

THE ACADIAN

Choice Miscellany.

WANTED.

Boys of spirit, boys of will,
Boys of muscle, brain, and power,
Fit to cope with anything—
These are wanted every hour.

Not the weak and whining drones,
That all trouble magnify;
Not the watchword of "I can't,"
But the nobler one "I'll try."

Do what'er you have to do
With a true and earnest zeal
Bend your sinews to the task;
Put your shoulder to the wheel.

In the counting-house or store,
Wherever you may be,
From your future efforts, boys,
Comes a nation's destiny.

SPECTERS OF A WINTER'S NIGHT.

One winter's night, when Custer's men
picked the Shenandoah Valley against
Early, a man was found dead on his post,
assassinated. A powerful blow, from a
long, keen knife had finished him so sud-
denly that he had not time to fire his car-
bine or cry out.

Who had done this bloody deed? Men
asked the question of each other, but no
one could answer it. It could not have
been a comrade—no enemy was near by.
That gloomy winter's night, as the picket
were posted along the front of forest and
thicket, the officer whispered to each man
as he left him on his post:

"Remember the murder of last night,
Let nobody approach from the woods."
When the relief had passed out of hear-
ing the lonely watch began. A soldier
may pace a beat or take up his station
in the shadow of a tree to watch and listen
for the enemy who has fought him in
open day and keep his nerve, but the
feeling that an assassin may creep upon
him and strike him to the heart makes
quite another man of him.

The wind blows up betimes in fierce
gusts, roaring and sobbing among the
leafless trees, and again it dies away, until
there is scarcely a rustle in the bushes.
The fierce gusts rouse the picket to in-
tense watchfulness, and the low rustle
makes his heart beat faster. Was it on
this post the picket of the night previous
was murdered? He does not know, but
as the thought flashes through his mind
his eyes scan the earth at his feet, as if
blood would not sink into the soil. It
must have been this post. There is that
tongue of thick forest reaching out into
the cleared field to furnish cover for an as-
sassin, until within fifty feet of his victim.
Then advantage could be taken of the
broken ground to come still nearer, and
one whose eyes were not looking for a
creeping assassin, would fail to detect him
until he rose up to strike.

The night grew blacker, and the rustle
of wind whirled a snowflake against the
soldier's cheek. He starts as if struck with
a missile. If storm befalling against the
darkness what chance has he against those
who may prowl with murder in their
hearts? He is a man of nerve, and he
fights against the timidity creeping into
his heart. One who rules against a bat-
tery belching grape and canister should
not fear a single man, even if he be in
darkness and darkness.

What! The relief coming! He would
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his post more than an hour. Yes, it
must be the relief. They are coming from
the right direction, and there seems to be
the right number. The assassin, if he
meditated further bloodshed, has been
beheaded. His first post to be relieved.
The relief advances and he calls out.

"Halt! Who comes there?"
"Relief guard, with the countersign!"
"Advance, officer of the guard!"
The officer steps forward, and as he
bends over to whisper the word the picket
drops his carbine, throws up his hands and
sinks to earth.

Forward to post No. 2. Forward from
that to No. 3 and down the line until No.
8, the last, is reached. The wind waves
and shrieks among the growing trees,
and the snow flies in great white clouds,
but the specters move on and on—from
post to post—from man to man. The
snow densens every foot-fall, there is
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heard above the storm. The reserve
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would scarcely hear the report of a car-
bine.

And the specters came with noiseless
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mile without the echo of a foot-fall, and
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the gale. An hour later another relief
guard passed that way. Sabers clanked,
men growled and cursed, and the officer
at their head stumbled over a form in his
path and reached his feet to cry out:

"Dead! Murdered! The assassin has
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And they drove on with the storm
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LITTLE JAKE

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"Where's the man that runs the ele-
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Then Little Jake would pipe up from
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I do not know anything to compare
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a missile. If storm befalling against the
darkness what chance has he against those
who may prowl with murder in their
hearts? He is a man of nerve, and he
fights against the timidity creeping into
his heart. One who rules against a bat-
tery belching grape and canister should
not fear a single man, even if he be in
darkness and darkness.

What! The relief coming! He would
have made oath that he had not been on
his post more than an hour. Yes, it
must be the relief. They are coming from
the right direction, and there seems to be
the right number. The assassin, if he
meditated further bloodshed, has been
beheaded. His first post to be relieved.
The relief advances and he calls out.

"Halt! Who comes there?"
"Relief guard, with the countersign!"
"Advance, officer of the guard!"
The officer steps forward, and as he
bends over to whisper the word the picket
drops his carbine, throws up his hands and
sinks to earth.

Forward to post No. 2. Forward from
that to No. 3 and down the line until No.
8, the last, is reached. The wind waves
and shrieks among the growing trees,
and the snow flies in great white clouds,
but the specters move on and on—from
post to post—from man to man. The
snow densens every foot-fall, there is
never a whisper among them. Silently,
swiftly, grimly—without a clank of armor
to alarm—without shot to arouse, they
move down the face of the forest, and at
each post it is the same:

"Halt! Who comes there?"
"Relief guard, with the countersign!"
"Advance, officer of the guard!"
Now and then the stricken picket ut-
ters a half-sob or a groan as the knife
seeks his life, but there is no sound to be
heard above the storm. The reserve
heltered in their tents, as if a mile away
would scarcely hear the report of a car-
bine.

And the specters came with noiseless
tread, moved down the front of half a
mile without the echo of a foot-fall, and
departed as if taken up on the wings of
the gale. An hour later another relief
guard passed that way. Sabers clanked,
men growled and cursed, and the officer
at their head stumbled over a form in his
path and reached his feet to cry out:

"Dead! Murdered! The assassin has
been here again!"

And they drove on with the storm
fearing yet hoping, and post No. 2 yield-
ed up its corpse. The deep impression,
and cries for vengeance are caught up by
the wind and sent along the path to the
next corpse, and the next, and the next—
as the guard gathered around the
eighth there was never a whisper or word.
Some men, with vengeance in their eyes
looked toward the forest for trace or
sign. Others whose faces were whiter
than the snow driven around them, look-
ed across the fields, hoping to see or hear
movement to give them the due to a
pursuit.

There was no sign—no sound. The
specters had done their work and vanish-
ed. In after days men spoke of that
dreadful night in low voices, and some
wondered if the dead of the battle-field
had risen to make war again. Others re-
plied by one whispered word:
"Guerrillas!" —*Detroit Free Press.*

That was what he was always called,
for, although he was the elevator boy in
a big dry goods establishment, he was so
small that ladies would look in and in-
quire: