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Title: Si Klegg, Book 1

Author: John McElroy

Release Date: March 25, 2010 [EBook #31771]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by David Widger

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SI KLEGG, BOOK 1 ***

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SI KLEGG

His Transformation From a Raw Recruit To A Veteran.

By John McElroy.



AS HE ENTERED LOUISVILLE.



AT THE END OF THREE MONTHS.

WHAT THREE MONTHS' SOLDIERING DID TO SI KLEGG.

SI KLEGG

HIS TRANSFORMATION FROM A RAW RECRUIT
TO A VETERAN.

BY JOHN MCELROY.



PUBLISHED BY
THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE CO.,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

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THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE CO.,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

SECOND EDITION

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THE SIX VOLUMES

[SI KLEGG, Book I, Transformation From a Raw Recruit](#)
[SI KLEGG, Book II, Through the Stone River Campaign](#)
[SI KLEGG, Book III, Meets Mr. Rosenbaum, the Spy](#)
[SI KLEGG, Book IV, On The Great Tullahoma Campaign](#)

PREFACE.

"Si Klegg, of the 200th Ind., and Shorty, his Partner," were born more than 25 years ago in the brain of John McElroy, editor of The National Tribune, who invented the names and characters, outlined the general plan, and wrote a number of the chapters. Subsequently, the editor, having many other important things pressing upon his attention, called in an assistant to help on the work, and this assistant, under the direction and guidance of the editor, wrote some of these chapters. Subsequently, without the editor's knowledge or consent, the assistant adopted all the material as his own, and expanded it into a book which had a limited sale and then passed into the usual oblivion of shortlived subscription books.

The sketches in this first number are the original ones published in The National Tribune in 1885-6, revised and enlarged somewhat by the editor.

Those in the second and all following numbers appeared in The National Tribune when the editor, John McElroy, resumed the story in 1897, 12 years after the first publication, and continued it for the unprecedented period of seven years, with constantly growing interest and popularity. They gave "Si Klegg" a nation-wide and enduring celebrity. Gen. Lew Wallace, the foremost literary man of his day, pronounced "Si Klegg" the "great idyll of the war."

How true they are to nature every veteran can abundantly testify from his own service. Really, only the name of the regiment was invented. There is no doubt that there were several men of the name of Josiah Klegg in the Union Army, and who did valiant service for the Government. They had experiences akin to, if not identical with, those narrated here, and substantially every man who faithfully and bravely carried a musket in defense of the best Government on earth had sometimes, if not often, experiences of with those of Si Klegg, Shorty and the boys are strong reminders.

Many of the illustrations in this first number are by the late Geo. Y. Coffin, deceased, a talented artist, whose work embellished The National Tribune for many years. He was the artist of The National Tribune until his lamented and premature death, and all his military work was done by daily consultation, instruction and direction of the editor of The National Tribune.

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

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THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

**TO THE RANK AND FILE
OF THE GRANDEST ARMY EVER MUSTERED FOR WAR.**

SI KLEGG

**CHAPTER I. GOING TO WAR—SI KLEGG'S
COMPLETE EQUIPMENT**

AND WHAT BECAME OF IT.

AFTER Si Klegg had finally yielded to his cumulative patriotic impulses and enlisted in the 200th Ind. for three years or until the rebellion was put down, with greater earnestness and solemnity to equip himself for his new career.

He was thrifty and provident, and believed in being ready for any emergency. His friends and family coincided with him. The Quartermaster provided him with a wardrobe that was serviceable, if not stylish, but there were many things that he felt he would need in addition.

"You must certainly have a few pairs of homeknit socks and some changes of underclothes," said his tearfully-solicitous mother. "They won't weigh much, and they'll in all likelihood save you a spell of sickness."

"Certainly," responded Josiah, "I wouldn't think of going away without 'em."

Into the capacious knapsack went several pounds of substantial knit woolen goods.

"You can't get along without a couple of towels and a piece of soap," said his oldest sister, Maria, as she stowed those things alongside the socks and underclothes.

"Si," said Ellen, his second sister, "I got this pocket album for my gift to you. It contains all our pictures, and there is a place for another's picture, whose name I suppose I needn't mention," she added archly.

Si got a little red in the face, but said:

"Nothing could be nicer, Nell. It'll be the greatest comfort in the world to have all your pictures to look at when I'm down in Dixie."

"Here's a 'housewife' I've made for you with my own hands," added Annabel, who was some other fellow's sister. She handed him a neatly-stitched little cloth affair. "You see, it has needles, thread, buttons, scissors, a fine-tooth comb, and several other things that you'll need very badly after you've been in camp awhile. And" (she got so near Si that she could whisper the rest) "you'll find in a little secret pocket a lock of my hair, which I cut off this morning."

"I suppose I'll have a good deal of leisure time while we're in camp," said Si to himself and the others; "I believe I'll just put this Ray's Arithmetic and Greene's Grammar in."

"Yes, my young friend," added the Rev. Boanarg, who had just entered the house, "and as you will be exposed to new and unusual temptations, I thought it would be judicious to put this volume of 'Baxter's Call to the Unconverted' in your knapsack, for it may give you good counsel when you need it sorely."

"Thankee," said Si, stowing away the book. Of course, Si had to have a hair-brush, blackingbrush, a shaving kit, and some other toilet appliances.



SI DECIDES TO ENLIST.

Then it occurred to his thoughtful sister Maria that he ought to have a good supply of stationery, including pens, a bottle of ink, and a portfolio on which to write when he was far away from tables and desks.

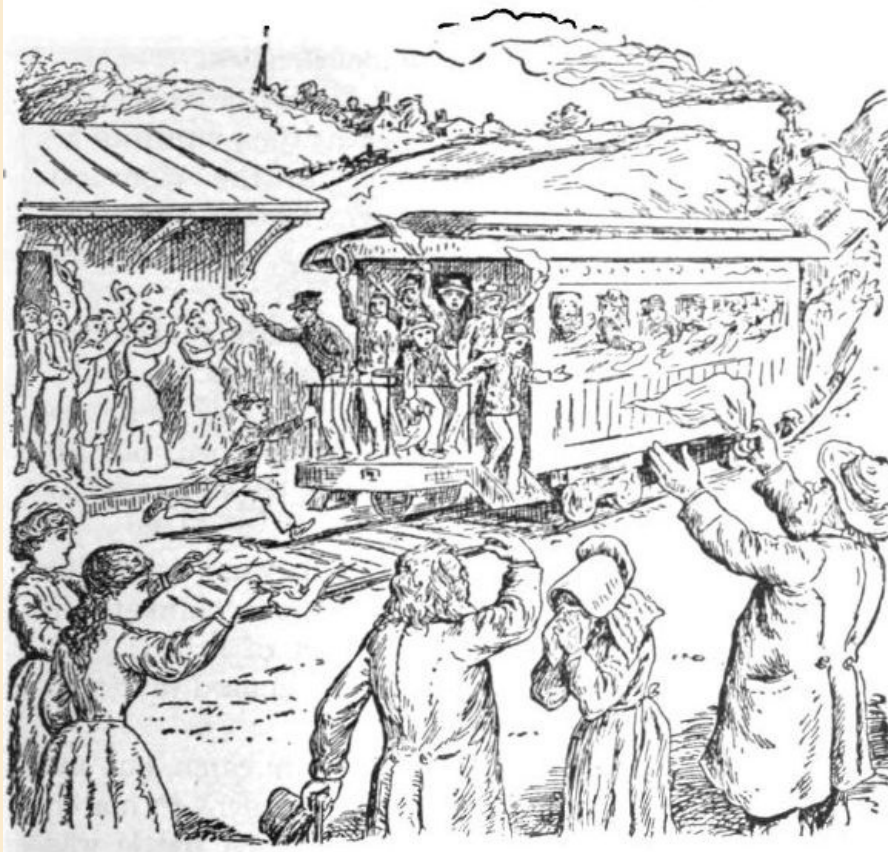
These went in, accompanied by a half-pint bottle of "No. 6," which was Si's mother's specific for all the ills that flesh is heir to. Then, the blanket which the Quartermaster had issued seemed very light and insufficient to be all the bed-clothes a man would have when sleeping on the bare ground, and Si rolled up one of the warm counterpanes that had helped make the Indiana Winter nights so comfortable for him.

"Seems rather heavy," said Si as he put his knapsack on; "but I guess I'll get used to it in a little while. They say that soldiers learn to carry surprising loads on their backs. It'll help cure me of being round-shouldered; it'll be better 'n shoulder-braces for holding me up straight."

Of course, his father couldn't let him go away without giving him something that would contribute to his health and comfort, and at last the old gentleman had a happy thought—he would get the village shoemaker to make Si a pair of his best stout boots. They would be ever so much better than the shoes the Quartermaster furnished for tramping over the muddy roads and swamps of the South. Si fastened these on top of his knapsack until he should need them worse than at present.

His old uncle contributed an immense bowie knife, which he thought would be of great use in the sanguinary hand-to-hand conflicts Si would have to wage.

On the way to the depot Si found some of his comrades gathered around an enterprising retail dealer in hardware, who was convincing them that they could serve their country much better, besides adding to their comfort, by buying from him a light hatchet and a small frying-pan, which he offered, in consideration of their being soldiers, to sell them at remarkable low rates.



OFF TO THE WAR.

Si saw at once the great convenience a hatchet and a frying-pan would be, and added them to his kit. An energetic dealer in tinware succeeded in selling him, before he reached the depot, a cunning little coffee-pot and an ingenious combination of knife, fork and spoon which did not weigh more than a pound.

When he got in the cars he was chagrined to find that several of his comrades had provided themselves with convenient articles that he had not thought of. He consoled himself that the regiment would stop some time in Louisville, when he would have an opportunity of making up his deficiencies.

But when the 200th reached Louisville there was no leisure for anything. Bragg was then running his celebrated foot-race with Buell for the Kentucky metropolis, and the 200th Ind. was trotted as rapidly as unused legs could carry it to the works several miles from the center of the city.

Everybody who was in that campaign remembers how terribly hot and dry everything was.

Si Klegg managed to keep up tolerably near the head of the column until camp was reached, but his shoulders were strained and blisters began to appear on his feet.

"That was a mighty tough pull, wasn't it?" he said to his chum as they spread their blankets on the dog-kennel and made some sort of a bed; "but I guess after a day or two we'll get so used to it that we won't mind it."

For a few days the 200th Ind. lay in camp, but one day there came an order for the regiment to march to Bardstown as rapidly as possible. A battle was imminent. The roads were dusty as ash-heaps, and though the pace was not three miles an hour, the boys' tongues were hanging out before they were out of sight of camp.

"I say, Captain, don't they never have resting spells in the army?" said Si.

"Not on a forced march," answered the Captain, who, having been in the first three months' service, was regarded as a veteran. "Push on, boys; they say that they'll want us before night." Another hour passed.



AS SI LOOKED WHEN HE LANDED AT LOUISVILLE.

"Captain, I don't believe you can put a pin-point anywhere on my feet that ain't covered with a blister as big as a hen's egg," groaned Si.

"It's too bad, I know," answered the officer; "but you must go on. They say Morgan's cavalry are in our rear shooting down every straggler they can find."

Si saw the boys around him lightening their knapsacks. He abominated waste above all things, but there seemed no help for it, and, reaching into that receptacle that bore, down upon his aching shoulders like a glacier on a groundhog, he pulled out and tossed into the fence corner the educational works he had anticipated so much benefit from. The bottle of "No. 6" followed, and it seemed as if the knapsack was a ton lighter, but it yet weighed more than any stack of hay on the home farm.

A cloud of dust whirled up, and out of it appeared a galloping Aid.

"The General says that the 200th Ind. must push on much faster. The enemy is trying to get to the bridge ahead of them," he shouted as he dashed off in another cloud of dust.

A few shots were heard in the rear.

"Morgan's cavalry are shooting some more stragglers," shouted some one.

Si was getting desperate. He unrolled the counterpane and slashed it into strips with his bowie. "My mother made that with her own hands," he explained to a comrade, "and if I can't have the good of it no infernal rebel shall. He next slashed the boots up and threw them after the quilt, and then hobbled on to overtake the rest of his company.

"There's enough dry-goods and clothing lying along in the fence corners to supply a good-sized town," the Lieutenant-Colonel reported as he rode over the line of march in rear of the regiment.

The next day Si's feet felt as if there was a separate and individual jumping toothache in every sinew, muscle, tendon and toe-nail; but that didn't matter. With Bragg's infantry ahead and John Morgan's cavalry in the rear, the 200th Ind. had to go forward so long as the boys could put one foot before the other.



SI'S LOAD BEGINS TO GET HEAVY.

The unloading went on even more rapidly than the day before.

"My knapsack looks like an elephant had stepped on it," Si said, as he ruefully regarded it in the evening.

"Show me one in the regiment that don't," answered his comrade.

Thenceforward everything seemed to conspire to teach Si how vain and superfluous were the things of this world. The first rain-storm soaked his cherished album until it fell to pieces, and his sister's portfolio did the same. He put the photographs in his blouse pocket and got along just as well. When he wanted to write he got paper from the sutler. A mule tramped on his fancy coffee-pot, and he found he could make quite as good coffee in a quart-cup. A wagon-wheel ran over his cherished frying-pan, and he melted an old canteen in two and made a lighter and handier pan out of one-half of it. He broke his bowie-knife prying the lid off a cracker-box. He piled his knapsack with the others one day when the regiment was ordered to strip them off for a charge, and neither he nor his comrades ever saw one of them again. He never attempted to replace it. He learned to roll up an extra pair of socks and a change of underclothing in his blanket, tie the ends of this together and throw it over his shoulder sash fashion. Then, with his socks drawn up over the bottoms of his pantaloons, three days' rations in his haversack and 40 rounds in his cartridgebox, he was ready to make his 30 miles a day in any direction he might be sent, and whip anything that he encountered on the road.

CHAPTER II. THE DEADLY BAYONET

IT IS USED FOR NEARLY EVERYTHING ELSE THAN FOR PRODDING MEN.

IN COMMON with every other young man who enlisted to defend the glorious Stars and Stripes, Si Klegg, of the 200th Ind., had a profound superstition concerning the bayonet. All the war literature he had ever read abounded in bloodcurdling descriptions of bayonet charges and hand-to-hand conflicts, in which bayonets were repeatedly thrust up to the shanks in the combatants' bodies just as he had put a pitch-fork into a bundle of hay. He had seen pictures of English regiments bristling with bayonets like a porcupine with quills, rushing toward French regiments which looked as prickly as a chestnut-bur, and in his ignorance he supposed that was the way fighting was done. Occasionally he would have qualms at the thought of how little his system was suited to have cold steel thrust through it promiscuous-like, but he comforted himself with the supposition that he would probably get used to it in time—"soldiers get used to almost anything, you know."

When the 200th Ind. drew its guns at Indianapolis he examined all the strange accouterments with interest, but gave most to the triangular bit of steel which writers who have never seen a battle make so important a weapon in deciding contests.

It had milk, molasses, or even applejack, for Si then was not a member of the Independent Order of Good Templars, of which society he is now an honored officer. Nothing could be nicer, when he was on picket, to bring buttermilk in from the neighboring farm-house to his chum Shorty, who stood post while he was gone.



**SI'S CHUM, "SHORTY"
ELLIOTT.**

Later in the service Si learned the inestimable value of coffee to the soldier on the march. Then he stripped the cloth from his canteen, fastened the strand with bits of wire and made a fine coffee-pot of it. In the morning he would half fill it with the splendid coffee the Government furnished, fill it up with water and hang it from a bush or a stake over the fire, while he went ahead with his other culinary preparations. By the time these were finished he would have at least a quart of magnificent coffee that the cook of the Fifth Avenue could not surpass, and which would last him until the regiment halted in the afternoon.

The bully of the 200th took it into his thick head one day to try to "run over" Si. The latter had just filled his canteen, and the bully found that the momentum of three pints of water swung at arm's length by an angry boy was about equal to a mule's kick.

