

RECOLLECTIONS OF A DRUMMER-BOY.*

BY HARRY M. KIEFFER.

THE writer of "Recollections of a Drummer-Boy" wishes to say to the readers of ST. NICHOLAS that he is writing no made-up story or fictitious narrative, but is drawing upon his own personal experiences for all he has to say. He was a Drummer-Boy in the "Army of the Potomac," having been mustered into the service in midsummer, 1862, and mustered out with what remained of his regiment at the close of the war, in 1865. Opposite to him, on the wall of his library, in which he is writing, hangs his "Discharge," framed in stout hickory, while before him on his table are three little black books, all stained and soiled with exposure to wind and weather on many a long march,—journals or diaries kept by him in camp and field,—together with a bundle of old army letters written to the folks at home. Would the readers of ST. NICHOLAS like to take an occasional peep into the contents of those three little black books and this bundle of old letters? Would they like to know something of the actual life of a Drummer-Boy in the Army?

CHAPTER I.

OFF TO THE WAR.

WHEN, in 1861, the war-fever broke out in the school I was attending, and one after another the desks were left vacant where the older boys had sat, and there were few scholars left but the girls and the smaller boys, who were too young to think of following the envied example of their older fellows, you can scarcely imagine how very dull our life became. We had no interest in study, were restive and listless, and gave our good teacher a world of trouble. The wars of Cæsar and the siege of Troy,—what were they when compared with the great war actually now being waged in our own land? The nodding plumes of Hector and the armor of Homer's heroes were not half so interesting or magnificent as the brave uniforms of the soldiers we saw occasionally on our streets. And when, one day, one of our own school-fellows was brought home, wounded by a ball through his shoulder, our excitement knew no bounds! And so, here is a letter I wrote to my father :

DEAR PAPA: I write to ask whether I may have your permission to enlist. I find the school is fast breaking up. Most of the boys are gone. I can't study any more. *Wont* you let me go?"

Poor Father! In the anguish of his heart it must have been that he sat down and wrote, "You may go!" Without the loss of a moment I was off to the recruiting-office, showed my father's letter, and asked to be sworn in; but alas! I was only sixteen, and lacked two years of being old enough, and they would not take me unless I could swear I was eighteen, which I could not do,—no, not even to gain this ardently desired object!

So then, back again to the school, to Virgil and Homer, and that poor little old siege of Troy, for a few weeks more; until the very school-master himself was taken down with the war-fever, and began to raise a company, and the school had to look for a new teacher, and they said I could enlist as

drummer-boy, no matter how young I might be, if only that I had my father's consent! And this, most unfortunately, had been revoked meanwhile, for there had come a letter, saying: "My dear boy: If you have not yet enlisted, do not do so: for I think you are quite too young and delicate, and I gave my permission perhaps too hastily and without due consideration." But alas! dear Father, it was too late then, for I had set my very heart on going; the company was nearly full, and would leave in a few days, and everybody in the village knew that Harry was going for a drummer-boy.

There was an immense crowd of people at the depot that midsummer morning nearly twenty years ago, when our company started off to the war. It seemed as if the whole county had suspended work and voted itself a holiday, for a continuous stream of people, old and young, poured out of the little village of L—, and made its way through the bridge across the river, and over the dusty road beyond, to the station where we were to take the train.

The thirteen of us who had come down from the village of M— to join the larger body of the company at L—, had enjoyed something of a triumphal progress on the way. We had a brass band to start with, besides no inconsiderable escort of vehicles and mounted horsemen, the number of which was steadily swelled to quite a procession as we advanced. The band played, and the flags waved, and the boys cheered, and the people at work in the fields cheered back, and the young farmers rode down the lanes on their horses, or brought their sweethearts in their carriages and fell in line with the dusty procession. Even the old gate-keeper, who could not leave his post, got much excited as we passed, gave "three cheers for the Union forever," and stood waving his hat after us till we were hid from sight behind the hills.

Reaching L— about nine in the morning, we found the village all ablaze with bunting, and so wrought up with the excitement that all thought

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of work had evidently been given up for that day. As we formed in line and marched down the main street toward the river, the sidewalks were every-

waving, and band-playing, the train at last came thundering in, and we were off, with the "Star-Spangled Banner" sounding fainter and farther away, until it was drowned and lost to the ear in the noise of the swiftly rushing train.

For myself, however, the last good-bye had not yet been said, for I had been away from home at school, and was to leave the train at a way station, some miles down the road, and walk out to my home in the country, and say good-bye to the folks at home,—and that was the hardest part of it all, for good-bye then might be good-bye forever.

If anybody at home had been looking out of door or window that hot August afternoon, more than nineteen years ago, he would have seen, coming down the dusty road, a slender lad, with a bundle slung over his shoulder, and—but nobody was looking down the road—nobody was in sight. Even Rollo, the dog, my old play-fellow, was asleep somewhere in the shade, and all was sultry, hot, and still. Leaping lightly over the fence, by the spring at the foot of the hill, I took a cool draught of water, and looked up at the great red farm-house above, with a throbbing heart, for that was Home, and many a sad good-bye had there to be said, and said again, before I could get off to the war!

Long years have passed since then, but never have I forgotten how pale the faces of Mother and sisters became when, entering the room where they were at work, and



IN FOR IT!

where crowded with people—with boys who wore red-white-and-blue neck-ties, and boys who wore fatigue-caps, with girls who carried flags, and girls who carried flowers, with women who waved their kerchiefs, and old men who waved their walking-sticks, while here and there, as we passed along, at windows and door-ways, were faces red with long weeping, for Johnny was off to the war, and may be mother and sisters and sweetheart would never, never see him again.

Drawn up in line before the station, we awaited the train. There was scarcely a man, woman, or child in that great crowd around us but had to press up for a last shake of the hand, a last good-bye, and a last "God bless you, boys!" And so, amid cheering and hand-shaking, and flag-

throwing off my bundle, in reply to their question, "Why, Harry! where did you come from?" I answered, "I come from school, and I'm off for the war!" You may well believe there was an exciting time of it in the dining-room of that old red farm-house then. In the midst of the excitement, Father came in from the field, and greeted me with, "Why, my boy, where did you come from?" to which there was but the one answer, "Come from school, and off for the war!"

"Nonsense; I can't let you go! I thought you had given up all idea of that. What would they do with a mere boy like you? Why, you'd be only a bill of expense to the Government. Dreadful thing to make me all this trouble!"

But I began to reason full stoutly with poor

Father. I reminded him, first of all, that I would not go without his consent; that in two years, and perhaps in less, I might be drafted and sent amongst men unknown to me, while here was a company commanded by my own school-teacher, and composed of acquaintances who would look after me; that I was unfit for study or work while this fever was on me, and so on, till I saw his resolution begin to give way, as he lit his pipe and walked down to the spring to think the matter over.

"If Harry is to go, Father," Mother says, "had n't I better run up to the store and get some woolens, and we'll make the boy an outfit of shirts yet to-night?"

"Well,—yes; I guess you had better do so."

But when he sees Mother stepping past the gate on her way, he halts her with—

"Stop! That boy can't go! I *can't* give him up!"

And shortly after, he tells her that she "had bet-

sewing-machine is going most of the night, and my thoughts are as busy as it is, until far into the morning, with all that is before me that I have never seen—and all that is behind me that I may never see again.

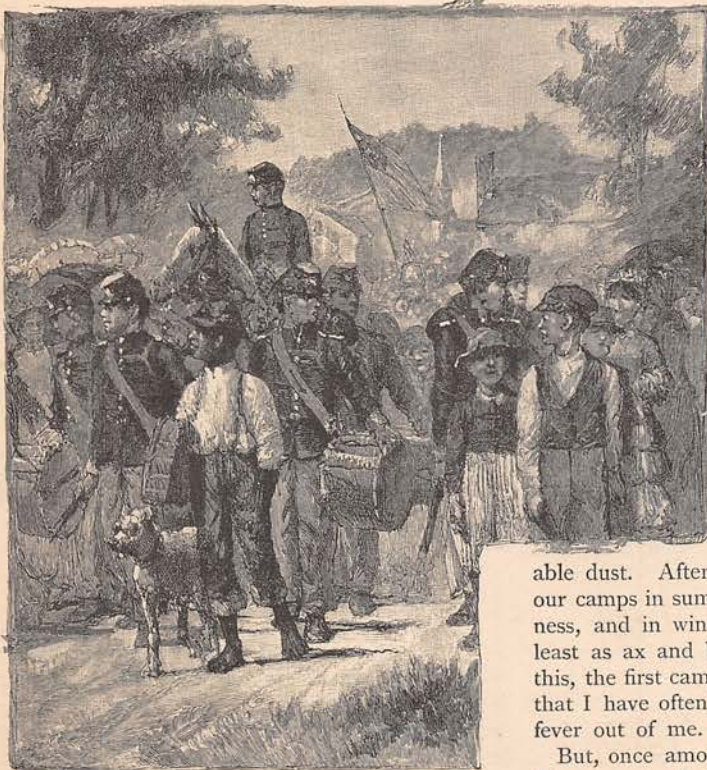
Let me pass over the trying good-bye the next morning, for Joe is ready with the carriage to take Father and me to the station, and we are soon on the cars, steaming away toward the great camp, whither the company already has gone.

"See, Harry, there is your camp." And looking out of the car-window, across the river, I catch, through the tall tree-tops, as we rush along, glimpses of my first camp,—acres and acres of canvas, stretching away into the dim and dusty distance, occupied, as I shall soon find, by some ten or twenty thousand soldiers, coming and going continually, marching and counter-marching until they have ground the soil into the driest and deepest dust I ever saw.

I shall never forget my first impressions of camp-life as Father and I passed the sentry at the gate. They were anything but pleasant, and I could not but agree with the remark of my father, that "the life of a soldier must be a hard life, indeed." For, as we entered that great camp, I looked into an A tent, the front flap of which was thrown back, and saw enough to make me sick of the housekeeping of a soldier. There was nothing in that tent but dirt and disorder, pans and kettles, tin cups and cracker boxes, forks and bayonet scabbards, greasy pork and broken hard-tack in utter confusion, and over all and everywhere that insuffer-

able dust. Afterward, when we got into the field, our camps in summer-time were models of cleanliness, and in winter models of comfort, as far at least as ax and broom could make them so, but this, the first camp I ever saw, was so abominable, that I have often wondered it did not frighten the fever out of me.

But, once among the men of the company, all this was soon forgotten. We had supper—hard-tack and soft bread, boiled pork, and strong coffee (in tin cups), fare that Father thought "one could live on right well, I guess," and then the boys came around and begged Father to let me go; "they would take care of Harry; never you fear for that," and so helped on my cause that that night, about



THE REGIMENT STARTS FOR THE WAR.

ter be after getting that woolen stuff for shirts," and again he stops her at the gate with—

"Dreadful boy! Why *will* he make me all this trouble? I *can not* let my boy go!"

But at last, and somehow, Mother gets off. The

eleven o'clock, when we were in the railroad station together, on the way home, Father said :

"Now, Harry, my boy, you are not enlisted yet ; I am going home on this train ; you can go home with me now, or go with the boys. Which will you do ?"

To which the answer came quickly enough ; too quickly and too eagerly, I have often since thought, for a father's heart to bear it well :

"Papa, I'll go with the boys !"

"Well, then, good-bye, my boy ! and may God bless you and bring you safely back to me again !"

The whistle blew "off brakes," the car door closed on Father, and I did not see him again for three long, long years !

Often and often as I have thought over these things since, I have never been able to come to any other conclusion than this : that it was the "war fever" that carried me off, and that made poor Father let me go. For that "war fever" was a terrible malady in those days. Once you were taken with it, you had a very fire in the bones until your name was down on the enlistment-roll. There was Andy, for example, afterward my mess-mate. He was on his way to school the very morning the company was leaving the village, with no idea of going along, but seeing this, that, and the other acquaintance in line, what did he do but run across the street to an undertaker's shop, cram his school-books through the broken window, take his place in line, and march off with the boys without so much as saying good-bye to the folks at home ! And he did not see his *Cæsar* and Greek grammar again for three years.

I should like to tell something about the life we led in that camp ; how we ate and slept and drilled, but as much more interesting matters await us, we must pass over our life here very briefly. I open the first of my three little black books, and read :

"Sept. 2d.—Received part of our uniforms, and I got a new drum. Had a trial at double-quick this evening till we were all out of breath, after which thirty-five of our men were detailed as camp guard for the first time. They stand guard two hours out of every six.

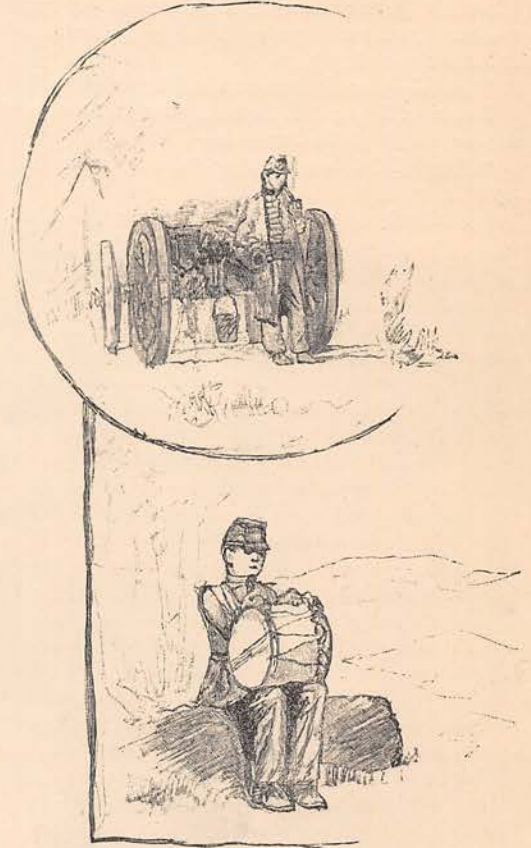
"Sept. 3d.—Slept soundly last night on the ground, although the cold was severe. Have purchased an India rubber blanket—'gum' blanket, we called it, to keep off the dampness. To-day, were mustered into service. We were all drawn up in line. Every man raised his right hand, while an officer recited the oath. It took only a few minutes, but when it was over one of the boys exclaimed : 'Now, fellows, I'd like to see any man go home if he dare. We belong to Uncle Sam, now.'"

Of the one thousand men drawn up in line there

that day, some lived to come back three years later and be drawn up in line again, almost on that identical spot, and how many do you think there were ? No more than one hundred and fifty.

CHAPTER II.

ON TO WASHINGTON.



AFTER two weeks in that miserable camp at the State capital, we were ordered to Washington, and into Washington, accordingly, one sultry September morning, we marched, after a day and a night in the cars on the way thither. Quite proud we felt, you may be sure, as we tramped up Pennsylvania Avenue, with our new silk flags flying, the fifes playing "Dixie," and we ten little drummer-boys pounding away, awkwardly enough, no doubt, under the lead of a white-haired old man, who had beaten *his* drum nearly fifty years before under Wellington, at the battle of Waterloo. We were

green, raw troops, as anybody could tell at a glance; for we were fair-faced yet, and carried enormous knapsacks. I remember passing some old troops somewhere near Fourteenth street, and being painfully conscious of the difference between them and us. *They*, I observed, had no knapsacks; a gum blanket, twisted into a roll and slung carelessly over the shoulder, was all the luggage they carried. Dark, swarthy, sinewy men they were, with torn shoes and faded uniforms, but with an air of self-possession and endurance that came only of experience and hardship. They smiled on us as we passed by,—a grim smile of half pity and half contempt—just as we in our turn learned to smile on other new troops a year or two later.

By some unardonable mistake, instead of getting into camp forthwith on the outskirts of the city, whither we had been ordered for duty at the present, we were marched far out into the country under a merciless sun, that soon scorched all the endurance out of me. It was dusty, it was hot, there was no water, my knapsack weighed a ton. So that when, after marching some seven miles, our orders were countermanded, and we were ordered back to the city again, I thought it impossible I ever should reach it. My feet moved mechanically, everything along the road was in a misty whirl, and when at night-fall Andy helped me into the barracks near the Capitol from which we had started in the morning, I threw myself, or rather, perhaps, fell, on the hard floor, and was soon so soundly asleep that Andy could not rouse me for my cup of coffee and ration of bread.

I have an indistinct recollection of being taken away next morning in an ambulance to some hospital, and being put into a clean white cot. After which, for days, all consciousness left me, and all was blank before me, save only that in misty intervals I saw the kind faces and heard the subdued voices of Sisters of Mercy; voices that spoke to me from far away, and hands that reached out to me from the other side of an impassable gulf.

Nursed by their tender care back to returning strength, no sooner was I able to stand on my feet once more than, against their solemn protest, I asked for my knapsack and drum, and insisted on setting out forthwith in quest of my regiment, which I found had meanwhile been scattered by companies about the city, my own company and another having been assigned to duty at "Soldiers' Home," the President's summer residence. Although it was but a distance of three miles or thereabouts, and although I started out in search of "Soldiers' Home" at noon, so conflicting were the directions given me by the various persons of whom I asked the road, that it was night-fall before I reached it. Coming then at the hour of dusk to a gate-way

leading apparently into some park or pleasure-ground, and being informed by the porter at the gate that this was "Soldiers' Home," I walked about among the trees in the growing darkness, in search of the camp of Company D, when, just as I had crossed a fence, a challenge rang out:

"Halt! Who goes there?"

"A friend."

"Advance, friend, and give the countersign!"

"Hello, Ellis," said I, peering through the bushes, "is that you?"

"That is n't the countersign, friend. You 'd better give the countersign, or you 're a dead man!"

Saying which, Ellis sprang back in true Zouave style, with his bayonet fixed and ready for a lunge at me.

"Now, Ellis," said I, "you know me just as well as I know myself, and you know I have n't the countersign, and if you 're going to kill me, why, don't stand there crouching like a cat ready to spring on a mouse, but up and at it like a man. Don't keep me here in such dreadful suspense."

"Well, friend without the countersign, I 'll call up the corporal, and he may kill you—you 're a dead man, any way." Then he sang out:

"Corporal of the Guard, post number three!"

From post to post it rang along the line, now shrill and high, now deep and low: "Corporal of the Guard, post number three!" "Corporal of the Guard, post number three!"

Upon which up comes the corporal of the guard on a full trot, with his gun at a right-shoulder-shift, and saying:

"Well, what 's up?"

"Man trying to break my guard."

"Where is he?"

"Why, there, beside that bush."

"Come along, you there; you 'll be shot for a spy to-morrow morning at nine o'clock."

"All right, Mr. Corporal, I 'm ready."

Now, all this was fine sport; for the corporal and Ellis were both of my company, and knew me quite as well as I knew them, but they were bent on having a little fun at my expense, and the corporal had marched me off some distance toward head-quarters beyond the ravine, when again the call rang along the line:

"Corporal of the Guard, post number three!"

"Corporal of the Guard, post number three!"

Back the corporal trotted me to Ellis.

"Well, what in the mischief 's up now?"

"Another fellow trying to break my guard, Corporal."

"Well, where is he? Trot him out; we 'll have a grand execution in the morning. The more the merrier, you know, and 'long live the Union!"

"I'm sorry, Corporal, but the fact is I killed this chap myself. I caught him trying to climb over the gate there, and he would n't stop nor give the countersign, and so I up and at him, and ran my bayonet through him, and there he is!"

And sure enough, there he was,—a big fat 'possum!

"All right, Ellis; you're a brave soldier. I'll speak to the colonel about this, and you shall have two stripes on your sleeve one of these days."

And so, with the 'possum by the tail and me by the shoulder, he marched us off to head-quarters, where, the 'possum being thrown down on the ground, and I handed over to the tender mercies of the captain, it was ordered that:

"This young man should be taken down to Andy's tent, and a supper cooked, and a bed made for him there; and that henceforth and hereafter, he should beat reveille at daybreak, retreat at sundown, tattoo at nine P. M., and lights out a half-hour later."

Nothing, however, was said about the execution of spies in the morning, although it was duly ordained that the 'possum, poor thing, should be roasted on the morrow.

Never was there a more pleasant camp than ours, there on that green hill-side across the ravine from the President's summer residence. We had light guard duty to do, but that of a kind we esteemed a most high honor, for it was no less than that of being special guards for President Lincoln. But the good President, we were told, although he loved his soldiers as his own children, did not like being guarded. Often did I see him enter his carriage before the hour appointed for his morning departure for the White House, and drive away in haste, as if to escape from the irksome escort of a dozen cavalry-men, whose duty it was to guard his carriage between our camp and the city. Then when the escort rode up to the door, some ten or fifteen minutes later, and found that the carriage had already gone, was n't there a clattering of hoofs and a rattling of scabbards as they dashed out past the gate and down the road to overtake the great and good President, in whose heart was "charity for all, and malice toward none."

Boy as I was, I could not but notice how pale and haggard the President looked as he entered his carriage in the morning, or stepped down from it in the evening after a weary day's work in the city; and no wonder, either, for those September days of 1862 were the dark, perhaps the darkest, days of the war. Many a mark of favor and kindness did we receive from the President's family. Delicacies, such as we were strangers to then, and would be for a long time to come, found their way from Mrs. Lincoln's hand to our camp on the

green hill-side; while little Tad, the President's son, was a great favorite with the boys, fond of the camp, and delighted with the drill.

One night, when all but the guards on their posts were wrapped in great-coats and sound asleep in the tents, I felt some one shake me roughly by the shoulder, and call:

"Harry! Harry! Get up quick and beat the long roll; we're going to be attacked. Quick, now!"

Groping about in the dark for my drum and sticks, I stepped out into the company street, and beat the loud alarm, which, waking the echoes, brought the boys out of their tents in double-quick time, and set the whole camp in an uproar.

"What's up, fellows?"

"Fall in, Company D!" shouted the orderly.

"Fall in, men," shouted the captain, "we're going to be attacked at once!"

Amid the confusion of so sudden a summons at midnight, there was some lively scrambling for guns, bayonets, cartridge-boxes, and clothes.

"I say, Bill, you've got my coat on!"

"Where's my cap?"

"Andy, you scamp, you've got my shoes!"

"Fall in, men, quick; no time to look after shoes now. Take your arms and fall in."

And so, some shoeless, others hatless, and all only half dressed, we form in line and are marched out and down the road at double-quick for a mile; then halt; pickets are thrown out; an advance of the whole line through the woods, among tangled bushes and briers, and through marshes, until, as the first early streaks of dawn are shooting up in the eastern sky, orders are countermanded, and we march back to camp, to find—that the whole thing was a ruse, planned by some of the officers for the purpose of testing our readiness for work at any hour. After that, we slept with our shoes on.

But poor old Jerry Black,—a man who should never have enlisted, for he was as afraid of a gun as Robinson Crusoe's man Friday,—poor old Jerry was the butt for many a joke the next day. For, amid the night's confusion, and in the immediate prospect, as he supposed, of a deadly encounter with the enemy, so alarmed did he become that he at once fell to—praying! Out of consideration for his years and piety, the captain had permitted him to remain behind as a guard for the camp in our absence, in which capacity he did excellent service, excellent service! But oh, when we sat about our fires the next morning, frying our steaks and cooking our coffee, poor Jerry was the butt of all the fun, and was cruelly described by the wag of the company as "the man that had a brave heart, but a most cowardly pair of legs!"

