Addresses to two
Companies leaving West Point
in 1858

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Address to the Co. of Engineers in 57

My Friends;

You are to leave us on the morrow: Your arms & accoutrements are in order, all the implements necessary for efficient service are well packed for transportation - You are well schooled in the duty of the Engineer Soldier; and everything for comfort, convenience and use is arranged for the Westward March - Many hearts are buoyant with expectancy & secure rejoicing at the change for any manners of the monotony of West Points life. A few may have secret heart-burnings. There will be some friends to part with, and many a strong tie to sever - The wheel of Providence keeps rolling around while some are at the top of the wheel others are dragged in the dust - While some clamor for gladness, others are bowed down in sorrow - While some souls leave with a pleasant exhilaration others are stricken with disappointment or, are overwhelmed with gloom. Still, the general current is sparkling: Your countenances are animated; new scenes, new pleasures, new associations are soon to greet you. I have marked many faces in the lectures - and many have met with me on Friday evenings and on Sundays for the purpose of studying the word of God. With whatever man I have met I have found a degree of manliness, candor & soldierlike deportment that I like.

I desired to see a greater number at the Bible Class, but I did not wonder; for Satan is always misrepresenting

such places - He always will help the worldly-minded to question the motives and the objects of those who go: He often puts it into the hearts of his votaries to ridicule those who intimate a desire to go. And all this for a good & substantial reason, he does not like to have his friends study the Bible, or go to the house of prayer. I am heartily sorry for any who have yielded to the influence of this insidious Spirit, whether in the form of ridicule, malicious untruth, or otherwise. I am sorry on my own account, for it has deprived me of the privilege of personal intercourse, wherein I have to tell of what My Saviour has done can do & is doing for the Soul. It has prevented me from demonstrating what, I have often asserted, that I have a deep interest in your salvation. Now you are going away. You are going into the field. From a life of comparative quiet, you are to commence one of activity, one fraught with danger. Instead of the drill you take up the long & weary march, instead of the neat table you will gather round the camp fire; instead of the comfortable bank you will take the ground. You will soon be exposed to new temptations to vicious indulgences - You will encounter the peculiar practices of reckless characters, who think little of human life, & less of Eternity and of God: who even curse their Maker & their fellows in His Name. You will find men who pour down the liquid fire & call it manly & brave, men who are filthy in communication and unrestrained in in passion. With such you will be in daily contact -

undoubtedly you set forth with intrepid hearts ready to meet any danger and to overcome any obstacle - Let me not try to damper your courage or lessen the pleasant excitement due to change - But it is wise to reconnoitre well, to understand well the position of our enemy as well as to observe our own ground. It is not at all probable that all will return with the same buoyancy & freshness of Spirit - that there will be no pain, no sorrow, no sickness, no death among you - Some one may drag along many a desolate mile with nothing to eat or drink - Another may be taken ill on the march and be consigned to the tender mercies of the baggage wagon, another may suffer for months with bruised or broken limbs, and it is not impossible that many may be engaged in a sharp conflict with the enemy, ~~and pour~~ out their life-blood on the battle field - My friends are you prepared for whatever may befall you! With your armor buckled on, health in your cheeks & strength in your limbs - are you wholly ready for life & for death -

"There is something you need; something that I fear too many of you have not been careful to procure. It is indispensable and especially so for you - It is the armor of God." "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand; stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth

and having on the breast-plate of righteousness and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace; Above all, ~~things~~ taking the Shield of Faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the ~~fiery~~ darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of Salvation and the Sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.

This, then, is the armor, the Girdle of Truth; the Breast plate righteousness; the Sandals, the Gospel; The Shield, faith; the helmet salvation, and the sword the Spirit.