Just as he was beginning to properly appreciate his canteen, he learned a sharp lesson, that comes to all of us, as to how much "cussedness" there can be in the simplest things when they happen to go wrong. He went out one day and got a canteen of nice sweet milk, which he and "Shorty" Elliott heartily enjoyed. He hung the canteen upon the ridge-pole of the tent, and thought no more about it until the next day, when he came in from drill, and found the tent filled with an odor so vile that it made him cough.

"Why in thunder don't the Colonel send out a detail to find and bury that dead mule? It'll pizen the hull camp."

He had been in service just long enough to believe that the Colonel ought to look out for and attend to everything.

"Taint no dead mule," said Shorty, whose nose had come close to the source of the odor. "It's this blamed canteen. What on earth have you been putting in it. Si?"

"Ha'nt had nothin' in but that sweet milk yesterday."

"That's just what's the matter," said the Orderly, who, having been in the three-months' service, knew all about war. He had come in to detail Si and Shorty to help unload Quartermaster's stores. "You must always scald 'out your canteens when you've had milk in 'em. Don't you remember how careful your mother is to scald her milk pans?"

After the company wagon had run over and hopelessly ruined the neat little frying-pan which Si had brought from Posey County, he was in despair as to how he should fry his meat and cook his "lobscouse." Necessity is the mother of invention. He melted in two a canteen he picked up, and found its halves made two deep tin pans, very light and very handy. A split stick made a handle, and he had as good a frying-pan as the one he had lost, and much more convenient, for when done using the handle was thrown away, and the pan slipped into the haversack, where it lay snug and close, instead of clattering about as the frying-pan did when the regiment moved at the double-quick.

The other half of the canteen was useful to brown coffee, bake hoe-cake, and serve for toilet purposes.

One day on the Atlanta campaign the regiment moved up in line to the top of a bald hill. As it rose above the crest it was saluted with a terrific volley, and saw that another crest across the narrow valley was occupied by at least a brigade of rebels.

"We'll stay right here, boys," said the plucky little Colonel, who had only worn Sergeant's stripes when the regiment crossed the Ohio River. "We've preempted this bit of real estate, and we'll hold it against the whole Southern Confederacy. Break for that fence there, boys, and every fellow come back with a couple of rails."

It seemed as if he hardly ceased speaking when the boys came running back with the rails which they laid

down along the crest, and dropped flat behind them, began throwing the gravelly soil over them with their useful half-canteens. In vain the shower of rebel bullets struck and sang about them. Not one could penetrate that little ridge of earth and rails, which in an hour grew into a strong rifle-pit against which the whole rebel brigade charged, only to sustain a bloody repulse.

The war would have lasted a good deal longer had it not been for the daily help of the ever-useful half-canteen.

CHAPTER III. THE OLD CANTEEN

THE MANY AND QUEER USES TO WHICH IT WAS AT LAST PUT.



THE DIVERSE USES OF THE GOOD OLD CANTEEN.

WHEN Josiah (called "Si" for short) Klegg, of the 200th Ind., drew his canteen from the Quartermaster at Louisville, he did not have a very high idea of its present or prospective importance. In the 22 hot Summers that he had lived through he had never found himself very far from a well or spring when his thirst cried out to be slacked, and he did not suppose that it was much farther between wells down South.

"I don't see the use of carrying two or three pints o' water along all day right past springs and over cricks," he remarked to his chum, as the two were examining the queer, cloth-covered cans.

"We've got to take 'em, any way," answered his chum, resignedly, "It's regulations."

On his entry into service a boy accepted everything without question when assured that it was "regulations." He would have charged bayonets on a buzz-saw if authoritatively informed that it was required by the mysterious "regulations."

The long march the 200th Ind. made after Bragg over the dusty turnpikes the first week in October, 1862, taught Si the value of a canteen. After that it was rarely allowed to get empty.

"What are these grooves along each side for?" he asked, pointing out the little hollows which give the "prod" lightness and strength.

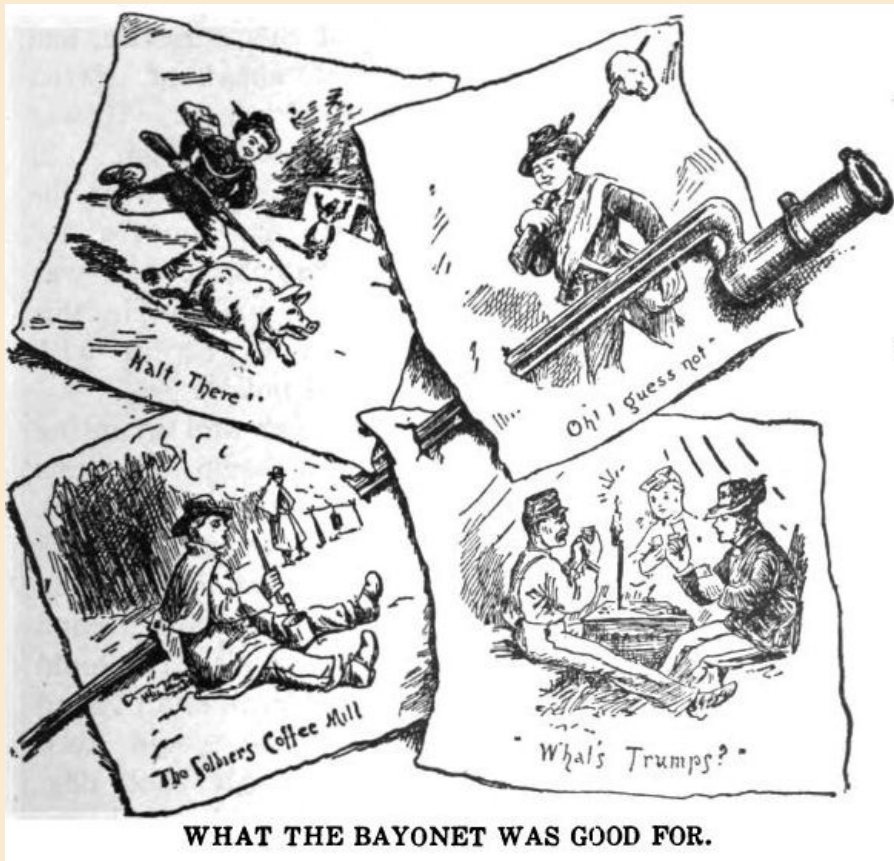
"Why," answered the Orderly, who, having been in the three-months' service, assumed to know more about war than the Duke of Wellington, "the intention of those is to make a wound the lips of which will close up when the bayonet is pulled out, so that the man'll be certain to die."

Naturally so diabolical an intention sent cold shivers down Si's back.

The night before Si left for "the front" he had taken his musket and couterments home to show them to his mother and sisters—and the other fellow's sister, whose picture and lock of hair he had safely stowed away. They looked upon the bayonet with a dreadful awe. Tears came into Maria's eyes as she thought of Si roaming about through the South like a bandit plunging that cruel steel into people's bowels.

"This is the way it's done," said Si, as he charged about the room in an imaginary duel with a rebel, winding up with a terrifying lunge. "Die, Tur-r-rraitor, gaul durn ye," he exclaimed, for he was really getting excited over the matter, while the girls screamed and jumped upon the chairs, and his good mother almost fainted.

The attention that the 200th Ind. had to give to the bayonet drill confirmed Si's deep respect for the weapon, and he practiced assiduously all the "lunges," "parries," and "guards" in the Manual, in the hope that proficiency so gained would save his own dearly-beloved hide from puncture, and enable him to punch any luckless rebel that he might encounter as full of holes as a fishing net.



The 200th Ind.'s first fight was at Perryville, but though it routed the rebel force in front of it, it would have taken a bayonet half-a-mile long to touch the nearest "Johnny." Si thought it odd that the rebels didn't let him get close enough to them to try his new bayonet, and pitch a dozen or two of them over into the next field.

If the truth must be told, the first blood that stained Si's bayonet was not that of a fellow-man.

Si Klegg's company was on picket one day, while Gen. Buell was trying to make up his mind what to do with Bragg. Rations had been a little short for a week or so. In fact, they had been scarcely sufficient to meet the demands of Si's appetite, and his haversack had nothing in it to speak of. Strict orders against foraging had been issued. It was the day of "guarding rebel onion patches." Si couldn't quite get it straight in his head why the General should be so mighty particular about a few pigs and chickens and sweet potatoes, for he was really getting hungry, and when a man is in this condition he is not in a fit mood to grapple with fine-spun theories of governmental policy.

So when a fat pig came wabbling and grunting toward his post, it was to Si like a vision of manna to the children of Israel in the wilderness. A wild, uncontrollable desire to taste a fresh spare-rib took possession of him. Naturally, his first idea was to send a bullet through the animal, but on second thought he saw that wouldn't do at all. It would "give him away" at once, and, besides, he had found that a single shot on the picket-line would keep Buell's entire army in line-of-battle for a whole day.

Si wrote to his mother that his bright new bayonet was stained with Southern blood, and the old lady shuddered at the awful thought. "But," added Si, "it was only a pig, and not a man, that I killed!"

"I'm so glad!" she exclaimed.



AS MARIA PICTURED SI USING HIS BAYONET.

By the time Si had been in the service a year there was less zeal in the enforcement of orders of this kind, and Si had become a very skillful and successful forager. He had still been unable to reach with his bayonet the body of a single one of his misguided fellow citizens, but he had stabbed a great many pigs and sheep. In fact, Si found his bayonet a most useful auxiliary in his predatory operations. He could not well have gotten along without it.

Uncle Sam generally furnished Si with plenty of coffee—roasted and unground—but did not supply him with a coffee mill. Si thought at first that the Government had forgotten something. He saw that several of the old veterans of '61 had coffee mills, but he found on inquiry that they had been obtained by confiscation only. He determined to supply himself at the first opportunity, but in the meantime he was obliged to 'use his bayonet as a substitute, just as all the rest of the soldiers did.

We regret to say that Si, having thrown away his "Baxter's Call to the Unconverted" in his first march, and having allowed himself to forget the lessons he had learned but a few years before in Sunday-school, soon learned to play poker and other sinful games. These, at night, developed another use for the bayonet. In its capacity as a "handy" candlestick it was "equaled by few and excelled by none." The "shank" was always ready to receive the candle, while the point could be thrust into the ground in an instant, and nothing more was necessary. This was perhaps the most general sphere of usefulness found by the bayonet during the war. Barrels of candle-grease flowed down the furrowed sides of this weapon for every drop of human blood that dimmed its luster.

CHAPTER IV. THE AWFUL HARDTACK

THE HARD AND SOLID STAFF OF MILITARY LIFE.

"APPETITE'S a queer thing," said Si to Shorty one day, when both were in a philosophical mood. "It's an awful bother when you haven't it, and it's a great deal worse when you have it, and can't get anything for it." "Same as money," returned sage Shorty. During the first few months of Si Klegg's service in the army the one thing that bothered him more than anything else was his appetite. It was a very robust, healthy one that Si had, for he had grown up on his father's farm in Indiana, and had never known what it was to be hungry without abundant means at hand for appeasing his desires in that direction. His mother's cupboard was never known to be in the condition of Old Mother Hubbard's, described in the nursery rhyme. The Kleggs might not have much tapestry and bric-a-brac in their home, but their smoke-house was always full, and Mrs. Klegg's kitchen could have fed a camp-meeting any time without warning. So it was that when Si enlisted his full, rosy face and his roundness of limb showed that he had been well fed, and that nature had made good use of the ample daily supplies that were provided. His digestive organs were kept in perfect condition by constant

exercise.

After Si had put down his name on the roll of Co. Q of the 200th Ind. he had but a few days to remain at home before his regiment was to start for Louisville. During this time his mother and sisters kept him filled up with "goodies" of every sort. In fact, it was the biggest thing in the way of a protracted picnic that Si had ever struck.

"You must enjoy these things while you can, Si," said his mother, "for goodness knows what you'll do when you really git into the army. I've heerd 'em tell awful things about how the poor sogers don't have half enough to eat, and what they do git goes agin' any Christian stomach. Here, take another piece of this pie. A little while, and it'll be a long time, I reckon, till ye git any more."

"Don't keer if I do!" said Si, for there was scarcely any limit to his capacity.

And so during those days and nights the old lady and the girls cooked and cooked, and Si ate and ate, until it seemed as if he wouldn't want any more till the war was over.

Si was full, and as soon as Co. Q was, it was ordered to camp, and Si had to go. They loaded him down with good things enough to last him a week. The pretty Annabel—the neighbor's daughter who had solemnly promised Si that she wouldn't go with any other fellow while he was away—came around to see Si off and brought him a rich fruit cake.

"I made that for you," she said.

"Bully for you!" said Si, for he felt that he must begin to talk like a soldier.

The first day or two after reaching Louisville the 200th received rations of "soft bread." But that didn't last long. It was only a way they had of letting the fresh soldier down easy. Orders came to get ready to pull out after Bragg, and then Si's regiment had its first issue of army rations. As the Orderly pried open a box of hardtack and began to distribute them to the boys, exclaimed:

"Them's nice-looking soda crackers. I don't believe the grub is going to be so bad, after all."

Si had never seen a hardtack before.

"Better taste one and see how you like it!" said one of Buell's ragged Indiana veterans, who had come over to see the boys of the 200th and hear the latest news from "God's country."

It happened that this lot was one of extra quality as to hardness. The baker's watch had stopped, or he had gone to sleep, and they had been left in the oven or dry-kiln too long. Si took one of them and carried it to his mouth. He first tried on it the bite which made such havoc with a quarter section of custard pie, but his incisors made no more impression upon it than if it had been a shingle.

"You have to bear on hard," said the veteran, with a grim smile.

"Je-ru-sa-lem!" exclaimed Si after he had made two or three attempts equally barren of results.

Then he tried his "back teeth." His molars were in prime order, and his jaw power was sufficient to crack a hickory nut every time. Si crowded one corner of the hardtack as far as he could between his "grinders," where he could get a good "purchase" on it, shut his eyes and turned on a full head of steam. His teeth and jaws fairly cracked under the strain, but he couldn't even "phase" it.

"If that ain't old pizen!" said Si. "It beats anything I ever seen up in the Wabash country."

But his blood was up, and laying the cracker upon a log, he brought the butt of his gun down upon it like a pile-driver.



HE TRIES THE BUTT OF HIS GUN ON IT.

"I thought I'd fix ye," he said, as he picked up the fragments, and tried his teeth upon the smaller ones. "Have I got to eat such stuff as that?" with a despairing look at his veteran friend. "I'd just as soon be a billy-goat and live on circus-posters, fruit-cans and old hoop-skirts."

"You'll get used to it after a while, same's we did. You'll see the time when you'll be mighty glad to get even as hard a tack as that!"

Si's heart sank almost into his shoes at the prospect, for the taste of his mother's pie and Annabel's fruit cake were yet fresh in his mouth. But Si was fully bent on being a loyal, obedient soldier, determined to make the best of everything without any more "kicking" than was the inalienable right of every man who wore a uniform.

For the first time in his life Si went to bed hungry that night. Impelled by the gnawings of his appetite he made repeated assaults upon the hardtack, but the result was wholly insufficient to satisfy the longings of his stomach. His supper wasn't anything to speak of. Before going to bed he began to exercise his ingenuity on various schemes to reduce the hardtack to a condition in which it would be more gratifying to his taste and better suited to the means with which nature had provided him for disposing of his rations. Naturally Si thought that soaking in water would have a beneficial effect. So he laid five or six of them in the bottom of a camp-kettle, anchored them down with a stone, and covered them with water. He thought that with the aid of a frying-pan he would get up a breakfast that he could eat, anyway.

Si felt a little blue as he lay curled up under his blanket with his head pillowed on his knapsack. He thought some about his mother, and sister Maria, and pretty Annabel, but he thought a good deal more about the beef and potatoes, the pies and the puddings, that were so plentifully spread upon the table at home.

