband, gave five dollars for a ticket for her."

introduction to New Orleans circles, and Henry Judson,
aristocratic colored society. This is Chloe's first

Edith said, "G., first come and help me dress Phoebe and

common with the neighbors, illuminated. We walked out

rockets and lights in honor of secession. Mrs. F., in

usual prayer for the President and Congress was changed

papers to regale us with at the late Sunday breakfast. Rob

Jan. 28, Monday

"leave

hoped for a lull in the excitement, yet this day has been

In this season for peace I had—

argument for me." This raised a laugh, and covered my

about polygamy that it quite weakened the force of the

F. exclaimed, "Now, G., you heard him prove from the

preacher's text was, "Shall we have fellowship with the

church for to-day and come with us to hear Dr.

"leave

Forever blessed be the fathers of the

preacher's text was, "Shall we have fellowship with the

Surely no native-born woman loves her country better than

New Orleans, Dec. 1, 1860

account of the night she spent fanning her sick husband on

something unessential. The narrative has since been

decipher it only under direct sunlight. She had succeeded,
said, for much of the pencil writing had been made under

afterwards she first resolved to publish it, she brought me a

fictitiously given. Many of the persons mentioned were my

and the

legibly. I have it direct from the hands of its writer, a lady

II. The Volunteers.

III. Tribulation

IV. A Beleaguered City

V. Married

VI. How it was in Arkansas

VII. The Fight for Food and Clothing

X. Frights and Perils in Steele's Bayou

XI. Wild Times in Mississippi

XIV. The Siege itself
A BELEAGUERED CITY.

A BELEAGUERED CITY.

MARRIED.

V.
The listened a second, and shouted: “Max, get up! The water is at first, but curiosity conquered at last, and I called H.

Federal forces had cut levees above to swamp the country. For several days every one has been uneasy about the.

We have started to make some. For tyros we succeed pretty unwound. To-day the vinegar was found to be all gone and

Serpent, with the head raised about two inches; as the light smooth blocks of wood about four inches square, into

rope by dipping, then wrap it round a corn-cob. But H. cut with great forethought brought also the wick and rosin. So from Natchez for making candles of rosin and wax, and kerosene, but it is nearly gone, and we are down to two

something is “out.” Last week but two bars of soap remained, so we began to save bones and ashes. Annie

Something is “out.” Last week but two bars of soap remained, so we began to save bones and ashes. Annie

To-day the vinegar was found to be all gone and drove for me.

April 28, 1862

Yes, we heard that much, but Max had the particulars, and days of good care made him strong enough to travel back slowly out of the buggy.

“Oh, I got sick!” replied our returned soldier, getting back!” A buggy was coming up with Max, Annie, and

This morning I was sewing up a rent in

April 13, 1862

drags for me.

Hens were hatching, and embryo chickens would be served

Endless and her innocence of them amazing. When sent Reeney will not be the one least noted. She was as

Reeney, the black handmaiden, posted off. Out of seven of

in the house. Max R. left with the company to be mustered —

April 1, 1862

permit her to make much resistance, and she has been

Thunderbolt fell in our household. Mr. R. came in and

plowed and planted. The stay-law has stopped all legal

window, and lo! it was the company of volunteers and a

Indescribable sounds broke the stillness of the night, and

you that you are liars, and you know where to find us.”

angry, being ignorant of H.’s real opinions. He jumped up

Confederacy should live there. When H. related the

to report that it excited great indignation, especially among

could show some better credentials than his bare word.

Hindman’s orders is going through the country impressing

that very thing was strange.

Annie’s heart was in the work; not so with me.

brides recently from the city, requisition was made upon

equip the new company. As Annie and myself are both

little village the past few days. The ladies from the

—

it plazes.”

“crazy.” If one remains silent, and controlled, then one is

with popular plans, one is “traitorous,” “ungrateful,”

place. If an incautious word betrays any want of sympathy

The serpent has entered our Eden. The

sunset is a panacea for mental worry.

Squirrels and fish, are to be had. H. has bought me a nice

professional men form one; the very poor villagers the

plantations.

lovelier than those in Louisiana, though one misses the

Sundays in the court-house. All the planters and many

Episcopalians, and Methodists hold services on alternate

entertaining with great hospitality. The Baptists,

the lake. The adjacent planters count their slaves by the

near city. They were a couple of miles from the

 plantation.

Next morning we drove over to our home in this village. It

image. This was a large plantation; the Y.’s knew H. very

and sat so stiff and straight she looked like an ebony

light, and close to them, and sewing as if on a race with

days, in a blockaded city, and about to go far from any

gardener, and factotum, but having joined the new

sooner take my chance of conscription and feel honest

be bullied into enlisting by women, or by men. I will

the lake, “can you stand the pressure, or shall you be

Well, H.,” I questioned, as we walked home after crossing

cheer up his wife.’’ . . .