But say you, it is idle to talk of procuring this armor in one night. Can we become Christians and be invested with this garniture so soon — before the morrow? I answer it cometh not from Man — but from God, "believe," only believe — Repent & believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Would you limit the mercy or the Grace of God to times and seasons? — The storm raged on the Sea of Galilee. The Disciples of our Lord were in terror and called unto him and said Master carest ~~thou~~ not that we perish? He arose and rebuked the wind and said unto the sea peace, be still, and the wind ceased & there was a Great calm. My friend is there a storm in ~~thy~~ your heart? is Satan, through your wicked passions & wicked inclination contending against your better ~~inclinations~~ purposes & striving to bring you into the bondage of Sin & make you fast in the stocks — then cry out, Master carest thou not that I perish,

He will rebuke the storm. He will say peace, be still. O, go to Christ just as you are this night all stripped of your armor as you are, go to him, He will gird your loins with his truth. He will protect you with his shield of faith and crown you with salvation.

My friends - You move with an air of manliness & conscious dignity, you hold up your heads amongst your fellows - Would you be truly superior; would you be a model company; then be a Christian company; be above all that is mean and low; set your standard high - yea, look to the great exemplar & guide - to Christ.

Would you manifest to the army, & to the nation the courage - then know that God giveth power to the faint and to them that have no might he increaseth strength - Be strong; fear not, behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and save you - If you are the followers of Christ, he hath not given you the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind -

But all these are not the motives with which to seek the Redeemer - Have we not immortal souls, ~~and~~ have we not needs like other men? Do we not need salvation & can we not understand that God so loved us as to give his only begotten son to die that we might live? Seek him then

this alone & foremost

not to please the Army or the Nation, seek not to gain advantage in the world or position in the service. but seek Him who loves you for yourself and for Himself. Should a man beguile & deceive you by showing you how you will lose by becoming a follower of Christ; tell him plainly that you will lose nothing, but will gain all things, even light instead of darkness, truth instead of falsehood, strength instead of weakness, courage instead of cowardice, yes even eternal life instead of eternal death.

You are to leave us; we shall meet you no more in this house for many days - but you are not going where there is no Saviour. Even in the desert, if one of you were alone & in misery. he would help, strengthen comfort & save you, if you were but willing to ask his companionship - Wherever you go he is ever near - He is waiting and gracious & tender in mercy - Listen to the tribute of a soldier to an officer who was killed in the Crimea: "When I opened the paper it made the tears come into my eyes, for to hear that my beloved friend had left this world. He is gone to sleep in Jesus. I wish I had been by his side and seen him fall asleep but I know that he is in greater glory than is to be had in this world, When I last saw him - among

us, little did I think it was the last. But he fell in Duty & Glory ——— I was always living in hopes of seeing that beloved, respected Captain, & honored brother in the Lord, only there, when I got a chance of going only to him. Now I am disappointed. But I will put no trust in Princes to get me to Heaven, but I look on the Blood of Jesus as the Crop. I will trust in Him and He will never forsake me. For Jesus says — All ye that thirst approach the stream where living waters flow.

Our beloved friend is drinking of those living waters now."

Yes, My friends what the poor Soldier says is true we need not look to man, once having learned that there is a Saviour & that he is not far off, but knocking at the very portals of our heart, it is sufficient for us; we can go to him directly and ask for whatever we need.

I ~~have been~~ was once marching with a body of men in the heat of summer; for some time we had been without water. The men had drunk up all that their Canteens contained — and were very thirsty — all at once we came in sight of a green piece of Ground and the men suspected there was water there — immediately they made for the place & were gladdened to find two or three little wells of fresh water — Each man eagerly helped himself & filled his Canteen — They did not sit down in

the distance and, each speculate about the matter and say; if it had been the will of Providence that I should have water, it would have been here at hand. I see no man sitting down ~~Almost overcome with thirst~~ I see a man off & waiting for another to try the water & tell him if it was good. No man doubted the cry, "here is water"; but each & all rushed to the fountain.

Now is not Christ the fountain of living water - a very well spring of water welling up into everlasting life. If ye are athirst, can ye not go straight to the fountain & drink? Listen to the precious words of your Saviour: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled" "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink.