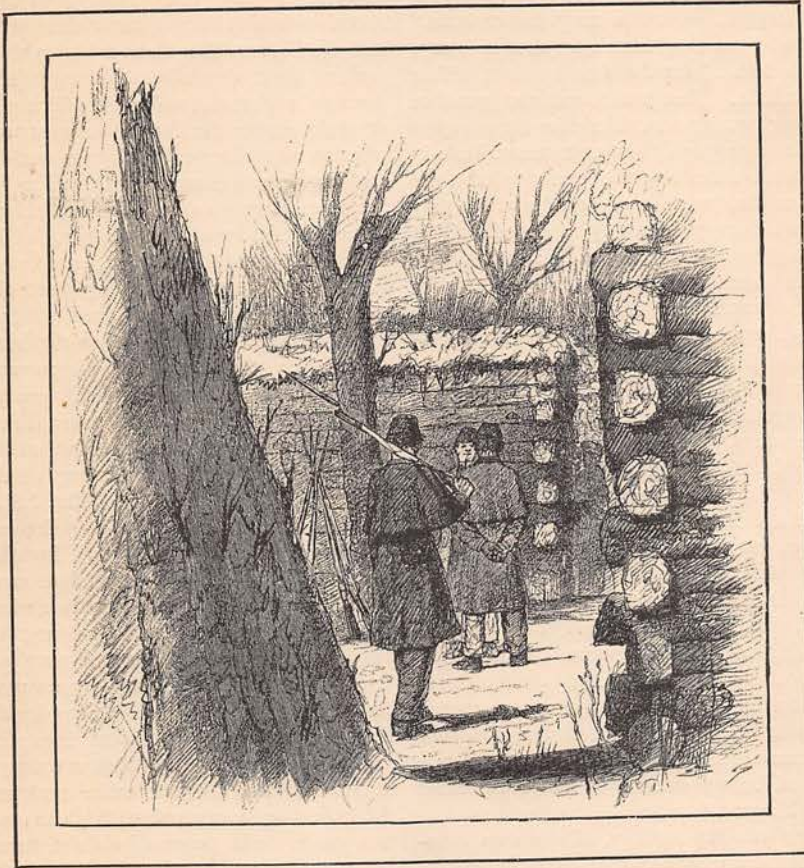
CHAPTER III.

OUR FIRST WINTER QUARTERS.

"WELL, fellows, I tell you what! I've heard a good deal about the balmy breezes and sunny skies of Old Virginy, but if this is a specimen of the sort of weather they have in these parts, I, for one, move we 'right-about-face' and march home."

So saying, Phil Hammer got up from under the scrub-pine, where he had made his bed for the

inland in the direction of Falmouth, and had halted and camped for the night in a thick undergrowth of scrub-pine and cedar. The day of our landing was remarkably fair. The skies were so bright, the air was so soft and balmy, that we were rejoiced to find what a pleasant country it was we were getting into, to be sure; but the next morning, when we drummer-boys woke the men with our loud reveille, we were all of Phil's opinion, that the sunny skies and balmy breezes of this new land were all a miserable fiction. For, as man after



IN WINTER QUARTERS.

night, shaking the snow from his blanket and the cape of his overcoat, while a loud "Ha! ha!" and an oft-repeated "What do you think of this, boys?" rang along the hill-side on which we had found our first camping-place on "Old Virginia's Shore."

The weather had played us a most deceptive and unpleasant trick. We had landed the day before, as my journal says, "at Belle Plains, at a place called Platt's Landing," having been brought down from Washington on the steamer "Louisiana"; had marched some three or four miles

man opened his eyes at the loud roll of our drums, and the shout of the orderly: "Fall in, Company D, for roll-call!" he found himself covered with four inches of snow, and more coming down. Fortunately, the bushes had afforded us some protection; they were so numerous and so thick that one could scarcely see twenty rods ahead of him, and with their great overhanging branches had kindly kept the falling snow out of our faces at least, while we slept.

And now began a busy time. We were to

build winter quarters—a work for which we were but poorly prepared, either by nature or by circumstance. Take any body of men out of civilized life, put them into the woods to shift for themselves, and they are generally as helpless as children. As for ourselves, we were indeed “Babes in the Wood.” At least half the regiment knew nothing of wood-craft, having never been accustomed to the use of the ax. It was a laughable sight to see some of the men from the city try to cut down a tree! Besides, we were poorly equipped. Axes were scarce, and worth almost their weight in gold. We had no “shelter tents.” Most of us had “poncho” blankets; that is to say, a piece of oil-cloth about five feet by four, with a slit in the middle. But we found our ponchos very poor coverings for our cabins; for the rain just *would* run down through that unfortunate hole in the middle; and then, too, the men needed their oil-cloths when they went on picket, for which purpose they had been particularly intended. This circumstance gave rise to frequent discussion that day: whether to use the poncho as a covering for the cabin, and get soaked on picket, or save the poncho for picket, and cover the cabin with brush-wood and clay? Some messes* chose the one alternative, others the other; and as the result of this preference, together with our ignorance of wood-craft and the scarcity of axes, we produced on that hill-side the oddest looking winter quarters a regiment ever built! Such an agglomeration of cabins was never seen before nor since. I am positive no two cabins on all that hill-side had the slightest resemblance to each other.

There, for instance, was a mess over in Company A, composed of men from the city. They had *one* kind of cabin, an immense square structure of pine logs, about seven feet high, and covered over the top, first with brush-wood and then coated so heavily with clay that I am certain the roof must have been two feet thick at the least. It was hardly finished before some wag had nicknamed it “Fortress Monroe.”

Then, there was Ike Sankey, of our own company; he invented another style of architecture, or perhaps I should rather say, he borrowed it from the Indians. Ike would have none of your flat-roofed concerns; he would build a wigwam. And so, marking out a huge circle, in the center of which he erected a pole, and around the pole a great number of smaller poles, with one end on the circle and the other end meeting in the common apex, covering this with brush and the brush with clay, he made for himself a house that was quite warm, indeed, but one so fearfully gloomy that within it was as dark at noon as at midnight. Ominous sounds came afterward from the dark

recesses of “The Wigwam”; for we were a “skirmish regiment,” and Ike was our bugler, and the way he tooted all day long, “Deploy to the right and left,” “Rally by fours,” and “Rally by platoons,” was suggestive of things yet to come.

Then, there was my own tent or cabin, if indeed I may dignify it with the name of either; for it was a cross between a house and a cave. Andy and I thought we would follow the advice of the Irishman, who in order to raise his roof higher, dug his cellar deeper. We resolved to dig down some three feet; “and then, Harry, we ’ll log her up about two feet high, cover her with ponchos, and we ’ll have the finest cabin in the row!” It took us about three days to accomplish so stupendous an undertaking, during which time we slept at night under the bushes as best we could, and when our work was done, we moved in with great satisfaction. I remember the door of our house was a mystery to all visitors, as, indeed, it was to ourselves until we “got the hang of it,” as Andy said. It was a hole about two feet square, cut through one end of the log part of the cabin, and through it you had to crawl as best you could. If you put one leg in first, then the head, and then drew in the other leg after you, you were all right; but if, as visitors generally did, you put in your head first, you were obliged to crawl in on all fours in a most ungraceful and undignified fashion.

That was a queer-looking camp all through. If you went up to the top of the hill, where the colonel had his quarters, and looked down, a strange sight met your eyes. By the time the next winter came, however, we had learned how to swing an ax, and we built ourselves winter quarters that reflected no little credit on our skill as experienced woodsmen. The last cabin we built—it was down in front of Petersburg—was a model of comfort and convenience; ten feet long by six wide, and five high, made of clean pine logs straight as an arrow, and covered with shelter tents; a chimney at one end, and a comfortable bunk at the other; the inside walls covered with clean oat-bags, and the gable ends papered with pictures cut from illustrated papers; a mantel-piece, a table, a stool; and we were putting down a floor of pine boards, too, one day toward the close of winter, when the surgeon came by, and looking in, said:

“No time to drive nails now, boys; we have orders to move!” But Andy said:

“Pound away, Harry, pound away; we ’ll see how it looks, anyhow, before we go!”

I remember an amusing occurrence in connection with the building of our winter quarters. I had gone over to see some of the boys of our company one evening, and found they had “logged up” their tent about four feet high, and stretched a

* A “mess” is a number of men who eat together.

poncho over it to keep the snow out, and were sitting before a fire they had built in a chimney-place at one end. The chimney was built up only as high as the log walls reached, the intention being to "cat-stick and daub" it afterward to a sufficient height. The mess had just got a box from home, and some one had hung nearly two yards of sausage on a stick across the top of the chimney, "to smoke." And there, on a log rolled up in front of the fire, I found Jimmy Lane and Sam Reed sitting smoking their pipes, and glancing up the chimney between whiffs every now and then, to see that the sausage was safe. Sitting down between them, I watched the cheery glow of the fire, and we fell to talking, now about the jolly times they were having at home at the holiday season, and again about the progress of our cabin-building, while every now and then Jimmy would peep up the chimney on one side, and shortly after, Sam would squint up on the other. After sitting thus for half an hour or so, all of a sudden, Sam, looking up the chimney, jumped off the log, clapped his hands together and shouted:

"Jim, it's gone!"

Gone it was; and you might as well look for a needle in a hay-stack as search for two yards of sausage among troops building winter quarters on short rations!

One evening Andy and I were going to have a feast, consisting in the main, of a huge dish of apple-fritters. We bought the flour and the apples of the sutler at enormous figures, for we were so tired of the endless monotony of bacon, beef, and bean-soup, that we were bent on having a glorious supper, cost or no cost. We had a rather small chimney-place, in which Andy was superintending the heating of a mess-pan half full of lard, while I was busying myself with the flour, dough, and apples, when, as ill-luck would have it, the lard took fire and flamed up the chimney with a roar, and a blaze so bright that it illuminated the whole camp from end to end. Unfortu-

nately, too, for us, four of our companies had been recruited in the city, and most of them had been in the volunteer fire department, in which service they had gained an experience, useful enough to them on the present occasion, but most disastrous to us.

No sooner was the bright blaze seen pouring high out of the chimney-top of our modest little cabin, than at least a half-dozen fire companies were on the instant organized for the emergency. The "Humane," the "Fairmount," the "Good-will," with their imaginary engines and hose-carriages, came dashing down our company street, with shouts, and yells, and cheers. It was but the work of a moment to attach the imaginary hose to imaginary plugs, plant imaginary ladders, tear down the chimney and demolish the roof, amid a flood of sparks, and to the intense delight of the firemen, but to our utter consternation and grief. It took us days to repair the damage, and we went to bed with some of our neighbors, after a scant supper of hard-tack and coffee.

How did we spend our time in winter quarters, do you ask? Well, there was always enough to do, you may be sure, and often it was work of the very hardest sort. Two days in the week the regiment went out on picket, and while there got but little sleep and suffered much from exposure. When they were not on picket, all the men not needed for camp guard had to drill. It was nothing but drill, drill, drill: company drill, regimental drill, brigade drill, and once even division drill. Our regiment, as I have said, was a skirmish regiment, and the skirmish-drill is no light work, let me tell you. Many an evening the men came in more dead than alive after skirmishing over the country for miles around, all the afternoon. Reveille and roll-call at five o'clock in the morning, guard mount at nine, company drill from ten to twelve, regimental drill from two to four, dress-parade at five, tattoo and lights out at nine at night, with continual practice on the drum for us drummer-boys—so our time passed away.

(To be continued.)



RECOLLECTIONS OF A DRUMMER-BOY.*

BY HARRY M. KIEFFER.

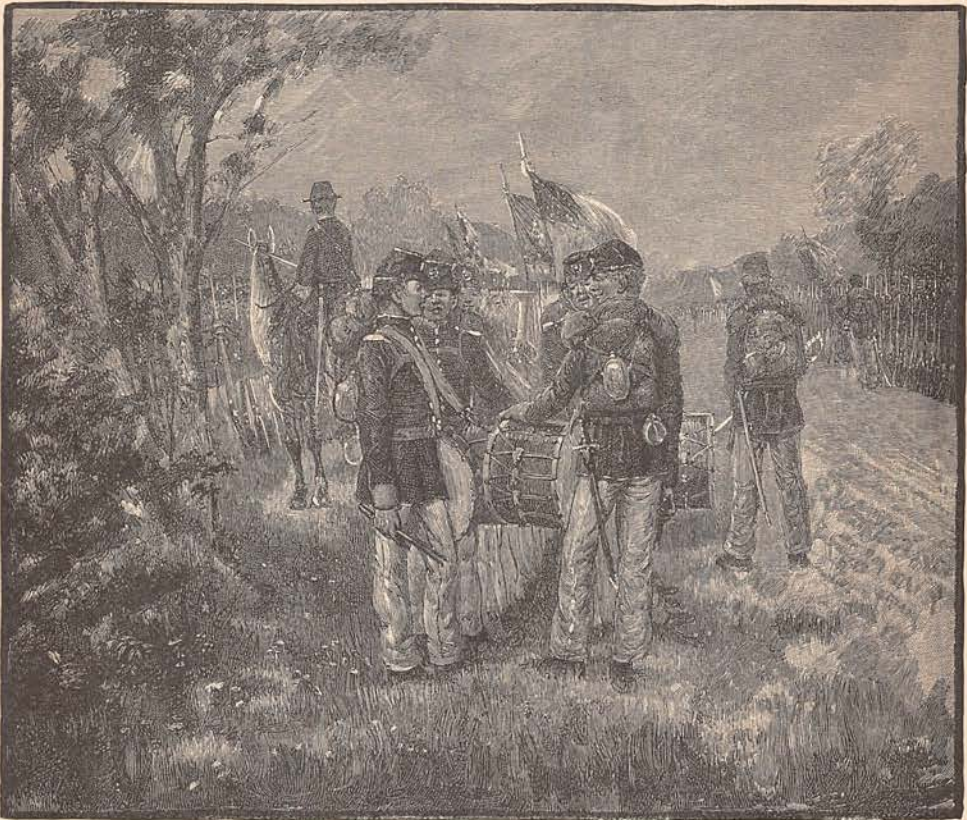
CHAPTER IV.

A GRAND REVIEW.

ON a certain day near the beginning of April, 1863, we were ordered to prepare for a grand review of our Corps. President Lincoln, Mrs. Lincoln, Master Tad Lincoln (who used to play among

itself to the eyes of the beholders when, on the morning of the ninth day of April, 1863, our gallant First Army Corps, leaving its camps among the hills, assembled on a wide, extended plain for the inspection of our illustrious visitors.

As regiment after regiment, and brigade after brigade, came marching out from the surrounding



WAITING TO BE REVIEWED BY THE PRESIDENT.

our tents at "Soldiers' Home"), and some of the Cabinet officers, were coming down to look us over and see what promise we gave for the campaign soon to open.

Those who have never seen a grand review of well-drilled troops in the field have never seen one of the finest and most inspiring sights the eyes of man can behold. I wish I could impart to the readers of *ST. NICHOLAS* some faint idea of the thrilling scene which must have presented

hills and ravines, with flags gayly flying, bands and drum corps making such music as was enough to stir the blood in the heart of the most indifferent to a quicker pulse, and well-drilled troops that marched in the morning sunlight with a step as steady as the stroke of machinery—ah, it was a sight to be seen but once in a century! And when those twenty thousand men were all at last in line, with the artillery in position off to one side on the hill, and ready to fire their salute, it

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seemed well worth the President's while to come all the way from Washington to look at them.

But the President was a long, long time in coming. The sun, mounting fast toward noon, began to be insufferably hot. One hour, two hours, three hours were passing away, when, at last, far off through a defile between the hills, we caught sight of a great cloud of dust.

"Fall in, men!" for now here they come, sure enough. Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln in a carriage, escorted by a body of cavalry and groups of officers, and at the head of the cavalcade Master Tad, sure as the world, mounted on a pony, and having for his especial escort a boy orderly, dressed in a cavalryman's uniform and mounted on another pony! And the two little fellows, scarce restraining their boyish delight, outrode the company and came on the field in a cloud of dust and at a full gallop—little Tad shouting to the men, at the top of his voice: "Make way, men! Make way, men! Father's a-coming! Father's a-coming!"

Then the artillery breaks forth into a thundering salute, that wakes the echoes among the hills and sets the air to shivering and quaking about your ears, as the cavalcade gallops down the long line, and regimental standards droop in greeting, and bands and drum corps, one after another, strike up "Hail to the Chief," till they are all playing at once in a grand chorus, that makes the hills ring as they never rang before.

But all this is only a flourish by way of prelude. The real beauty of the review is yet to come, and can be seen only when the cavalcade, having galloped down the line in front and up again on the rear, has taken its stand out yonder immediately in front of the middle of the line, and the order is given to "pass in review."

Notice now, how, by one swift and dexterous movement, as the officers step out and give the command, that long line is broken into platoons of exactly equal length; how, straight as an arrow, each platoon is dressed; how the feet of the men all move together, and their guns, flashing in the sun, have the same inclination. Observe particularly how, when they come to wheel off, there is no *bend* in the line, but they wheel as if the whole platoon were a ramrod made to revolve about its one end through a quarter-circle; and now that they are marching thus down the field and past the President, what a grandeur there is in the steady step and onward sweep of that column of twenty thousand boys in blue!

But, once we have passed the President and gained the other end of the field, it is not nearly so nice. For we must needs finish the review in a double-quick, just by way of showing, I suppose, what we could do if we were wanted in a hurry—

as, indeed, we will be, not more than sixty days hence! Away we go, then, on a dead run off the field, in a cloud of dust and amid a clatter of bayonet-scarbards, till, hid behind the hills, we come to a more sober pace, and march into camp just as tired as tired can be.

CHAPTER V.

ON PICKET ALONG THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

"HARRY, would n't you like to go out on picket with us to-morrow? The weather is pleasant, and I'd like to have you for company, for time hangs rather heavy on a fellow's hands out there; and, besides, I want you to help me with my Latin."

Andy was a studious fellow, and carried on his studies with greater or less regularity during our whole time of service. Of course we had no books, except a pocket copy of "Cæsar," but to make up for the deficiency, particularly of a grammar, I had written out the declensions of the nouns and the conjugations of the verbs on odd scraps of paper, which Andy had gathered up and carried in a roll in his breast-pocket, and many were the lessons we had together under the canvas or beneath the sighing branches of the pines.

"Well, old boy, I'd like to go along first-rate, but we must get permission of the adjutant first."

Having secured the adjutant's consent, and provided myself with a gun and accouterments, the next morning at four o'clock I set out, in company with a body of some several hundred men of the regiment. We were to be absent from camp for two days, at the expiration of which time we were to be relieved by the next detail.

It was pleasant April weather, for the season was well advanced. Our route lay straight over the hills and through the ravines, for there were no roads, fences, nor fields. But few houses were to be seen, and from these the inhabitants had, of course, long since disappeared. At one of these few remaining houses, situated some three hundred yards from the river's edge, our advance picket-reserve was established, the captain in command making his head-quarters in the once beautiful grounds of the mansion, long since left empty and deserted by its former occupants. The place had a very distressing air of neglect. The beautiful lawn in front, where merry children had no doubt played and romped in years gone by, was overgrown with weeds. The large and commodious porch in front, where in other days the family gathered in the evening-time and talked and sang, while the river flowed peacefully by, was now abandoned to the spiders and their webs. The whole house was pitifully forlorn-looking, as if

wondering why the family did not come back to fill its spacious halls with life and mirth. Even the colored people had left their quarters. There was not a soul anywhere about.

We were not permitted either to enter the house or to do any damage to the property. Pitching our shelter-tents under the outspreading branches of the great elms on the lawn in front of the house, and building our fires back of a hill in the rear, to cook our breakfast, we awaited our turn to stand guard on the picket-line, which ran close along the river's edge.

It may be interesting to the boys of ST. NICHOLAS to know more particularly how this matter of standing picket is arranged and conducted. When a body of men numbering, let us say, for the sake of example, two hundred in all, go out on picket, the detail is usually divided into two equal parts, consisting in the supposed case of one hundred each. One of these companies of a hundred goes into a sort of camp about a half-mile from the picket-line,—usually in a woods or near by a spring, if one can be found, or in some pleasant ravine among the hills,—and the men have nothing to do but make themselves comfortable for the first twenty-four hours. They may sleep as much as they like, or play at such games as they please, only they must not go away any considerable distance from the post, because they may be very suddenly wanted, in case of an attack on the advance picket-line.

The other band of one hundred takes position only a short distance to the rear of the line where the pickets pace to and fro on their beats, and is known as the advance picket-post. It is under the charge of a captain or lieutenant, and is divided into three parts, each of which is called a "relief," the three being known as the first, the second, and the third relief, respectively. Each of these is under the charge of a non-commissioned officer,—a sergeant or corporal,—and must stand guard in succession, two hours on and four off, day and night, for the first twenty-four hours, at the end of which time the reserve one hundred in the rear march up and relieve the whole advance picket-post, which then goes to the rear, throws off its accouterments, stacks its arms, and sleeps till it can sleep no more. I need hardly add that each picket is furnished with the countersign, which is regularly changed every day. While on the advance picket-post no one is permitted to sleep, whether on duty on the line or not, and to sleep on the picket-line is death! At or near midnight a body of officers, known as "The Grand Rounds," goes all along the line examining every picket to see that "all is well."

Andy and I had by request been put together on

the second relief, and stood guard from eight to ten in the morning, two to four in the afternoon, and eight to ten and two to four at night.

It was growing dark as we sat with our backs against the old elms on the lawn, telling stories, singing catches of songs, or discussing the probabilities of the summer campaign, when the call rang out: "Fall in, second relief!"

"Come on, Harry—get on your horse-hide and shooting-iron. We've got a nice moonlight night for it, any way."

Our line, as I have said, ran directly along the river's edge, up and down, which Andy and I paced on our adjoining beats, each of us having to walk about a hundred yards, when we turned and walked back, with gun loaded and capped and at a right-shoulder-shift.

The night was beautiful. A full round moon shone out from among the fleecy clouds overhead. At my feet was the pleasant plashing of the river, ever gliding on, with the moonbeams dancing as if in sport on its rippling surface, while the opposite bank was hid in the deep, solemn shadows made by the overhanging trees. Yet the shadows were not so deep there but that occasionally I could catch glimpses of a picket silently pacing his beat on the south side of the river, as I was pacing mine on the north, with bayonet flashing in the patches of moonlight as he passed up and down. I fell to wondering, as I watched him, what sort of man he was? Young or old? Had he children at home, may be, in the far-off South? Or a father and mother? Did he wish this cruel war was over? In the next fight may be he'd be killed! Then I fell to wondering who had lived in that house up yonder—what kind of people were they? Were the sons in the war, and the daughters, where were they?—and would they ever come back again and set up their household gods in the good old place once more? My imagination was busy trying to picture the scenes that had enlivened the old plantation, the darkies at work in the fields and the—

"Hello, Yank! We can lick you!"

"Beautiful night, Johnny, is n't it?"

"Y-e-s, lovely!"

But our orders are to hold as little conversation with the pickets on the other side of the river as necessary, and so, declining any further civilities, I resume my beat.