It was a long time before he got to sleep. As he lay there, thinking and thinking, there came to his mind some other uses to which it seemed to him the hardtack might be put, which would be much more consistent with its nature than to palm it off on the soldiers as alleged food. He thought he could now understand why, when he enlisted, they examined his teeth so carefully, as if they were going to buy him for a mule. They said it was necessary to have good teeth in order to bite "cartridges" successfully, but now he knew it was with reference to his ability to eat hardtack.

Si didn't want to be killed if he could help it.

While he was lying there he determined to line one of his shirts with hardtacks, and he would put that on whenever there was going to be a fight. He didn't believe the bullets would go through them. He wanted to do all he could toward paralyzing the rebels, and with such a protection he could be very brave, while his comrades were being mowed down around him. The idea of having such a shirt struck Si as being a brilliant one.

Then, he thought hardtack would be excellent for half-soling his shoes. He didn't think they would ever wear out.

If he ran short of ammunition he could ram pieces of hardtack into his gun and he had no doubt they would do terrible execution in the ranks of the enemy.

All these things and many more Si thought of until finally he was lost in sleep. Then he dreamed that somebody was trying to cram stones down his throat.

The company was called out at daylight, and immediately after roll-call Si went to look after the hardtacks he had put to soak the night before. He thought he had never felt so hungry in his life. He fished out the hardtack and carefully inspected them, to note the result of the submerging and to figure out the chances on his much-needed breakfast.

To any old soldier it would be unnecessary to describe the condition in which Si found those hardtacks, and the effect of the soaking. For the information of any who never soaked a hardtack it may be said that Si found them transformed, to all appearances, into sole-leather. They were flexible, but as tough as the hide that was "found in the vat when the tanner died."

Si tried to bite a piece off one of them to see what it was like, but he couldn't get his teeth through it. In sheer desperation he laid it on a log, seized a hatchet, and chopped off a corner. He put it in his mouth and chewed on it a while, but found it as tasteless as cold codfish.

Si thought he would try the frying-pan. He chopped the hardtacks into bits, put in equal parts of water and grease, sifted over the mixture a little salt and pepper, and then gave it a thorough frying. Si's spirits rose during the gradual development of this scheme, as it seemed to offer a good prospect for his morning meal. And when it came to the eating. Si found it really good, comparatively speaking, even though it was very much like a dish compounded of the sweepings from around a shoemaker's bench. A good appetite was indispensable to a real enjoyment of this—which the soldiers called by a name that cannot be given here—but Si had the appetite, and he ate and was thankful.

"I thought I'd get the bulge on them things some way or other," said Si, as he drank the last of his coffee and arose from his meal, feeling like a giant refreshed with new wine.

For the next two or three months Si largely devoted his surplus energies to further experimenting with the hardtack. He applied every conceivable process of cookery he could think of that was possible with the meager outfit at his command in the way of utensils and materials. Nearly all of his patient and persevering efforts resulted only in vexation of spirit.

He continued to eat hardtack from day to day, in these various forms, but it was only because he had to do it. He didn't hanker after it, but it was a military necessity—hardtack or starvation. It was a hard choice, but Si's love of life—and Annabel—induced him to choose the hardtack.



THE BEST WAY AFTER ALL.

But for a long-time Si's stomach was in a state of chronic rebellion, and on the whole he had a hard time of it getting used to this staple article of army diet. He did not become reconciled to it until after his regiment had rations of flour for a week, when the "cracker-line" had been cut by the guerillas and the supply of that substantial edible was exhausted. Si's experience with the flour swept away all his objections to the hardtack. Those slapjacks, so fearfully and wonderfully made, and those lumps of dough, mixed with cold water and dried on flat stones before the fire, as hard as cannon balls, played sad havoc with his internal arrangements. For the first time he was obliged to fall into the cadaverous squad at sick-call and wobble up to the doctor's shop, where he was dosed with castor-oil and blue-mass. Si was glad enough to see hardtack again. Most of the grumbling he did thereafter concerning the hardtack was because he often couldn't get enough.

About six months taught Si what all the soldiers learned by experience, that the best way to eat the average hardtack was to take it "straight"—just as it came out of the box, without any soaking or frying or stewing. At meal-time he would make a quart or so of coffee, stab the end of a ramrod through three or four slices of sowbelly, and cook them over the coals, allowing some of the drippings to fall upon the hardtack for lubricating purposes, and these constituted his frugal repast.

CHAPTER V. FAT PORK—INDISPENSABLE BODY TIMBER FOR PATRIOTISM.

IT WAS told in the last chapter how the patriotic impulses of Si Klegg, of the 200th Ind., reached his stomach and digestive apparatus, and brought them under obedient subjection to hardtack. He didn't have quite so rough an experience with that other staple of army diet, which was in fact the very counterpart of the hardtack, and which took its most popular name from that part of the body of the female swine which is usually nearest the ground. Much of Si's muscle and brawn was due to the fact that meat was always plenty on his father's farm. When Si enlisted he was not entirely free from anxiety on the question of meat, for to his appetite it was not even second in importance to bread. If bread was the "staff of life" meat was life itself to Si. It didn't make much difference to him what kind it was, only so it was meat. He didn't suppose Uncle Sam would keep him supplied with quail on toast and porterhouse steaks all the time, but he did hope he would give him as much as he wanted of something in that line.

"You won't get much pork, unless you're a good forager," said one of Si's friends he met at Louisville, and who had been a year in the service.

Si thought he might, with practice and a little encouragement, be fairly successful in foraging on his' own hook, but at the same time he said he wouldn't grumble if he could only get plenty of pork. Fortunately for him he had not been imbued with the teachings of the Hebraic dispensation which declared "unclean" the beast that furnished the great bulk of the animal food for the American defenders of the Union.

Co. Q of the 200th Ind. received with the first issue of army rations at Louisville a bountiful supply of bacon of prime quality, and Si was happy at the prospect. He thought it would always be that way.

"I don't see anything the matter with such grub as that!" said Si. "Looks to me as though we were goin' to live like fighting-cocks."

"You're just a little bit brash," said his veteran friend, who had just been through the long, hungry march from Huntsville, Ala., to Louisville. "Better eat all you can lay yer hands on now, while ye've got a chance. One o' these days ye'll git into a tight place and ye won't see enough hog's meat in a week to grease a griddle. I've bin there, myself! Jest look at me and see what short rations 'll bring you to?"

But Si thought he wouldn't try to cross a bridge till he got to it, nor lie awake nights worrying over troubles that were yet in the future. Si had a philosophical streak in his mental make-up and this, by the way, was a good thing for a soldier to have. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," was an excellent rule for him to

go by.

So Si assimilated all the pork that fell to his share, with an extra bit now and then from a comrade whose appetite was less vigorous. He thrived under its fructifying influence, and gave good promise of military activity and usefulness. No scientific processes of cookery were necessary to prepare it for immediate use. A simple boiling or frying or toasting was all that was required.



THE VETERAN TALKS TO SI.

During the few days at Louisville fresh beef was issued occasionally. It is true that the animals slain for the soldiers were not always fat and tender, nor did each of them have four hind-quarters. This last fact was the direct cause of a good deal of inflammation in the 200th Ind., as in every other regiment. The boys who got sections of the forward part of the "critter," usually about three-quarters bone, invariably kicked, and fired peppery remarks at those who got the juicy steaks from the rear portion of the animal. Then when their turn came for a piece of hind-quarter the other fellows would growl. Four-fifths of the boys generally had to content themselves with a skinny rib or a soupshank. Si shared the common lot, and did his full quota of grumbling because his "turn" for a slice of steak didn't come every time beef was issued.

The pickled pork was comparatively free from this cause of irritation. It was all alike, and was simply "Hobson's choice." Si remembered the fragrant and delicious fried ham that so often garnished his mother's breakfast table and wondered why there was not the same proportion of hams and sides in the Commissary that he remembered in the meathouse on the Wabash. He remarked to Shorty one day:

"I wonder where all this pork comes from?"

"It comes from Illinoy, I suppose," said Shorty. "I notice the barrels are all marked 'Chicago'."

"Must grow funny kind o' hogs out there—a mile long each, I should say. What do you mean?"

"Why, we've drawn a full mile o' sides from the Commissary, and haint struck a ham yit. I'm wonderin' jest how long that hog is!"

"Well, you are green. You oughter know by this time that there are only enough hams for the officers."

Now and then a few pigs' shoulders were handed round among the boys, but the large proportion of bone they contained was exasperating, and was the cause of much profanity.

Sometimes bacon was issued that had really outlived its usefulness, except, perhaps, for the manufacture of soap. Improperly "cured," it was strong and rancid, or, occasionally, so near a condition of putrefaction that the stench from it offended the nostrils of the whole camp. Some times it was full of "skippers," that tunneled their way through and through it, and grew fat with riotous living.



DRAWING RATIONS.

Si drew the line at this point. He had an ironplated stomach, but putrid and maggoty meat was too much for it. Whenever he got any of this he would trade it off to the darkies for chickens. There is nothing like pork for a Southern negro. He wants something that will "stick to his ribs."

By a gradual process of development his appetite reached the point when he could eat his fat pork perfectly raw. During a brief halt when on the march he would squat in a fence corner, go down into his haversack for supplies, cut a slice of bacon, lay it on a hardtack, and munch them with a keen relish.



"ALL RIGHT, BOSS; DAT'S A GO."

At one of the meetings of the Army of the Cumberland Gen. Garfield told a story which may appropriately close this chapter.

One day, while the Army of the Cumberland was beleaguered in Chattanooga and the men were almost starving on quarter rations, Gen. Rosecrans and his staff rode out to inspect the lines. As the brilliant cavalcade dashed by a lank, grizzled soldier growled to a comrade:

"It'd be a darned sight better for this army if we had a little more sowbelly and not quite so many brass buttons!"

CHAPTER VI. DETAILED AS COOK—SI FINDS RICE ANOTHER INNOCENT

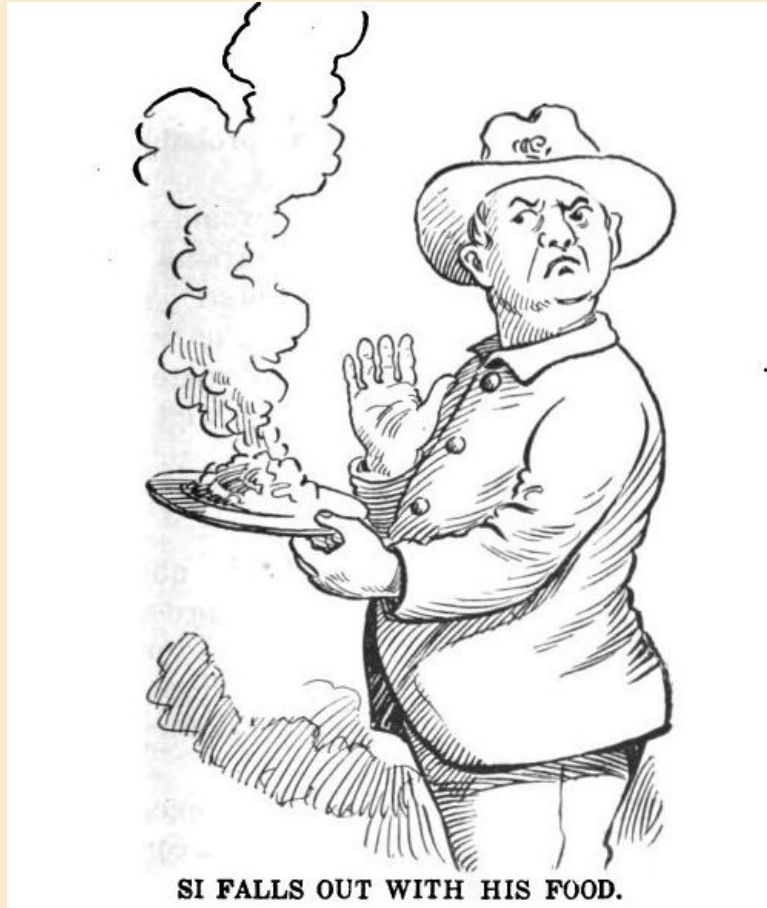
WITH A GREAT DEAL OF CUSSEDNESS IN IT.

IT WOULD have been very strange, indeed, if Si Klegg had not grumbled loudly and frequently about the

food that was dished up to him by the company cooks. In the first place, it was as natural for a boy to grumble at the "grub" as it was for him to try to shirk battalion drill or "run the guard." In the next place, the cooking done by the company bean-boiler deserved all the abuse it received, for as a rule the boys who sought places in the hash foundry did so because they were too lazy to drill or do guard duty, and their knowledge of cooking was about like that of the Irishman's of music:

"Can you play the fiddle, Pat?" he was asked. "Oi don't know, sor-r-r—Oi niver tried."

Si's mother, like most of the well-to-do farmers' wives in Indiana, was undoubtedly a good cook, and she trained up her daughters to do honor to her teachings, so that Si undoubtedly knew what properly-prepared food was. From the time he was big enough to spank he had fared sumptuously every day. In the gush of patriotic emotions that prompted him to enlist he scarcely thought of this feature of the case. If it entered his mind at all, he felt that he could safely trust all to the goodness of so beneficent a Government as that for the preservation of which he had offered himself as a target for the rebels to shoot at. He thought it no more than fair to the brave soldiers that Uncle Sam should furnish professional cooks for each company, who would serve everything up in the style of a first-class city restaurant. So, after Si got down among the boys and found how it really was, it was not long till his inside was a volcano of rebellion that threatened serious results.



When, therefore, Si lifted up his voice and cried aloud, and spared not—when he said that he could get as good coffee as that furnished him by dipping his cup into a tan-vat; when he said that the meat was not good soap-grease, and that the potatoes and beans had not so much taste and nutrition in them as so much pine-shavings, he was probably nearer right than grumblers usually are.

"Give it to 'em, Si," his comrades would say, when he turned up his loud bazoo on the rations question. "They ought to get it ten times worse. When we come out we expected that some of us would get shot by the rebels, but we didn't calculate that we were going to be poisoned in camp by a lot of dirty, lazy potwrastlers."

One morning after roll-call the Orderly-Sergeant came up to Si and said:

"There's been so much chin-music about this cooking-business that the Captain's ordered the cooks to go back to duty, and after this everybody'll have to take his regular turn at cooking. It'll be your turn to-day, and you'll stay in camp and get dinner."

When Co. Q marched out for the forenoon drill. Si pulled off his blouse and set down on a convenient log to think out how he should go to work. Up to this time he had been quite certain that he knew all about cooking that it was worth while to know. Just now none of his knowledge seemed to be in usable shape, and the more he thought about it the less able he seemed to be to decide upon any way of beginning. It had always appeared very easy for his mother and sisters to get dinner, and on more than one occasion he had reminded them how much better times they had staying in the house cooking dinner than he had out in the harvest field keeping up with the reaper. At this moment he would rather have kept up with the fastest reaper in Posey County, on the hottest of July days, than to have cooked the coarse dinner which his 75 comrades expected to be ready for them when they returned, tired, hot and hungry, from the morning drill.



SI THINKS IT OVER.

He went back to the barracks and inspected the company larder. He found there the same old, coarse, greasy, strong, fat pork, a bushel or so of beans, a few withered potatoes, sugar, coffee, bread, and a box of rice which had been collected from the daily rations because none of the cooks knew how to manage it. The sight of the South Carolina staple recalled the delightful rice puddings his mother used to make. His heart grew buoyant.

"Here's just the thing," he said. "I always was fond of rice, and I know the boys will be delighted with it for a change. I know I can cook it; for all that you've got to do is to put it in a pot with water and boil it till it is done. I've seen mother do that lots o' times.

"Let's see," he said, pursuing his ruminations.

"I think each boy can eat about a cupful, so I'll put one for each of 'em in the kettle."

"There's one for Abner," he continued, pouring a cupful in for the first name on the company-roll; "one for Acklin, one for Adams, one for Barber, one for Brooks," and so on down through the whole well-known list.

"It fills the old kettle tol'bly full," he remarked, as he scanned the utensil after depositing the contribution for Williams, the last name on the roll; "but I guess she'll stand it. I've heard mother tell the girls that they must always keep the rice covered with water, and stir it well, so that it wouldn't burn; so here goes. Won't the boys be astonished when they have a nice mess of rice, as a change from that rusty old side-meat!"

He hung the kettle on the fire and stepped out to the edge of the parade-ground to watch the boys drilling. It was the first time he had had the sensation of pleasure of seeing them at this without taking part in it himself, and he began to think that he would not mind if he had to cook most of the time. He suddenly remembered about his rice and hurried back to find it boiling, bulging over the top like a small snowdrift.



THE TROUBLE BEGINS.

"I was afraid that kettle was a little too full," he said to himself, hurrying off for another campkettle, in which he put about a third of the contents of the first. "Now they're all right. And it'll cook better and quicker in two than one. Great Scott! what's the matter? They're both boiling over. There must be something wrong with that rice."

Pretty soon he had all the company kettles employed, and then all that he could borrow from the other companies. But dip out as much as he would there seemed no abatement in the upheaving of the snowy cereal, and the kettles continued to foam over like so many huge glasses of soda water. He rushed to his bunk and got his gum blanket and heaped upon it a pile as big as a small haycock, but the mass in the kettle seemed larger than it was before this was subtracted.

He sweat and dipped, and dipped and sweat; burned his hands into blisters with the hot rice and hotter kettles, kicked over one of the largest kettles in one of his spasmodic rushes to save a portion of the food that was boiling over, and sent its white contents streaming over the ground. His misery came to a climax as he heard the quick step of his hungry comrades returning from drill.

"Right face; Arms a-port; Break ranks—March!" commanded the Orderly-Sergeant, and there was a clatter of tin cups and plates as they came rushing toward him to get their dinner—something to stay their ravenous stomachs. There was a clamor of rage, ridicule, wrath and disappointment as they took in the scene.



THE RICE GETS THE BULGE.

"What's the matter here?" demanded the Captain, striding back to the company fire. "You young rascal, is this the way you get dinner for your comrades? Is this the way you attend to the duty for which you're detailed? Waste rations in some fool experiment and scatter good food all over the ground? Biler, put on your arms and take Klegg to the guard-house. I'll make you pay for this nonsense, sir, in a way that you won't forget in a hurry, I'll be bound."

So poor Si marched to the guard-house, where he had to stay for 24 hours, as a punishment for not knowing, until he found out by this experience, that rice would "s-well." The Captain wouldn't let him have anything to eat except that scorched and half-cooked stuff cut of the kettles, and Si thought he never wanted to see any more rice as long as he lived.



SI MAKES THE ACQUAINTANCE OF THE GUARD-HOUSE.

In the evening one of the boys took Si's blanket to him, thinking he would want it to sleep in.

"I tell ye, pard, this is purty derved tough!" said Si as he wiped a tear out of the southwest corner of his left eye with the sleeve of his blouse. "I think the Cap'n's hard on a feller who didn't mean to do nothin' wrong!" And Si looked as if he had lost all his interest in the old flag, and didn't care a pinch of his burnt rice what

became of the Union.

His comrade "allowed" that it was hard, but supposed they, had got to get used to such things. He said he heard the Captain say he would let Si out the next day.

CHAPTER VII. IN THE AWKWARD SQUAD

SI HAS MANY TRIBULATIONS LEARNING THE MANUAL OP ARMS.

WHEN Si Klegg went into active service with Co. Q of the 200th Ind. his ideas of drill and tactics were exceedingly vague. He knew that a "drill" was something to make holes with, and as he understood that he had been sent down South to make holes through people, he supposed drilling had something to do with it. He handled his musket very much as he would a hoe. A "platoon" might be something to eat, for all he knew. He had a notion that a "wheel" was something that went around, and he thought a "file" was a screeching thing that his father used once a year to sharpen up the old buck saw.

The fact was that Si and his companions hardly had a fair shake in this respect, and entered the field at a decided disadvantage. It had been customary for a regiment to be constantly drilled for a month or two in camp in its own State before being sent to the front; but the 200th was rushed off to Kentucky the very day it was mustered in. This was while the cold chills were running up and down the backs of the people in the North on account of the threatened invasion by Bragg's army. The regiment pushed after the fleeing rebels, but whenever Suell's army halted to take breath, "Fall in for drill!" was shouted through its camp three or four times a day. It was liable to be called into action at any moment, and it was deemed indispensable to begin at once the process of making soldiers out of those tender-footed Hoosiers, whose zeal and patriotism as yet far exceeded their knowledge of military things. Most of the officers of the 200th were as green as the men, though some of them had seen service in other regiments; so, at first, officers and non-commissioned officers who had been in the field a few months and were considered veterans, and who knew, or thought they knew, all about tactics that was worth knowing, were detailed from the old regiments to put the boys through a course of sprouts in company and squad drill.

One morning three or four days after leaving Louisville, word was passed around that the regiment would not move that day, and the boys were so glad at the prospect of a day of rest that they wanted to get right up and yell. Si was sitting on a log, with his shoes off, rubbing his aching limbs and nursing his blisters, when the Orderly came along.

"Co. Q, be ready in 10 minutes to fall in for drill. Stir around, you men, and get your traps on. Klegg, put on them gunboats, and be lively about it."

"Orderly," said Si, looking as if he hadn't a friend on earth, "just look at them blisters; I can't drill to-day!"

"You'll have to or go to the guard-house," was the reply. "You'd better hustle yourself, too!"

Si couldn't think of anything to say that would do justice to his feelings; and so, with wailing and gnashing of teeth, and a few muttered words that he didn't learn in Sunday school, he got ready to take his place in the company.

As a general combustion of powder by the armies of Buell and Bragg was hourly expected, it was thought best for the 200th to learn first something about shooting. If called suddenly into action it was believed the boys could "git thar," though they had not yet mastered the science of company and battalion evolutions. Co. Q was divided into squads of eight for exercise in the manual of arms. The man who took Si's squad was a grizzled Sergeant, who had been "lugging knapsack, box and gun" for a year. He fully realized his important and responsible functions as instructor of these innocent youths, having at the same time a supreme contempt for their ignorance. "Attention, Squad!" and they all looked at him in a way that meant business.



"RIGHT SHOULDER SHIFT—ARMS!"

"Load in nine times—Load!"

Si couldn't quite understand what the "in" meant, but he had always been handy with a shotgun, to the terror of the squirrels and coons up in Posey County, and he thought he would show the Sergeant how spry he was. So he rammed in a cartridge, put on a cap, held up his musket, and blazed away, and then went to loading again as if his life depended upon his activity. For an instant the Sergeant was speechless with amazement. At length his tongue was loosened, and he roared out:

"What in the name of General Jackson are you doing, you measly idiot! Who ordered you to load and fire your piece?"

"I—I th—thought you did!" said Si, trembling as if he had the Wabash ague. "You said for us to load nine times. I thought nine loads would fill 'er chuck full and bust 'er and I didn't see any way but to shute 'em oft as fast as I got 'em in."

"No, sir! I gave the command according to Hardee, 'Load—in—nine—times!' and ef yer hadn't bin in such a hurry you'd 'a' found out what that means. Yer'll git along a good deal faster ef you'll go slower. Yer ought ter be made ter carry a rail, and a big one, for two hours."

Si protested that he was sorry, and didn't mean to, and wouldn't do so again, and the drill went on. The master went through all the nine "times" of "Handle—Cartridge!" "Draw—Rammer!" etc., each with its two or three "motions." It seemed like nonsense to Si.

"Boss," said he, "I kin get 'er loaded in just half the time ef yer'll let me do it my own way!"

"Silence!" thundered the Sergeant. "If you speak another word I'll have ye gagged 'n' tied up by the thumbs!"

Si had always been used to speaking right out when he had anything to say, and had not yet got his "unruly member" under thorough subjection. He saw that it wouldn't do to fool with the Drill Sergeant, however, and he held his peace. But Si kept thinking that if he got into a fight he would ram in the cartridge and fire them out as fast as he could, without bothering his head about the "one time and three motions."



"FIX—BAYONETS!"

"Order—Arms!" commanded the Sergeant, after he had explained how it was to be done. Si brought his gun down along with the rest like a pile-driver, and it landed squarely on the foot of the man next to him.



BROUGHT HIS GUN DOWN ON THE MAN'S FOOT.

"Ou-ou-ouch!" remarked the victim of Si's inexperience.

"Didn't do it a'purpose, pard," said Si compassionately; "pon my word I didn't. I'll be more keerful after this."

His suffering comrade, in very pointed language, urged upon Si the propriety of exercising a little more care. He determined that he would manage to get some other fellow to stand next to Si after that.

"Shoulder—Arms!" ordered the Sergeant, and the guns came straggling up into position. Then, after a few words of instruction, "Right shoulder shift—Arms!"

"Don't you know your right shoulder?" said the Sergeant, with a good deal of vinegar in his tone, to Si, who had his gun on the "larboard" side, as a sailor would say.

"Beg yer pardon," said Si; "I always was lefthanded. I'll learn if yer only gimme a show!"

"Silence!" again roared the Sergeant. "One more word, sir, and I will tie ye up, fer a fact!"

The Sergeant got his squad down to an "order arms" again, and then, after showing them how, he gave the order, "Fix—Bayonets!"

There was the usual clicking and clattering, during which Si dexterously managed to stick his bayonet into the eye of his comrade, whose toes were still aching from the blow of the butt of Si's musket. Si assured him he was sorry, and that it was all a mistake, but his comrade thought the limit of patience had been passed. So he confidently informed Si that as soon as drill was over he was going to "pound the stuffin'" out of him, and there wouldn't be any mistake about it, either.

When the hour was up the Captain of the company came around to see how the boys were getting along. The upshot of it was that poor Si was immediately organized into an "awkward squad" all by himself, and drilled an extra hour.

"We'll see, Mr. Klegg," said the Captain, "if you can't learn to handle your arms without mashing the toes and stabbing the eyes out of the rest of the company."

CHAPTER VIII. ON COMPANY DRILL

SI GETS TANGLED IN THE MAZES OF THE EVOLUTIONS.

"ALL in for company drill!"

These words struck the unwilling ears of Co. Q, 200th Ind., the next time Buell halted his army to draw a long breath.

"Wish somebody would shoot that durned Orderly," muttered Si Klegg. "For two cents I'd do it myself."

"Don't do it, Si," admonished Shorty, "They'd git another one that'd be just as bad. All orderlies are cusses."

Si believed it would be a case of justifiable homicide, and, if the truth must be told, this feeling was largely shared by the other members of the company. For more than a week the boys had been tramping over a "macadamized" Kentucky pike. Feet were plentifully decorated with blisters, legs were stiff and sore, and joints almost refused to perform their functions.

It had rained nearly all the previous day, and the disgusted Hoosiers of the 200th went sloshing along, wet to the skin, for 20 dreary miles. With that diabolical care and method that were generally practiced at such times, the Generals selected the worst possible locations for the camps. The 200th was turned into a cornfield, where the men sank over their shoetops in mud, and were ordered to bivouac for the night. The wagons didn't get up at all. How they passed the slowly-dragging hours of that dismal night will not be told at this time. Indeed, bare mention is enough to recall the scene to those who have "been there."



DON'T CARE A CONTINENTAL.

In the morning, when the company was ordered out for drill, Si Klegg was standing before the sputtering fire trying to dry his steaming clothes, every now and then turning around to give the other side a chance. The mercury in his individual thermometer had fallen to a very low point—in fact, it was a cold day for Si's

patriotism. He had reached that stage, not by any means infrequent among the soldiers, when he "didn't care whether school kept or not."

"Well, Si, I s'pose you love your country this mornin'!" said Shorty. He was endeavoring to be cheerful under adverse circumstances.

"I ain't quite as certain about it," said Si, reflectively, "as I was when I left home, up in Posey County. I'm afeared I haven't got enough of it to last me through three years of this sort of thing!"

Si felt at that moment as though he was of no account for anything, unless it was to be decked with paint and feathers and stood for a sign in front of a cigar store.

The rain had ceased, and the Colonel of the 200th felt that he must, like the busy bee, "improve each shining hour" in putting his command into condition for effective service. So he told the Adjutant to have the companies marched over to an adjacent pasture for drill.

"Attention, Co. Q!" shouted the Captain, after the Orderly had got the boys limbered up enough to get into ranks. The Captain didn't know very much about drilling himself, but he had been reading up "Hardee," and thought he could handle the company; but it was a good deal like the blind trying to lead the blind.

"Right—Face!"

Not quite half the men faced the wrong way, turning to the left instead of the right, which was doing pretty well for a starter.

"Get around there, Klegg, and the rest of you fellows! Can't ye ever learn anything."



Si was so particularly awkward that the Captain put him at the tail-end of the company. Then he tried the right face again, and as the boys seemed to get around in fair shape he commanded:

"Right shoulder shift arms! Forward—March!"

The company started off; but the Captain was not a little surprised, on looking back, to see Si marching: off in the opposite direction. He had faced the wrong way again, and, as he didn't see the others, he thought he was all right, and away he went on his own hook, till a shout from the Captain told him of his mistake.



"FORWARD—MARCH!"

When the Captain reached the field which was the drill-ground for the day, he thought he would try a wheel. After a brief lecture to the company on the subject he gave the command for the movement.



"COMPANY—RIGHT WHEEL!"

It is scarcely necessary to say that the first trial was a sad failure. The line bulged out in the center, and the outer flank, unable to keep up, fell behind, the company assuming nearly the shape of a big letter C. Then the boys on the outer end took the double-quick, cutting across the arc of the proper circle, which soon resulted in a hopeless wreck of the whole company. The Captain halted the chaotic mass of struggling men, and with the help of the Orderly finally succeeded in getting them straightened out and into line again. The men had often seen practiced soldiers going through this most difficult of all tactical movements, and it seemed easy enough; they didn't see why they couldn't do it just as well as the other fellows. They kept at it, and in the course of half an hour had improved so much that they could swing around in some kind of shape without the line breaking to pieces.

CHAPTER IX. SI GETS A LETTER

AND WRITES ONE TO PRETTY ANNABEL, UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

"COMPANY Q, tumble up here and git yer mail!" shouted the Orderly one afternoon, soon after the 200th Ind. turned into a tobacco patch to bivouac for the night. It had been two weeks since the regiment left Louisville, and this was the first mail that had caught up with it.

It seemed to the boys as if they had been away from home a year. For a whole fortnight they hadn't heard a word from their mothers, or sisters, or their "girls." Si Klegg couldn't have felt more lonesome and forsaken if he had been Robinson Crusoe.

In the excitement of distributing the mail everything else was forgotten.. The boys were all getting their suppers, but at the thought of letters from home even hunger had to take a back seat.

Si left his coffee-pot to tip over into the fire, and his bacon sizzling in the frying-pan, as he elbowed his way into the crowd that huddled around the Orderly.

"If there ain't more'n one letter for me," said Si softly to himself, "I hope it'll be from Annabel; but, of course, I'd like to hear from Ma and sister Marier, too!"

The Orderly, with a big package of letters in his hand, was calling out the names, and as the boys received their letters they distributed themselves through the camp, squatting about on rails or on the ground, devouring with the greatest avidity the welcome messages from home. The camp looked as if there had been a snowstorm.

Si waited anxiously to hear his name called as the pile letters rapidly grew smaller, and he began to think he was going to get left.

"Josiah Klegg!" at length shouted the Orderly, as he held out two letters. Si snatched them from his hand, went off by himself, and sat down on a log.

Si looked at his letters and saw that one of them was addressed in a pretty hand. He had never received a letter from Annabel before, but he "felt it in his bones" that this one was from her. He glanced around to be certain nobody was looking at him, and gently broke the seal, while a ruddy glow overspread his beardless cheeks. But he was secure from observation, as everybody else was similarly intent.

"Dear Si," the letter began. He didn't have to turn over to the bottom of the last page to know what name he would find there. He read those words over and over a dozen times, and they set his nerves tingling clear down to his toe-nails. Si forgot his aches and blisters as he read on through those delicious lines.



She wrote how anxious she was to hear from him and how cruel it was of him not to write to her real often; how she lay awake nights thinking about him down among those awful rebels; how she supposed that by this time he must be full of bullet-holes; and didn't he ge' hungry sometimes, and wasn't it about time for him to get a furlough? how it was just too mean for anything that those men down South had to get up a war; how proud she was of Si because he had 'listed, and how she watched the newspapers every day to find some thing about him; how she wondered how many rebels he had killed, and if he had captured any batteries yet—she said she didn't quite know what batteries were, but she read a good deal about capturing 'em, and she supposed it was something all the soldiers did; how she hoped he wouldn't forget her, and she'd like to see how he looked, now that he was a real soldier, and her father had sold the old "mooley" cow, and Sally Perkins was engage to Jim Johnson, who had stayed at home, and as for herself she wouldn't have anybody but a soldier about the size of Si, and 'Squire Jones's son had been trying to shine up to her and cut Si out, but she sent him off with a flea in his ear.

"Yours till deth, Annabel."

The fact that there was a word misspelt now and then did not detract in the least from the letter, so pleasing to Si. In fact, he was a little lame in orthography himself, so that he had neither the ability nor the disposition to scan Annabel's pages with a critic's eye. Si was happy, and as he began to cast about for his

supper he even viewed with complacency his bacon burned to a crisp and his capsized coffee-pot helplessly melting away in the fire.

"Well, Si, what does she say?" said his friend Shorty.

"What does who say?" replied Si, getting red in the face, and bristling up and trying to assume an air of indifference.

"Just look here now. Si," said Shorty, "you can't play that on me. How about that rosy-cheeked girl up in Posey County?"

It was Si's tender spot. He hadn't got used to that sort of thing yet, and he felt that the emotions that made his heart throb like a sawmill were too sacred to be fooled with. Impelled by a sudden impulse he smote Shorty fairly between the eyes, felling him to the ground.

The Orderly, who happened to be near, took Si by the ear and marched him up to the Captain's quarters.

"Have him carry a rail in front of my tent for an hour!" thundered the Captain. "Don't let it be a splinter, either; pick out a good, heavy one. And, Orderly, detail a guard to keep Mr. Klegg moving."



Of course, it was very mortifying to Si, and he would have been almost heartbroken had he not been comforted by the thought that it was all for her! At first he felt as if he would like to take that rail and charge around and destroy the whole regiment; but, on thinking it over, he made up his mind that discretion was the better part of valor.

As soon as Si's hour was up, and he had eaten supper and "made up" with Shorty, he set about answering his letter. When, on his first march, Si cleaned out all the surplusage from his knapsack, he had hung on to a pretty portfolio that his sister gave him. This was stocked with postage stamps and writing materials, including an assortment of the envelopes of the period, bearing in gaudy colors National emblems, stirring legends, and harrowing scenes of slaughter, all intended to stimulate the patriotic impulses and make the breast of the soldier a very volcano of martial ardor.

When Si got out his nice portfolio he found it to be an utter wreck. It had been jammed into a shapeless mass, and, besides this, it had been soaked with rain; paper and envelopes were a pulpy ruin, and the postage stamps were stuck around here and there in the chaos. It was plain that this memento of home had fallen an early victim to the hardships of campaign life, and that its days of usefulness were over.

"It's no use; 'tain't any good," said Si sorrowfully, as he tossed the debris into the fire, after vainly endeavoring to save from the wreck enough to carry, out his epistolary scheme.

Then he went to the sutler—or "skinner," as he was better known—and paid 10 cents for a sheet of paper and an envelope, on which were the cheerful words, "It is sweet to die for one's country!" and 10 cents more for a 3-cent postage stamp. He borrowed a leadpencil, hunted up a piece of crackerbox, and sat down to his work by the flickering light of the fire. Si wrote:

"Deer Annie."

There he stopped, and while he was scratching his head and thinking what he would say next the Orderly came around detailing guards for the night, and directed Klegg to get his traps and report at once for duty.



SI WRITES TO "DEER ANNIE."

"It hain't my turn," said Si. "There's Bill Brown, and Jake Schneider, and Pat Dooley, and a dozen more—I've been since they have!"

But the Orderly did not even deign to reply. Si remembered the guard-house, and his shoulder still ached from the rail he had carried that evening; so he quietly folded up his paper and took his place with the detail.

The next morning the army moved early, and Si had no chance to resume his letter. As soon as the regiment halted, after an 18-mile march, he tackled it again. This time nothing better offered in the way of a writing-desk than a tin plate, which he placed face downward upon his knee. Thus provided, Si plunged briskly into the job before him, with the following result:

"I now take my pen in hand to let you know that I am well, except the doggoned blisters on my feet, and I hope these few lines may find you enjoying the same blessings."

Si thought this was neat and a good start for his letter. Just as he had caught an idea for the next sentence a few scattering shots were heard on the picket-line, and in an instance the camp was in commotion. "Tall in!" "Be lively, men!" were heard on every hand.

Si sprang as if he had received a galvanic shock, cramming the letter into his pocket. Of course, there wasn't any fight. It was only one of the scares that formed so large a part of that campaign. But it spoiled Si's letter-writing for the time.

It was nearly a week before he got his letter done. He wrote part of it using for a desk the back of a comrade who was sitting asleep by the fire. He worked at it whenever he could catch a few minutes between the marches and the numerous details for guard, picket, fatigue and other duty. He said to Annie:



AN ARMY WRITING-DESK.

"Bein' a soljer aint quite what they crack it up to be when they're gittin' a fellow to enlist. It's mity rough, and you'd better believe it. You ought to be glad you're a gurl and don't haf to go. I wish't I was a gurl sometimes. I haven't kild enny rebbles yet. I hain't even seen one except a fiew raskils that was tuk in by the critter soljers, they calls em cavilry. Me and all the rest of the boys wants to hav a fite, but it looks like Ginral Buil was afeared, and we don't git no chance. I axed the Ordly couldn't he get me a furlow. The Ordly jest laft and says to me, Si, says he, yer don't know as much as a mule. The Capt'n made me walk up and down for an hour with a big rail on my sholder.

"You tell Squire Joneses boy that he haint got sand enuff to jine the army, and if he don't keep away from you I'll bust his eer when I git home, if I ever do. Whattle you do if I shouldn't ever see you agin? But you no this glorus Govymnt must be pertected, and the bully Stars and Strips must flote, and your Si is goin to help do it.

*"My pen is poor, my ink is pale,
My luv for you shall never fale.*

"Yours, aflfeckshnitly, Si Klegg."

CHAPTER X. SI AND THE DOCTORS

HE JOINS THE PALE PROCESSION AT SICK-CALL.

SI KLEGG was a good specimen of a healthy, robust Hoosier lad—for he could scarcely be called' a man yet. Since he lay in his cradle and was dosed with paregoric and catnip tea like other babies, he had never seen a sick day, except when he had the mumps on "both sides" at once. He had done all he could to starve the doctors.

When the 200th Ind. took the field it had the usual outfit of men who wrote their names sandwiched between a military title in front and "M. D." behind, a big hospital tent, and an apothecary shop on wheels, loaded to the guards with quinine, blue-mass, castor oil, epsom salts, and all other devices to assuage the sufferings of humanity.

The boys all started out in good shape, and there had been hardly time for them to get sick much yet. So up to this stage of the regiment's history the doctors had found little to do but issue arnica and salve for lame legs and blistered feet, and strut around in their shiny uniforms.

But there came a day when they had all they could attend to. On going into camp one afternoon, the regiment, well in advance, struck a big field of green corn and an orchard of half-ripe apples. Of course, the boys sailed in, and natural consequences followed.

"Now this is something like!" said Si, as he squatted on the ground along with Shorty and half a dozen messmates. They surrounded a camp-kettle full of steaming ears and half a bushel or so of apples heaped on a poncho.

"Wish we had some o' mother's butter to grease this corn with," observed Si, as he flung a cob into the fire and seized a fresh ear.

All agreed that Si's head was level on the butter question, but under all the circumstances of the case they were glad enough to have the com without butter.

The ears went off with amazing rapidity. Every man seemed to be afraid he wouldn't get his share. When the kettle was empty the boys turned themselves loose on the apples, utterly reckless of results. So, they were filled full, and were thankful.

When Si got up he burst off half the buttons on his clothes. He looked as if he was carrying a bass-drum in front of him. After he began to shrink he had to tie up his clothes with a string until he had a chance to repair damages. But during the next 24 hours he had something else to think of.

In fact, it wasn't long till Si began to wish he had eaten an ear of corn and an apple or two less. He didn't feel very well. He turned in early, thinking he would go to sleep and be all right in the morning.

Along in the night he uttered a yell that came near stampeding the company. An enormous colic was raging around in his interior, and Si fairly howled with pain. He thought he was going: to die right away.



"Shorty," said he, between the gripes, to his comrade, "I'm afeared I'm goin' to peter out. After I'm gone you write to—to—Annie and tell her I died for my country like a man. I'd ruther been shot than die with the colic, but I 'spose 'twont make much difference after it's all over!" 9 "I'll do it," replied Shorty. "We'll plant you in good shape; and Si, we'll gather up the corn-cobs and build a monument over you!"

But Si wasn't cut off in the bloom of youth by that colic. His eruptive condition frightened Shorty, however, and though he was in nearly as bad shape himself, he went up and routed out one of the doctors, who growled a good deal about being disturbed.

The debris of the supper scattered about the camp told him what was the matter, and he had no need to make a critical diagnosis of Si's case. He gave him a dose of something or other that made the pain let up a little, and Si managed to rub along through the night.

Fortunately for Si, and for more than half the members of the regiment, the army did not move next day, and the doctors had a good opportunity to get in their work.

At the usual hour in the morning the bugle blew the "sick-call." A regiment of tanned and grizzled veterans from Ohio lay next to the 200th Ind., and as Si lay there he heard them take up the music:

*"Git yer qui-nine! Git yer qui-nine!
Tumble up you sick and lame and blind;
Git a-long right smart, you'll be left be-hind."*

"Fall in fer yer ipecac!" shouted the Orderly of Co. Q. Si joined the procession and went wabbling up to the "doctor's" shop. He was better than he had been during the night, but still looked a good deal discouraged.

It was a regular matinee that day. The Surgeon and his assistants were all on hand, as the various squads, colicky and cadaverous, came to a focus in front of the tent.



A RUDE AWAKENING.

The doctors worked off the patients at a rapid rate, generally prescribing the same medicine for all, no matter what ailed them. This was the way the army doctors always did, but it happened in this case that they were not far wrong, as the ailments, arising from a common cause, were much the same.

Si waited till his turn came, and received his rations from the Hospital Steward. Of course, he was excused from duty for the day, and as he speedily recovered his normal condition he really had a good time.



VISITS THE DOCTOR.

A few days after this the whole regiment was ordered on fatigue duty to repair an old corduroy road. Si didn't want to go, and "played off." He told the Orderly he wasn't able to work, but the Orderly said he would have to shoulder an ax or a shovel, unless he was excused by the doctor. He went up at sick-call and made a wry face, with his hands clasped over his body in the latitude of his waistband.

The doctor gave him a lot of blue-mass pills, which Si threw into the fire as soon as he got back to his quarters. Then he played seven-up all day with Shorty, who had learned before Si did how to get a day off when he wanted it.

Si thought it was a great scheme, but he tried it once too often. The doctor "caught on," and said, the next time Si went up, that castor oil was what he needed to fetch him around. So he poured out a large dose and made Si take it right then and there.

The next time fatigue duty was ordered Si thought he felt well enough to go along with the boys.

CHAPTER XI. THE PLAGUE OF THE SOLDIER

INTRODUCTION TO "ONE WHO STICKETH CLOSER THAN A BROTHER."

"HELLO Si; goin' for a soljer, ain't ye?"

"You bet!"

"Wall, you'd better b'lieve its great fun; it's jest a picnic all the time! But, say, Si, let's see yer finger-nails!"

"I'd like ter know what finger-nails 's got to do with soljerin'!" said Si. "The 'cruitin' ossifer 'n' the man 't keeps the doctor shop made me shuck myself, 'n' then they 'xamined my teeth, 'n' thumped me in the ribs, 'n' rubbed down my legs, 'n' looked at my hoofs, same 's if 'I'd bin a hoss they wuz buyin', but they didn't say nothin' 'bout my finger-nails."

"You jest do 's I tell ye; let 'em grow, 'n' keep 'em right sharp. Ye'll find plenty o' use fer 'em arter a while, 'n' 'twont be long, nuther. I know what I'm talkin' 'bout; I've been thar!"

This conversation took place a day or two before Si bade farewell to his mother and sister Marier and pretty Annabel and left the peaceful precincts of Posey County to march away with the 200th Ind. for that awful place vaguely designated as "the front!" He had promptly responded to the call, and his name was near the top of the list of Company Q.



Si already had his blue clothes on. By enlisting early he had a good pick of the various garments, and so got a suit that fitted his form—which was plump as an apple-dumpling tolerably well. It was left for the tail-enders of the company to draw trousers that were six inches too long or too short, and blouses that either wouldn't reach around, and left yawning chasms in front, or were so large that they looked as if they were hung on bean-poles.

Of course, Si couldn't be expected to do any more plodding farm work, now that he had "jined" the army. While the company was filling up he spent most of his time on dress parade in the village near by, eliciting admiring smiles from all the girls, and an object of the profoundest awe and wonder to the small boys.

One day Si was sitting on the sugar-barrel in the corner grocery, gnawing a "blind robin," and telling how he thought the war wouldn't last long after the 200th Ind. got down there and took a hand and got fairly interested in the game; they would wind it up in short meter. Such ardent emotions always seethed and bubbled in the swelling breasts of the new troops when they came down to show the veterans just how to do it.

One of the town boys who had been a year in the service, had got a bullet through his arm in a skirmish, and was at home on furlough, came into the store, and then took place the dialog between him and Si that opens this chapter.

Si wondered a good deal what the veteran meant about the finger-nails. He did not even know that there existed in any nature a certain active and industrious insect which, before he had been in the army a great while, would cause his heart to overflow with gratitude to a beneficent Providence for providing him with nails on his fingers.

When the 200th left Indiana all the boys had, of course, brand-new outfits right from Uncle Sam's great one-price clothing house. Their garments were nice and clean, their faces well washed, and their hair yet showed marks of the comb. At Louisville they stuck up their noses, with a lofty consciousness of superiority, at the sight of Buell's tanned and ragged tramps, who had just come up on the gallop from Tennessee and northern Alabama.



If the new Hoosier regiment had been quartered for a while in long-used barracks, or had pitched its tents in an old camp, Si would very soon have learned, in the school of experience, the delightful uses of fingernails. But the 200th stayed only a single night in Louisville and then joined the procession that started on the chase after the rebel army. It generally camped on new ground, and under these circumstances the insect to which allusion has been made did not begin its work of devastation with that suddenness that usually marked its attack upon soldiers entering the field. But he never failed to "git there" sooner or later, and it was more frequently sooner than later.

One afternoon, when a few days out on this march, a regiment of Wisconsin veterans bivouacked next to the 200th Ind. The strange antics as they threw off their accouterments attracted Si's attention.

"Look a' thar," he said to Shorty. "What 'n name of all the prophets 's them fellers up to?"

"Seems like they was scratchin' theirselves!"

"I s'pose that's on account of the dust 'n' sweat," said Si.

"It's a mighty sight worse 'n that!" replied Shorty, who knew more about these things than Si did. "I reckon we'll all be doin' like they are 'fore long."

Si whistled softly to himself as he watched the Wisconsin boys. They were hitching and twisting their shoulders about, evidently enjoying the friction of the clothing upon their skins. There was a general employment of fingers, and often one would be seen getting come other fellow to scratch his back around where he couldn't reach himself. If everybody was too busy to do this for him he would back up to a tree and rub up and down against the bark.

Life has few pleasures that can equal the sensations of delightful enjoyment produced in those days, when graybacks were plenty, by rubbing against a tree that nicely fitted the hollow of the back, after throwing off one's "traps" at the end of a day's march.

Directly the Wisconsin chaps began to scatter into the woods. Si watched them as they got behind the trees and threw off their blouses and shirts. He thought at first that perhaps they were going in swimming, but there was no stream of water at hand large enough to justify this theory in explanation of their nudity. As each man set down, spread his nether garment over his knees and appeared to be intently engaged, with eyes and fingers. Si's curiosity was very much excited.

"Looks 's if they wuz all mendin' up their shirts and sewin' on buttons," said Si, "Guess it's part o' their regular drill, ain't it, Shorty?"

Shorty laughed at Si's ignorant simplicity. He knew what those veterans were doing, and he knew that Si would have to come to it, but he didn't want to shock his tender sensibilities by telling him of it.

"Them fellers ain't sewin' on no buttons. Si," he replied; "they're skirmishin'."

"Skirmishin'!" exclaimed Si, opening his eyes very wide. "I haint seen any signs o' rebs 'round here, 'n' there aint any shootin' goin' on, 'nless I've lost my hearin'. Durned if 't aint the funniest skirmishin' I ever hearn tell of!"

"Now, don't ax me nuthin' more 'bout it, Si," said Shorty. "All I'm goin' to tell ye is that the longer ye live the more ye'll find things out. Let's flax 'round 'n' git supper!"

A little while after, as Si was squatting on the ground holding the frying-pan over the fire, he saw a strange insect vaguely wandering about on the sleeve of his blouse. It seemed to be looking for something, and Si became interested as he watched it traveling up and down his arm. He had never seen one like it before, and he thought he would like to know what it was. He would have asked Shorty, but his comrade had gone to the spring for water. Casting his eye around he saw the Captain, who chanced to be sauntering through the camp.

The Captain of Co. Q had been the Principal of a seminary in Posey County, and was looked upon with awe

by the simple folk as a man who knew about all that was worth knowing. Si thought he might be able to tell him all about the harmless's-looking little stranger.

So he put down his frying-pan and stepped up to the Captain, holding out his arm and keeping his eye on the insect so that he shouldn't get away.

"Good evenin', Cap.," said Si, touching his hat, and addressing him with that familiar disregard of official dignity that characterised the average volunteer, who generally felt that he was just as good as anybody who wore shoulder straps.

"Good evening, Klegg," said the Captain, returning the salute.

"Say, Cap, you've been ter collidge 'n' got filled up with book-larnin'; p'raps ye kin tell me what kind o' bug this is. I'm jest a little bit curious to know."

And Si pointed to the object of his inquiry that was leisurely creeping toward a hole in the elbow of his outer garment.

"Well, Josiah," said the Captain, after a brief inspection, "I presume I don't know quite as much as some people think I do; but I guess I can tell you something about that insect. I never had any of them myself, but I've read of them."

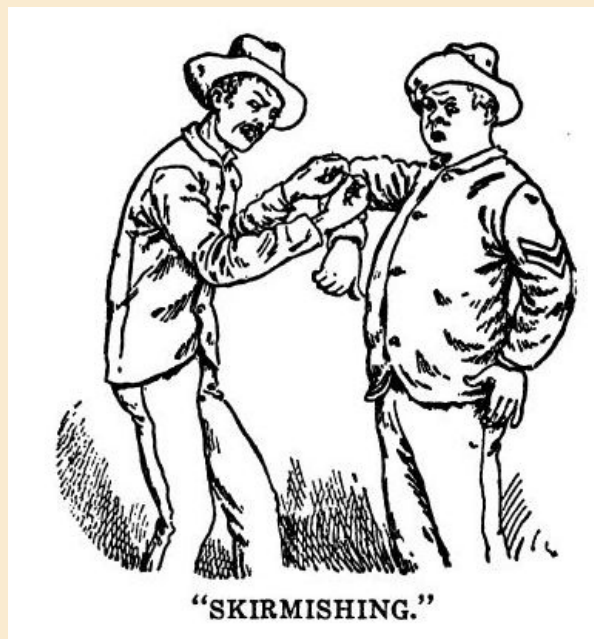
"Never had 'em himself," thought Si. "What 'n the world does ha mean?" And Si's big eyes opened with wonder and fear at the thought that whatever it was he had "got 'em."

"I suppose," continued the Captain, "you would like to know the scientific name?"

"I reckon that'll do 's well 's any."

"Well, sir, that is a *Pediculus*. That's a Latin word, but it's his name."

"Purty big name fer such a leetle bug, ain't it, Perfessor?" observed Si. "Name's big enough for an el'fant er a 'potamus."



"It may seem so, Klegg; but when you get intimately acquainted with him I think you will find that his name isn't any too large for him. There is a good deal more of him than you think."

The young soldier's eyes opened still wider.

"I was going on to tell you," continued the Captain, "that there are several kinds of *Pediculi*—we don't say *Pediculuses*. There is the *Pediculus Capitis*—Latin again—but it means the kind that lives on the head. I presume when you were a little shaver your mother now and then harrowed your head with a fine-tooth comb?"

"Ya-as" said Si; "she almost took the hide off sometimes, an' made me yell like an Injun."

"Now, Klegg, I don't wish to cause you unnecessary alarm, but I will say that the head insect isn't a circumstance to this one on your arm. As you would express it, perhaps, he can't hold a candle to him. This fellow is the *Pediculus Corporis*!"

"I s'pose that means they eats up Corporals!" said Si.

"I do not think the *Pediculus Corporis* confines himself exclusively to Corporals, as his name might indicate," said the Captain, laughing at Si's literal translation and his personal application of the word. "He no doubt likes a juicy and succulent Corporal, but I don't believe he is any respecter of persons. That's my opinion, from what I've heard about him. It is likely that I 'will be able to speak more definitely, from experience, after a while. *Corporis* means that he is the kind that pastures on the human body. But there's one thing more about this fellow, some call him *Pediculus Vestimenti*; that is because he lives around in the clothing."

"But we don't wear no vests," said Si, taking a practical view of this new word; "nothin' but blouses, 'n' pants, 'n' shirts."

"You are too literal, Klegg. That word means any kind of clothes. But I guess I've told you as much about him as you care to know at present. If you want any more information, after two or three weeks, come and see me again. I think by that time you will not find it necessary to ask any more questions."

Si went back to his cooking, with the *Pediculus* still on his arm. He wanted to show it to Shorty. The Captain's profound explanation, with its large words, was a little too much for Si. He did not yet clearly

comprehend the matter, and as he walked thoughtfully to where Shorty was "bilin" the coffee he was trying to get through his head what it all meant.

"Hello, Si," said Shorty; "whar ye bin? What d'ye mean, goin' off 'n' leavin' yer sowbelly half done?"

"Sh-h!" replied Si. "Ye needn't git yer back up about it. Bin talkin' to the Cap'n. Shorty, look at that 'ere bug!"

And Si pointed to the object of the Captain's lecture on natural history that was still creeping on his arm. Shorty slapped his thigh and burst into a loud laugh.

"Was that what ye went to see the Cap'n 'bout?" he asked as soon as he could speak.

"Why—ya-as," replied Si, somewhat surprised at Shorty's unseemly levity. "I saw that thing crawlin' round, 'n' I was a-wonderin' what it was, fer I never seen one afore. I knowed Cap was a scolar, 'n' a perfesser, 'n' all that 'n' I 'lowed he c'd tell me all about it. So I went 'n' axed him."

"What'd he tell ye?"

"He told me lots o' big, heathenish words, 'n' said this bug was a ridiculous, or suthin' like that."

"Diculus be blowed!" said Shorty, "The ole man was a'stuffin' ye. I'll tell ye what that is, Si," he added solemnly, "that's a grayback!"

"A grayback!" said Si. "I've hearn 'em call the Johnnies graybacks, but I didn't know 's there was any other kind."

"I reck'n 'twont be long, now, till yer catches on ter the meanin' ol what a grayback is. Ye'll know all 'bout it purty sudden. This ain't the first one I ever seen."

Si was impressed, as he had often been before, by Shorty's superior wisdom and experience.

"See here. Si," Shorty continued, as his eye suddenly lighted up with a brilliant thought, "I guess I kin make ye understand what a grayback is. What d'ye call that coat ye've got on?"

"Why, that's a fool question; it's a blouse, of course!"

"Jesso!" said Shorty. "Now, knock off the fust letter o' that word, 'n' see what ye got left!"

Si looked at Shorty as if he thought his conundrums were an indication of approaching idiocy. Then he said, half to himself:

"Let's see! Blouse—blouse—take off the 'b' 'n' she spells l-o-u-s-e, louse! Great Scott, Shorty, is that a louse?"

"That's jest the size of it. Si. Ye'll have millions of 'em 'fore the war's over 'f they don't hurry up the cakes."

Si looked as if he would like to dig a hole in the ground, get into it, and have Shorty cover him up.

"Why didn't the Cap'n tell me it was that? He said suthin' about ridiculus corporalis, and I thought he was makin' fun o' me. He said these bugs liked to eat fat Corporals."

"I reckon that's so," replied Shorty; "but they likes other people jest as well—even a skinny feller like me. They lunches off'n privits, 'n' Corp'rils, 'n' Kurnals, 'n' Gin'ral, all the same. They ain't satisfied with three square meals a day, nuther; they jest eats right along all the time 'tween regular meals. They allus gits hungry in the night, too, and chaws a feller up while he sleeps. They don't give ye no show at all. I rayther think the graybacks likes the ossifers best if they could have their ch'ice, 'cause they's fatter 'n the privits; they gits better grub."

Si fairly turned pale as he contemplated the picture so graphically portrayed by Shorty. The latter's explanation was far more effectual in letting the light in upon Si's mind than the scientific disquisition of the "Perfesser." He had now a pretty clear idea of what a "grayback" was. Whatever he lacked to make his knowledge complete was soon supplied in the regular way. But Si was deeply grieved and shocked at what Shorty had told him. It was some minutes before he said anything more.

"Shorty," he said, with a sadness in his tone that would almost have moved a mule to tears, "who'd a-thought rd ever git as low down 's this, to have them all-fired graybacks, 's ye call 'em, crawlin' over me. How'd mother feel if she knew about 'em. She wouldn't sleep a wink fer a month!"

"Ye'll have to come to it. Si. All the soljers does, from the Major-Gin'ral down to the tail-end of the mule-whackers. Ye mind them 'Sconsin chaps we was lookin' at a little bit ago?"

"Yes," said Si.

"Well, graybacks was what ailed 'em. The fellers with their shirts on their knees was killin' 'em off. That's what they calls 'skirmishin'. There's other kinds o' skirmishing besides fitin' rebels! Ye'd better git rid of that one on yer arm, if he hasn't got inside already; then there'll be one less of 'em."

Si found him after a short search, and proposed to get a chip, carry him to the fire and throw him in.

"Naw!" said Shorty in disgust, "that's no way. Lemme show yer how!"



“NAW! LEMME SHOW YE HOW!”

Shorty placed one thumb-nail on each side of the insect. There was a quick pressure, a snap like the crack of a percussion cap, and all was over.

Si shuddered, and wondered if he could ever engage in such a work of slaughter.

"D'ye s'pose," he said to Shorty, "that there's any more of 'em on me?" And he began to hitch his shoulders about, and to feel a desire to put his fingers to active use.

"Shouldn't wonder," replied Shorty. "Mebbe I've got 'em, to. Let's go out'n do a little skirmishin' ourselves."

"We'd better go off a good ways," said Si, "so's the boys won't see us."

"You're too nice and pertickler for a soljer. Si. They'll all be doin' it, even the Cap'n himself, by termorrer or nex' day."

They went out back of the camp, where Si insisted on getting behind the largest tree he could find. Then they sat down and engaged in that exciting chase of the *Pediculus* up and down the seams of their garments, so familiar to all who wore either the blue or the gray. Thousands of nice young men who are now preachers and doctors and lawyers and statesmen, felt just as bad about it at first as Si did.

"Shorty," said Si, as they slowly walked back to eat their supper, which had been neglected in the excitement of the hour, "before Co. Q left Posey County to jine the rigiment a feller 't was home on furlow told me ter let my finger-nails grow long 'n' sharp. He said I'd need 'em. I didn't know what he meant then, but I b'lieve I do now."

CHAPTER XII. A WET NIGHT

THE DEPRAVITY OF AN ARMY TENT REVEALS ITSELF.

NIGHT threw her dark mantle over the camp of the 200th Ind. The details of guard and picket had been made. Videts, with sleepless eye and listening ear, kept watch and ward on the outposts, while faithful sentries trod their beats around the great bivouac. All day the army had marched, and was to take the road again at an early hour in the morning. Supper had been eaten, and the tired soldiers were gathered around the campfires that gleamed far and near through the darkness.

"Si," said Shorty to his chum as they sat on a log beside the dying embers, "how d'ye like soldierin', as fur as ye've got?"

"It's purty hard business," said Si, reflectively, "an' I s'pose we haint seen the worst on it yet, either, from what I've hearn tell. Pity the men that got up this war can't be made to do all the trampin' 'n' fitin'. An' them fellers up in old Injeanny that come 'round makin' such red-hot speeches to git us boys to 'list, wouldn't it be fun to see 'em humpin' 'long with gun 'n' knapsack, 'n' chawin' hardtack, 'n' stan'in' guard nights, 'n' pourin' water on their blisters, 'n' pickin' graybacks off their shirts, 'n' p'leecin' camp, 'n' washin' their own clothes?"

"I think we'd enjy seein' 'em do all that," said Shorty, laughing at the picture Si had drawn. "I reckon most of 'em 'd peter out purty quick, and I'd like to hear what sort o' speeches they'd, make then. I tell ye, Si, there's a big diffrence 'tween goin' yerself an' tellin' some other feller to go."

"Mebbe they'll git to draftin' after a while," observed Si, "'n' if they do I hope that'll ketch em!"

"Wall, we're in fur it, anyway," said Shorty. "Let's take down the bed 'n' turn in!"

It didn't take long to complete the arrangements for the night. They spread their "gum" blankets, or ponchos, on the ground, within the tent, and on these their wool blankets, placed their knapsacks at the head for pillows, and that was all. It was warmer than usual that evening, and they stripped down to their nether garments.

"Feels good once in a while," said Si, "to peel a feller's clothes oft, 'n' sleep in a Christian-like way. But,

Great Scott! Shorty, ain't this ground lumpy? It's like lying on a big washboard. I scooted all over the country huntin' fer straw to-night. There wasn't but one little stack within a mile of camp. Them derved Ohio chaps gobbled every smidgin of it. They didn't leave enuff to make a hummin'-bird's nest. The 200th Ind. 'll git even with 'em some day."

So Si and Shorty crept in between the blankets, drew the top one up to their chins, and adjusted their bodily protuberances as best they could to fit the ridges and hollows beneath them.

"Now, Si," said Shorty, "don't ye git to fitin' rebels in yer sleep and kick the kiver off, as ye did last night."

As they lay there their ears caught the music of the bugles sounding the "tattoo." Far and near floated through the clear night air the familiar melody that warned every soldier not on duty to go to bed. Next to the 200th Ind. lay a regiment of wild Michigan veterans, who struck up, following the strains of the bugles:

*Say, oh Dutch'y, will ye fight mit Si-gel?
Zwei glass o' la-ger, Yaw! Yaw! Yaw!!!
Will yet fight to help de bul-ly ea-gle?*

*Schweitzer-ksse und pret-zels,
Hur-raw! raw! raw!*

During the night there came one of those sudden storms that seemed to be sent by an inscrutable Providence especially to give variety to the soldier's life.



STRUCK BY A CYCLONE.