But though our Lord is ever present, ever with us; ever ready to bind up a broken heart - though he will answer those that call upon him, & bless those that seek him with the whole heart; still it is well to seek sympathy - to comfort one another; to talk often one to another; to bear each other's burdens in the Lord.

So I trust those of you that love the Lord, will continue as opportunity offers to talk about the mercy & love of Christ - that you will get together on the sabbath and read the Word of God; that you will pray together that the words of your mouth and the meditation of your heart may be acceptable in the sight of God - whom you will by so doing

find to be your strength & your Redeemer. I presume the great majority of you will take with you some book to relieve the monotony of halts on the March - Now let it be the Bible or the Testaments - You will find that in this Book that will answer every wants & meet every contingency. It will aid you to lift up your hearts from the contamination of worldly men, it will assist you to yield up your selves to Christ - It will tell you how abundant & manifold are his Blessings - How real his mercy, how great his love, and also how very simple is the way of Salvation. As a matter of It is an undoubted truth, that, if a man chooses Satan & the pleasures of sin for a season; rather than Christ & his Cause, it is a truth that he will find little pleasure in a Book that his Heavenly Father has sent him. He does not like to see his own deformity. He does not love words like these - "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul" - or these: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me & of my words, in this adulterous & sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his father with the Holy Angels."

He loves to be let alone, to sing the delusive fantom of some relief way off in the distant future - He loves to base his hopes on his own theories - He loves to be blind and hates goodness. Show him a Christian and he will tell you a thousand faults in him

show him a drunkard and he will excuse him - and tell you what a good fellow he is - Paints him to Christ, he denies him and is determined not to believe in Him; unless he has formed some image to suit his own heart & dressed it in a fashion to suit his own depravity - Why should he have to read the Bible! And, yet, even this man is not beyond hope - Our Lord has given himself for him, has atoned for his transgressions - Yea! he calls unto him, "Turn Oh! turn why will ye die" - If he will repent, the Bible will become his delight, He will learn a new understanding - a new appreciation of its truth.

Do not forget us - do not forget words that you have heard in the house of prayer - treasure up truth in your hearts as a storehouse - You will need it all - It is not true that a man may not be a Christian and a Soldier. The Providence of God has placed us here in the service, Let us fill our position in good faith.

During the march hours will have ample opportunities for meditation and prayer - During your tours of Guard duty you will be often alone for hours - Then in the solemn stillness, think of Him who is always on the watch - Upon whom the universe reposes and who condescends to guard the humble creature of the Earth - As you look around you in the quietude of the night season, think of the sleep that opprimitates this - the sleep that

knows no waking. As you turn to the sparkling firmament, let your mind expand into a wider conception of the creation and then think of the Almighty. Now turn within to your little self. note your limited vision. your imperfect faculties, your corrupt affections. your uncontrolable desires & passions. Will I be always thus, a spot a blemish in this fair creation of God? It may not be. for there is flows for the cleansing. There now hers "good tidings" of great joy". and they are for me. Raise up the tearful eye & open the heart. Christ, your Redeemer is close at hand, He is ready & willing to pour the fulness of his Spirit upon you.

Let me speak unto you as unto those I may never see again. I wish to say what we all have heard from our earliest boyhood. It is this. In a few short years at the farthest, we all must die, our bodies be put in the silent grave: and our Spirits go forth into the world of ~~souls~~ Spirits. If we must not here. we will meet there. we will all appear at the judgment seat of Christ. Now let me tell you how I would like to meet you, this little company. It is this: in joy & not in anguish. with hearts filled with grateful emotions, in such a condition that you could raise your eyes and look upon your Saviour, and see his face. for then his name would be in your forheads.

May the God of peace & love go with you and guard

you from every danger. May he continue his long suffering forbearance. May he give you in abundance of the rich gifts of his mercy - and grant you the power to become & remain true soldiers of the Cross. grant you to feel that though — Man may trouble & distress me
Yet will only drive me to thy breast
Life with trials hard may press me
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest.