"Harry, I'm going to lie down here at the upper end of your beat," says the sergeant who has charge of our relief. "I aint agoing to sleep, but I'm tired. Every time you come up to this end of your beat speak to me, will you?—for I *might* fall asleep."

"Certainly, Sergeant."

The first time I speak to him, the second, and

the third, he answers readily enough, "All right, Harry," but at the fourth summons he is sound asleep. Sleep on, Sergeant, sleep on! Your slumbers shall not be broken by me—unless the "Grand Rounds" come along, for whom I must keep a sharp lookout, lest they catch you napping and give you a pretty court-martial! But Grand Rounds or no, you shall have a little

ing the second relief goes out again—down through the patch of meadow, wet with the heavy dew, and along down the river to our posts. It is nearly three o'clock, and Andy and I are standing talking in low tones, he at the upper end of his beat and I at the lower end of mine, when—

Bang! And the whistle of a ball is heard overhead among the branches. Springing forward at once by a common impulse, we get behind the shelter of a tree, run out our rifles, and make ready to fire.

"You watch up-river, Harry," whispers Andy, "and I'll watch down, and if you see him trying to handle his ramrod, let him have it, and don't miss him."

But apparently Johnny is in no hurry to load up again, and likes the deep shadow of his tree too well to walk his beat any more, for we wait impatiently for a long while and see nothing of him. By and by we hear him calling over: "I say, Yank!"

"Well, Johnny?"

"If you wont shoot, I wont."

"Rather late in the morning to make such an offer, is n't it? Did n't you shoot, just now?"

"You see, my old gun went off by accident."

"That 's a likely yarn o' yours, Johnny!"

"But it 's an honest fact, any way."

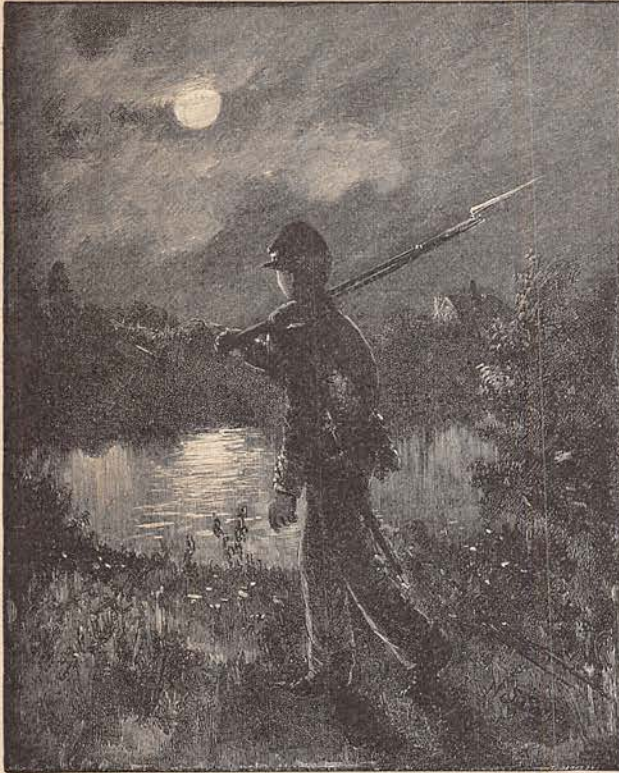
"Well, Johnny, next time your gun 's going to go off in that uncomfortable way, you will oblige us chaps over here by holding the muzzle down toward Dixie, or somebody 'll turn up his toes to the daisies before morning yet."

"All right, Yank," said Johnny, stepping out from behind his tree into the bright moonlight like a man, "but we can lick you, any way!"

"Andy, do you think that fellow's gun went off by accident, or was the rascal trying to hurt somebody?"

"I think he 's honest in what he says, Harry. His gun might have gone off by accident. There 's no telling, though. He 'll need a little watching, I guess."

But Johnny paces his beat harmlessly enough for the remainder of the hour, singing catches of song, and whistling the airs of Dixie, while we pace ours as leisurely as he, but, with a wholesome regard for guns that go off so easily of themselves, we have a decided preference for the dark shadows, and are cautious lest we linger too long on those



IN A DANGEROUS PART OF HIS BEAT.

sleep. One of these days, you, and many more of us besides, will sleep the last long sleep that knows no waking. But hark!—I hear the challenge up the line! I must rouse you, after all.

"Sergeant! Sergeant! Get up—Grand Rounds!"

"Halt! Who goes there?"

"The Grand Rounds."

"Advance, officer of the Grand Rounds, and give the countersign."

An officer steps out from the group that is half-hidden in the shadow, and whispers in my ear, "Lafayette," when the whole body silently and stealthily passes down the line.

Relieved at ten o'clock, we go back to our post at the house, and find it rather hard work to keep our eyes open from ten to two o'clock, but sleep is out of the question. At two o'clock in the morn-

parts of our several beats where the bright moon-beams lie.

It must not be supposed that the sentries of the two armies were forever picking one another off whenever opportunity offered; for what good did it do to murder each other in cold blood? It only wasted powder, and did not forward the issue of the great conflict at all. Except at times immediately before or after a battle, or when there was some specially exciting reason for mutual defiance, the pickets were generally on friendly terms, conversed freely about the news of the day, exchanged newspapers, coffee, and tobacco, swapped knives, and occasionally had a friendly game of cards together. Sometimes, however, picket duty was but another name for sharp-shooting and bushwhacking of the most dangerous and deadly sort.

When we had been relieved, and got back to our little bivouac under the elms on the lawn, and sat down there to discuss the episode of the night, I asked Andy:

"What was that piece of poetry you read to me the other day, about a picket being shot? It was something about 'all quiet along the Potomac to-night.' Do you remember the words well enough to repeat it?"

"Yes, I committed it to memory, Harry, and if you wish, I'll recite it for your benefit. We'll just imagine ourselves back in the dear old Academy again, and that it is 'declamation-day,' and my name is called and I step up and declaim:

"ALL QUIET ALONG THE POTOMAC TO-NIGHT.

"ALL quiet along the Potomac, they say,
Except, now and then, a stray picket
Is shot, as he walks on his beat to and fro,
By a rifleman hid in the thicket.
'T is nothing—a private or two, now and then,
Will not count in the news of the battle;
Not an officer lost—only one of the men,
Moaning out, all alone, the death-rattle.

"All quiet along the Potomac to-night,
Where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming;
Their tents, in the rays of the clear autumn morn,
O'er the light of the watch-fires are gleaming.
A tremulous sigh of the gentle night-wind
Through the forest-leaves softly is creeping,
While stars up above, with their glittering eyes,
Keep guard, for the army is sleeping.

"There 's only the sound of the lone sentry's tread,
As he tramps from the rock to the fountain,
And thinks of the two, in the low trundle-bed,
Far away in the cot on the mountain.
His musket falls slack—his face, dark and grim,
Grows gentle with memories tender,
As he mutters a prayer for the children asleep—
For their mother—may Heaven defend her!

"He passes the fountain, the blasted pine-tree—
His footstep is lagging and weary;
Yet onward he goes, through the broad belt of light,
Toward the shades of the forest so dreary.

Hark! was it the night-wind that rustled the leaves?
Was it the moonlight so wondrously flashing?
It looked like a rifle—"Ha! Mary, good-bye!"
And the life-blood is ebbing and plashing!

"All quiet along the Potomac to-night—
No sound save the rush of the river:
While soft falls the dew on the face of the dead—
The picket 's off duty forever!"

CHAPTER VI.

HOW WE GOT A SHELLING.

"PACK UP!" "Fall in!" All is stir and excitement in the camp. The bugles are blowing "boots and saddles" for the cavalry camped above us on the hill; we drummer-boys are beating the "long roll" and "assembly" for the regiment; mounted orderlies are galloping along the hill-side with great yellow envelopes stuck in their belts; and the men fall out of their miserable winter-quarters, with shouts and cheers that make the hills about Falmouth ring again. For the winter is past; the sweet breath of spring comes balmily up from the south, and the whole army is on the move—whither?

"Say, Captain, tell us where are we going?" But the captain does n't know, nor even the colonel—nobody knows. We are raw troops yet, and have not learned that soldiers never ask questions about orders.

So, fall in there, all together, and forward! And we ten little drummer-boys beat gayly enough "The Girl I Left Behind Me," as the line sweeps over the hills, through the woods, and on down to the river's edge.

And soon here we are, on the Rappahannock, three miles below Fredericksburg. We can see, as we emerge from the woods, away over the river, the long line of earth-works thrown up by the enemy, and small dark specks moving about along the field, in the far, dim distance, which we know to be officers, or perhaps cavalry-pickets. We can see, too, our own first division laying down the pontoon-bridge, on which, according to a rumor that is spreading among us, we are to cross the river and charge the enemy's works.

Here is an old army-letter lying before me, written on my drum-head in lead-pencil, in that stretch of meadow by the river, where I heard my first shell scream and shriek:

"NEAR RAPPAHANNOCK RIVER, Apr. 28th.
"DEAR FATHER: We have moved to the river, and are just going into battle. I am well and so are the boys.—Your affect. son,
HARRY."

But we do not go into battle that day, nor next day, nor at all at that point; for we are making only a "feint," though we do not know it now, to attract the attention of the enemy from the main

movement of the army at Chancellorsville, some twenty-five or thirty miles farther up the river. The men are in good spirits and all ready for the fray, but as the day wears on without further developments, arms are stacked, and we begin to roam about the hills; some are writing letters home, some sleeping, some even fishing in a little rivulet that runs by us, when toward three o'clock in the afternoon, and all of a sudden, the enemy opens fire on us with a salute of three shells fired in rapid succession, not quite into our ranks, but a little to the left of us; and see! over there where the Forty-third lies, to our left, come three *stretchers*, and you can see deep crimson stains on the canvas as they go by us on a lively trot to the rear; for "the ball is opening, boys," and we are under fire for the first time.

I wish I could convey to the readers of ST. NICHOLAS some faint idea of the noise made by a shell as it flies shrieking and screaming through the air, and of that peculiar *whirring* sound made by the pieces after the shell has burst overhead or by your side. So loud, high-pitched, shrill, and terrible is the sound, that one unaccustomed to it would think at first that the very heavens were being torn down about his ears!

How often I have laughed and laughed at myself when thinking of that first shelling we got there by the river! For, up to that time, I had had a very poor, old-fashioned idea of what a shell was like, having derived it probably from accounts of sieges in the Mexican war.

I had thought a shell was a hollow ball of iron, filled with powder and furnished with a fuse, and that they threw it over into your ranks, and there it lay, hissing and spitting, till the fire reached the powder, and the shell burst and killed a dozen men or so—that is, if some venturesome fellow did n't run up and stamp the fire off the fuse before the miserable thing went off! Of a *conical* shell, shaped like a minie-ball, with ridges on the outside to fit the grooves of a rifled cannon, and exploding by a percussion-cap at the pointed end, I had no idea in the world. But that was the sort of thing they were firing at us now—Hur-r-r—bang! Hur-r-r—bang!

Throwing myself flat on my face while that terrible shriek is in the air, I cling closer to the ground while I hear that low, whirring sound near by, which I foolishly imagine to be the sound of a burning fuse, but which, on raising my head and looking up and around, I find is the sound of pieces of exploded shells flying through the air about our heads! The enemy has excellent range of us, and gives it to us hot and fast, and we fall in line and take it as best we may, and without the pleasure of replying, for the enemy's batteries are a full

mile and a half away, and no Enfield rifle can reach half so far.

"Colonel, move your regiment a little to the right, so as to get under cover of yonder bank." It is soon done; and there, seated on a bank about twenty feet high, with our backs to the enemy, we let them blaze away, for it is not likely they can tumble a shell down at an angle of forty-five degrees.

And now, see! Just to the rear of us, and therefore in full view as we are sitting, is a battery of our own, coming up into position at full gallop—a grand sight indeed! The officers with swords flashing in the evening sunlight, the bugles clanging out the orders, the carriages unlimbered, and the guns run up into position; and now, that ever beautiful drill of the artillery in action, steady and regular as the stroke of machinery! How swiftly the man that handles the swab has prepared his piece, while the runners have meanwhile brought up the little red bag of powder and the long, conical shell from the caisson in the rear! How swiftly they are rammed home! The lieutenant sights his piece, the man with the lanyard with a sudden jerk fires the cap, the gun leaps five feet to the rear with the recoil, and out of the cannon's throat, in a cloud of smoke, rushes the shell, shrieking out its message of death into the lines a mile and a half away, while our boys rend the air with wild hurrahs, for the enemy's fire is answered!

Now ensues an artillery duel that keeps the air all quivering and quaking about our ears for an hour and a half, and it is all the more exciting that we can see the beautiful drill of the batteries beside us, with that steady swabbing and ramming, running and sighting and bang! bang! bang! The mystery is how in the world they can load and fire so fast.

"Boys, what are you trying to do?" It is the general commanding the division, who reins in his horse and asks the question, and he is one of the finest artillerists in the service, they say.

"Why, General, we are trying to put a shell through that stone barn over there; it's full of sharp-shooters."

"Hold a moment!"—and the general dismounts and sights the gun. "Try that elevation once, Sergeant," he says; and the shell goes crashing through the barn a mile and a half away, and the sharp-shooters come pouring out of it like bees out of a hive. "Let them have it so, boys." And the general has mounted, and rides, laughing, away along the line.

Meanwhile, something is transpiring immediately before our eyes that amuses us immensely. Not more than twenty yards away from us is another high bank, corresponding exactly with the one we

are occupying, and running parallel with it, the two hills inclosing a little ravine some twenty or thirty yards in width.

This second high bank,—the nearer one,—you must remember, faces the enemy's fire. The water has worn out of the soft sand-rock a sort of cave, in which Darky Bill, our company cook, took refuge at the crack of the first shell. And there, crouching in the narrow recess of the rock, we can see him shivering with affright. Every now and then, when there is a lull in the firing, he comes to the wide-open door of his house, intent upon flight, and, rolling up the great whites of his eyes, is about to step out and run, when Hur-r-r—bang—crack! goes the shell, and poor scared Darky Bill dives into his cave again head-first, like a frog into a pond.

After repeated attempts to run and repeated frog-leaps backward, the poor fellow takes heart and cuts for the woods, pursued by the laughter and shouts of the regiment—for which he cares far less, however, than for that terrible shriek in the air, which, he afterward told us, "was a-sayin' all de time, 'Where 's dat nigger! Where 's dat nigger! Where 's dat nigger!'"

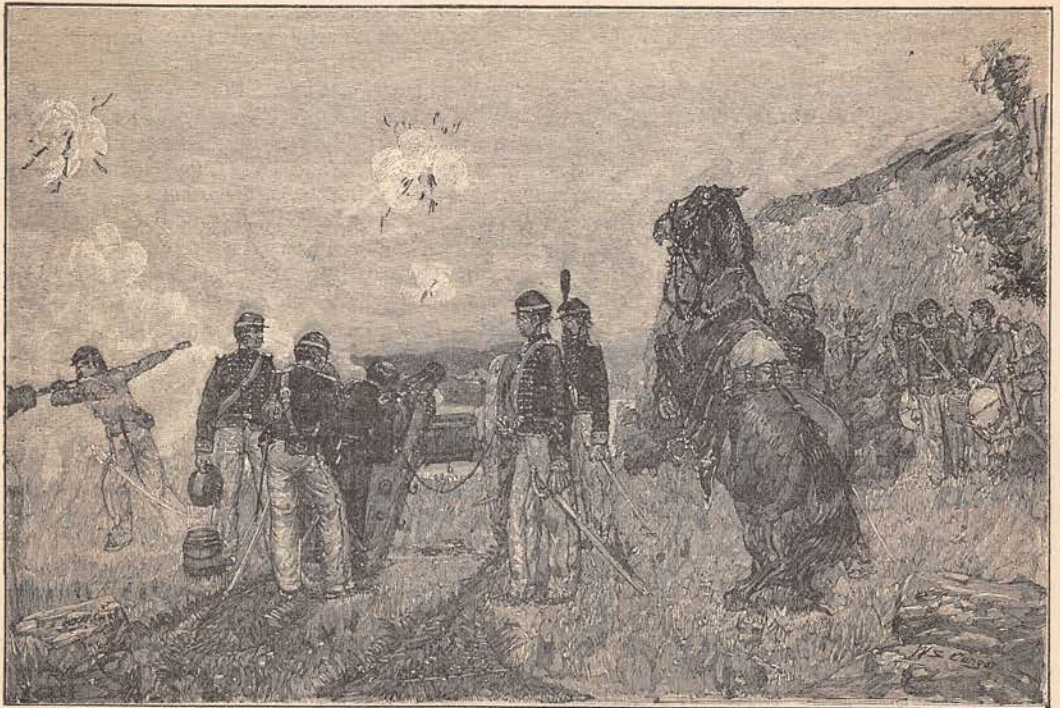
As night-fall comes on, the firing ceases. Word

is passed around that under cover of night we are to cross the pontoons and charge the enemy's works; but we sleep soundly all night on our arms, and are awaked only by the first streaks of light in the morning sky.

We have orders to move. A staff-officer is delivering orders to our colonel, who is surrounded by his staff. They press in toward the messenger, standing immediately below me as I sit on the bank, when the enemy gives us a morning salute, and the shell comes ricocheting over the hill and tumbles into a mud-puddle about which the group is gathered; the mounted officers crouch in their saddles and spur hastily away, the foot officers throw themselves flat on their faces into the mud; the drummer-boy is bespattered with mud and dirt; but fortunately the shell does not explode, or the readers of ST. NICHOLAS would never have heard how we got our first shelling.

And now, "Fall in, men!" and we are off on a double-quick in a cloud of dust, amid the rattle of canteens and tin cups, and the regular *flop, flop* of cartridge-boxes and bayonet-scabbards, pursued for two miles by the hot fire of the enemy's batteries, for a long, hot, weary day's march to the extreme right of the army at Chancellorsville.

(To be continued.)



"THE GENERAL DISMOUNTS AND SIGHTS THE GUN."

RECOLLECTIONS OF A DRUMMER-BOY.*

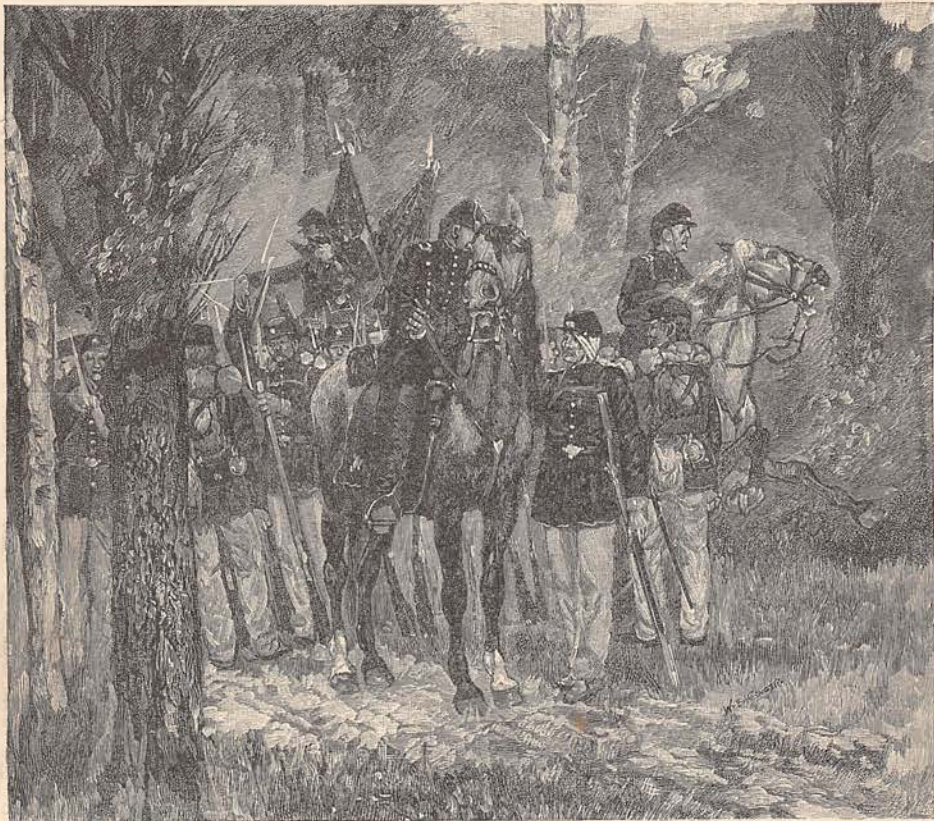
BY HARRY M. KIEFFER.

CHAPTER VII.

IN THE WOODS AT CHANCELLORSVILLE.

It is no easy matter to describe a long day's march to one who knows nothing of the hardships of a soldier's life. That a body of troops marched some twenty-five or thirty miles on a certain day

soldier's powers of endurance to the very utmost. He has, in the first place, a heavy load to carry. His knapsack, haversack, canteen, ammunition, musket, and accouterments are by no means a light matter at the outset, and they grow heavier with every additional mile of the road. So true is this that, in deciding what of our clothing to take along on a march and what to throw away, we soon



"A SURGEON WRITING UPON THE POMMEL OF HIS SADDLE AN ORDER FOR AN AMBULANCE."

from daylight to midnight, from one point to another, seems, to one who has not tried it, no great undertaking. Thirty miles! It is but an hour's ride in the cars. Nor can the single pedestrian, who easily covers greater distances in less time, have a full idea of the fatigue of a soldier as he throws himself down by the road-side, utterly exhausted, when the day's march is done.

Unnumbered circumstances combine to test the

learned to be guided by the soldiers' proverb that "what weighs an ounce in the morning weighs a pound at night." Then, too, the soldier is not master of his own movements, as is the solitary pedestrian; for he can not pick his way, nor husband his strength by resting when and where he may choose. He marches generally "four abreast" — sometimes at double-quick, when the rear is closing up, and again at a most provokingly slow pace

when there is some impediment on the road ahead. Often his canteen is empty, no water is to be had, and he marches on in a cloud of dust, with parched throat and lips and trembling limbs—on and on, and still on, until about the midnight hour, at the final "Halt!" he drops to the ground like a shot, feverish, irritable, exhausted in body and soul.

It would seem a shame and a folly to take troops thus utterly worn out, and hurl them at midnight into a battle the issue of which hangs trembling in the balance. Yet this was what they came pretty near doing with us, after our long march from four miles below Fredericksburg to the extreme right of the army at Chancellorsville.

I have a very indistinct and cloudy recollection of that march. I can quite well remember the beginning of it, when at the early dawn the enemy's batteries drove us, under a sharp shell-fire, at a lively double-quick for the first four miles. And I can well recall how, at midnight, we threw ourselves under the great oak-trees near Chancellorsville, and were in a moment sound asleep amid the heaven-rending thunder of the guns, the unbroken roll of the musketry, and the shouts and yells of the lines charging each other a quarter of a mile to our front. But when I attempt to call up the incidents that happened by the way, I am utterly at a loss. My memory has retained nothing but a confused mass of images: here a farm house, there a mill; a company of stragglers driven on by the guard; a Surgeon writing upon the pommel of his saddle an order for an ambulance to carry a poor exhausted and but half-conscious fellow; an officer's Staff or an Orderly dashing by at a lively trot; a halt for coffee in the edge of a wood; filling a canteen (oh, blessed memory!) at some meadow stream or road-side spring; and on, and on, and on, amid the rattle of bayonet-scabbards and tin cups, mopping our faces and crunching our hard-tack as we went;—this, and such as this, is all that will now come to mind.

But of events toward night-fall the images are clearer and more sharply defined. The sun is setting, large, red, and fiery-looking, in a dull haze that hangs over the thickly wooded horizon. We are nearing the ford where we are to cross the Rappahannock. We come to some hill-top, and—hark! A deep, ominous growl comes, from how many miles away we know not; now another; then another!

On, Boys, on! There is work doing ahead, and terrible work it is, for two great armies are at each other's throat, and the battle is raging fierce and high, although we know nothing as yet of how it may be going.

On,—on,—on!

Turning sharp to the left, we enter the approach

to the ford, the road leading, in places, through a deep cut,—great high pine-trees on either side of the road shutting out the little remaining light of day. Here we find the first actual evidences of the great battle that is raging ahead: long lines of ambulances filled with wounded; yonder a poor fellow with a bandaged head, sitting by a spring; and a few steps away another, his agonies now over; here, two men, one with his arm in a sling supporting the other, who has turned his musket into a crutch; then more ambulances, and more wounded in increasing numbers; Orderlies dashing by at full gallop, while the thunder of the guns grows louder and closer as we step on the pontoons and so cross the gleaming river.

"Colonel, your men have had a hard day's march; you will now let them rest for the night."

It is a Staff-officer whom I hear delivering this order to our Colonel, and a sweeter message I think I never heard. We cast wistful eyes at the half-extinguished camp-fires of some regiment that has been making coffee by the road-side, and has just moved off, and we think them a godsend, as the order is given to "stack arms." But before we have time even to unsling knapsacks, the order comes, "Fall in!" and away we go again, steadily plodding on through that seemingly endless forest of scrub-pine and oak, straight in the direction of the booming guns ahead.

Why whippoorwills were made I do not know; doubtless for some wise purpose; but never before that night did I know they had been made in such countless numbers. Every tree and bush was full of them, it seemed. There were thousands of them, there were tens of thousands of them, there were millions of them! And every one whistling, as fast as it could, "Who-hoo-hoo! Who-hoo-hoo! Who-hoo-hoo!" Had they been vultures or turkey-buzzards,—vast flocks of which followed the army wherever we went, almost darkening the sky at times, and always suggesting unpleasant reflections,—they could not have appeared more execrable to me. Many were the imprecations hurled at them: as we plodded on under the light of the great red moon, now above the tree-tops, while still from every bush came that monotonous half-screech, half-groan, "Who-hoo-hoo! Who-hoo-hoo!"

But, O miserable birds of ill-omen, there is something more ominous in the air than your lugubrious night-song! There is borne to our ears at every additional step the deepening growl of the cannon ahead. As the moon mounts higher, and we advance farther along the level forest-land, we hear still more distinctly another sound—the long, unbroken roll of musketry.

Forward now, at double-quick, until we are on the outskirts of the battle-field.

Shells are crashing through the tall tree-tops overhead.

"Halt! Load at will! Load!"

In the moonlight that falls shimmering across the road, as I look back over the column, I see the bright steel flashing, while the jingle of the ramrods makes music that stirs the blood to a quicker pulse. A well-known voice calls me down the line, and Andy whispers a few hurried words into my ear, while he grasps my hand, *hard*. But we are off at a quick step. A sharp turn to the left, and—hark! The firing has ceased, and they are "charging" down there! That peculiar, and afterward well-known, "Yi! Yi! Yi!" indicates a struggle for which we are making straight and fast.

At this moment comes the order: "Colonel, you will countermarch your men, and take position down this road on the right. Follow me!" The staff-officer leads us half a mile to the right, where, sinking down utterly exhausted, we are soon sound asleep.

Of the next day or two I have but an indistinct recollection. What with the fatigue and excitement, the hunger and thirst, of the last few days, a high fever set in for me. I became half-delirious, and lay under a great oak-tree, too weak to walk, my head nearly splitting with the noise of a battery of steel cannon in position fifty yards to the left of me. That battery's beautiful but terrible drill I could plainly see. My own corps was put on reserve: the men built strong breast-works, but took no part in the battle, excepting some little skirmishing. Our day was yet to come.

One evening,—it was the last evening we spent in the woods at Chancellorsville,—a Sergeant of my company came back to where we were, with orders for me to hunt up and bring an ambulance for one of the Lieutenants who was sick.

"You see, Harry, there are rumors that we are going to retreat to-night, for the heavy rains have so swollen the Rappahannock that our pontoons are in danger of being carried away, and it appears that, for some reason or other, we've got to get out of this at once under cover of night, and Lieutenant can't stand the march. So you will go for an ambulance. You'll find the ambulance park about two miles from here. You'll take through the woods in that direction,"—pointing with his finger,—“until you come to a path; follow the path till you come to a road; follow the road, taking to the right and straight ahead, till you come to the ambulances.”

Although it was raining hard at the time, and had been raining for several days, and though I myself was probably as sick as the Lieutenant, and felt positive that the troops would have started in

retreat before I could get back, yet it was my duty to obey, and off I went.

I had no difficulty in finding the path; and I reached the road all right. Forging a stream, the corduroy bridge of which was all afloat, and walking rapidly for a half-hour, I found the ambulances all drawn up ready to retreat.

"We have orders to pull out from here at once, and can send an ambulance for no man. Your Lieutenant must take his chance."

It was getting dark fast, as I started back with this message. I was soaked to the skin, and the rain was pouring down in torrents. To make bad worse, in the darkness I turned off from the road at the wrong point, missed the path and quite lost my way! What was to be done? If I should spend much time where I was, I was certain to be left behind, for I felt sure that the troops were moving off; and yet I feared to make for any of the fires I saw through the woods, for I knew the lines of the two armies were near each other, and I might, as like as not, walk over into the lines of the enemy.

Collecting my poor fevered faculties, I determined to follow the course of a little stream I heard plashing down among the bushes to the left. By and by I fixed my eye on a certain bright camp-fire, and determined to make for it at all hazards, be it of friend or of foe. Judge of my joyful surprise when I found it was burning in front of my own tent!

Standing about our fire trying to get warm and dry, our fellows were discussing the question of the retreat about to be made. But I was tired and sick, and wet and sleepy, and did not at all relish the prospect of a night march through the woods in a drenching rain. So, putting on the only remaining dry shirt I had left (I had *two* on already, and they were soaked through), I lay down under my shelter, shivering and with chattering teeth, but soon fell sound asleep.

In the gray light of the morning we were suddenly awakened by a loud "Halloo there, you chaps! Better be digging out of this! We're the last line of cavalry pickets, and the Johnnies are on our heels!"

It was an easy matter for us to sling on our knapsacks and rush after the cavalry-man, until a double-quick of two miles brought us within the rear line of defenses thrown up to cover the retreat.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST DAY AT GETTYSBURG.

"HARRY, I'm getting tired of this thing. It's becoming monotonous, this thing of being roused

every morning at four, with orders to pack up and be ready to march at a moment's notice, and then lying around here all day in the sun. I don't believe we are going anywhere, anyhow."

We had been encamped for six weeks, of which I need give no special account, only saying that in those "summer quarters," as they might be called, we went on with our endless drilling, and were baked and browned, and thoroughly hardened to the life of a soldier in the field.

The monotony of which Andy complained did not end that day, nor the next. For six successive days we were regularly roused at four o'clock in the morning, with orders to "pack up and be ready to move immediately!"—only to unpack as regularly about the middle of the afternoon. We could hear our batteries pounding away in the direction of Fredericksburg, but we did not then know that we were being held well in hand till the enemy's plan had developed itself into the great march into Pennsylvania, and we were let off in hot pursuit.

So at last, on the 12th of June, 1863, we started, at five o'clock in the morning, in a north-westerly direction. My journal says: "Very warm, dust plenty, water scarce, marching very hard. Halted at dusk at an excellent spring, and lay down for the night with aching limbs and blistered feet."

I pass over the six days' continuous marching that followed, steadily on toward the north, pausing only to relate several incidents that happened by the way.

On the 14th we were racing with the enemy—we being pushed on to the utmost of human endurance—for the possession of the defenses of Washington. From five o'clock of that morning till three the following morning,—that is to say, from daylight to daylight,—we were hurried along under a burning June sun, with no halt longer than sufficient to recruit our strength with a hasty cup of coffee at noon and nightfall. Nine, ten, eleven, twelve o'clock at night, and still on! It was almost more than flesh could endure. Men fell out of line in the darkness by the score, and tumbled over by the road-side, asleep almost before they touched the ground.

I remember how a great tall fellow in our company made us laugh along somewhere about one o'clock that morning—"Pointer," we called him; an excellent soldier, who afterward fell at his post at Spottsylvania. He had been trudging on in sullen silence for hours, when all of a sudden, coming to a halt, he brought his piece to "order arms" on the hard road with a ring, took off his cap, and in language far more forcible than elegant, began forthwith to denounce both parties to the war, "from A to Izzard," in all branches of

the service, civil and military, army and navy, artillery, infantry, and cavalry, and demanded that the enemy should come on in full force here and now, "and I'll fight them all single-handed and alone, the whole pack of 'em! I'm tired of this everlasting marching, and I want to fight!"

"Three cheers for Pointer!" cried some one, and we laughed heartily as we toiled doggedly on to Manassas, which we reached at three o'clock A. M., June 15th. I can assure you we lost no time in stretching ourselves at full length in the tall summer grass.

"James McFadden, report to the Adjutant for camp guard. James McFadden! Anybody know where Jim McFadden is?"

Now, that was rather hard, was n't it? To march from daylight to daylight, and lie down for a rest of probably two hours before starting again, and then to be called up to stand throughout those precious two hours, on guard duty!

I knew very well where McFadden was, for was n't he lying right beside me in the grass? But just then I was in no humor to tell. The camp might well go without a guard that night, or the Orderly might find McFadden in the dark if he could.

But the rules were strict, and the punishment was severe, and poor McFadden, bursting into tears of vexation, answered like a man: "Here I am, Orderly; I'll go." It was hard.

Two weeks later, both McFadden and the Orderly went where there is neither marching nor standing guard any more.

Now comes a long rest of a week in the woods near the Potomac, for we have been marching parallel with the enemy, and dare not go too fast, lest by some sudden and dexterous move in the game he should sweep past our rear in upon the defenses of Washington. And after this sweet refreshment, we cross the Potomac on pontoons, and march, perhaps with a lighter step, since we are nearing home, through the smiling fields and pleasant villages of "Maryland, my Maryland." At Poolesville, a little town on the north bank of the Potomac, we smile as we see a lot of children come trooping out of the village school,—a merry sight to men who have seen neither woman nor child these six months and more, and a touching sight to many a man in the ranks as he thinks of his little flaxen-heads in the far-away home. Aye, think of them now and think of them full tenderly, for many a man of you shall never have child climb on his knee any more!

As we enter one of these pleasant little Maryland villages, we find on the outskirts of the place two young ladies and two young gentlemen waving the good old flag as we pass, and singing "Rally round

the Flag, Boys." The excitement along the line is intense. Cheer on cheer is given by regiment after regiment as we pass along, we drummer-boys beating, at the Colonel's express orders, the old tune, "The Girl I left behind me," as a sort of response. Soon we are in among the hills again, and still the cheering goes on in the far distance to the rear.

Only ten days later we passed through the same village again, and were met by the same young ladies and gentlemen, waving the same flag and singing the same song. But though we tried twice, and tried hard, we could not cheer at all, for there 's a difference between five hundred men and one hundred—is there not? So, that second time, we drooped our tattered flags, and raised our caps in silent and sorrowful salute.

"Colonel, close up your men and move on as rapidly as possible."

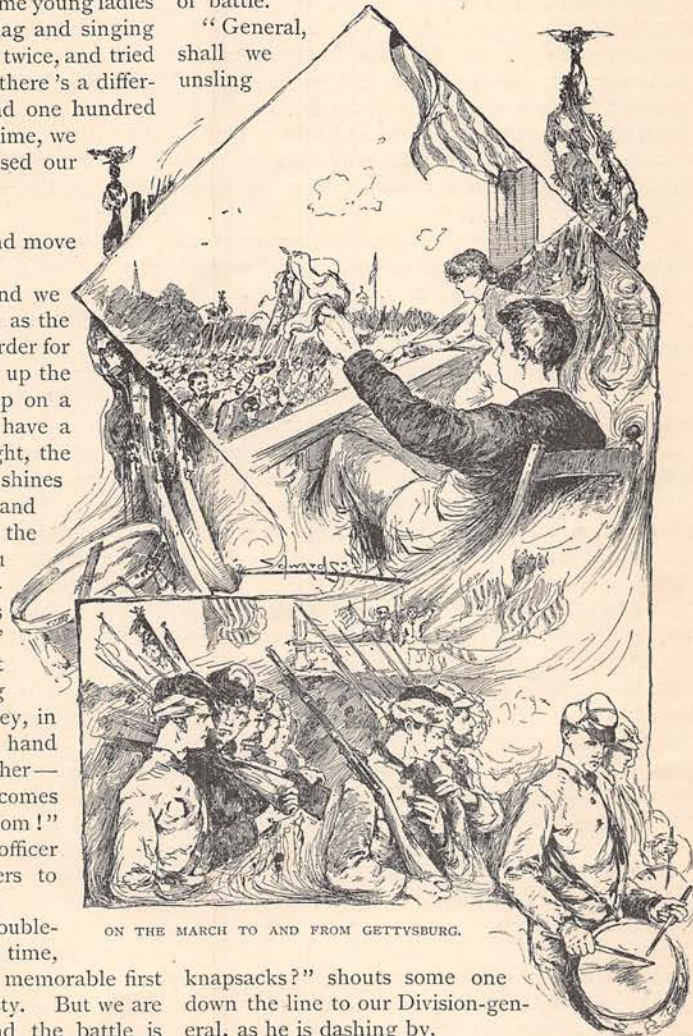
It is the morning of July 1st, and we are crossing a bridge over a stream, as the Staff-officer, having delivered this order for us, dashes down the line to hurry up the regiments in the rear. We get up on a high range of hills, from which we have a magnificent view. The day is bright, the air is fresh and sweet, and the sun shines out of an almost cloudless sky, and as we gaze away off yonder down the valley to the left—look! Do you see that? A puff of smoke in mid-air! Very small and miles away, as the faint and long-coming "boom" of the exploding shell indicates, but it means that something is going on yonder, away down in the valley, in which, perhaps, we may have a hand before the day is done. See! Another—and another! Faint and far away comes the long-delayed "boom!" "boom!" echoing over the hills, as the Staff-officer dashes along the lines with orders to "double-quick! double-quick!"

Four miles of almost constant double-quicking is no light work at any time, least of all on such a day as this memorable first day of July, for it is hot and dusty. But we are in our own State now, boys, and the battle is opening ahead, and it is no time to save breath. On we go, now up a hill, now over a stream, now checking our headlong rush for a moment, for we *must* breathe a little. But the word comes along the line again, "double-quick," and we settle down to it with right good-will, while the cannon ahead seem to be getting nearer and louder. There 's little said in the ranks, for there is little

breath for talking, though every man is busy enough thinking. We all feel, somehow, that our day has come at last—as indeed it has!

We get in through the outskirts of Gettysburg, tearing down the fences of the town lots and outlying gardens as we go; we pass a battery of brass guns drawn up beside the Seminary, some hundred yards in front of which building, in a strip of meadow-land, we halt, and rapidly form the line of battle.

"General, shall we unsling



ON THE MARCH TO AND FROM GETTYSBURG.

knapsacks?" shouts some one down the line to our Division-general, as he is dashing by.

"Never mind the knapsacks, boys; it 's the State now!"

And he plunges his spurs up to the rowels in the flanks of his horse, as he takes the stake-and-rider fence at a leap and is away.

"Unfurl the flags, Color-guard!"

"Now, forward, double——"

"Colonel, we 're not loaded yet!"

A laugh runs along the line as, at the command "Load at will—load!" the ramrods make their merry music, and at once the word is given, "Forward, double-quick!" and the line sweeps up that rising ground with banners gayly flying, and cheers that rend the air—a sight, once seen, never to be forgotten.

I suppose the boy-readers of ST. NICHOLAS wonder what a drummer-boy does in time of battle. Perhaps they have the same idea I used to have, namely, that it is the duty of a drummer-boy to beat his drum all the time the battle rages, to encourage the men or drown the groans of the wounded! But if they will reflect a moment, they will see that amid the confusion and noise of battle, there is little chance of martial music being either heard or heeded. Our Colonel had long ago given us our orders:

"You drummer-boys, in time of an engagement, are to lay aside your drums and take stretchers and help off the wounded. I expect you to do this, and you are to remember that, in doing it, you are just as much helping the battle on as if you were fighting with guns in your hands."

And so we sit down there on our drums, and watch the line going in with cheers. Forthwith we get a smart shelling, for there is evidently somebody else watching that advancing line besides ourselves; but they have elevated their guns a little too much, so that every shell passes quite over the line and plows up the meadow-sod about us in all directions.

Laying aside our knapsacks, we go to the Seminary, now rapidly filling with the wounded. This the enemy surely can not know, or they would n't shell the building so hard! We get stretchers at the ambulances, and start out for the line of battle. We can just see our regimental colors waving in the orchard, near a log-house about three hundred yards ahead, and we start out for it—I on the lead and Daney behind.

There is one of our batteries drawn up to our left a short distance as we run. It is engaged in a sharp artillery duel with one of the enemy's, which we can not see, although we can hear it plainly enough, and straight between the two our road lies. So, up we go, Daney and I, at a lively trot, dodging the shells as best we can, till, panting for breath, we set down our stretcher under an apple-tree in the orchard, in which, under the brow of the hill, we find the regiment lying, one or two companies being out on the skirmish line ahead.

I count six men of Company C lying yonder in the grass—killed, they say, by a single shell. Andy calls me away for a moment to look after some poor fellow whose arm is off at the shoulder; and it was just time I got away, too, for immediately a

shell plunges into the sod where I had been sitting, tearing my stretcher to tatters and plowing up a great furrow under one of the boys who had been sitting immediately behind me, and who thinks "That was rather close shaving, was n't it, now?" The bullets whistling overhead make pretty music with their ever-varying "z-i-p! z-i-p!" and we could imagine them so many bees, only they have such a terribly sharp sting. They tell me, too, of a certain cavalry-man (Dennis Buckley, Sixth Michigan cavalry it was, as I afterward learned—let history preserve the brave boy's name) who, having had his horse shot under him, and seeing that first-named shell explode in Company C with such disaster, exclaimed, "That is the company for me!" He remained with the regiment all day, doing good service with his carbine, and he escaped unhurt!

"Here they come, boys; we 'll have to go in at them on a charge, I guess!" Creeping close around the corner of the log-house, I can see the long lines of gray sweeping up in fine style over the fields; but I feel the Colonel's hand on my shoulder.

"Keep back, my boy; no use exposing yourself in that way."

As I get back behind the house and look around, an old man is seen approaching our line through the orchard in the rear. He is dressed in a long, blue, swallow-tailed coat and high silk hat, and coming up to the Colonel, he asks:

"Would you let an old chap like me have a chance to fight in your ranks, Colonel?"

"Can you shoot?" inquires the Colonel.

"Oh yes, I can shoot, I reckon," says he.

"But where are your cartridges?"

"I 've got 'em here, sir," says the old man, slipping his hand on his pantaloons pocket.

And so "old John Burns," of whom every school-boy has heard, takes his place in the line and loads and fires with the best of them, and is left wounded and insensible on the field when the day is done.

Reclining there under a tree while the skirmishing is going on in front and the shells are tearing up the sod around us, I observe how evidently hard pressed is that battery yonder in the edge of the wood, about fifty yards to our right. The enemy's batteries have excellent range on the poor fellows serving it. And when the smoke lifts or rolls away in great clouds for a moment, we can see the men running, and ramming, and sighting, and fring, and swabbing, and changing position every few minutes to throw the enemy's guns out of range a little. The men are becoming terribly few, but nevertheless their guns, with a rapidity that seems unabated, belch forth great clouds of

smoke and send the shells shrieking over the plain.

Meanwhile, events occur which give us something more to think of than mere skirmishing and shelling. Our beloved Brigadier-general, stepping out a moment to reconnoiter the enemy's position and movements, is seen by some sharp-shooter off in a tree, and is carried severely wounded into the barn. Our Colonel assumes command of the brigade. Our regiment facing westward, while the line on our right faces to the north, is observed to be exposed to an enfilading fire from the enemy's guns, as well as from the long line of gray now appearing in full sight on our right. So our regiment must form in line and change front forward, in order to come in line with the other regiments. Accomplished swiftly, this new movement brings our line at once face to face with the enemy's, which advances to within fifty yards, and exchanges a few volleys, but is soon checked and staggered by our fire.

Yet now, see! Away to our left, and consequently on our flank, a new line appears, rapidly advancing out of the woods a half-mile away, and there must be some quick and sharp work done now, Boys, or, between the old foes in front and the new ones on our flank, we shall be annihilated. To clear us of these old assailants in front before the new line can sweep down on our flank, our brave Colonel, in a ringing command, orders a charge along the whole line. Then, before the gleaming and bristling bayonets of our "Buck-tail" brigade, as it yells and cheers, sweeping resistlessly over the field, the enemy gives way and flies in confusion. But there is little time to watch them fly, for that new line on our left is approaching at a rapid pace; and, with shells falling thick and fast into our ranks, and men dropping everywhere, our regiment must reverse the former movement by "changing front to rear," and so resume its original position facing westward, for the enemy's new line is approaching from that direction, and if it takes us in flank, we are done for.

To "change front to rear" is a difficult movement to execute even on drill, much more so under severe fire; but it is executed now steadily and without confusion, yet not a minute too soon! For the new line of gray is upon us in a mad tempest of lead, supported by a cruel artillery fire, almost before our line can steady itself to receive the shock. However, partially protected by a post-and-rail fence, we answer fiercely, and with effect so terrific that the enemy's line wavers, and at length moves off by the right flank, giving us a breathing space for a time.

During this struggle, there had been many an exciting scene all along the line as it swayed back-

ward and forward over the field—scenes which we have had no time to mention yet.

See yonder, where the colors of the regiment on our right—our sister regiment, the 149th—have been advanced a little to draw the enemy's fire, while our line sweeps on to the charge. There ensues about the flags a wild *mêlée* and close hand-to-hand encounter. Some of the enemy have seized the colors and are making off with them in triumph, shouting victory. But a squad of our own regiment dashes out, and amid yells and cheers and smoke, you see the battle-flags rise and fall, and sway hither and thither upon the surging mass, as if tossed on the billows of a tempest, until, wrenched away by strong arms, they are borne back in triumph to the line of the 149th.

See yonder, again! Our Colonel is clapping his hand to his cheek, from which a red stream is pouring; our Lieutenant-colonel is kneeling on the ground, and is having his handkerchief tied tight around his arm at the shoulder; the Major and Adjutant both lie low, pierced with balls through the chest; one Lieutenant is waving his sword to his men, although his leg is crushed at the knee; three other officers of the line are lying over there, motionless now forever. All over the field are strewn men wounded or dead, and comrades pause a moment in the mad rush to catch the last words of the dying. Incidents such as these the reader must imagine for himself, to fill in these swift sketches of how the day was won—and lost!

Aye, lost! For the balls which have so far come mainly from our front, begin now to sing in from our left and right, which means that we are being flanked. Somehow, away off to our right, a half-mile or so, our line has given way and is already on retreat through the town, while our left is being driven in, and we ourselves may shortly be surrounded and crushed—and so the retreat is sounded.

Back now along the railroad cut we go, or through the orchard and the narrow strip of woods behind it, with our dead scattered around on all sides, and the wounded crying piteously for help.

"Harry! Harry!" It is a faint cry of a dying man yonder in the grass, and I *must* see who it is.

"Why, Willie! Tell me where you are hurt?" I ask, kneeling down beside him, and I see the words come hard, for he is fast dying.

"Here in my side, Harry. Tell—Mother—Mother—"

Poor fellow, he can say no more. His head falls back, and Willie Black is at rest forever!

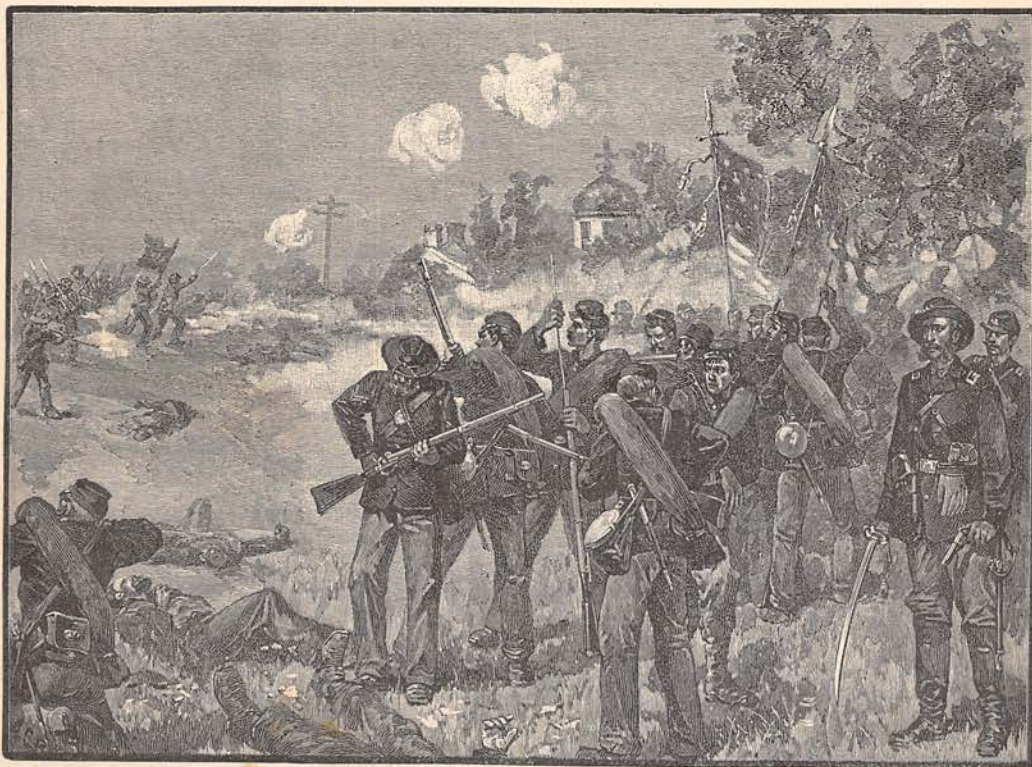
On, now, through that strip of woods, at the other edge of which, with my back against a stout oak, I stop and look at a beautiful and thrilling sight. Some reserves are being brought up; infantry in

the center, the colors flying and officers shouting; cavalry on the right with sabers flashing and horses on a trot; artillery on the left, with guns at full gallop sweeping into position to check the headlong pursuit—it is a grand sight and a fine rally, but a vain one; for in an hour we are swept off the field and are in full retreat through the town.

Up through the streets hurries the remnant of our shattered corps, while the enemy is pouring into the town only a few squares away from us. There is a tempest of shrieking shells and whistling balls

toward sunset, and throw ourselves down by the road in a tumult of excitement and grief, having lost the day through the overwhelming force of numbers, and yet somehow having gained it, too (although as yet we know it not), for the sacrifice of our corps has saved the position for the rest of the army, which has been marching all day, and which comes pouring in over Cemetery Ridge all night long.

Aye, the position is saved—but where is our corps? Well may our Division-general, who early



AT CLOSE QUARTERS, ON THE FIRST DAY AT GETTYSBURG.

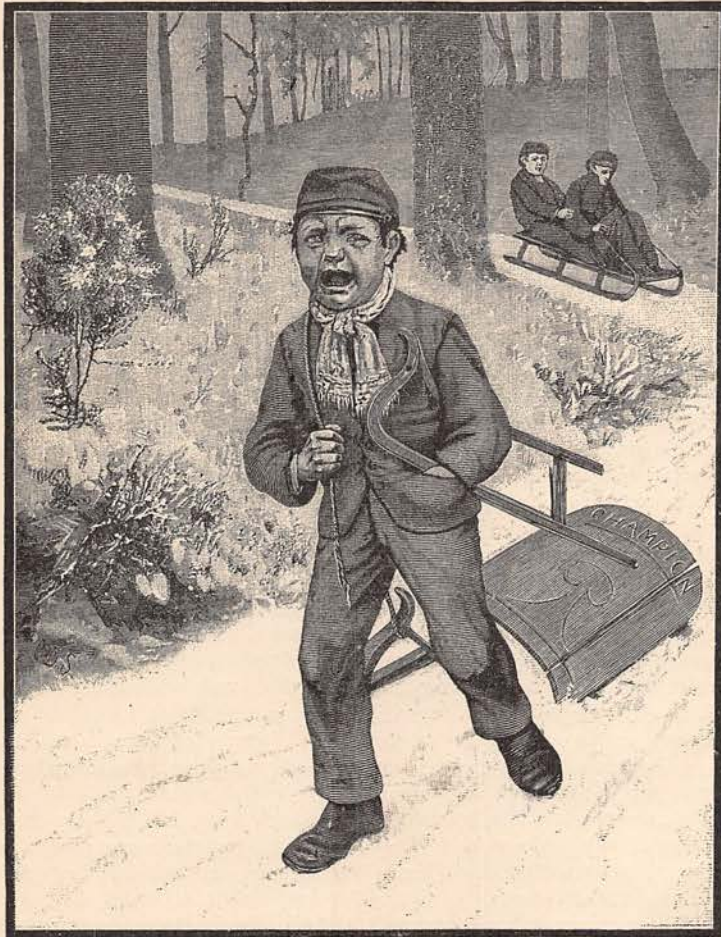
about our cars. The guns of that battery by the woods we have dragged along, all the horses being disabled. The artillery-men load as we go, double-charging with grape and canister.

"Make way there, men!" is the cry, and the surging mass crowds close up on the sidewalks to right and left, leaving a long lane down the center of the street, through which the grape and canister go rattling into the ranks of the enemy's advance-guard.

And so, amid scenes which I have neither space nor power to describe, we gain Cemetery Ridge

in the day succeeded to the command when our brave Reynolds had fallen, shed tears of grief as he sits there on his horse and looks over the shattered remains of that First Army Corps, for there is but a handful of it left. Of the five hundred and fifty men that marched under our regimental colors in the morning, but one hundred remain. All our Field and Staff officers are gone. Of some twenty captains and lieutenants, but one is left without a scratch, while of my own company only thirteen out of fifty-four sleep that night on Cemetery Ridge, under the open canopy of heaven.

(To be continued.)



THE WINTER OF LIFE.

 RECOLLECTIONS OF A DRUMMER-BOY.*

 BY HARRY M. KIEFFER.

CHAPTER IX.

AFTER THE BATTLE.

I HAD many times seen pictures of battle-fields and had often read about them, but the most terrible scenes of carnage my boyish imagination had ever figured fell far short of the dreadful reality as I beheld it after the great battle of the war. It was the evening of Sunday, July 5, 1863, when, at the sug-

gestion of Andy, we took our way across the breast-works, stone fences, and redoubts to look over the battle-field. Our shattered brigade had been mainly on reserve during the last three days; and as we made our way through the troops lying in our front, and over the defenses of stone and earth and ragged rocks, the scene among our troops was one for the pencil of a great artist.

Scattered about irregularly were groups of men discussing the battle and its results, or relating

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exciting incidents and adventures of the fray; here, one fellow pointing out bullet-holes in his coat or cap, or a great rent in the sleeve of his blouse made by a flying piece of shell; there, a man laughing as he held up his crushed canteen, or showed his tobacco-box with a hole in the lid and a bullet among his "fine cut"; yonder, knots of men frying steaks and cooking coffee about the fire, or making ready for sleep.

Before we pass beyond our own front line, evidences of the terrible carnage of the battle environ us on all sides. Fresh, hastily dug graves are there, with rude head-boards telling the poor fellows' names and regiments; yonder, a tree on whose smooth bark the names of three Confederate generals, who fell here in the gallant charge, have been carved by some thoughtful hand. The trees round about are chipped by the balls and stripped almost bare by the leaden hail, while a log-house near by in the clearing has been so riddled with shot and shell that scarcely a whole shingle is left to its roof.

But sights still more fearful await us as we step out beyond the front line, pick our way carefully among the great rocks, and walk down the slope to the scene of the fearful charge. The ground has been soaked with the recent rains, and the heavy mist which hangs like a pall over the field, together with the growing darkness, renders objects but indistinctly visible and all the more ghastly. As the eye ranges over so much of the field as the shrouding mist allows us to see, we behold a scene of destruction terrible indeed, if ever there was one in all this wide world! Dismounted gun-carriages, shattered caissons, knapsacks, haversacks, muskets, bayonets, accouterments, scattered over the field in wildest confusion,—horses (poor creatures!) dead and dying,—and, worst and most awful of all, dead men by the hundreds! Most of the men in blue have been buried already, and the pioneers yonder in the mist are busy digging trenches for the poor fellows in gray.

As we pass along, we stop to observe how thickly they lie, here and there, like grain before the scythe in summer-time,—how firmly some have grasped their guns, with high, defiant looks,—and how calm are the countenances of others in their last solemn sleep; while more than one has clutched in his stiffened fingers a piece of white paper, which he waved, poor soul, in his death-agony, as a plea for quarter, when the great wave of battle had receded and left him there, mortally wounded, on the field.

I sicken of the dreadful scene,—can endure it no longer,—and beg Andy to "Come away! Come away! It's too awful to look at any more!"

And so we get back to our place in the breast-works with sad, heavy hearts, and wonder how we ever could have imagined war so grand and gallant a thing when, after all, it is so horribly wicked and cruel. We lie down—the thirteen of us that are left in the company—on a big flat rock, sleeping without shelter, and shielding our faces from the drizzling rain with our caps as best we may, thinking of the dreadful scene in front there, and of the sad, heavy hearts there will be all over the land for weary years, till kindly sleep comes to us with sweet forgetfulness of all.

Our clothes were damp with the heavy mists and drizzling rain when we awoke next morning, and hastily prepared for the march off the field and the long pursuit of the foe through the waving grain-fields of Maryland. Having cooked our coffee in our blackened tin cups, and roasted our slices of fresh beef, stuck on the end of a ramrod and thrust into the crackling fires, we were ready in a moment for the march, for we had but little to pack up.

Straight over the field we go, through that valley of death where the heavy charging had been done, and thousands of men had been swept away, line after line, in the mad and furious tempest of the battle. Heavy mists still overhang the field, even dumb Nature seeming to be in sympathy with the scene, while all around us, as we march along, are sights at which the most callous turn faint. Interesting enough we find the evidences of conflict, save only where human life is concerned.

We stop to wonder at the immense furrow yonder which some shell has plowed up in the ground, we call one another's attention to a caisson shivered to atoms by an explosion, or to a tree cut clean off by a solid shot, or bored through and through by a shell. With pity we contemplate the poor artillery horses hobbling, wounded and mangled, about the field, and we think it a mercy to shoot them as we pass. But the dead men! Hundreds of torn and distorted bodies yet on the field, although thousands already lie buried in the trenches. Even the roughest and rudest among us marches awed and silent, as he is forced to think of the terrible suffering endured in this place, and of the sorrow and tears there will be among the mountains of the North, and the rice-fields of the far-off South.

We were quiet, I remember,—very quiet,—as we marched off that great field; and not only then, but for days afterward, as we tramped through the pleasant fields of Maryland. We had little to say, and we all were pretty busily thinking. Where were the boys who, but a week before, had marched with us through those same fragrant fields, blithe as a sunshiny morn in May? And so, as I have told you, when those young ladies and gentlemen came out to the end of that Maryland village to

meet and cheer us after the battle, as they had met and cheered us before it, we did not know how heavy-hearted we were until, in response to their song of "Rally round the Flag, Boys," some one proposed three cheers for them. But the cheers would not come. Somehow, after the first hurrah, the other two stuck in our throats or died away soundless on the air. And so we only said: "God bless you, young friends: but we can't cheer to-day, you see!"

CHAPTER X.

THROUGH "MARYLAND, MY MARYLAND."

OUR course now lay through Maryland, and we performed endless marches and countermarches over turnpikes, and through field and forest.

After crossing South Mountain,—but stop, I just *must* tell you about that—it will take but a paragraph or two. South Mountain Pass we entered one July evening, after a drenching rain, on the Middletown side, and marched along through that deep mountain gorge, with a high cliff on either side and a delightful stream of fresh water flowing along the road, emerging on the other side at the close of day. Breaking off the line of march by the right flank, we suddenly crossed the stream and were ordered up the mountain-side in the gathering darkness. We climbed very slowly at first, and more slowly still as the darkness deepened and the path grew steeper and more difficult. At about nine o'clock, orders were given to "sleep on arms," and then, from sheer fatigue, we all fell sound asleep, some lying on the rocks, some sitting bolt upright against the trees, some stretched out at full length on beds of moss or clumps of bushes.

What a magnificent sight awaited us the next morning! Opening our eyes at peep o' day, we found ourselves high up on top of a mountain-bluff overlooking the lovely valley about Boonesboro. The rains were past; the sun was just beginning to break through the clouds; great billows of mist were rolling up from the hollows below, where we could catch occasional glimpses of the movements of troops,—cavalry dashing about in squads, and infantry marching in solid columns. What may have been the object of sending us up that mountain, or what the intention in ordering us to fell the trees from the mountain-top and build breastworks hundreds of feet above the valley, I have never learned. That one morning amid the mists of the mountain, and that one grand view of the lovely valley beneath, were to my mind sufficient reason for being there.

Refreshed by a day's rest on the mountain-top, we march down into the valley on the 10th, exhilarated by the sweet, fresh mountain air, as well as by the prospect, as we suppose, of a speedy

end being put to this cruel war. For we know that the enemy is somewhere crossing the swollen Potomac back into Virginia, in a crippled condition, and we are sure he will be finally crushed in the next great battle, which can not now be many hours distant. And so we march leisurely along, over turnpikes and through grain-fields, on the edge of one of which, by and by, we halt in line of battle, stack arms, and, with three cheers, rush in a line for a stake-and-rider fence, with the rails of which we are to build breastworks. It is wonderful how rapidly that Maryland farmer's fence disappears! Each man seizing a rail, the fence literally walks off, and in less than fifteen minutes it re-appears in the shape of a compact and well-built line of breastworks.

But scarcely is the work completed when we are ordered into the road again, and up this we advance a half-mile or so, and form in line on the left of the road and on the skirt of another wheat-field. We are about to stack arms and build a second line of works, when—

Z-i-p! z-i-p! z-i-p!

Ah! It is music we know right well by this time! Three light puffs of smoke rise yonder in the wheat-field, a hundred yards or so away, where the enemy's pickets are lying concealed in the tall grain. Three balls go singing merrily over my head—intended, no doubt, for the Lieutenant who is Acting-adjutant, and who rides immediately in front of me, with a bandage over his forehead, but who is too busy forming the line to give much heed to his danger.

"We'll take you out o' that grass a-hopping, you long-legged rascals!" shouts Pointer, as the command is given:

"Deploy to right and left, as skirmishers,"—while a battery of artillery is brought up at a gallop, and the guns are trained on a certain red barn away across the field, from which the enemy's sharpshooters are picking off our men.

Bang! Hur-r-r! Boom! One, two, three, four shells go crashing through the red barn, while the shingles and boards fly like feathers and the sharpshooters pour out from it in wild haste. The pickets are popping away at one another out there along the field and in the edge of the wood beyond; the enemy is driven in and retreats, but we do not advance, and the expected battle does not come off after all, as we had hoped it would. For, in the great war-council held about that time, as we afterward learned, our generals, by a close vote, have decided not to risk a general engagement, but to let the enemy get back into Virginia again, crippled indeed, but not crushed, as every man in the ranks believes he well might be.

As we step on the swaying pontoons to recross

the Potomac into old Virginia, there are murmurs of disappointment all along the line.

"Why did n't they let us fight? We could have thrashed them now, if ever we could. We are tired of this everlasting marching and counter-marching up and down, and we want to fight it out and be done with it."

But for all our feelings and wishes, we are back again on the south side of the river, and the column of blue soon is marching along gayly enough among the hills and pleasant fields about Waterford.

We did not go very fast nor very far those hot July days, because we had very little to eat. Somehow or other our provision trains had lost their reckoning, and in consequence we were left to subsist as best we could. We were a worn, haggard-looking, hungry, ragged set of men. As for me—out at knee and elbow, my hair sticking out in tufts through holes in the top of my hat, my shoes in shreds, and my haversack empty—I must have presented a forlorn appearance, indeed. Fortunately, however, blackberries were ripe and plentiful. All along the road and all through the fields, as we approached Warrenton, these delicious berries hung on the vines in great luscious clusters. Yet, blackberries for supper and blackberries for breakfast give a man but little strength for marching under a July sun all day long. So Corporal Harter and I thought, as we sat one morning in a clover-field where we were resting for the day, busy boiling a chicken at our camp-fire.

"Where did you get that chicken, Corporal?" said I.

"Well, you see, Harry, I did n't steal her, and I did n't buy her, neither. Late last night, while we were crossing that creek, I heard some fellow say he had carried that old chicken all day since morning, and she was getting too heavy for him, and he was going to throw her into the creek; and so I said I'd take her, and I did, and carried her all night, and here she is now in the pan, sizzling away, Harry."

"I'm afraid, Corporal, this is a fowl trick."

"Fair or fowl, we'll have a good dinner, anyway."

With an appetite ever growing keener as we caught savory whiffs from the steaming mess-pan, we piled up the rails on the fire and boiled the biddy, and boiled, and boiled, and boiled her from morn till noon and from noon to night, and could n't eat her then, she was so tough!

"May the dogs take the old grizzle-gizzard! I'm not going to break my teeth on this old buzzard any more," shouted the corporal, as he flung the whole cartilaginous mass into a pile of brush near by. "It was a fowl trick, after all, Harry, was n't it?"

Thus it chanced that, when we marched out of

Warrenton early one sultry summer morning, we started with empty stomachs and haversacks, and marched on till noon with nothing to eat. Halting then in a wood, we threw ourselves under the trees, utterly exhausted. About three o'clock, as we lay there, a whole staff of officers came riding down the line—the Quartermaster-General of the Army of the Potomac and staff, they said it was. Just the very man we wanted to see! Then broke forth such a yell from hundreds of famished men as the Quartermaster-General had probably never heard before nor ever wished to hear again:

"Hard-tack!"

"Coffee!"

"Pork!"

"Beef!"

"Sugar!"

"Salt!"

"Pepper!"

"Hard-tack! Hard-tack!"

The Quartermaster and Staff put their spurs to their horses and dashed away in a cloud of dust, and at last, about night-fall, we got something to eat.

By the way, this reminds me of an incident that occurred on one of our long marches; and I tell it just to show what sometimes is the effect of short rations.

We drummer-boys were, by the colonel's orders, put in the care of our regimental surgeon,—a man far too old, nervous, and peevish for the service. He established his quarters a short distance to the rear of the breastworks, on the bank of a little stream, and here we pitched our tents. Rations were getting scarce, for we were in an immense forest,—a continuation, indeed, of that great "Wilderness" in which we saw another fight one year later. The roads were bad, transportation was difficult, and we were putting ourselves on short allowance.

"I wish I had some meat, Harry," said Pete Grove, anxiously inspecting the contents of his haversack; "I'm awful hungry for meat."

"Well, Pete," said I, "I saw some jumping around here pretty lively a while ago. May be you could catch it."

"Meat jumping around here? Why, what do you mean?"

"Why, frogs to be sure—frogs, Pete. Did you never eat frogs?"

"Bah! I think I'd be a great deal hungrier than I am now, ever to eat a frog! Ugh! No, indeed! But where is he? I'd like the fun of hunting him, anyhow."

So saying, he loaded his revolver and we sallied forth along the stream, and Pete, who was a good marksman, in a short time had laid out Mr. Froggy at the first shot.

“Now, Pete, we ’ll skin him, and you shall have a feast fit for a king.”

So, putting the meat into a tin cup with a little water, salt, and pepper, boiling it for a few minutes, and breaking some hard-tack into it when done, I set it before him, being myself still too feverish to eat. I need hardly say that when he had once tasted the dish he speedily devoured it, and when he had devoured it, he looked up his revolver and hunted frogs for the rest of that afternoon.

Drum and fife have more to do with the discipline of an army than an inexperienced person would imagine. The drum is the tongue of the camp. It wakes the men in the morning, mounts the guard, announces the dinner-hour, gives a peculiar charm to dress-parade in the evening, and calls the men to quarters with its pleasant tattoo at night. For months, however, we had had no drums. Ours had been lost, with our knapsacks, at Gettysburg. [And I will here pause to say that if any good friend across the border has in his possession a snare-drum with the name and regiment of the writer clearly marked on the inside of the body, and will return the same to the owner thereof, he will confer no small favor, and will be overwhelmed with an ocean of thanks !]

We did not know how really important a thing a drum is until, one late September day, we were ordered to prepare for a dress-parade—a species of regimental luxury in which we had not indulged since the early days of June.

“Major, you don’t expect us drummer-boys to turn out, do you?”

“Certainly. And why not, my boy?”

“Why, we have no drums, Major!”

“Well, your fifers have fifes, have n’t they? We ’ll do without the drums; but you must all turn out, and the fifers can play.”

So, when we stood drawn up in line on the parade-ground among the woods and the order was given:

“Parade, rest! Troop, beat off!”—

Out we drummers and fifers wheeled from the head of the line, with three shrill fifes screaming out the rolls, and started at a slow march down the line, while every man in the ranks grinned, and we drummer-boys laughed and the officers joined us, until at last the whole line, officers and men alike, broke out into loud haw-haws at the sight. The fifers could n’t whistle for laughing, and the major ordered us all back to our places when only half down the line, and never even attempted another parade until a full supply of brand-new drums arrived for us from Washington.

Then the major picked out mine for me, I remember, and it proved to be the best in the lot.

CHAPTER XI.

AROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

WHAT glorious camp-fires we used to have in the fall of that year! It makes one rub his hands together yet, just to think of them. The nights were getting cold and frosty, so that it was impossible to sleep under our little shelters with comfort; and so half the night was spent around the blazing fires at the ends of the company streets.

I always took care that there should be a blazing good fire for our little company, anyhow. My duties were light, and left me time which I found I could spend with pleasure in swinging an ax. Hickory and white-oak saplings were my favorites; and with these cut into lengths of ten feet and piled up as high as my head on wooden fire-dogs, what a glorious crackle we would have by midnight! Go out there what time of night you might please,—and you were pretty sure to go out to the fire three or four times a night, for it was too bitterly cold to sleep in the tent more than an hour at a stretch,—you would always find a half-dozen of the boys sitting about the fire on logs, smoking their pipes, telling yarns, or singing odd catches of song. As I recall those weird night-scenes of army life,—the blazing fire, the groups of swarthy men gathered about, the thick darkness of the forest where the lights and shadows danced and played all night long, and the rows of little white tents covered with frost,—it looks quite poetical in the retrospect; but I fear it was sometimes prosy enough in the reality.

“If you fellows would stop your everlasting arguing there, and go out and bring in some wood, it would be a good deal better; for if we don’t have a big camp-fire to night we ’ll freeze in this snow-storm.”

So saying, Pointer threw down the butt-end of a pine sapling he had been half-dragging, half-carrying out of the woods in the edge of which we were to camp, and, ax in hand, fell to work at it with a will.

There was, indeed, some need of following Pointer’s good advice, for it was snowing fast and was bitterly cold. It was Christmas Eve, 1863, and here we were with no protection but our little shelters pitched on the hard, frozen ground.

Why did we not build winter quarters, do you ask? Well, we had already built two sets of winter quarters, and had been ordered out of them in both instances to take part in some expedition or other; and it was a little hard to be houseless and homeless at this merry season of the year, when folks up North were having such happy times, was n’t it?

But it is wonderful how elastic the spirits of a soldier are, and how jolly he can be under the most adverse circumstances.

"Well, Pointer, they had n't any business to put me out of the mess. That was a mean trick, any way you take it."

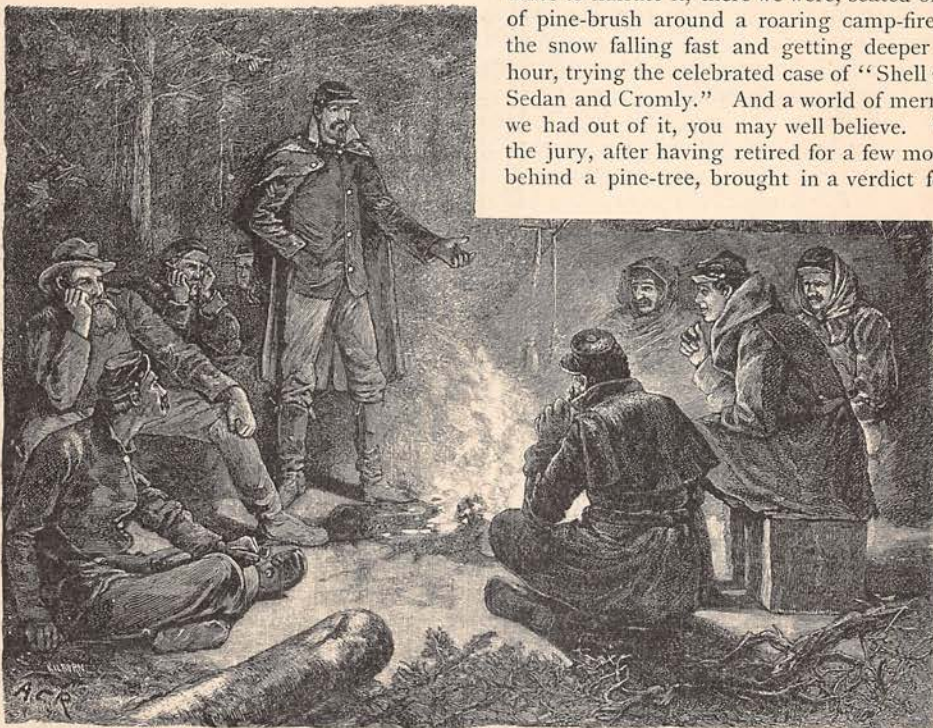
"If we had n't put you out of our mess, you'd have eaten up our whole box from home in one night. He's an awful glutton, Pointer."

"Say, boys, I move we organize ourselves into a court, and try this case," said Sergeant Cummings. "They've been arguing and arguing about this thing the whole day, and it's time to take it up

the cold charities of the camp; and he, the said Shell, now lodges a due and formal complaint before this honorable court, presently sitting on this pile of pine-brush, and humbly prays and petitions re-instatement in his just rights and claims, *sine qua non, e pluribus unum pro bono publico!*"

"Silence in the court!"

To organize ourselves into a court of justice was a matter of a few moments. Cummings was declared judge, Reed and Slocum his assistants. A jury of twelve men, good and true, was speedily impaneled. Attorneys and tipstaves, sheriff and clerk were appointed, and in less time than it takes to narrate it, there we were, seated on piles of pine-brush around a roaring camp-fire, with the snow falling fast and getting deeper every hour, trying the celebrated case of "Shell *versus* Sedan and Cromly." And a world of merriment we had out of it, you may well believe. When the jury, after having retired for a few moments behind a pine-tree, brought in a verdict for the



CHRISTMAS-EVE AROUND THE CAMP-FIRE.

and put an end to it. The case is—let's see; what'll we call it? I'm not a very good hand at the legal lingo, but I suppose if we call it a 'motion to quash a writ of ejectment,' or something of that sort, we'll be within the lines of the law. Let me now state the case: Shell *versus* Sedan and Cromly. These three, all members of Company D, after having lived, messed, and sojourned together peaceably for a year or more, have had of late some disagreement, quarrel, squabble, fracas, or general tearing out, the result of which said disagreement, quarrel, squabble, et cetera, et cetera, has been that the hereinbeforementioned Shell has been thrown out of the mess and left to

plaintiff, it was full one o'clock on Christmas morning, and we began to drop off to sleep, some rolling themselves up in their blankets and overcoats and lying down, Indian fashion, feet to the fire; while others crept off to their cold shelters under the snow-laden pine-trees for what poor rest they could find, jocularly wishing one another a "Merry Christmas."

Time wore away monotonously in the camp we established there, near Culpepper Court-house. All the more weary a winter was it for me, because I was so sick that I could scarcely drag myself about. So miserable did I look that one day a Company B Boy said, as I was passing his tent:

"Young mon, an' if ye don't be afther pickin' up a bit, it 's my opinion ye 'll be gathered home to your fathers purty soon."

I was sick with the same disease which slew more men than fell in actual battle. We had had a late fall campaign, and had suffered much from exposure, of which one instance may suffice:

We had been sent into Thoroughfare Gap to hold that mountain pass.

Breaking camp there at daylight in a drenching rain, we marched all day long, through mud up to our knees, and soaked to the skin by the cold rain; at night we forded a creek waist-deep, and marched on with clothes frozen almost stiff; at one o'clock the next morning we lay down utterly exhausted, shivering helplessly, in wet clothes, without fire, and exposed to the north-west wind that swept the vast plain keen and cold as a razor. Whoever visits the Soldiers' Cemetery near Culpepper will there find a part of the sequel of that night-march; the remainder is scattered far and wide over the hills of Virginia, and in forgotten places among the pines.

Could we have had home care and home diet, many would have recovered. But what is to be done for a sick man whose only choice of diet must 'be made from pork, beans, sugar, and hard-tack? Home? Ah, yes, if we only could get home for a month! Homesick? Well, no, not exactly. Still we were not entire strangers to the feelings of that poor recruit who was one day found by his lieutenant sitting on a fallen pine-tree in the woods, crying as if his heart would break.

"Why," said the Lieutenant, "what are you crying for, you big baby, you?"

"I wish I was in my daddy's barn, boo, hoo!"



"Young man, an' if ye don't be afther pickin' up a bit, it's my opinion ye'll be gathered home to your fathers purty soon!"



"Well, I wish I was in daddy's barn!"

"And what would you do if you were?"

The poor fellow replied, between his sobs: "Why, if I was in my daddy's barn, I'd go into the house mighty quick!"

(To be continued.)

PUSSY AND THE CHIPMUNK.



RECOLLECTIONS OF A DRUMMER-BOY.*

BY HARRY M. KIEFFER.

CHAPTER XII.

OUR FIRST DAY IN "THE WILDERNESS."

At last the long winter, with its deep snows and intense cold, was gone, and on May 4, 1864, at four o'clock in the morning, we broke camp. In what direction we should march, whether north, south, east, or west, none of us had the remotest idea; for the pickets reported the Rapidan River so well fortified by the enemy on the farther bank, that it was plainly impossible for us to break their lines at

any point there. But in those days we had a general who had no such word as "impossible" in his dictionary, and under his leadership we marched that May morning straight for and straight across the Rapidan, in solid column. All day we plodded on, the road strewn with blankets and overcoats, of which the army lightened itself now that the campaign was opening; and at night we halted, and camped in a beautiful green meadow.

Not the slightest suspicion had we, as we slept quietly there that night, of the great battle, or rather series of great battles, about to open on the

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following day. Even on that morrow, when we took up the line of march and moved leisurely along for an hour or two, we saw so few indications of the coming struggle that, when we suddenly came upon a battery of artillery in position for action by the side of the road, some one exclaimed:

"Why, hello, fellows: that looks like business!"

Only a few moments later, a staff-officer rode up to our regiment and delivered his orders:

"Major, you will throw forward your command as skirmishers for the brigade."

The regiment at once moved into the thick pine-woods, and was lost to sight in a moment, although we could hear the bugle clanging out its orders "deploy to right and left," as the line forced its way through the tangled and interminable "Wilderness."

Ordered back by the Major into the main line of battle, we drummer-boys found the troops massed in columns along a road, and we lay down with them among the bushes. How many men were there we could not tell. Wherever we looked, whether up or down the road, and as far as the eye could reach, were masses of men in blue. Among them was a company of Indians, dark, swarthy, stolid-looking fellows, dressed in our uniform and serving with some Iowa regiment, under the command of one of their chiefs as captain.

But hark!

"Pop! Pop! Pop-pop-pop!" The pickets are beginning to fire, the "ball is going to open," and things will soon be getting lively.

A venturesome fellow climbs up a tall tree to see what he can see, and presently comes scrambling down, reporting nothing in sight but signal-flags flying over the tree-tops, and beyond them nothing but woods and woods for miles.

Orderlies are galloping about and staff-officers are dashing up and down the line, or forcing their way through the tangled bushes, while out on the skirmish line is the ever-increasing rattle of the musketry,—

"Pop-pop! Pop-pop-pop!"

"Fall in, men! Forward, guide right!"

There is something grand in the promptitude with which the order is obeyed. Every man is at his post. Forcing its way as best it can through the tangled undergrowth of briars and bushes, across ravines and through swamps, our whole magnificent line advances, until, after a half-hour's steady work, we reach the skirmish line, which, hardly pressed, falls back into the advancing column of blue as it reaches a little clearing in the forest. Now we see the lines of gray in the edge of the woods on the other side of the little field; first their pickets behind clumps of bushes,

then the solid column appearing behind the fence, coming on yelling like demons, and firing a volley that fills the air with smoke and cuts it with whistling lead. Sheltered behind the trees, our line reserves its fire, for it is likely that the enemy will come out on a charge, and then we'll mow them down!

With bayonets fixed, and yells that make the woods ring, here they come, Boys, through the clearing, on a dead run! And now, as you love the flag that waves yonder in the breeze, up, Boys, and let them have it! Out from our Enfields flashes a sheet of flame, before which the lines of gray stagger for a moment; but they recover and push on, then reel again and quail, and at length fly before the second leaden tempest, which sweeps the field clear to the opposite side.

With cheers and shouts of "Victory!" our line, now advancing swiftly from behind its covert of the trees, sweeps into and across the clearing, driving back the enemy into the woods from which they had so confidently ventured.

The little clearing over which the lines of blue are advancing is covered with dead and dying and wounded men, among whom I find Lieutenant Stannard, of my acquaintance.

"Harry, help me, quick! I'm bleeding fast. Tear off my suspender or take my handkerchief, and tie it as tight as you can draw it around my thigh, and help me off the field."

Ripping up the leg of his pantaloons with my knife, I soon check the flow of blood with a hard knot—and none too soon, for the main artery has been severed. Calling a comrade to my assistance, we succeed in reaching the woods, and make our way slowly to the rear in search of the division hospital.

Whoever wishes to know something of the terrible realities of war should visit a field hospital during some great engagement. No doubt the boys of ST. NICHOLAS imagine war to be a great and glorious thing, and so, indeed, in many regards it is. It would be idle to deny that there is something stirring in the sound of martial music, something strangely uplifting and intensely fascinating in the roll of musketry and the loud thunder of artillery. Besides, the march and the battle afford opportunities for the unfolding of manly virtue, and as things go in this disjointed world, human progress seems to be almost impossible without war.

Yet still, war is a terrible, a horrible thing. If the boys of ST. NICHOLAS could have been with us as we helped poor Stannard off the field that first day in "the Wilderness"—if they could have seen the surgeons of the first division of our corps as we saw them, when passing by with the Lieuten-

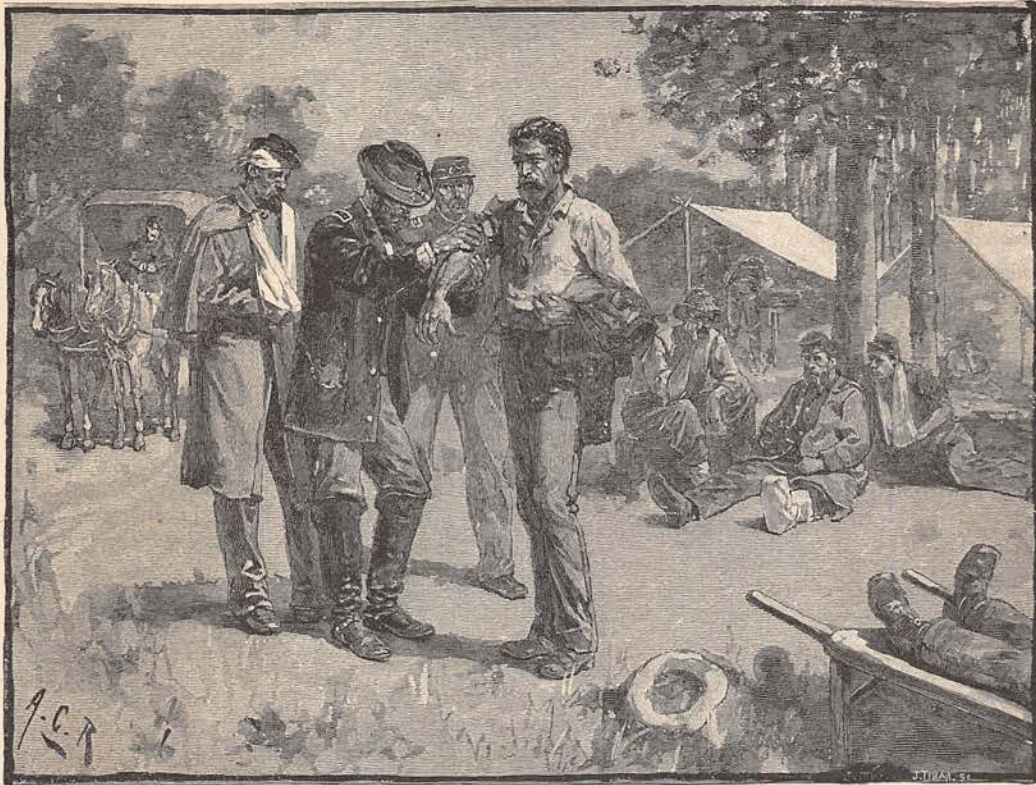
ant on a stretcher, they would, I think, agree with me that if war is a necessity, it is a *dreadful* necessity. There were the surgeons, busy at work, while dozens of poor fellows were lying all around on stretchers, awaiting their turns.

"Hurry on, Boys! Hurry on! Don't stop here. I can't stand it," groaned our charge.

So, we pushed on with our burden, until we saw our Division colors over in a clearing among the pines, and on reaching this we came upon a scene that I can never adequately describe.

longer any hope for him,—and down yonder, about a row of tables, each under a fly,* stood groups of them, ready for their dreadful and yet helpful work.

To one of these groups we carried poor Stannard, and I stood by and watched; the sponge saturated with chloroform was put to his face, rendering him unconscious while the operation of tying the severed artery was performed. On a neighboring table was a man whose leg was being taken off at the thigh, and who, chloroformed into



A PART OF THE FIELD-HOSPITAL.

There were hundreds of the wounded already there; other hundreds, perhaps thousands, were yet to come. On all sides, within and just without the hastily erected hospital-tents, were the severely and dangerously wounded, while great numbers of slightly wounded men, with hands or feet bandaged or heads tied up, were lying about the sides of the tents or out among the bushes. The surgeons were everywhere busy,—here, dressing wounds, there, alas! stooping down to tell some poor fellow, over whose countenance the pallor of death was already spreading, that there was no

unconsciousness, interested everybody by singing at the top of his voice, and with a clear articulation, five verses of a hymn to an old-fashioned Methodist tune, never once losing the melody nor stopping for a word. I remember seeing another poor fellow with his arm off at the shoulder, lying on the ground and resting after the operation; he appeared to be very much amused at himself, "because" (he said, in answer to my inquiry as to what he was laughing at) "he had felt a fly on his right hand, and when he went to brush it off with his left there was no right hand there any more!"

* A piece of canvas stretched over a pole and fastened to tent-pins by long ropes; having no walls, it admits light on all sides.

I remember, too, seeing a tall prisoner brought in and laid on the table,—a magnificent specimen of physical development, erect, well-built, and strong looking, and with a countenance full of frank and sturdy manliness,—and the surgeon said, as the wounded prisoner was stretched out on the table:

“Well, Johnny, my man; what is the matter with you, and what can we do for you to-day?”

“Well, doctor, your people have used me rather rough to-day. In the first place, there’s something down in here,” feeling about his throat, “that troubles me a good deal.”

Opening his shirt-collar, the surgeon found a deep blue mark an inch or more below the “Adam’s apple.” On pressing the blue lump a little with the fingers, out popped a “Minié” ball which had lodged just beneath the skin.

“Lucky for you that this was a ‘spent ball,’ Johnny,” said the surgeon, holding the bullet between his fingers.

“Give me that, doctor—give me that ball; I want it,” said Johnny, eagerly reaching out his left hand for the ball; then he carefully examined it, and put it away into his jacket-pocket.

“And now, doctor, there’s something else, you see, the matter with me, and something more serious, too, I’m afraid. You see, I can’t use my right arm. The way was this: we were having a big fight out there in the woods. In the bayonet-charge I got hold of one of your flags, and was waving it, when all on a sudden I got an ugly clip in the arm here, as you see.”

“Never mind, Johnny. We shall treat you just the same as our own boys, and though you are dressed in gray, you shall be cared for as faithfully as if you were dressed in blue, until you are well and strong again.”

We had carried Stannard into a tent, and laid him on a pile of pine-boughs, where, had he only been able to keep quiet, he would have done well enough. But he was not able to keep quiet. A more restless man I never saw. Although his wound was not considered necessarily dangerous, yet he was evidently in great fear of death, and for death, I grieve to say, he was not at all prepared. He had been a wild, wayward man, and now that he thought the end was approaching, he was full of alarm. As I bent over him, trying my best, but in vain, to comfort and quiet him, my attention was called to a man on the other side of the tent, whose face I thought I knew, in spite of its unearthly pallor.

“Why, Smith,” said I, “is this you? Where are you hurt?”

“Come turn me around and see,” he said.

Rolling him over carefully on his side, I saw a great, cruel wound in his back.

My countenance must have expressed alarm when I asked him, as quietly as I could, whether he knew he was very seriously wounded and might die.

Never shall I forget the look that man gave me, as, with a strange light in his eye, he said:

“I am in God’s hands; I am not afraid to die.”

Two or three days after that, while we were marching on rapidly in column again, we passed an ambulance-train filled with wounded, on their way to Fredericksburg. Hearing my name called by some one, I ran out of line to an ambulance, in which I found Stannard.

“Harry, for pity’s sake, have you any water?”

“No, Lieutenant. I’m very sorry, but there’s not a drop in my canteen, and there’s no time now to get any.”

It was the last time I ever saw him. He was taken to Fredericksburg, submitted to a second operation, and died—and I have always believed that his death was largely owing to want of faith.

Six months, or may be a year, later, Smith came back to us with a great white scar between his shoulders, and I doubt not he is alive and well to this day.

And there was Jimmy Lucas, too. They brought him in about the middle of that same afternoon, two men bearing him on their arms. He was so pale that I knew at a glance he was severely hurt. “A ball through the lungs,” they said, and “he can’t live.” Jimmy was of my own company, from my own village. We had been school-fellows and playmates from childhood almost, and you may well believe it was sad work to kneel down by his side, and watch his slow and labored breathing, looking at his pallid features, and thinking—ah, yes, that was the saddest of all—of those at home. He would scarcely let me go from him a moment, and when the sun was setting he requested every one to go out of the tent, for he wanted to speak a few words to me in private. As I bent down over him, he gave me his message for his father, and mother, and a tender good-bye to his sweetheart, begging me not to forget a single word of it all if ever I should live to see them; and then he said:

“And, Harry, tell Father and Mother I thank them now for all their care and kindness in trying to bring me up well and in the fear of God. I know I have been a wayward boy, sometimes, but I can trust in the Forgiving Love.”

When the sun had set that evening, poor Jimmy had entered into rest. He was buried somewhere among the woods that night, and no flowers are strewn over his grave on “Decoration Day” as the years go by, for no head-board marks his resting-place among the moaning pines.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN THE FRONT AT PETERSBURG.

"ANDY, let 's go a-swimming."

"Well, Harry, I don't know about that. I 'd like to take a good plunge; but, you see, there 's no telling how soon we may move."

It was the afternoon of Tuesday, June 14, 1864. We had been marching and fighting almost continually for five weeks and more, from the Wilderness to Spottsylvania, over the North Anna, in at Cold Harbor, across the Pamunky and over the

We had not gone far when we discovered a mule tied up in a clump of bushes, with a rope around his neck. And this long-eared animal, somewhat "gothic" in his style of architecture, we decided, after a solemn council of war, to declare contraband, and forthwith we impressed him into service, intending to return him, after our bath, on our way back to camp. Untying Bucephalus from the bush, we mounted, Andy in front and I on behind, each armed with a switch, and we rode along gayly enough, with our feet dangling among the corn-stalks.



"BETTER GIT OFF 'N DAT DAR MULE!"

Chickahominy to the banks of the James River, about a mile and a half from which we were now lying, along a dusty road. We were sun-burned, covered with dust, and generally used up, so that a swim in the river would be a refreshment indeed.

Having learned from one of the officers that the intention evidently was to remain where we then were until the entire corps should come up, and that we should probably cross the river at or somewhere near that point, we resolved to risk it.

