

have lost the whole of them.

CHAPLAIN NEILL'S LETTER.

WASHINGTON, July 24, 1861, }
Wednesday Night. }

* * The conductors of the advance towards Richmond forgot the better part of valor, discretion. Our regiment, as you have learned, was in the advance of Heintzelman's column, and I never saw men behave with so much dignity and cheerfulness, with the entire absence of all shouting, as they descended into the battle field. Occupying the extreme right on the battle field, and in proximity to the Fire Zouaves, I have no doubt that their red shirts led the rebels to suppose that they were all of the same corps, and direct their fire upon our men with greater energy.

It was painful, I assure you, to be on the battle field and have nothing to do but dodge cannon balls. It was impossible for me to lag behind, as I felt that the soldiers ought to see me by such and so they entered the engagement; and yet, when they skirmished around and left me near the artillery, I felt a singular loneliness, and would have felt much better if I had had some distinct military duty to perform.

As the battle ceased, however, I found my hands full in dragging our wounded men to the hospital near by. Afterwards I succeeded in bringing Capt. Acker, Lieut. Harley, (of Capt. Pell's company,) and five other wounded men in an ambulance to Centreville, near where we had camped before the battle. Harley and I reached this place before we were ordered to retire to Washington. We reached Georgetown at 11 A. M. Monday, having been on our feet, with the exception of a few halts, thirty hours. During that time I saw the battle; was in the ambulance and surrounded by thousands of panic stricken men; forced to make a wounded man tear off his flannel shirt, which I hung out of the ambulance on a sabre, as a hospital sign, so that the rebels, who were alleged to be near, would not fire on the suffering; witnessed the wreck of artillery wagons, baggage wagons, &c., on the road, which has been so fully told in all the papers. From Saturday night at six o'clock until Monday at dinner time, I had the privilege of eating two pilot crackers, a piece of cake and a cup of coffee.

All my baggage was thrown into the road to make way for the wounded, and I fear that the trunk may be captured. In that case I am left with only the clothes on my back.

We were quite anxious for Drs. Boutillier and Stewart, fearing that they may have been captured, but to night the former arrived, and we learn that the latter is out by the Hospital, not far from the battle field.

The field officers behaved very well on the field, and all of them escaped without the slightest scratch.