

thing was done; Andersonville was avenged, Wirz was hung.”

This is exactly as it reads in Mr. Grigsby's book. It appears that he started out to be honest and tell the truth, but toward the end evidently weakened, or the thought occurred to him that in the one hundred and thirty-seven pages of his work he had denounced Captain Wirz unstintedly, placing the whole blame of Andersonville solely and simply upon that unfortunate man.

John W. Urban, another Andersonville prisoner, who wrote "Battlefield and Prison Pen," says (p. 381):

“We could not help contrasting this with our miserable condition; and is it strange that we sometimes felt embittered against the Government for not making a greater effort to release us? But as true as needle to the north pole, so were the most of the Union soldiers confined in Southern prisons to the Government they had sworn to defend. They might feel themselves slighted, neglected, or even deserted by the Government and among themselves be tempted to say some bitter things; but a word or insinuation to that effect from their enemies would excite their ire and indignation to the utmost and they were always ready to defend the Government from the charge that it was not doing all it could to release them. It was, however, a sad fact that hundreds died with the fear

haunting them that it was so. Men who had cheerfully faced death on many a battlefield, lay down and died broken-hearted as the terrible suspicion forced itself into their minds that the Government they loved so well, and fought so hard to save, was indifferent to their sad fate."

Exchange was at an end. Consternation reigned. Terror, amazement and despair were plainly depicted upon the countenances of the poor, forsaken prisoners.

Many of the prisoners, being but human, raised their clenched, trembling hands toward heaven and with fearful oaths cursed the authorities at Washington, the Government, the North and the South, and the day they were born.

Oh, what a hatred was then engendered for our Secretary of War! Ex-soldiers, North and South, and non-combatants and civilians may talk and think as they please, and notwithstanding all that has been said pro and con, Edwin M. Stanton at that time was classed in their hatred with Winder, Wirz, Davis, and Barrett. It is true that after we were finally released we tried to forget, and for policy sake, I believe, either kept silent or perhaps joined in the clamor against Wirz.

Then there was quibbling and subterfuge. "The South refused to exchange a negro prisoner for a rebel prisoner"; "The rebels would not exchange on an equitable basis as to relative rank of officers"; "The rebel Government resorted to

frivolous pretexts to delay exchange, as death was doing its work at Andersonville, Salisbury, and other prisons." The Confederacy would not concede this nor agree to that, and other similar theories were given. There was charge and refutation; words, words, words.

Aesop relates that a wolf and a lamb once simultaneously went to a stream to drink, whereupon the wolf accused the lamb of roiling the water to prevent him from drinking. "How can that be," said the lamb, "when you are above me and the water flows from you to me?" "Oh, that's a subterfuge," replied the wolf, "and at any rate your tribe has always injured the poor wolves, never allowing them to live in peace, and I shall now punish you for it." So he killed the lamb and felt appeased. Allowing that it was true that the Confederate authorities refused to exchange negro soldiers for rebel soldiers, did it better the condition of the poor negro held as a prisoner to have no exchange of white Union soldiers?

Grigsby, on page 137 of his Andersonville story, says:

"As a matter of pure principle this was probably correct, but as a matter of public policy and of justice and mercy to the white soldier, who had enlisted before there were any freed negroes, it was all wrong. If there had been any considerable number of negro soldiers in the prisons suffering with the others, then there

would have been a vital principle of justice as well as honor at stake, and the white prisoners themselves would have been the last men in the world to have sacrificed that principle in order to secure their own liberty and lives. There was not a negro soldier in Andersonville or in any other prison for a considerable time. When they were captured they were either sent back to their old masters or put to work on rebel fortifications, and they were not starved and did not suffer. Their condition as prisoners was little worse than it had always been before the war. Stanton and others who insisted on that point, might as well have insisted that every black in the South, whose liberty had been granted him by the Emancipation Proclamation, and who was detained by his old master, should be a subject of exchange."

When the Andersonville emissaries returned from Washington there was not one word about the exchange of the negro soldiers being in the way of our release. It was not then thought of. I know that for the past forty-two years that matter has been published broadcast in the North as a reason why we were not exchanged.

Grigsby is right in this. The Washington authorities had concluded to stop the exchange before there were any negro prisoners.

General Grant in his "Memoirs" bluntly but honestly gives the reason for not exchanging prisoners. It seems that it was decided at Washington

that exchange meant the reinforcement of the rebel army, and he goes on to explain that the exchanged rebel soldier behind barricades and fortifications fighting on the defensive was equivalent to three Union soldiers attacking him.

This was the Stanton policy, and if this atrocious and inhuman doctrine is anyway meritorious, the "War Secretary" is entitled to the credit.

original number, attended, and brought back a set of resolutions as follows:

*Preamble:* Apparently one of the sad effects of the progress of this terrible war has been to deaden our sympathies and make us more selfish than we were when the tocsin of battle strife first sounded in the land. Perhaps this state of public feeling was to have been anticipated. The frequency of which you hear of captures in battles, and the accounts which you have seen of their treatment, has robbed the spectacle of its novelty and, by law of nature, has taken off the edge of sensibilities, and made them less the object of interest. No one can know the horrors of imprisonment in crowded quarters but him who has endured it. But hunger, nakedness, squalor and disease are as nothing compared with the heartsickness which wears prisoners down, most of them young men, whose terms of enlistments have expired, and many of them with nothing to attach them to the cause in which they suffer but principle and love of country and of friends. Does the misfortune of being taken prisoner make us less the object of interest to our Government? If such you plead, plead it no longer. These are no common men and it is no common merit that they call upon you to aid in their release from captivity.

“There are confined in this prison from 25,000 to 30,000 men, with daily accessions of hundreds, and that the mortality among them, generated by

various causes, such as change of climate, dirt, and want of proper exercise is becoming truly frightful to contemplate, and is rapidly increasing in virulence, decimating our ranks by hundreds weekly.

“In view of the foregoing facts we, your petitioners, most earnestly yet respectfully pray that some action be immediately taken to effect our speedy release, either on parole or by exchange. *The dictates of both humanity and justice alike demanding it on the part of our Government!*”

“We shall look forward with a hopeful confidence that something be done speedily in this matter, believing that a proper statement of the facts is all that is necessary to secure a redress of the grievance complained of.”

The above was signed by more than one hundred sergeants, prisoners, who had charge of detachments of their fellow-prisoners, the men authorizing the sergeants to sign it.

The committee selected to go to Washington to intercede for exchange were: Edward Bates, Company K, Forty-second N. Y.; H. C. Higgen-son, Company K, Nineteenth Illinois; Prescott Tracey, Company G, Eighty-second N. Y.; and Sylvester Noirot, Company B, Fifth N. J. They were paroled for this purpose. It was my understanding that three of them returned to Andersonville and reported the failure of their mission.