So, over a corn-field we started at a good pace.

For a while all went well. We fell to talking about the direction we had come since leaving the Pamunky; and Andy, who was usually such an authority on matters geographical and astronomical that on the march he was known in the company as "the compass," confessed to me as we rode on that he himself had been somewhat turned about, in that march over the Chickahominy swamp.

"And as for me," said I, "I think this is the awfulest country to get turned about in that I ever

did see. Why, Andy, while we were lying over there in the road it seemed to me that the sun was going down in the east. Fact! But when I took my canteen and went over a little ridge to the rear to look for water for coffee, I found, on looking up, that on that side of the ridge the sun was all right. Yet when I got back to the road and looked around, judge of my surprise when I found the whole thing had somehow swung around again, and the sun was going down in the east. And you may judge still further of my surprise, Andy, when, on going and walking back and forth across that ridge, I found one particular spot, from which, if I looked in one direction, the sun was going down all right in the west; but if in the opposite direction, he was going down all wrong, entirely wrong, in the east!"

"Whoa dar! Whoa dar! Whar you gwine wid dat dar mule o' mine? Whoa, Pete!"

The mule stopped stock-still as we caught sight of the black head and face of a darkey boy peering forth from the door of a tobacco-house that we were passing. Possibly, he was the owner of the whole plantation now, and the mule Pete might be his only live-stock.

"Where are we going, Pompey? Why, we're going 'on to Richmond!"

"On ter Richmon'! An' wid dat dar mule o' mine! 'Clar to goodness, sodgers, can't git along widout dat mule. Better git off 'n dat dar mule!"

"Whip him up, Andy!" shouted I.

"Come up, Bucephalus!" shouted Andy.

And we both laid on right lustily. But never an inch would that miserable mule budge from the position he had taken on hearing the darkey's voice, until all of a sudden, and as if a mine had been sprung under our feet, there was such a striking out of heels and such an uncomfortable elevation in the rear, the angle of which was only increased by increased cudgelling, that at last, with an enormous spring, Andy and I were sent flying off into the corn.

"Yi! yi! yi! Did n' I say better git off 'n dat dar mule o' mine? Yi! yi! yi!"

Laughing as heartily as the darkey at our misadventure, we felt that it would be safer to make for the river afoot. We had a glorious plunge in the waters of the James, and returned to the regiment at sunset, greatly refreshed.

The next day we crossed the James in steam-boats. There were thousands of men in blue all along both shores; some were crossing, some were already over, and others were awaiting their turn. By the middle of the forenoon we were all well over, and it has been said that, had we pushed on without delay, the story of the siege of Petersburg would have read quite differently. But we waited,

—for provisions, I believe,—and during this halt the whole corps took a grand swim in the river. We marched off at three o'clock in the afternoon, over a dusty road and without fresh water, and reached the neighborhood of Petersburg at midnight, but did not get into position until after several days of hard fighting in the woods.

It would be impossible to give a clear and interesting account of the numerous engagements in which we took part around that long-beleagured city, where for ten months the two great armies of the North and South sat down to watch and fight each other until the end came. For, after days and days of maneuvering and fighting, attack and sally, it became evident that Petersburg could not be carried by storm, and there was nothing for it but to sit down stubbornly, and, by cutting off all railroad supplies and communications, starve it into surrender.

It may be interesting, however, to tell something of the every-day life and experience of our soldiers during that great siege.

Digging becomes almost an instinct with the experienced soldier. It is surprising how rapidly men in the field throw up fortifications, how the work progresses, and what immense results can be accomplished by a body of troops in a single night. Let two armies fight in the open field one evening — by the next morning both are strongly intrenched behind rifle-pits and breastworks, which it will cost either side much blood to storm and take. If spades and picks are at hand when there is need of fortifications, well; if not, bayonets, tin cups, plates, even jack-knives, are pressed into service until better tools arrive; and every man works like a beaver.

Thus it was that although throughout the 18th of June the fighting had been severe, yet, in spite of weariness and darkness, we set to work, and the morning found us behind breastworks; these we soon so enlarged and improved that they became well-nigh impregnable. At that part of the line where my regiment was stationed, we built solid works of great pine-logs, rolled up, log on log, seven feet high and banked with earth on the side toward the enemy, the whole being ten feet through at the base. On the inside of these breastworks we could walk about perfectly safe from the enemy's bullets, which usually went singing harmlessly over our heads.

On the outside of these works were further defenses. First, there was the ditch made by throwing up the ground against the logs; then, farther out, about twenty or thirty yards away, was the abatis—a peculiar means of defense, made by cutting off the tops and heavy limbs of trees, sharpening the ends, and planting them firmly in

the ground in a long row, the sharpened ends pointing toward the enemy, the whole being so close and so compacted together with telegraph-wires everywhere twisted in, that it was impossible for a line of battle to get through it without being cut off to a man. Here and there, at intervals, were left gaps wide enough to admit a single man, and it was through these man-holes that the pickets passed out to their pits beyond.

of a little pine-brush erected overhead, or in front of the pit as a screen. There the picket lay, flat on his face, picking off the enemy's men whenever he could catch sight of a head or even so much as a hand; and right glad would he be if, when the long-awaited relief came at length, he had no wounds to show.

But later on, as the siege progressed, this murderous state of affairs gradually disappeared.

Neither side found it pleasant, nor profitable, and nothing was gained by it. It decided nothing, and only wasted powder and ball. And so, gradually, the pickets on both sides began to be on quite friendly terms. It was no unusual thing to see a Johnny picket—who would be posted scarcely a hundred yards away, so near were the lines—lay down his gun, wave a piece of white paper as a signal of truce, walk out into the neutral ground between the picket-lines, and meet one of our own pickets, who, also dropping his gun, would go out to inquire what Johnny might want to-day.

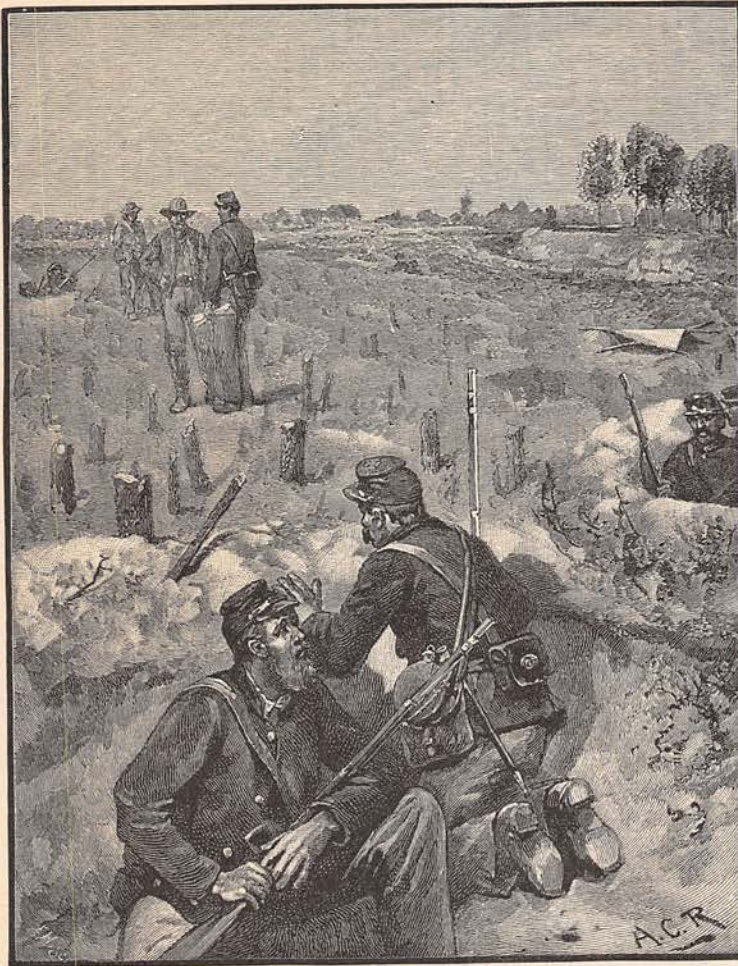
"Well, Yank, I want some coffee, and I'll trade tobacco for it."

"Has any of you fellows back there some coffee to trade for tobacco? 'Johnny Picket,' here, wants some coffee."

Or, may be he wanted to trade papers, a Richmond *Enquirer* for a New York *Herald* or *Tribune*, "even up and no odds." Or, he only wanted to talk about the news of the day—how "we 'uns whipped you 'uns up the valley the other day"; or how, "if we had Stonewall Jackson yet, we'd be in Washington before winter"; or may be he only wished to have a friendly game of cards!

There was a certain chivalrous etiquette developed through this social intercourse of deadly foemen, and it was really admirable. Seldom was there breach of confidence on either side. It would have gone hard with the comrade who should

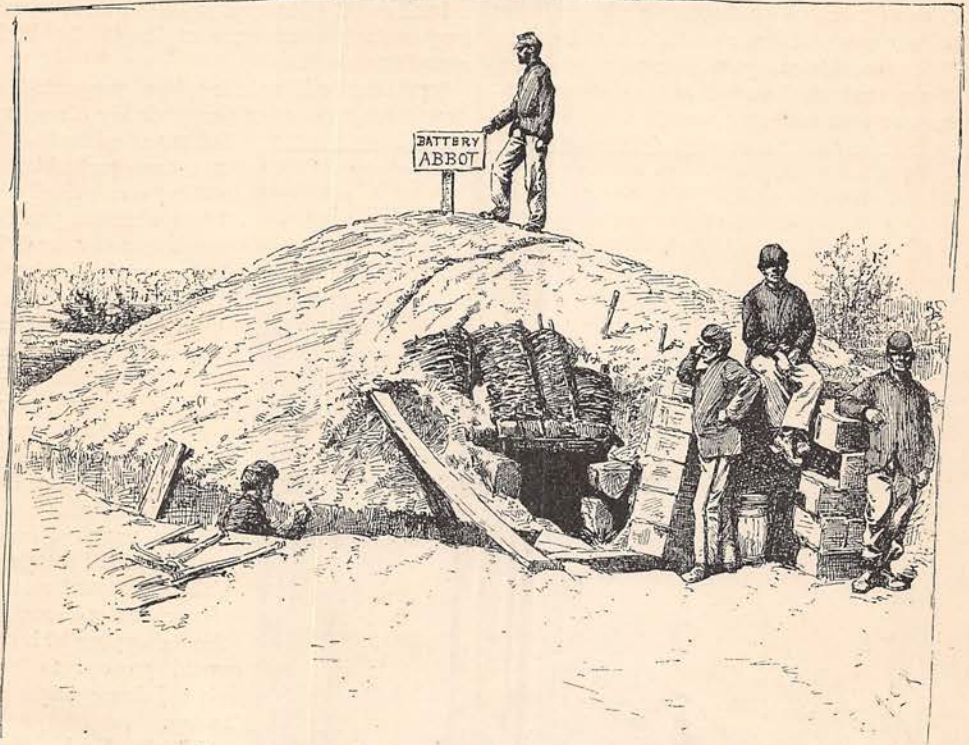
have gone hard with the comrade who should



SCENES AMONG THE RIFLE-PITS BEFORE PETERSBURG.

Fifty yards in front of the abatis the pickets were stationed. When first the siege began, picketing was dangerous business. Both armies were bent on fight, and picketing meant simply sharp-shooting. As a consequence, at first the pickets were posted only at night, so that from midnight to midnight the poor fellows lay in their rifle-pits under a broiling July sun, with no protection from the intolerable heat, excepting the scanty shade

have ventured to shoot down a man in gray who had left his gun and come out of his pit under the sacred protection of a piece of white paper. twenty feet in height, with rows of gabions* and sand-bags arranged on top of the embankment, and at intervals along the sides embrasures or port-



"THE MAGAZINE WHERE THE POWDER AND SHELLS WERE STORED."

If disagreement ever occurred in bartering, or high words arose in discussion, shots were never fired until due notice had been given. And I find mentioned in one of my old army letters that a general fire along our entire front grew out of some disagreement on the picket-line about trading coffee for tobacco. The two pickets could n't agree, jumped into their pits, and began firing, the one calling out: "Look out, Yank, here comes your tobacco." Bang!

And the other replying: "All right, Johnny, here comes your coffee." Bang!

Great forts stood at intervals all along the line as far as the eye could see, and at these the men toiled day and night all summer long, adding defense to defense, and making "assurance doubly sure," until the forts stood out to the eye of the beholder, with their sharp angles and well-defined outlines, formidable structures indeed. Without attempting to describe them in technical military language, I will simply ask you to imagine a piece of level ground, say two hundred feet square, surrounded by a bank of earth about

holes, at which the great cannon were planted,—and you will have some rough notion of what one of our forts looked like. Somewhere within the inclosure, usually near the center of it, was the magazine, where the powder and shells were stored. This was made by digging a deep place, something like a cellar, covering it over with heavy logs, and piling up earth and sand-bags on the logs, the whole, when finished, having the shape of a small, round-topped pyramid. At the rear was left a small passage, like a cellar-way, and through this the ammunition was brought up. If ever the enemy could succeed in dropping a shell down that little cellar-door, or in otherwise piercing the magazine, then good-bye to the fort and all and everybody in and around it!

On the outside of each large fort there were, of course, all the usual defenses of ditch, abatis, and *chevaux-de-frise*, to render approach very dangerous to the enemy.

The enemy had fortifications like ours—long lines of breastworks, with great forts at commanding positions; and the two lines were so near that,

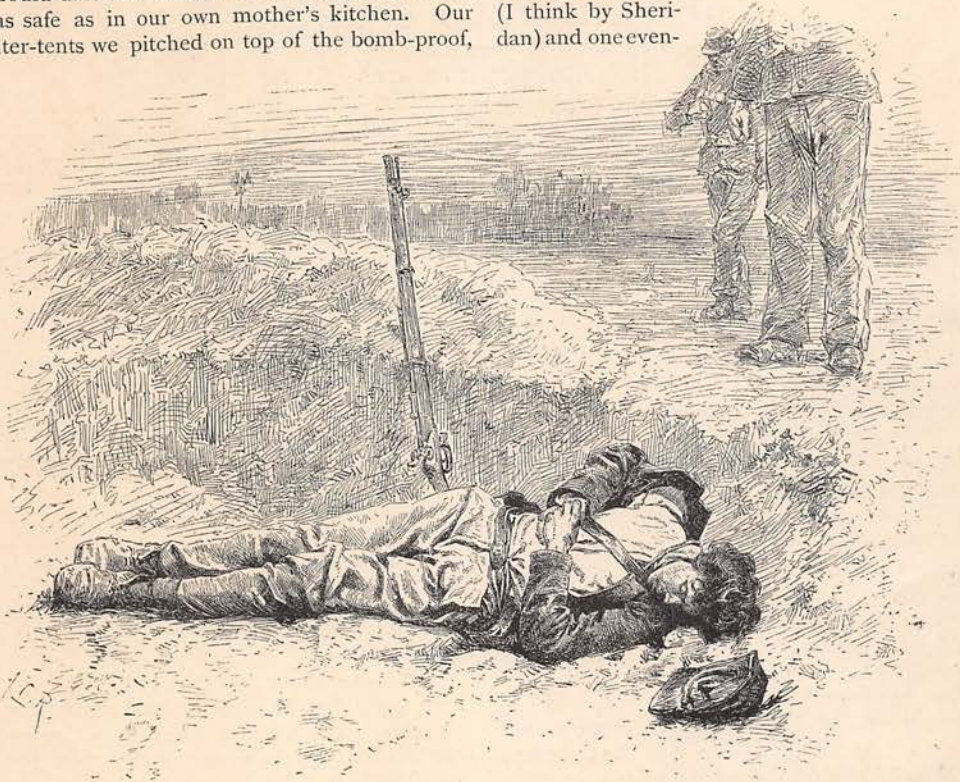
* Bottomless wicker baskets, used to strengthen earthworks.

standing in one of our forts, I could have carried on a conversation with a man in the fort opposite. I remember, while on the picket-line one evening, watching a body of troops moving along the edge of a wood within the enemy's works, and quite easily distinguishing the color of their uniforms.

I have said already that, inside of our breastworks, one was quite secure against the enemy's bullets. But bullets were not the only things we had to look out for—there were the shell, the case-shot, and I know not what shot besides. Every few hours these would be dropped behind our breastworks, and often much execution was done by them. To guard against these missiles, each mess built what was called a "bomb-proof," which consisted of an excavation about six feet square by six deep, covered with heavy logs, the logs covered with earth, a little back cellar-way being left on the side away from the enemy. Into this bomb-proof we could dart the moment the shelling began, and be as safe as in our own mother's kitchen. Our shelter-tents we pitched on top of the bomb-proof,

Familiarity breeds contempt—even of danger; and sometimes we were caught. Thus, one day, when there had been no shelling for a long time and we had grown somewhat careless, and were scattered about under the trees, some sleeping and others sitting on top of the breastworks to get a mouthful of fresh air, all of a sudden the guns of one of the great forts opposite us opened with a rapid fire, dropping shells right among us. Of course there was a "scatteration" as we tried to fall into our pits pell-mell; but, for all our haste, several of us were severely hurt. There was a boy from Philadelphia,—I forget his name,—sitting on the breastworks writing a letter home; a piece of shell tore off his arm with the pen in his hand. A lieutenant received an iron slug in his back, while a number of other men were hurt. And such experiences were of frequent occurrence.

A great victory had been gained by our cavalry somewhere (I think by Sheridan) and one even-



FINDING A WOUNDED PICKET IN A RIFLE-PIT.

and in this upper story we lived most of the time, dropping down occasionally into the cellar.

Bang! bang! bang!

"Fall into your pits, boys!" and in a trice there was n't so much as a blue coat in sight.

ing an orderly rode along the line to each regimental head-quarters, distributing dispatches containing an account of the victory, with instructions that the papers be read to the men. Cheers were given all along the line that night,

and a shotted salute was ordered at daylight the next morning.

At sunrise every available gun from the Appomattox to the Weldon Railroad must have been brought into service and trained against the enemy's works, for the noise was terrific. And still further to increase the din, the Johnnies, supposing it to be a grand assault along the whole line, replied with every gun they could bring to bear, and the noise was so great that you would have thought the very thunders of doom were rolling. After the firing had ceased, the Johnnies were informed that "we have only been giving three iron

cheers for the victory Sheridan has gained up the valley lately." There was, I presume, some regret on the other side over the loss of powder and shot. At all events, whenever, after that, similar iron cheers were given, and this was not seldom the case, the enemy preserved a moody silence.

After remaining in our works for about a month, we were relieved by other troops and marched off to the left in the direction of the Weldon Railroad, which we took after severe fighting. We held it, and at once fortified our position with a new line of works, thus cutting off one of the main lines of communication between Petersburg and the South.

(To be continued.)

THE CHILDREN'S COUNTRY.

BY ELLEN M. H. GATES.



SHE is sitting very silent in her little crimson chair,
With the flicker of the firelight on her pretty golden hair;
And all pleasant things surround her, but her thoughts are elsewhere.

For these little lads and lasses have a country of their own,
Where, without the older people, they can wander off alone,
Into dim and distant regions, that were never named or known.

They are wearied with the questions, and the running to and fro,
For some one is always saying, "You must come," or "You must go."
"You must speak and write correctly, sitting, standing, thus and so."

So they turn at any moment from the figures on their slates;
And the names of all the islands, and the oceans, and the States
Are forgotten in a moment when they see the shining gates

Of their own delightful country, where they wander as they please

On the great enchanted mountains, or beneath the forest trees,
With a thousand other children, all entirely at their ease.

Oh, the happy, happy children! do they wish for anything,
Book or bird, or boat or picture, silken dress or golden ring?
Lo! a little page will hasten, and the treasure straight will bring.

It is strange the older people can not find this land at all;
If they ever knew its language, it is lost beyond recall,
And they only, in their dreamings, hear its music rise and fall.

Oh, the riches of the children with this country for their own!
All the splendor of its castles, every flower and precious stone,
Until time itself is ended, and the worlds are overthrown.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A DRUMMER-BOY.*

BY HARRY M. KIEFFER.

CHAPTER XIV.

"HATCHER'S RUN."

WHILE we were yet before Petersburg, two divisions of our corps (the Fifth) with two divisions of the Ninth, leaving the line of works at the Weldon Railroad, were pushed out still farther to the left, with the intention of turning the enemy's right flank.

Starting out, therefore, early on the morning of Thursday, October 27, 1864, with four days' rations in our haversacks, we moved off rapidly by the left, striking the enemy's picket-line about ten o'clock.

"Pop! pop! pop! Boom! boom! boom! We're in for it again, Boys; so, steady on the left there, and close up."

Away into the woods we plunge in line of battle, through briars and tangled undergrowth, beneath the great trees dripping with rain. We lose the points of the compass, and halt every now and then to close up a gap in the line by bearing off to the right or left. Then, forward we go through the brush again, steady on the left and guide right, until I feel certain that officers as well as men are getting pretty well "into the woods" as to the direction of our advance. It is raining, and we have no sun to guide us, and the moss is growing on the wrong side of the trees. I see one of our generals sitting on his horse, with his pocket-compass on the pommel of his saddle, peering around into the interminable tangle of brier and brush, with an expression of no little perplexity.

Yet still, on, Boys, while the pickets are popping away and the rain is pouring down. The evening falls early and cold, as we come to a stand in line of battle and put up breastworks for the night.

We have halted on the slope of a ravine. Minié-balls are singing over our heads as we cook our coffee, while sounds of axes and falling trees are heard on all sides; and still that merry "z-i-p! z-i-p!" goes on among the tree-tops and sings us to sleep, at length, as we lie down shivering under our India rubber blankets, to get what rest we may.

How long we had slept I did not know, when some one shook me, and in a whisper the word passed around:

"Wake up, Boys! Wake up, Boys! Don't

make any noise, and take care your tin cups and canteens don't rattle. We've got to get out of this on a double jump!"

We were in a pretty fix, indeed! In placing the regiments in position, by some blunder, quite excusable no doubt in the darkness and the tangled forest, we had been unwittingly pushed beyond the main line—were, in fact, quite outside the picket-line! It needed only daylight to let the enemy see his game, and sweep us off the boards. And daylight was fast coming in the east.

Long after, a Company A Boy, who was on picket that night, told me that, upon going to the rear somewhere about three o'clock, to cook a cup of coffee at a half-extinguished fire, a cavalry picket ordered him back within the lines.

"The lines are not back there; my regiment is out yonder in front, on skirmish!"

"No," said the cavalryman; "our cavalry is the extreme picket-line, and our orders are to send in all men beyond us."

"Then take me at once to General Bragg's head-quarters," said the Company A Boy.

When General Bragg learned the true state of affairs, he at once ordered out an escort of five hundred men to bring in our regiment.

Meanwhile, we were trying to get back of our own accord.

"This way, men!" said a voice in a whisper ahead.

"This way, men!" said another voice in the rear.

That we were wandering about vainly in the darkness, and under no certain leadership, was evident, for I noticed in the dim light that, in our tramping about in the tangle, we had twice crossed the same fallen tree, and so must have been moving in a circle.

And now, as the day is dawning in the east, and the enemy's pickets see us trying to steal away, a large force is ordered against us, and comes sweeping down with yells and whistling bullets—just as the escort of five hundred, with re-assuring cheers, comes up from the rear to our support!