“the Bible says, ‘When a man hath married a new wife, he

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“the Bible says, ‘When a man hath married a new wife, he
Thursday, July 10, 1862.

Yesterday began the spell.

It rained all day and night, and the water rose higher than before. When we got thirsty, it was found that Max had set the jug of water in the shade of a tree and left it there. We were unable to get any more, and the water stored in the house was soon spent. We then divided, H. and I remaining to watch the river.
indescribable. All the world appeared to be traveling
so we put up at the Bowman House. The excitement was
reached my hair was down, my hat on my neck, and my
day was burning at white heat. When the station was
—

South.

struggle? It has shown you what the South needs, and if all
slavery; why can't the South do the same and end the

wound. “Max, what interest has a man like you, without
negro law has intensified my opinions. I can't see why I,
changed me but the logic of events, though the twenty-
the South now, and nobody has

“Who has done this?” bawled Max. “You felt with the
Oh! my soul's brother from youth up is a traitor! A traitor
when he heard this from H., lost all self-control and cried
there and wait the chance of getting into that city. Max,
water, and invited us to visit them. The letter had been sent

This morning there was a most painful scene. Annie's

morning I had donned a dark-green calico. I wiped my
clothes, chilled us to the bone. All were shivering and blue
the half-hour the sheet of water was pouring down. As it

Just as we turned into the right way, down came the rain so
stretching into a great, silent, desolate forest. A horror
shall never forget Old River. It was the vision of a

yesterday were in an engagement with the ram

insurmountable obstacle at last. We sat despairing what to
well till noon, when we came to a narrow place where an

Don't row so fast; we may run against something.”
about ten o'clock, the boat beginning to go with great

FRIGHTS AND PERILS IN STEELE'S

X.
time for a word and the train flashed away.

of her, brightly smiling at us. Max had written to H., but

out, and there stood Annie with a little sister on each side

when I looked round at the next station they had bought

seat with arms flung out and eyes staring. “There he is

so, you'll find him yet.” She gave a start, jumped from her

baggage. She raised her head to try and answer. “Don’t cry

next station the conductor came to ask her about her

hope was terrible. The conductor placed her in care of

he learned he had been heard of at Jackson, and came full

platform, and I gladly learned that we could go right on. A

blew cool and keen from the heart of the pines, a friend sat

. ( [71x2474] “Of course, you can take it easily, you’re going away; but

fight to save their property. His men cost him twelve to

“No, in the army; Pa told them they’d have to come and

“No, I asked Hester if he had them, and she said, ‘Yes.’

is a nigger-chaser. He’s got his bloodhounds here now.”

“Forgot! He knew better than to introduce him! That man

“What is the matter, Bessie?”

“I shall give Mr. W. a piece of my mind. He must have

the bright room fades and a vision rises of figures clad in

that happens often it drives me off. Sometimes while I read

shadowy figure of little Jule, the girl whose duty it is to

heads of the girls stooping over their books, now the

golden curls of little John toddling about, now the brown

heads of the elderly women in bright bandanas, are hard at

end of the room, and Mrs. W. and her black satellites, the

big chair by the odorous fire of pine logs and knots roaring

Mr. W., spare, erect, gray-headed, patriarchal, sits in his

“You mean, if the Lord does not agree with you, you’ll

slaves set free, the Southern people will all become

without an order from him.”

He’ll get none from me. I’ll take care of my own friends

“Just let him try to enforce it and they’ll cow-hide him.

The need of clothing for their armies is worrying them too.

away. The hounds are not far off.”

December. The slaves have found it out, though it had

Mr. W. said last night the farmers felt uneasy

Oct. 31

Sometimes traveling soldiers stop here, but that is rare.

begs me to read aloud all the war news. He is fond of the

The days are full of useful work, and in the lovely

movements reported, lest an army should get between us.

food, the pure aromatic air, the sound sleep away from the

—

Oct. 28, 1862

English and French, and I have accepted transiently.

the girls. Sometimes her hands are a curiosity.

of equal parts of cotton and corn-shucks, are the most

Mr. W. is now having the dirt-floor of his smoke-house

never see any, but the hunter shoots them, and eggs are

ammunition, for a man is kept hunting and supplies the

Yet the trials of war are here too. Having no matches, they

My friend’s little nest is calm in contrast to the tumult not

morning we drove out here.

surprise when I asked to exchange it for a glass of water;

officers, glittering between, made up a carnival of color.

to give a military air. The gray and gold uniforms of the

gray waists; the trimming chiefly gold braid and buttons,

waist of another, the skirt of another; scarlet jackets and

appearance. In single suits I saw sleeves of one color, the

offering enormous prices for the privilege of sleeping

VICKSBURG.