Resolve my friends from this hour to make Christ your portion - Oh how glad you will then be at the hour of death and in the day of Judgement.
Resolve to seek him with all prayer & supplication of spirit.
Resolve to be diligent in every known duty to repent & seek forgiveness of our Lord day by day —

1 Delivered Wednesday evening Sept 8th 1858

A few short months ago you will remember I addressed the Engineer Company on the eve of their departure for Utah. And on looking over my notes I find these words: "Undoubtedly you set forth with intrepid hearts ready to meet any danger and to overcome any obstacle. Let me not try to dampen your courage or lessen the pleasant excitement due to change. But it is wise to reconnoitre well: to understand well the position of our enemy as well as to observe our own ground. It is not at all probable that all will return with the same buoyancy and freshness of spirit – that there will be no pain, no sorrow, no sickness, no death among you. Some one may drag along many a desolate mile with nothing to eat. ~~or desire~~ another may be taken ill on the march & be consigned to the tender mercies of the baggage wagon. &c – and then the question was asked are you prepared for ~~life~~ whatever may befall you? With your armour buckled on, health in your cheeks & strength in your limbs, are you wholly ready for life and for death?" Already the news has reached us that one of those who were listening to these words, and who bore the insignia of health & youthful vigor not less than the rest, sickened on the march and had to be left behind – where after great distress from the mountain fever, he was paralized with apoplexy & breathed his

last in the hospital of a stranger company. His comrades were far away, and strangers paid him the last tribute of respect as ~~they~~ at their camping ground they were obliged to consign him to a coffinless grave.

This young man's death has lessons for us. and important ones too. It turns us to the solemn questions that were put to him before his departure. "Are you prepared for whatever may befall you? Are you wholly ready for life and for death?" As I conceive the whole question to be embraced in a proper preparation for death. I will make this the theme of a few reflections.

What constitutes a proper preparation for death?

Before setting forth on this Expedition the Engineer Company made themselves ready; food, clothing implements for service, weapons, armour &c. were collected & put in order. All necessary things were taken and all superfluous things were rejected lest they should be encumbrances. Now what food & clothing do we want for the journey of life; that leads so soon into the valley & shadow of death? What food shall we take with us? Let us answer the question in the words of our Saviour: "For my Father giveth you the true bread from Heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven and

giveth life unto the world. Jesus interprets this language thus, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; again he says I am that bread of life... This is that bread that cometh down from heaven that a man may eat thereof and not die - I am the living bread which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever - Afterwards he changes the figure and says. Whoso eatheth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath Eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day; "for my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed."
As bread is the staff of the natural life - so the Son of God is the staff of the Spiritual. You will notice that the whole Spiritual world is indicated to the mind by figures - the things that are unseen are made evident to us by those things that are seen and made - The unregenerate soul is destitute of the love of God and actually has no faith in his promises - and this state is very aptly represented by the body without food - Christ receives the penitent sinner, forgives him, and breathes literally, his Spirit, into his soul. The ~~soul~~ was hungry - craving, now ~~it is~~ it is filled.# Why does your neighbor work so hard to get money ~~& spend all his~~ after he is already rich? ~~His soul is hungry~~ Why does he spend ~~so~~ many restless nights? Why does he grind the poor man and cause so many to ~~hate~~ hate him? Why does he not look cheerful & contented and distribute sunshine all ~~at~~ around him? He cannot. His soul is hungry - and he has been mean with it and fed it on husks.

Why is yonder wise man so restless & impatient? Why does he look at you so coldly, and receive your hearty salutation so grufflly – His soul is an hungered

Why does this ~~person~~ man take so much pleasure in retailing the faults and showing the dark sides of any person you may chance to speak well of? That Soul needs bread it is feeding on poisonous weeds –

Why is it that that intelligent man of our acquaintance tells so many falsehoods – has so many deceitful ways and holds out so many ~~contrary~~ foreign colors – He is afraid of exposing himself; He is covering past misconduct Hunger is gnawing at his heart. How he would leap for joy, if he could feel as he did at twelve or sixteen! He is taking nauseous drugs & living on them instead of the bread of life – Oh! What a poor, pitiable fellow creature is such a man – Can we not persuade him to accept & feed on what his Soul needs.