Instantly we are in the cloud and smoke of battle. A battery of artillery, hastily dragged up into position, opens on the charging line of gray with grape and canister, while from bush and tree pours back and forth the dreadful blaze of musketry. For half an hour, the conflict rages fierce and high in the dawning light and under the drip-

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ping trees—the officers shouting, and the men cheering and yelling and charging, often fighting hand to hand and with bayonets locked in deadly encounter, while the air is cut by the whistling lead, and the deep bass of the cannon wakes the echoes of the forest.

But at last the musketry-fire gradually slackens, and we find ourselves out of danger.

The enemy's prey has escaped him, and, to the wonder of all, we are brought within the lines again, begrimed with smoke and leaving many of our poor fellows dead or wounded on the field.

him,—and searched in vain. Not a soul had tidings of him. At last, however, a soldier with his blouse-sleeve ripped up and a red-stained bandage around his arm, told me that, about day-light, when the enemy came sweeping down on us, he and Andy were behind neighboring trees. He himself received a ball through the arm, and was busy trying to stop the flow of blood, when, looking up, he saw Andy reel and, he thought, *fall*. He was not quite sure it was Andy, but he thought so.

Andy killed! What should I do without Andy?



THE CONFLICT AT DAY-BREAK IN THE WOODS AT HATCHER'S RUN.

Anxiously every man looked about for his chum and messmates, lost sight of during the whirling storm of battle in the twilight woods. And I, too, looked,—but where was Andy?

CHAPTER XV.

KILLED, WOUNDED, OR MISSING?

ANDY was nowhere to be found.

All along the line of battle-worn men, now gathered in irregular groups behind the breastworks, and safe from the enemy, I searched for

—the best and truest friend, the most companionable messmate, that a soldier ever could hope to have! It could not be! I would look farther for him.

Out, therefore, I went, over the breastworks to the picket-line, where the rifles were popping away at intervals. I searched among trees and behind bushes, and called and called, but all in vain. Then the retreat was sounded, and we were drawn off the field, and marched back to the fortifications which we had left the day before.

Toward evening, as we reached camp, I obtained permission to examine the ambulance-trains, in

search of my chum. As one train after another came in, I climbed up and looked into each ambulance; but the night had long set in before I found him—or thought I had found him. Raising my lantern high, so as to throw the light full on the face of the wounded man lying in a stupor on the floor of the wagon, I was at first confident it was Andy; for the figure was short, well-built, and had raven black hair.

“Andy! Andy! Where are you hurt?” I cried.

But no answer came. Rolling him on his back and looking full into his face, I found, alas! a stranger—a manly, noble face, too, but no life, no signs of life, in it. There were indeed a very low, almost imperceptible breathing, and a faint pulse—but the man was evidently dying.

About a week afterward, having secured a pass from corps head-quarters, I started for City Point to search the hospitals there for my chum. The pass allowed me not only to go through all the guards I might meet on my way, but also to ride free to City Point over the railroad—“General Grant’s Railroad,” we called it.

Properly speaking, this was a branch of the road from City Point to Petersburg, tapping it about midway between the two places, and from that point following our lines closely to the extreme left of our position. Never was road more hastily built. So rapidly did the work advance that scarcely had we learned such a road was planned, before one evening the whistle of a locomotive was heard down the line only a short distance to our right. No grading was done. The ties were simply laid on the top of the ground, the rails were nailed fast, and the rolling-stock was put on without waiting for ballast; and there the railroad was—up hill and down dale, and “as crooked as a dog’s hind leg.” At only one point had any cutting been done, and that was where the road, after climbing a hill, came within range of the enemy’s batteries. The first trains which passed up and down afforded a fine mark and were shelled vigorously, the enemy’s aim becoming with daily practice so exact that nearly every train was hit somewhere. The hill was then cut through, and the fire avoided. It was a rough road, and the riding was full of fearful jolts, but it saved thousands of mules, and enabled General Grant to hold his position during the winter of the Petersburg siege.

City Point was a stirring place at that time. It was General Grant’s head-quarters, and the depot of all supplies for the army, and here I found the large hospitals which I meant to search for Andy, although I scarcely hoped to find him.

Into hospital-tents at one end and out at the

other, looking from side to side at the long, white rows of cots, and inquiring as I went, I searched long and almost despairingly, until at last—there he was! Sitting on his cot, his head neatly bandaged, writing a letter!

Coming up quietly behind him, I laid my hand on his shoulder with—“Andy, old boy! have I found you at last? I thought you were killed!”

“Why, Harry!—God bless you!”

The story was soon told. “A clip in the head, you see, Harry, out there among the trees when the Johnnies came down on us, yelling like demons,—all got black before me as I reeled and fell. By and by, coming to myself a little, I begged a man of a strange regiment to help me off, and so I got down here. It’s nothing much, Harry, and I’ll soon be with you again; not near so bad as that poor fellow over there—the man with the black hair. His is a wonderful case. He was brought in the same day I was, with a wound in the head which the doctors said was fatal. Every day we expected him to die, but there he lies yet, breathing very low, conscious, but unable to speak or to move hand or foot. Some of his company came yesterday to see him. They had been with him when he fell, had supposed him mortally wounded, and had taken all his valuables out of his pockets to send home—among them was an ambrotype of his wife and child. Well, you just should have seen that poor fellow’s face when they opened that ambrotype and held it before his eyes! He could n’t speak nor reach out his hand to take the picture; and there he lay, convulsed with feeling, while tears rolled down his cheeks.”

On looking at him, I found it was the very man I had seen in the ambulance and mistaken for Andy.

CHAPTER XVI.

A WINTER RAID INTO NORTH CAROLINA.

ABOUT the beginning of December, 1864, we were busy building cabins for the winter. Everywhere in the woods to our rear were heard the sound of axes and the crash of falling trees. Men were carrying pine logs on their shoulders, or dragging them along the ground with ropes, for the purpose of building our last winter quarters; for, of the three years for which we had enlisted, but a few months remained. The camp was a scene of activity and interest on all sides. Here were some men “notching” the logs to fit them nicely together at the corners; yonder, one was hewing rude, Robinson Crusoe boards for the eaves and gables; there, a man was digging clay for the chimney which his messmate was cat-sticking up

to a proper height; while some had already stretched their shelters over rude cabins, and were busy cooking their suppers. Just then, as ill-luck would have it in those uncertain days, an orderly rode into camp with some orders from headquarters, and all building was directed to be stopped at once.

"We have orders to move, Andy," said I, coming into the half-finished cabin where Andy (lately returned from hospital) was chinking the cracks in the side of the house.

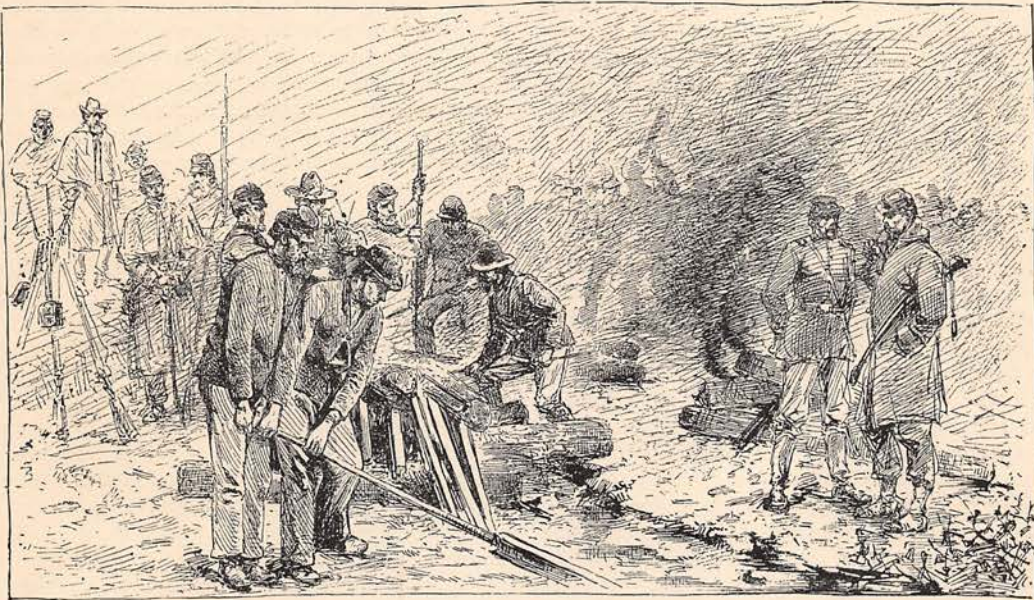
"Orders to move! Why, where in the world are we going this time of year? I thought we had tramped around enough for one campaign, and were going to settle down for the winter."

"I don't know where we 're going; but they say

house at ten A. M., halting at dusk near the Weldon and Petersburg Railway, about five miles from the North Carolina line.

Though we did not then know what all this meant, we soon learned that it was simply a winter raid on the enemy's communications; the intention being to destroy the Weldon road, and so render it useless to them. True, we had already cut that same road near Petersburg, but the enemy still brought their supplies on it from the South, near to the point where our lines were thrown across, and by means of wagons carried these supplies around our left, and safely into Petersburg.

Never was railway more completely destroyed! The morning after we had reached the scene of operations, in the drizzling rain and falling sleet,



WRECKING THE RAILWAY.

the Sixth Corps will relieve us in the morning, and we are to pull out, anyhow."

We were not deceived. At daylight next morning, December 6th, we did "pack up and fall in" and move out from our fortified camp, away to the rear, where we lay all day massed in the woods, with nothing to do but to speculate as to the direction we were to take.

From daylight of Wednesday, December 7th, we marched, through rain and stiff mud, steadily toward the South, crossing the Nottaway River on pontoons at eight P. M., and halting at midnight for such rest as we could find on the cold, damp soil of a corn-field. Next day, on again we went, straight toward the South, through Sussex Court-

the whole command was set to work. As far as the eye could see down the road were men in blue, divested of weapons and accouterments, prying and wrenching, and tearing away at iron rails and wooden ties. It was a well-built road, and hard to tear up. The rails were what are known as "T" rails, and each being securely fastened to its neighbor at either end by a stout bar of iron or steel which had been forced into the groove of the T, the track was virtually two long, unbroken rails for its whole length.

"No use tryin' to tear up them rails from the ties, Major," said an old railroader, with a touch of his cap. "The plagued things are all spliced together at the j'ints, and the only way to get

them off is to pry up the whole thing, rails, ties, and all, and then split the ties off from the rails when you 've got her upside down."

So, with fence-rails for levers, the men fell to work, prying and heave-I-ho-ing, until one side of the road, ties, track, and all, pulled and wrenched by thousands of strong arms, began to loosen and move, and was raised gradually higher and higher. Forced at last to a perpendicular, it was pushed over and laid upside down, with a mighty cheer from the long line of wreckers!

Once the thing was started, it was easy enough to roll miles and miles of it over without a break. And so brigade after brigade did roll it; tearing and splitting off the ties, and wrenching away the rails.

It was not enough, however, merely to destroy the track—the rails must be made forever useless as rails. Accordingly, the ties were piled in heaps, or built up as children build corn-cob houses, and then the heaps were fired. The rails were laid across the top of the burning pile, where they soon became red-hot in the middle, and bent themselves double by the weight of their ends, which hung out beyond the reach of the fire. In some cases, however, a grim and humorous conceit led to a more artistic use of the heated rails, for many of them were taken and carried to some tree hard by, and twisted two or three times around the trunk, while not a few of the men hit on the happy device of bending the rails, some into the shape of a U, and others into the shape of an S, and setting them up by pairs against the fences along the line, in order that, in this oft-repeated iron U S, it might be seen that Uncle Sam had been looking around in those parts.

When darkness came, the scene presented by that long line of burning ties was wild and weird. Rain and sleet had been falling all day, and there was frost as well, and we lay down at night with stiff limbs, aching bones, and chattering teeth. Everything was covered with a coating of ice; so that Andy and I crept under a wagon for shelter and a dry spot to lie down in. But the horses, tied to the wheels, gave us little sleep. Scarcely would we fall into a doze, when one of the horses would poke his nose between the wheels, or through the spokes, and whinny pitifully in our ears. And no wonder, either, we thought, when, crawling out at day-break, we found the poor creatures covered with a coating of ice, and their tails turned to great icicles. The trees looked very beautiful in their magnificent frost-work, but we were too cold and wet to admire anything, as our drums hoarsely beat the "assembly," and we set out for a two days' wet and weary march back to camp in front of Petersburg.

Both on the way down and on the retreat, we passed many fine farms or plantations. It was a new country to us, and no other Northern troops had passed through it. One consequence of this was that we were everywhere looked upon with wonder by the white inhabitants, and by the colored population as deliverers sent for their express benefit.

All along the line of march, both down and back, the overjoyed darkies flocked to us by hundreds, old and young, sick and well, men, women, and children. Whenever we came to a road or lane leading to a plantation, a crowd of darkies would be seen hurrying pell-mell down the lane toward us. And then they would take their places in the colored column that already tramped along the road in awe and wonderment beside "de sodjers." There were stout young darkies with bundles slung over their backs, old men hobbling along with canes, women in best bib and tucker with immense bundles on their heads, mothers with babes in their arms, and a barefooted brood trotting along at their heels; and now and then one would call out, anxiously, to some venturesome boy:

"Now, you Sam! Whar you goin' dar? You done gone git run ober by de sodjers yit, you will."

"Auntie, you 've got a good many little folks to look after, have n't you?" some kindly soldier would say to one of the mothers.

"Ya-as, Cunnel, right smart o' chilluns I 'se got yere, but I 'se a-gwine up Norf an' can't leabe enny on 'em behind, sah."

Fully persuaded that the year of jubilee had come at last, the poor things joined us, from every plantation along the road, many of them maybe leaving good masters for bad, and comfortable homes for no homes at all. Occasionally, however, we met some who would not leave. I remember one old, gray-headed, stoop-shouldered uncle who stood leaning over a gate, looking wide-eyed at the blue-coats and the great exodus of his people.

"Come along, Uncle," shouted one of the men.

"Come along—the year of jubilee is come!"

"No, sah. Dis yere chile 's too ole. Reckon I better stay wid ole Mars'r."

When we halted at night-fall in a cotton-field, around us was gathered a great throng of colored people, houseless, homeless, well-nigh dead with fatigue, and with nothing to eat. Near where we pitched our tent, for instance, was a poor negro woman with six little children, of whom the oldest was apparently not more than eight or nine years of age—the whole forlorn family crouched shivering together in the rain and sleet. Andy and I thought, as we were driving in our tent-pins:

"That 's pretty hard, now, is n't it? Could n't we somehow get a shelter and something to eat for the poor souls?"

It was not long before we had set up a rude but serviceable shelter, and thrown in a blanket and built a fire in front for them, and set Dinah to cooking coffee and frying bacon for her famishing brood.

Never shall I forget how comical those little darkies looked as they sat cross-legged about the fire, watching the frying-pan and coffee-pot with great, eager eyes!

Dinah, as she cooked, and poked the fire betimes, told Andy and me how she had deserted the old home at the plantation—a home which no doubt she afterward wished she had never left.

an' leabe us all 'lone, an' so when we see de sodjers comin' we done cl'ar out too,—ki-yi!"

CHAPTER XVII.

"JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME."

WE had just come out of what is known as the "Second Hatcher's Run" fight, somewhere about the middle of February, 1865. The company, which was now reduced to a mere handful of men, was standing about a smoking fire in the woods, discussing the engagement and relating adventures, when some one came in from brigade headquarters, shouting the following message: "Say, Boys, good news! They told me over at head-



THE CHARGE ON THE CAKES.

"When we heerd dat de Yankees was a-comin'," said she, "de folks all git ready fer to leabe. Ole Mars' John, he ride out de road dis way, an' young Mars' Harry, he ride out de road dat way, fer to watch if dey was a-comin'; and den ebbery now an' den one or udder on 'em 'd come a-ridin' up to de house an' say, 'Did ye see anyt'ing on 'em yit? Did ye hear whar dey is now?' An' den one mawning, down come young Mars' Harry a-ridin' his hoss at a gallop—'Git out o' dis! Git out o' dis! De Yankees is a-comin'! De Yankees is a-comin'!' and den all de folks done gone cl'ar out

quarters that we are to be sent North to relieve the 'regulars' somewhere."

Ha! ha! ha! That was an old story—too old to be good, and too good to be true. For a year and more we had been hearing that same good news,— "Going to Baltimore," "Going to Washington," and so forth, and we always ended with going into battle instead, or off on some long raid.

So we did n't much heed the tidings. We were too old birds to be caught with chaff.

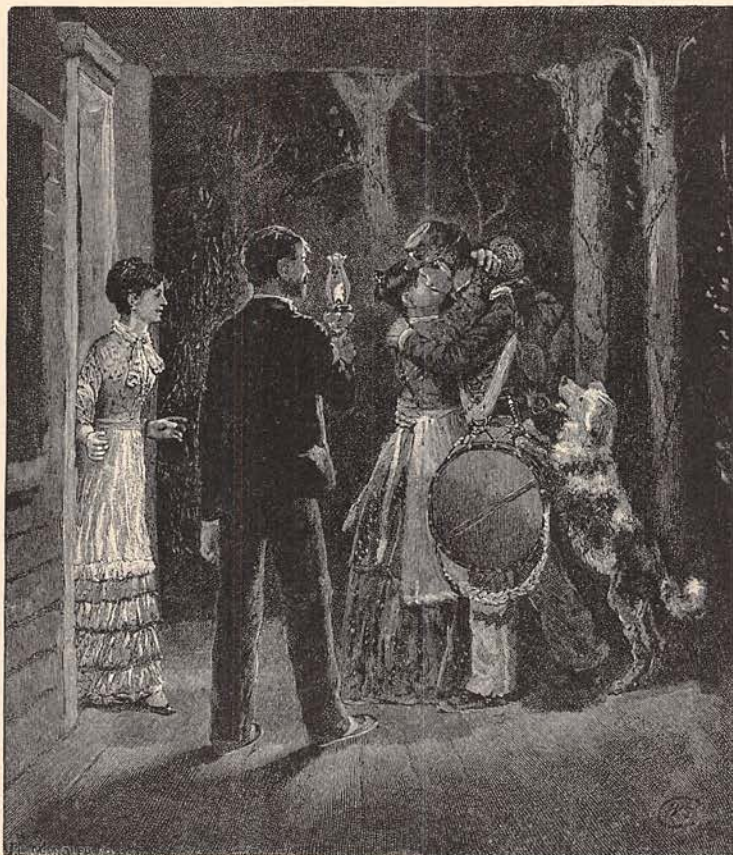
But, in spite of our incredulity, the next morning we were marched down to General Grant's

branch of the Petersburg Railway, loaded on box-cars, and carried to City Point, where we at once embarked on two huge steamers, which we found awaiting us.

For two days and nights we were cooped up in those miserable boats. We had no fire, and we suffered from the cold. We had no water for thirty-six hours, and, of course, no coffee, and what is life to a soldier without coffee? All were seasick, too, for the weather was rough; and so, what with

“Dem sodjers, dar, must be done gone starved, dat’s sartin. Nebber seed sech hungry men in all my bawn days,—nebber!”

After supper we were lodged in a great upper room of a large building—bunks ranged around the four sides, and in the middle an open space, which was soon turned to account, for one of the boys strung up his fiddle, which he had carried on his knapsack for full two years, on every march, and through every battle we had been in, and we



THE WELCOME HOME.

hunger and thirst, cold and seasickness, we landed one evening at Baltimore more dead than alive.

No sooner were we well down the gang-plank than the crowd of apple and pie women that stood on the wharf made quick sales and large profits. Then we marched away to a “soldiers’ retreat” and were fed. Fed! We never tasted so grand a supper as that before nor since—“salt horse,” dry bread, and coffee! The darkies that carried around the great cans of the latter were kept pretty busy for a while, I can tell you; and they must have thought:

proceeded to celebrate our “change of front” with music and dancing until the small hours of the night.

Down through the streets of Baltimore we march in the morning, with our blackened and tattered flags a-flying, mustering only one hundred and eighty men out of the one thousand who marched through those same streets nearly three years ago. We take the cars (box or cattle cars, with no fire, and the snow outside a foot deep), and steam away for two days and a night to a certain city in the far distant North. At midnight we

pass within two miles of my own home, and I think the folks there would n't be sleeping quite so soundly if they could know how near I am to them.

And—for there is no need I should prolong matters any further—after some months of garrison duty in a Northern city, the great and good news came at last one day that Peace was declared and the great war was over! The young readers of ST. NICHOLAS can scarcely imagine what joy instantly burst forth all over the land. Bells were rung all day long, bonfires burned, and people paraded the streets half the night, and everybody was glad beyond possibility of expression. And among the joyful thousands all over the land, the Boys in Blue were probably the gladdest of all, for was n't the war over now, and would n't "Johnny come marching home"?

But before getting home, we bid our comrades in arms good-bye, for the regiment was composed of companies from different parts of the State, and we must part, in all probability never to see one another again. And a more hearty, rough and ready, affectionate good-bye there never was in all this wide world. In the rooms of one of the hotels at the State capital we were gathered, waiting for our respective trains; knapsacks slung, Sharp's rifles at a "right-shoulder shift" or a "carry"; songs were sung, hands shaken, or rather wrung; loud, hearty "God bless you, old fellows," resounded, and many were the toasts and the healths that were drunk before the men parted for good and all. And then, at last, we were off for the train, "Shouting the Battle-cry of Freedom!"

Of the thirteen men who had gone out from our little village, but three had lived to get home together. Reaching the village in the stage, at dusk one evening in June, we found gathered at the hotel where the stage stopped, a great crowd of our school-fellows and friends, who had come to meet us. We almost feared to step down among them, lest they should quite tear us to pieces

with shaking of hands. The stage had scarcely stopped when I heard a well-known voice calling:

"Harry! Are *you* there?"

"Yes, Father! Here I am!"

"God bless you, my boy!"

And pushing his way through the crowd, my father plunges into the stage, not able to wait until it has driven around to the house, and if his voice is husky with emotion, as he often repeats "God bless you, my boy!" and gets his arm around my neck, is it any wonder?

But my dog Rollo can't get into the stage, and so he runs barking after it, and is the first to greet me at the gate, and jumps up at me with his great paws on my shoulders. Does he know me? I rather think he does!

Then Mother and Sisters come around, and they must needs call for a lamp and hold it close to my face, and look me all over from head to foot, while Father is saying to himself again and again, "God bless you, my boy!"

Although I knew that my name was never forgotten in the evening prayer all the while I was away, yet not once, perhaps, in all that time was Father's voice so choked in utterance as when now, his heart overflowing, he came to give thanks for my safe return. And when I lay down that night in a clean white bed, for the first time in three long years, I thanked God for Peace and Home.

And—Andy? Why—the Lord bless him and his!—he's a soldier still. For, having laid aside the blue, he put on the black, being a sober, steady-going Presbyterian parson now, somewhere up in York State. I have n't seen him for years; but when we do meet, once in a great while, there is such a wringing of hands as makes us both wince until the tears start, and we sit up talking over old times so far into the night that the good folk of the house wonder whether we shall ever get to—

THE END.