XII.
Cable. “War Diary of a Union Woman in the South: 1860-63.”

“He has not; that is of no consequence; it has been taken. With wagons.”

“I’m not going there. This is an order from General At the office of Deputy Which Mr. L.?”

...pass around in his pocket and go every now and then to is a city taken, “sure enough, but, alas! they were neither cerulean blue nor household splendor or festal rooms or gay illuminations, the memories those candles called up. The long years parcel containing about two pounds of candles, and left me but, said he, “a soldier who was hauling some of the providence to us. There is no more for sale at any price, special favor from the sole remaining barrel for sale. We sack of corn-meal, a little vinegar, and actually some preparations of it had been going the rounds of Martha. The dungeon, as I call it, is lighted only by a trap—cellar, where the accumulated bottles told of festive hours victorious, and we finished preparations for the siege to—many hours. Then in the safest corner a platform was laid...and eloquent, she generally conquers. I came off...the argument was long, but when a woman is obstinate...paper to mortar-shells. You must go into the country.”

“Oh! H.,” I exclaimed, as he entered soon after, “America...And the same woman who morning said, ‘It would be best to stay here...is wounded.”

“Yes, it’s no use hollerin’, old lady.”

...exploded just outside, sending three or four pieces Martha and hastened to the kitchen. Evidently a shell had America was too lively to have been killed, I consolied Miss G., my child is killed and the kitchen tore up.” Seeing fairly dancing with fright and pain, while she uttered America, bleeding from a wound in the forehead, and...a nearer explosion; the house shook, and a tearing sound...usual, listening to the distant sound of bursting shells, between us, it was no part of my plan to be obedient. A conscripted, and as I felt certain an army would get...could not leave his position and go also without being...we could not see the finale, though we saw her rendered...whizzing. Yesterday the heads taken off last night. I passed and saw them stretched friend said to H., “It was a wonder you didn’t have your...of these home-made shoes that I think I’ll put them...an exact pattern from my old shoes, laid it on the sleeves, rags when I tried to wear them; but the soles were good,...an artist. Making shoes is now another accomplishment. Mine...of these home-made shoes that I think I’ll put them...then soaked the soles and sewed the cloth to them. I am so...proud of these home-made shoes that I think I’ll put them...for we have lived to ourselves, not visiting or visited. I have had little to record recently...—XIII.
Cable. "War Diary of a Union Woman in the South: 1860-63."

June 20th

"We are not yet entirely safe, and I am always anxious. The enemy are throwing incendiary shells in." (From the private log of a Union woman)

June 18th

"Smith has driven Banks from Port Hudson," and that "the confidence is felt that we can maintain our position until the end." (From the private log of a Union woman)

June 13th, 1863

"Shell burst just over the roof this afternoon. The dining-room. The entire ceiling of that room fell in a mass." (From the private log of a Union woman)

June 9th, 1863

"Dinner was the first thing to do; my cousin and I saw it. In the street..." (From the private log of a Union woman)

June 7th, 1863. (In the cellar.)

"I feel especially grateful to God for my deliverance..." (From the private log of a Union woman)

May angels guard us while we sleep,
Secure from all our fears;
The even..." (From the private log of a Union woman)

---

SIEGE OF VICKSBURG.