Look around you – What are men doing? Here is one running after wealth, here another pleasure – All the vices have their votaries – Licentiousness stalks abroad, and pretentious characters, styled good men smile upon her – Drunkenness quenches every vestige of goodness & kindness out of the soul, and makes men delight, nay, glory in their own shame and in the number of their dear friends they can bring to the same plain of degradation.

and yet how pleasant is he for a companion, who will drink with you, & how hospitable is he who puts the bottle to his neighbors mouth!
Behold envy and jealousy and backbitings - what community is free from these pestiferous sores.
Rich & poor, high & low all are very subject to them. Can you rejoice in another's good fortune? Can you see another rise while you are lowly? Can you lose your wealth & standing & be forgiving, unsuspicious?
Can you charitably construe another's miscarriage and overlook a fault? Can you restrain the tongue from tale-bearing and leave a wholesome impression on the hearers mind of him you hear commended?
If we pass beyond the lesser vices that are like pestes amongst us - How many are committing crimes - murder theft, robbery, adultery and all manner of wickedness comes to our ears from the public press -
What does all this mean? Simply that the soul is unsatisfied, unfilled - and it goes forth grasping at & carping for everything in creation but what it needs. It wants bread & meat and it is fed on husks, straw, gravel. Oh! My friends for the journey of life let us ask bread for our sustenance - for that life that begins here and never, never ends let us have that bread that cometh down from Heaven, even Jesus our Saviour.
It is astonishing how many dogmas, pretentious forms, creeds, and other pebbles are palmed off

on the intelligent mass of men – It is wonderful how they drink them in; and with what labor, life, and strenuosity they try to establish themselves in them – but it is all because their souls are perishing and Satan persuades them to take up with anything rather than Christ.
Oh! My friends, I beseech you to look well to this matter – Observe well not only your temporal food which will sustain & strengthen the body for the duties of ~~life~~ this life. But also watch well the food upon which you nourish your immortal souls.
The clothing: Let it be righteousness & holiness Be upright men and be complete men. After we have come to Jesus and accepted him, our work is not ended, but just begun – Gods work is not ended but begun. We may have been covered with garments, but such were gaudy, flimsey or ragged. We may have been wise in our conceits – and just according to an imperfect law; we may have formed habits of mind where there was no recognition of God & his demands – We laid down our theories, made our moral plans, prided ourselves, it maybe, that we were not as other men. Self entered into our morning & evening calculations – and Selfishness appeared from every point of our character – Our highest enjoyment rested in a self-complacent contemplation of self, and our generous swords cut, proceeded

from love of self somewhat more refined – Such Spiritual garments are gaudy – They have the appearance at first sight sometimes of genuine, good material but they will not bear inspection. We ourselves, though we deceive others seldom deceive ourselves so far as to feel that we need nothing more than these things for covering in the time of need. The habits of false hope that we have generated constitute nothing but a tinsel array – We have been false with the tongue, false in bearing and false in our thoughts; untrue to ourselves & untrue to others. How deceitful above all things & desperately wicked is the unregenerate heart.

All the old habits of Cursing, using the name of our dear & precious Saviour profanely – Speaking the Name of God without reverence or Godly fear – without hallowing it with our lips & in our hearts. All Idolatries, men-worshiping – Gold-worshiping, position-craving idolatries, all inordinate affections, all absorbing love of offspring, out casting the supreme love which God demands to himself. These and such a taste as leads men to love the low & the filthy jest, or the impure story, all these compose the miserable rags that we have been clothed in.