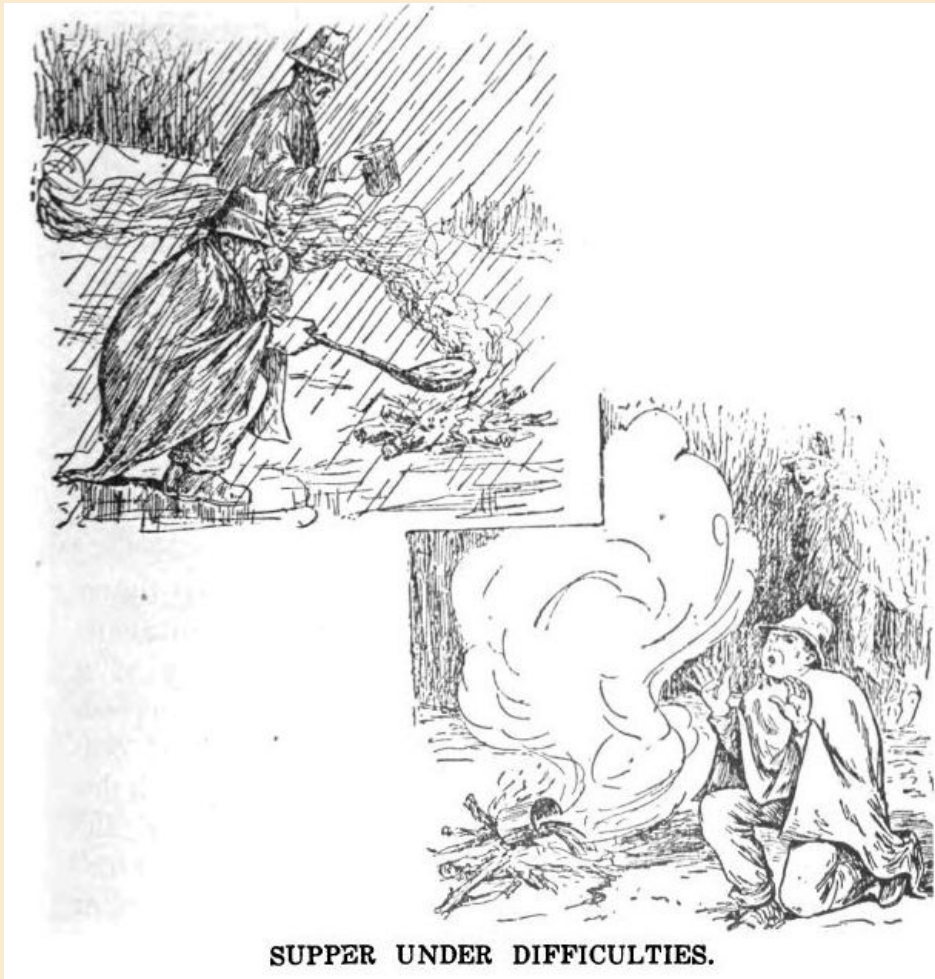
A well-developed cyclone struck the camp, and Si and Shorty were soon awakened by the racket. The wind was blowing and whirling in fierce gusts, wrenching out the tent-pins or snapping the ropes as if they were threads. Everywhere was heard the flapping of canvas, and the yells and shouts of the men as they dashed about in the darkness and wild confusion. Many of the tents were already prostrate, and their demoralized inmates were crawling out from under the ruin. To crown all the rain began to fall in torrents. The camp was a vast pandemonium. The blackest darkness prevailed, save when the scene was illuminated by flashes of lightning. These were followed by peals of thunder that made the stoutest quake.

Si sprang up at the first alarm. "Git up, here, you fellers!" he shouted. "We'd better go outside and grab the ropes, or the hull shebang 'll go over."

There was not a moment to spare. Si dashed out into the storm and darkness, followed by his comrades. Seizing the ropes, some of which were already loosened, they braced themselves and hung on for dear life, in the drenching rain, their hair and garments streaming in the wind.

Si's prompt action saved the tent from the general wreck. The fury of the storm was soon past. Si and his comrades, after driving the pins and securing the ropes, re-entered the tent, wet and shivering for the mercury had gone down with a tumble, or rather it would have done so had they been supplied with thermometers. But the scanty costume in which Si found himself afforded a weather indicator sufficiently

accurate for all practical purposes.



SUPPER UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

The ground was flooded, and their blankets and garments were fast absorbing the water that flowed around in such an exasperating way. Sleep under such conditions was out of the question. Si and Shorty put on their clothes and tried to make the best of their sorry plight.

By this time the rain had nearly ceased. Fortunately they had laid in a good stock of fuel the night before, and after a little patient effort they succeeded in getting a fire started. Around this the boys hovered, alternately warming their calves and shins.

"This is a leetle more'n I bargained fer," said Si. Then, taking a philosophical view of the case, he added, "but there's one good thing about it, Shorty, we'll be all fixed for mornin', an' we won't have to get up when they sound the revel-lee. The buglers kin jest bust theirselves a-blowin' fer all I keer!"

In this way the soldiers spent the remainder of the night. Before daybreak the blast of a hundred bugles rang out, but there was little need for the reveille.

Breakfast was soon over, and in the gray dawn of that murky morning the long column went trailing on its way. The weather gave promise of a sloppy day, and the indications were fully verified. A drizzling rain set in, and continued without cessation. The boys put their heads through the holes in their ponchos, from the corners of which the water streamed. With their muskets at a "secure" they sloshed along through the mud, hour after hour. In spite of their "gums" the water found its way in at the back of the neck and trickled down their bodies. Their clothes became saturated, and they were altogether about as miserable as it is possible for mortals to be.



A FIELD SHANTY.

It seemed to Si that the maximum of discomfort had been reached. He had experienced one thing after another during the few weeks since he left home, and he thought each in turn was worse than the last, and about as bad as it could be. But Si learned a good deal more before he graduated. All through the long, dreary day the soldiers plodded on. There was little comfort to be derived from the "rest," for the ground was soaked with water.

"Why didn't we think of it, Shorty," said Si, "'n' make it part o' the bargain' when we 'listed that we were to have umbrellers. These gum things don't amount to shucks, nohow, to keep the rain off. I sh'd think Uncle Sam might do that much for us!"

"I reckon our clothes 'll be purty well washed by the time we git out o' this mess," said Shorty.

"Feels that way," said Si; "but how about the bilin'? A cold bath jest refreshes them pesky little varmints, 'n' makes 'em livelier 'n ever. Say, Shorty, ye didn't write home anything 'bout our havin' graybacks, did ye?"

"No, not yet; but I was thinkin' I'd tell 'em 'bout it one o' these days."

"Well, Shorty, I ain't going to tell my folks; it 'd jest make my mother feel awful to know I was that way. And sister Maria, and—"

Si was thinking aloud, and was going to say "Annabel," but he checked himself. That name was not to be mentioned in other ears. But he was afraid she would go back on him if she knew, all about it.

It was nearly night when the 200th Ind., dripping and discouraged, filed off into a field of standing corn to pass the night. The men sank to their shoetops in the soft earth. Si remarked to Shorty that he didn't see why the officers should turn 'em loose in such a place as that. But the longer he lived the more he found out about those things. That was the way they always did.



IN THE MORNING.

In five minutes after arms were stacked not a cornstalk remained standing in the field. During the afternoon the troops had gone over a long stretch of swamp road that was almost impassable for teams. Fears were entertained that the wagons of the regiment would not be up that night, and they would not have their tents to shelter them from the storm. In anticipation of such a calamity the boys, gathered in the cornstalks, having a vague idea that they would help out in case of emergency.



TAKING THE TOP RAIL.

Then there was a scramble for the fences. Recognizing the need of good fuel, an order from the General was filtered through the various headquarters that the men might take the top rails, only, from the fence inclosing the field. This order was literally interpreted and carried out, each man, successively, taking the "top rail" as he found it. The very speedy result was that the bottom rails became the "top," and then there weren't any. Almost in the twinkling of an eye the entire fence disappeared.

The drizzle continued through the evening, and by the sputtering fires the soldiers prepared and ate their frugal suppers. Word came that, as was feared, the wagons were hopelessly bemired three or four miles back, and the men would have to make such shift as they could.

The prospect was dreary and cheerless enough. It was little wonder that many of the young Hoosiers felt as if they wanted to quit and go home. But with that wonderful facility for adapting themselves to circumstances that marked the volunteer soldiers, they set about the work of preparing for the night. No one who has not "been there" can imagine how good a degree of comfort—comparatively speaking, of course—it was possible to reach, with such surroundings, by the exercise of a little patience, ingenuity and industry.

Si and Shorty and the others of the "mess" bestirred themselves, and it did not take them more than 20

minutes to build, out of rails and cornstalks, a shelter that was really inviting. They kindled a big fire in front of it, laid some rails within, covered with stalks, and on these spread their blankets. Si, who had "bossed" the job, viewed the work with great satisfaction.

"I tell ye, that's no slouch of a shanty!" said he.

CHAPTER XIII. SI "STRAGGLED"

AND THE OTHER BOYS MADE IT MIGHTY LOVELY FOR HIM.

ONE day while Buell was chasing Bragg, two or three weeks after leaving Louisville, the army was pushing forward at a gait that made the cavalry ahead trot half the time to keep out of the way of the infantry. The extraordinary speed that day was due to the fact that there were no rebels in sight. Half a dozen ragged troopers with shotguns, a mile away, would have caused the whole army to halt, form line-of-battle, and stay there the rest of the day.

The tanned veterans didn't mind the marching. They stretched their legs and went swinging along with a happy-go-lucky air, always ready for anything that might turn up. But it was rough on the new troops, just from home. It taxed their locomotive powers to the utmost limit.

The boys of the 200th Ind. started out bravely. Their fresh, clean faces, new uniforms, and shiny accouterments contrasted strongly with those of the weather-beaten soldiers of '61. You could tell a "tenderfoot" as far as you could see him.

They trudged along in fair shape for an hour or two. Before starting in the morning strict orders had been read to the regiment forbidding straggling, for any reason, under the most terrifying pains and penalties.

"Them fellers that's been in the service longer 'n we have think they're smart," said Si Klegg, as he and Shorty plodded on, both already a little blown. "Well show 'em that we can hoof it jest as fast as they can, and jest as fur in a day!"

"Seems to me we're git'n over the ground party lively to-day," replied Shorty, who was in a grumbling mood. "Wonder if the Gin'ral thinks we're bosses! I'm a little short o' wind, and these pesky gunboats are scrapin' the bark off'n my feet; but I'll keep up or bust."

Though the spirit of these young patriots was willing, the flesh was weak. It wasn't long till Si began to limp. Now and then a groan escaped his lips as a fresh blister "broke." But Si clinched his teeth, humped his back to ease his shoulders from the weight of his knapsack, screwed up his courage, and tramped on over the stony pike. He thought the breathing spells were very short and a long way apart.

Si's knapsack had experienced the universal shrinkage, as told in a previous chapter of our hero's martial career. He still had, however, a good many things that he thought he couldn't spare, but which he found later he could very well get along without.

By noon the 200th began to show signs of going to pieces. The column stretched out longer and longer, like a piece of India-rubber. The ranks looked thin and ragged. Lame and foot-sore, with wo-begone faces, their bodies aching in every bone and tendon, and overcome with a weariness that no one can realize unless he has "been there," the men dropped out one by one and threw themselves into the fence-corners to rest. The officers stormed and drew their swords in vain. Nature—that is, the nature of a new soldier—could endure no more. The ambulances were filled to their utmost, but these would not hold a twentieth part of the crippled and suffering men.

"How're ye gittin' on, Shorty?" said Si, as he and his comrade still struggled along.

"Fair to middlin'," replied Shorty. "I'm goin' to try and pull through!"

"I thought I could," said Si, "but I'm 'bout played out! I am, fer a fact! I guess ef I rest a bit I'll be able to ketch up after a while."

Si didn't know till he found out by experience how hard it was to "ketch up" when a soldier once got behind on the march. Si was too fat for a good roadster, but it didn't take a great while to work off his surplus flesh. Shorty was tall and slim, mostly bone—one of the sort that always stood the marching best, crept up to the Orderly and told him that he would have to stop and puff a while and give his blisters a rest. He'd pull up with Co. Q in an hour or so.

"Better not, Si" said the Orderly; "ye know it's agin orders, and the rear-guard 'll punch ye with their bayonet's if they catch ye stragglin'."

But Si concluded that if he must die for his country it would be sweeter to do so by having a bayonet inserted in his vitals, and then it would be all over with at once, than to walk himself to death.

So he gradually fell back till he reached the tail of the company. Watching his opportunity, he left the ranks, crept into a clump of bushes, and lay down, feeling as if he had been run through a grist-mill. Soon the rear-guard of the 200th came along, with fixed bayonets, driving before them like a flock of frightened sheep a motley crowd of limping, groaning men, gathered up by the roadside.

Si lay very still, hoping to escaoe discovery; but the keen eye of the officer detected the blue heap among the bushes.

"Bring that man out!" said he sternly to one of the guards.

Poor Si scarcely dare to breathe. He hoped the man would think he was dead, and therefore no longer of any account. But the soldier began to prod him with his bayonet, ordering him to get up and move on.



"DON'T STAB ME."

"Look-a-here, pard," said Si, "don't stab me with that thing! I jest can't git along any further till I blow a little. You please lemme be, an' I'll do as much for you. P'rhaps some time you'll get played out and I'll be on the rear-guard. The Cap'n 'll tell me ter fotch ye 'long, an' I'll jest let ye rest, so I will!"

This view of the case struck the guard with some force. Moved with compassion, he turned away, leaving Si to enjoy his rest.



HYDROPATHIC TREATMENT.

Si threw aside his traps, took off his shoes and stockings, and bathed his feet with water from his canteen. He ate a couple of hardtack, and in the course of half an hour began to feel more like Si Klegg. He geared

himself up, shouldered his gun, and started to "ketch up."

All this time the stream of troops—regiments, brigades and divisions—had flowed on. Of course, soldiers who were with their colors had the right of way, and the stragglers were obliged to stumble along as best they could, over the logs and through the bushes at the sides of the roads or skirt along the edges of the fields and woods adjoining. It was this fact added to their exhausted and crippled condition, that made it almost impossible for stragglers to overtake their regiments until they halted for the night. Even then it was often midnight before the last of the wayfarers, weary and worn, dragged their aching limbs into camp.

Si started forward briskly, but soon found it was no easy matter to gain the mile or so that the 200th Ind. was now ahead of him. It was about all he could do to keep up with the fast-moving column and avoid failing still further to the rear. Presently the bugles sounded a halt for one of the hourly rests.

"Now," said Si to himself, "I'll have a good chance to git along tor'd the front. The soljers 'll all lie down in the fence corners an' leave the road clear. I'll jest git up an' dust!"

The sound of the bugles had scarcely died away when the pike was deserted, and on either side, as far as the eye could reach, the prostrate men that covered the ground mingled in a long fringe of blue.

Si got up into the road and started along the lane between these lines of recumbent soldiers. His gait was a little shaky, for the blisters on his feet began to give evidence of renewed activity. He trudged pluckily along, limping some in spite of himself, but on the whole making very good headway.

Pretty soon he struck a veteran regiment from Illinois, the members of which were sitting and lying around in all the picturesque and indescribable postures which the old soldiers found gave them the greatest comfort during a "rest." Then they commenced—that is, it was great sport for the Sucker boys, though Si did not readily appreciate the humorous features of the scene.

"What rigiment is this?" asked Si, timidly.

"Same old rijiment!" was the answer from half a dozen at once. A single glance told the swarthy veterans that the fresh-looking youth who asked this conundrum belonged to one of the new regiments, and they immediately opened their batteries upon him:

"Left—left—=left!"

"Hayfoot—strawfoot! Hayfoot—strawfoot!" keeping time with Si's somewhat irregular steps.

"Hello, there, you! Change step and you'll march easier!"

"Look at that 'ere poor feller; the only man left alive of his regiment! Great Cesar, how they must have suffered! Say, what rijiment did you b'long to?"