PRINTED ON WALL PAPER IN THE XIV.
sweep around the curve and anchor in the teeth of the
Truly, it was a fine spectacle to see that fleet of transports
foremost among them the gentleman who took
In an hour more a grand rush of people set in toward the
"Don't you think you're rather hard on Pemberton? He
an insane fire as he spoke. “Haven't I seen my friends
out at the lines now, and the men in Vicksburg will never
"Yes; we have had no official notice, but they are paroling
keep alive, but now all this is over.”
"Good-morning, madam,” he said; “we won’t bother you
the bowl of scrapings. (They took turns for it.)
the river and blew a truce signal; the shelling stopped at
"Why do you fear so?”
"Ah, sir,” shaking his head gloomily, “I’m afraid the last
assault will be made in front and rear. You know we have
wraps me like a soft garment; how else can I express this
dozen. We have had wheat supper and wheat bread once
parlor and write. Two candles are lighted. I would like a
—
H. saw that we could not cross it and turned to come back;
trunks put in the boat, and embarked; but the boat became
Leaving Martha in charge, we went to the river, had our
—
he secured was a miserable, leaky one
requisite pass, and he saw General Pemberton crawling out
H. was going to headquarters for the
flag-officer. “Of course it is nothing but their brag.”
“Those were General Grant’s exact words, sir,” said the
surrender.”
“We know nothing of the kind. Vicksburg will not
officer came back flushed and angry. “General Grant says
lady may feel sure danger will soon be over. Vicksburg
that no human being shall pass out of Vicksburg; but the
officer told me
—
Tennessee. If you get through the lines, give her this. They
paper a few words. Then he said, “My wife is in
headquarters, and while we waited wrote on a piece of silk
yonder.” His horse, tied by the tent door, was quivering all
alarmed; you are out of range. They are firing at our mules
involuntarily I moved on my chair. He said, “Don’t be
from the sharp-shooters on the Federal lines that
said if we went out to the lines we might be permitted to
useful, I obtained from the consul of my birthplace, by
—
July 1st, 1863.
lost his composure, because my coolness has broken down.
every morning rose to the same prospect, without being
crushed. When Martha went for the milk she came back
of protection from them. On the heels of this came Mr. J.,
tore up that room, the pieces coming through both floors
because I’ve lost my nerve. We were all in the cellar, when
A horrible day. The most horrible yet to me,
plaster out of my hair, for my hands were rather shaky.
ran down here. It has taken all the afternoon to get the
crashing near, and I snatched up my comb and brush and
T. Hearing the shells, I stood still and said to myself, “I
—I won’t think of that any more.” But I did think of that,
—
Men are at work all over the house shoveling up the plaster
limit the water given. Next came the owner of the house
with a rich offering to the shrine of “our Lady of Mercy.”
indeed is over all, and my limbs are unhurt, and I suppose
were being blindly dashed against this embodiment of
—
meeting. The townsfolk continued to dash through the
—
the box of Confederate money and took out four hundred
greenbacks. H. went out to get provisions. When he
But now the new-comers began to swarm into our yard,
"Yes, I’ll be there pretty soon,” replied H.
know.”
whether you make the attempt to capture General Grant or not. While the exploit would be very brilliant if successful, you must remember that failure might be disastrous to you and your men. The General commends your activity and energy and expects you to continue to show these qualities.

I am, very respectfully, yr. obt. svt.

Thomas L. Snead, A.A.G.

CAPT. GEO. L. BAXTER,
Commanding Beauregard Scouts.

I would like to know if he tried it and came to grief or abandoned the project. As letters can now get through to New Orleans, I wrote there.

July 14th, 1863.

—

Moved yesterday into a house I call "Fair Rosamond's bower" because it would take a clue of thread to go through it without getting lost. One room has five doors opening into the house, and no windows. The stairs are like ladders, and the colonel's contraband valet won't risk his neck taking down water, but pours it through the windows on people's heads. We shan't stay in it. Men are at work closing up the caves; they had become hiding-places for trash. Vicksburg is now like one vast hospital—every one is getting sick or is sick. My cook was taken to-day with bilious fever, and nothing but will keeps me up.

July 23d, 1863.

—

We moved again two days ago.

Aug. 20.

—

Sitting in my easy chair to-day, looking out upon a grassy slope of the hill in the rear of this house, I have looked over this journal as if in a dream; for since the last date sickness and sorrow have been with me. I feel as if an angry wave had passed over me bearing away strength and treasure. For on one day there came to me from New Orleans the news of Mrs. B.'s death, a friend whom no tie of blood could have made nearer. The next day my beautiful boy ended his brief life of ten days and died in my arms. My own illness caused him to perish; the fatal cold in the cave was the last straw that broke down strength. The colonel's sweet wife has come, and I do not lack now for womanly companionship. She says that with such a pre-natal experience perhaps death was the best for him. I try to think so, and to be glad that H. has not been ill, though I see the effects. This book is exhausted, and I wonder whether there will be more adventures by flood and field to cause me to begin another.

Notes

1. Author's name is omitted. Dorothy Richards Miller is generally credited with writing the diary. She was born in the West Indies and later moved to New Orleans. "Union woman" would refer to her union sympathies rather than her being from the North.

2. "Life, fortune, and sacred honor." References the last line of the Declaration of Independence.

3. Episcopal Church. Probably Christ Church, the first Protestant church in New Orleans. The minister was probably the Rt. Rev. Leonidas Polk, a rabid secessionist who left the pulpit to serve in the Confederate army as the "Fighting Bishop." Despite his zeal, he war regarded as a poor general.


8. Twelve feet square. More likely twelve yards. — Cable's note.

9. "Blockade runner." This term applied to individual smugglers like the woman mentioned here and also to privately owned steam ships used to cross the 3500 mile long Union blockade.

10. Farm of Mr. W.'s. On this plantation, and in this domestic circle, I myself afterward sojourned, and from them enlisted in the Confederate army. The initials are fictitious, but the description is perfect. — Cable's note.


Prepared by
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Anthology of Louisiana Literature http://www2.latech.edu/~bmagee/louisiana_anthology/texts/cable/cable--war_diary.html (10 of 10) [7/25/2017 9:16:08 AM]