Now then as we begin to feed on the bread of life, we have need to be clothed upon with other than such gaudy flimsy, ragged vesture. Our intellects need clothing – we lay aside the old thoughts, we cease to dwell on the vile and vicious – we cease to spin webs for self

aggrandizement, and the like; and we begin to meditate on God, with all his holy attributes; on Christ ~~Christ~~ his only begotten Son, who, besides being an all-sufficient Saviour, presents the true example of perfect humanity, who is greater than all great men and better than all good men. Whom we may adore, serve, love and imitate and whom in the sense we have used the word, we may feed upon. We begin to consider the comforting Spirit sent unto us, to appreciate its blessed influence and assistance. As we have laid aside the old habits of crossing and irreverence, we begin to form habits of prayer & affectionate communion with God. Morning & night we ~~commune with~~ commune with the Spirit. We lift the voice of thanksgiving and bow our souls in humble entreaty. We lay aside old habits of intemperance in eating and drinking, garments that envelop us in burning poison. While we begin to form habits of temperance. We take fasting for intemperance, cheerfulness for sourness; and whatsoever else is of real worth & soundness is woven into the Christian's vestura. Righteousness & holiness comprehend the whole. Habits of righteousness & habits that generate holiness of heart are the vestments that we need for this journey.

A few short months ago I conversed with Wm. Slayter on this subject in private. He was respectful and attentive but whether he ever become fully reconciled to his Saviour is known

to him and his God. I hope he may have been led by the Spirit of God in those lonely hours, before the intensity of his sufferings overpowered him, to seek for mercy from a loving & forgiving Saviour. I hope he may have been adorned with pure spiritual robes and been permitted to feast on the true bread from Heaven. Could he come back to you my friends, to you who are mourning for him, who would have been happy to have alleviated the distress of his last hours. Would he not say - prepare for death, say more; go & buy wine and milk without money & without price. Go straight to him who will feed you & clothe you - and be made ready for your never ending existence. But yesterday I saw a young man who wears the same uniform reeling to & fro from intoxication. To him he would say, thou fool! prepare to meet thy God. Oh! My friend, beware, that which thou sowest that shalt thou also reap. Drink not poison, but quench your thirst with the water of life. Drink deep at this fountain and thy soul shall be glad.

If your companion Wm Slaytor was as healthy & strong as any of you six months ago - Now know you that your own bodies may not within six short months lie mouldering in the Grave and your souls be gone forth to try the new scenes of the Spirit world. My friends, there is every inducement in the world & more than all

all the world to enter upon a Christian life: but men will not do it. They love sin and the pleasures of sin, and they enfold and refold themselves in them - They do not love God, for he is holy, just, and good - They cannot be saved for salvation is love & they cannot love; Are they not blind, that they cannot see and deaf that they cannot hear?

The Destroyer puts forth his hand and plucks one after another - We see it, we hear of it, we understand it - but an insidious Spirit whispers to us as to our first parent, "Thou shalt not surely die" and with as little wisdom we believe him; we mock! we will need no warning, till we, one by one, begin to struggle in the grasp of death ourselves -

My friends will it be in the next world as it is here? Can we be base & God hating and be indifferent? Can we commit sin upon sin and smother conscience Can we put on cloaks of superstition & falsehood, and remain at rest? For my part I would rather believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, & would rather be cleansed by his blood and sanctified by his Spirit - and embowered within his blessed fold - yes; the powerful motive of an everlasting rescue from corruption, and the prospect of a never ending life of pure joy ought to be enough for me, to make me willing to throw myself into the arms of my Saviour. Be persuaded my friends to seek salvation while their is life, while there is health & strength - While God is willing

to pardon, cleanse, relieve – O! come to Christ to-day. Just as I am without one plea
But that thy blood was shed for me
O! Lamb of God I come.

And now as we ~~take our~~ bid adieu to the young Soldier, who still far away ~~will~~ lies wrapped in his Soldier's blanket, taking the rest that knows no waking – let us pray that this Providence of God may be blessed to the eternal good of his family and friends – and that his brethren in arms ~~may pause to~~ as they say poor fellow! when they pass the slab that marks his name; may each pause and consider that ~~each~~ "I too must come to this end". Before long my soul like his will have taken its everlasting flight to the unsearchable ~~regions~~ regions of Eternity.