

A CIRCULAR
TO THE BENEVOLENT.

The following is an extract of a letter of the 12th inst., from a daughter of Rev. E. Folsom, Hospital Chaplain, at Cairo, Ill., travelling under special order of the commander of that Post to solicit aid in behalf of the multitude of Union refugees brought there by military authority, as they are driven from their homes by the barbarities of rebels, in extreme suffering, and need immediate relief, both in money for transportation to localities where they can find employment to sustain themselves, and in clothing for women and children: -

“Last evening we had some very interesting remarks from an Army Colporter, Rev. Mr. Benson. What a good work is being done for our soldiers by the American Tract Society.

“Mr. Benson related one of the most heart rending incidents of the suffering of our poor refugees I have heard. The facts may not be new to you, but I will give them as nearly as I can in his words. He said: As I was in Cairo engaged in my work among the soldiers, I called one morning at the home for Refugees. I found there a lady with two little daughters - I was struck with her appearance - there was an air of refinement and cultivation about her, her manners so gentle and ladylike, I felt at once interested to know her history, and asked her if she would be so kind as to tell me something of her experience. Her husband was a clergyman. Their home was Meridian, Miss. A few weeks before, a gang of conscriptors rushed into their house - told her husband to take the oath of allegiance to the confederacy or they would shoot him - he told them he could not - they said we will give you so long to consider. He said I do not wish to consider. I shall never take the oath; only give me time to pray with my family. Just then a little boy, their only son, eight years old, caught hold of his father’s knees and begged they would not hurt his poor papa. A soldier caught the boy by the hair and cut off his head, threw his poor body off, and then shot the father and burned the house and all the poor woman had. She found her way within our lines, and was brought to the home. A few days after hearing this sad history (said Mr. Benson) I went to the home again and found the poor mother watching over her little girls both very sick with measles. Shortly after a messenger came to me; the oldest (little Ada) was dying. A few days after I was again called; the last (little Eliza) was gone too - the agonized mother was clinging to her body, crying, “alone-alone-alone.” I found I could not comfort her and turned to go - when she called me to go with her dear child to the grave, and bury her beside her sister, “and oh,” she said, “will you say a prayer at her grave? Poor Ada had no one to pray over her poor body;” I did as she requested, and returned from the grave to find the poor woman a raving maniac, and her cry of agony was, “alone, alone, alone.”

“Oh, father, do you wonder my heart smote me as I remembered how I have sometimes murmured that my only boy was taken from me, when I contrasted my sorrow with the heart-broken refugee’s. I have husband, my precious little daughters, and so many comforts left; yet I have felt it hard to give half of my children, my first born and my youngest. I thought as I

heard from the lips of one who had been a witness of this suffering, - it is not strange that he can plead for the Refugees - I do not wonder that you, my dear father, can plead night and day for them.”

Any contributions in this behalf, in money, may be sent to Mr. Folsom, to Dea. Julius A. Palmer, 162 Washington St., Boston. Donations of clothing may be sent to the American Express Co., Boston.