



A NIGHT BURIAL ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

As soon as a battle ceased the troops were, as a rule, withdrawn a little from the actual field of the conflict and devoted themselves to such rest and refreshment and repairing of damages as they could obtain. Then began the dread work of succoring the wounded and counting and burying the dead. It almost always happened that this was at night, since most battles of any consequence were fought or the pursuit was kept up until darkness came. The surgeons and hospital corps, lanterns in hand, began scouring the field to recover any wounded, friend or foe alike, who had not been carried to the rear during the day; and sometimes these numbered thousands. Beside them went the parties detailed from each command to bury the dead on their part of the line. The pockets of each man were searched, and what they contained were kept to be sent to his friends at home. His name and regiment, where it could be ascertained, was recorded in the note-book of the officer in charge of the party; and a marked board set at the head of the shallow grave. As soon as possible these bones were disinterred by the Government and transferred to the various national cemeteries; or were brought home by friends. But of thousands all identity was lost, either before or after burial, and they will molder to dust in unknown graves.