"Paymaster's comin', boys, here's a chap with a pay-roll round his neck!" Si had put on that morning the last of the paper collars he had brought from home.

"You'd better shed that knapsack, or it'll be the death of ye!"

"I say, there, how's all the folks to home?"

"How d'ye like it as far as you've got, any way?"

"Git some commissary and pour into them gunboats!"

"Second relief's come, boys; we can all go home now."

"Grab a root!"

"Hep—hep—hep!"

"How'd ye leave Mary Ann?"

Si had never been under such a fire before. He stood it as long as he could, and 'then he stopped.

"Halt!" shouted a chorus of voices. "Shoulder—Arms!" "Order—Arms!"

By this time Si's wrath was at the boiling point. Casting around him a look of defiance, he exclaimed:

"You cowardly blaggards; I can jest lick any two of ye, an' I'll dare ye to come on. If the 200th Ind. was here we'd clean out the hull pack of ye quicker'n ye can say scat!"

This is where Si made a mistake. He ought to have kept right on and said nothing. But Si had to find out all these things by experience, as the rest of the boys did.



SI DEFIES A REGIMENT.

All the members took a hand in the game. They just got right up and yelled, discharging at Si a volley of expletives and pointed remarks that drove him to desperation. Instinctively he brought up his gun.

"Load in nine times—Load!" shouted a dozen of the Illinois tramps.

If Si's gun had been loaded he would have shot somebody, regardless of consequences. Thinking of his bayonet, he jerked it quickly from its scabbard.

"Fix—Bay'net!" yelled the ragged veterans.

And he did, though it was more from the promptings of his own hostile feelings than in obedience to the orders.

"Charge—Bay'net!"

Si had completely lost control of himself in his overpowering rage. With blood in his eye, he came to a charge, glancing fiercely from one side of the road to the other, uncertain where to begin the assault.

Instantly there was a loud clicking all along the line. The Illinois soldiers, almost to a man, fixed their bayonets. Half of them sprang to their feet, and all aimed their shining points at the poor young Hoosier patriot, filling the air with shouts of derision.

It was plain, even to Si in his inflamed state of mind, that the odds against him were too heavy.

"Unfix—Bay'net!" came from half the regiment.

Si concluded he had better get out of a bad scrape the best way he could. So he took off his bayonet and put it back in its place. He shouted words of defiance to his tormentors, but they could not be heard in the din.

"Shoulder—Arms!" "Right—Face!" "Right shoulder shift—Arms!" "Forward—March!" These commands came in quick succession from the ranks amidst roars of laughter.

Si obeyed the orders and started off.

"Left—left—left!"

"Hayfoot—strawfoot!"

Forgetting his blisters. Si took the double-quick while the mob swung their caps and howled with delight.

Si didn't "ketch up" with the 200 Ind. until after it had gone into camp. Shorty had a quart of hot coffee waiting for him.

"Shorty," said Si as they sat by the fire,—"I'm goin' to drop dead in my tracks before I'll fall out again."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"Oh, nothin'; only you jest try it," said Si.

Had it not been for the "fun" the soldiers had in the army to brighten their otherwise dark and cheerless lives, they would all have died. Si was a true type of those who had to suffer for the good of others until they learned wisdom in the school of experience.

CHAPTER XIV. SI AND THE MULES

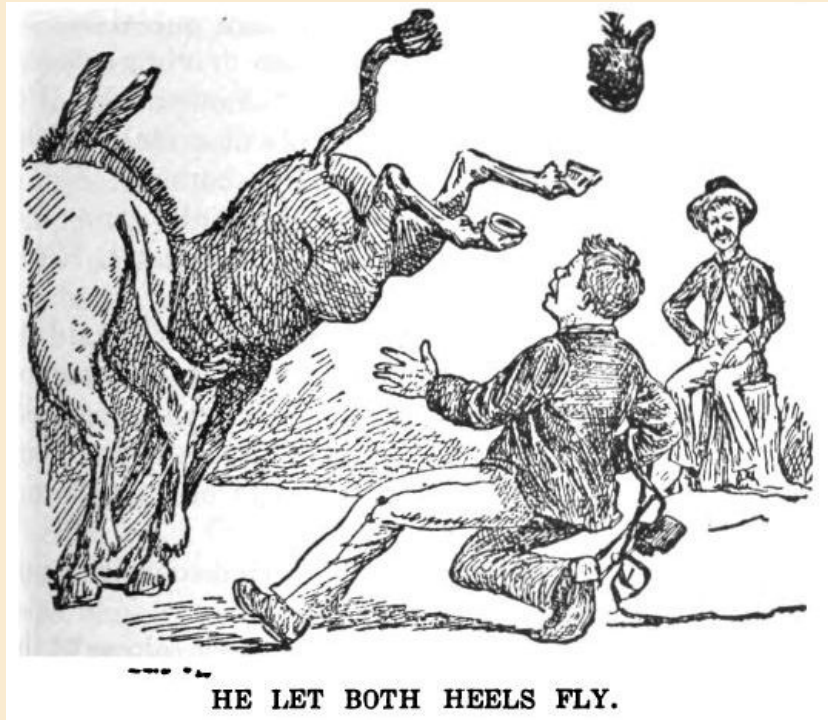
ONE DAY'S RICH EXPERIENCE AS COMPANY TEAMSTER.

"I'VE GOT to have a man to drive team for a few days," said the Orderly of Co. Q of the 200th Ind. one morning at roll-call. "The teamster's sick and I'm goin' to send him to the hospital to-day."

The Orderly-Sergeant of Co. Q was a wily fellow. All Orderly-Sergeants have to be. If they are not naturally, they learn it very quickly, or lose the little diamond on their sleeves, if not all their stripes. The man who undertakes to manage 60 or 75 stalwart, high-spirited young Americans through all their moods and tempers, and every kind of weather, has to be as wise as a serpent, though not necessarily as harmless as a dove. Therefore, the Orderly-Sergeant didn't tell the boys what ailed the teamster. The fact was that the heels of the "off-wheeler" caught the teamster in the pit of the stomach and doubled him up so badly that he wouldn't be fit for duty for a week. It was worse than the green-corn colic.

"'Tisn't every man," continued the Orderly, "that's gifted with fust-class talent fur drivin' team. I'd like to find the best man to steer them animals, an' if there's a real sientifick mule-whacker in this comp'ny let him speak up an' I'll detail him right off. It'll be a soft thing fur somebody; them mules are daises."

Somehow they didn't all speak at once. The company had only had the team two or three weeks, but the boys were not dull of hearing, and ominous sounds had come to them from the rear of the camp at all hours of the night—the maddening "Yeehaw-w-w!" of the long-eared brutes, and the frantic ejaculations of the teamster, spiced with oaths that would have sent a shudder through "our army in Flanders."



So they did not apply for the vacant saddle with that alacrity which might have been expected, when so good a chance was offered for a soldier to ride and get his traps carried on a wagon. Whenever an infantryman threw away such an opportunity it is safe to assume that there was some good reason for it.

But the idea of riding for a few days and letting his blisters get well was too much for Si Klegg. Besides, he thought if there was any one thing he could do better than another it was driving a team. He had been doing it on his father's farm all his life. It is true, he didn't know much about mules, but he imagined they were a good deal like horses.

"I'm your man!" spoke up Si cheerfully.

"All right," said the Orderly. "Company, Right—Face! Break ranks—March!"

"There ain't any trouble about it!" Si said to Shorty as they walked back to the tent. "I reckon it's easy enough to manage mules if you go at 'em right. It'll be just fun for me to drive team. And say, Shorty, I'll carry all your traps on my wagon. That'll be a heap better'n totin' 'em!"

Si gathered up his outfit and started to enter upon his new sphere of usefulness.

"Shall I take my gun and bay'net along?" he asked the Orderly.

"Guess you'd better; they might come handy!" replied the Orderly, as he thought of the teamster's disastrous encounter with the "off-wheeler."

After Shorty had eaten his breakfast he thought he would go back to the tent and see how Si was getting on. With thoughtful care Si had fed his mules before appeasing his own appetite, and Shorty found him just waiting for his coffee to cool a bit.

"Why, them 'ere mules is jist as gentle'n' peaceful-like ez so many kittens. Look at 'em, Shorty!" and Si pointed with a proud and gratified air to where the six "daises" were standing, three on each side of the wagon-pole, with their noses in the feed-box, quietly munching their matutinal rations, and whisking their paint-brush tails about in evident enjoyment.

Indeed, to look at those mules one who was ignorant of the peculiar characteristics of the species would not have thought that beneath those meek exteriors there were hearts filled with the raging fires of total depravity. Shorty thought how it would be, but he didn't say anything. He was sure that Si would find out about it soon enough.

The brigade to which the 200th Ind. belonged was to march in the rear of the long procession that day. This was lucky for Si, as it gave him an hour or two more than he would otherwise have had to get hitched up. But all the same he thought he would begin early, so as to be on hand with his team in good time.

"Want any help?" asked Shorty.

"No," said Si; "I can hitch 'em up slick's a whistle. I can't see why so many makes sich a fuss 'bout handlin'

mules."

Shorty lighted his cob pipe and sat down on a stump to watch Si. "Kinder think there'll be a circus!" he said to himself.

Si got up from his coffee and hardtack, and addressed himself to the business of the hour. It proved to be just as much as he could attend to. When Si poured half a bushel of corn into the feed box it was all very nice, and the animals rubbed their heads against him to give expression to their grateful emotions. But when it came to putting on the harness, that was quite a different thing. The mere touch of a strap was enough to stimulate into baleful activity all the evil passions of mule-nature.

"Now, Pete and Jim and Susan, we must git ready to pull out!" said Si to his charge, in a familiar, soothing tone, preliminary to getting down to business. It was his evident desire to maintain the friendly relations that he thought he had already established. At the first rattle of the harness Pete and Susan and the rest, moved by a common impulse, laid back their ears and began to bray, their heels at the same time showing symptoms of impatience.

"Whoa, there—whoa!" exclaimed Si, in a conciliatory way, as he advanced with a bridle in his hand toward one of the big wheelers, whose ears were flapping about like the fans of a windmill.

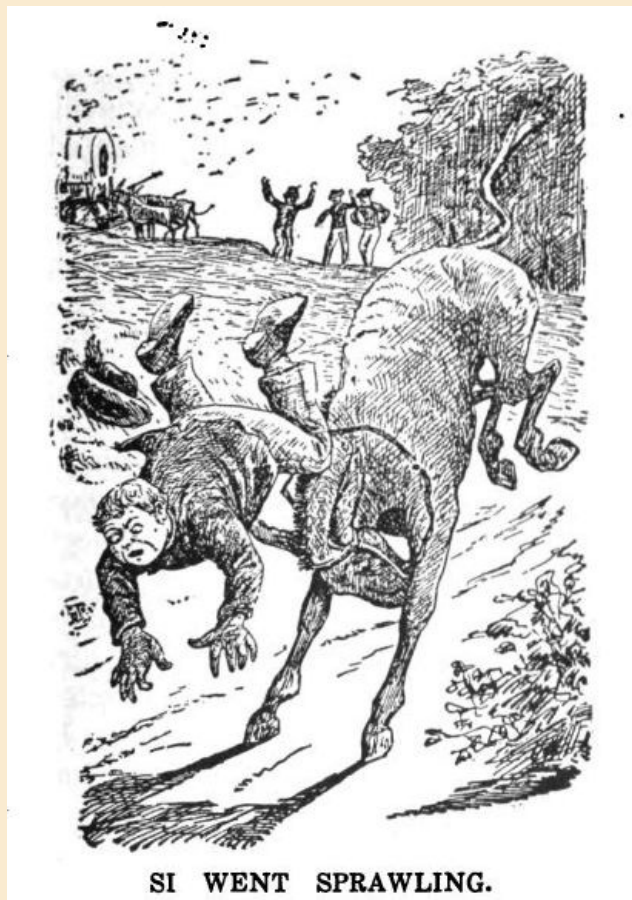
Si imprudently crept up from the rear. A flank movement would have been better. As soon as he had got fairly within range the mule winked viciously, lowered his head, and let fly both heels. Si was a spry boy, and a quick dodge saved him from the fate of his predecessor. One of the heels whizzed past his ear with the speed of a cannon ball, caught his hat, and sent it spinning through the air.

Shorty, who was whittling up a piece of Kentucky twist to recharge his pipe, laughed till he rolled off the stump all in a heap. A few of the other boys had stayed out to see the fun, and were lounging around the outskirts of the corral. "Go for 'em, Si!" they shouted.

Si was plucky, and again advanced with more caution. This time he was successful, after a spirited engagement, in getting the bridle on. He thought he would ride him down to the creek for water, and this would give him a chance to get acquainted with him, as it were. He patted the animal's neck, called him pet names, and gently stroked his stubby mane. Alas, Si didn't know then what an utter waste of material it was to give taffy to an army mule.

With a quick spring Si vaulted upon the back of the mule. He started off in good shape, waving his hand exultingly to the boys with the air of a General who has just won a great battle.

All at once the animal stopped as suddenly as if he had run against a stone wall. He planted his fore feet, throwing his ears back and his head down. There was a simultaneous rear elevation, with the heels at an upward angle of about 45 degrees. Si went sprawling among the bushes. This performance was greeted with great enthusiasm by the fast increasing crowd of spectators.



"I oughter have told you that saddle-mule's the worst bucker in the Army o' the Ohio," said the Quartermaster-Sergeant, who was among the onlookers. "Why, he'd buck off the stripe that runs down his back, if he took it into his measly head. He bucked off a chattel mortgage, and that's the way he come into the army. You can't ride him without using one of Aunt Jemima's sticking plasters."

"Much obliged for your information. But I will ride him all the same," said Si, whose temper had risen to the exploding point. "I kin ride him if he ties himself in a double bow-knot."

Si was too much of a farmer boy to give in to anything that walked on four legs.

He had hung on to the bridle rein, and after addressing a few impressive words to the obstreperous mule

he again leaped upon his back. The mule took a docile turn, his motive having apparently been merely to show Si what he could do when he took a notion.

The space at command will not permit us to follow Si through all the details of "hitching up" that team. He did finally "git thar, Eli," after much strategic effort. The mules brayed and kicked a good deal, and Si's wrath was fully aroused before he got through. He became convinced that soft words were of no account in such a contest, and he enforced discipline by the judicious use of a big club, together with such appropriate language as he could think of. Si hadn't yet learned to swear with that wonderful and appalling proficiency that was so soon acquired by the army teamsters. In the management of mules profanity was considered an invaluable accessory in times of great emergency.

At last Si climbed into the saddle, as proud as a King. Seizing the long, single line running to the "leaders"—by which contrivance the army team was always guided—he shouted "Git up, thar, Pete! G'lang Susan!" and the caravan started. But the unregenerated brutes didn't go far. Si was gaily cracking his whip, trying to hit a big blue-bottle fly that was perched on the ear of one of the "swing" mules.

As if by a preconcerted plan, the establishment came to a sudden halt and the mules began to rear and kick and plunge around in utter disregard of consequences. It didn't take more than a minute for them to get into a hopeless tangle. They were in all conceivable shapes—heads and tails together, crosswise and "every which way," tied up with the straps of the harness. The air in all directions was full of heels. There was a maddening chorus of discordant braying.

In the course of the scrimmage Si found himself on the ground. Gathering himself up, he gazed in utter amazement at the twisted, writhing mass. At this moment a messenger came from the Captain to "hurry up that team," and poor Si didn't know what to do. He wished he could only swear like the old mule drivers. He thought it would make him feel better. There was no one to help him out of his dilemma, as the members of the company were all getting ready for the march.

A veteran teamster happened along that way, and took in the situation at a glance. He saw that Si had bit off more than he could chew, and volunteered his assistance.

"Here, young feller," said he, "lemme show ye how to take the stiffenin' out o' them ere dod-gasted mules!"

Seizing the whip at the small end of the stock he began laying on right and left with the butt, taking care to keep out of range of the heels. During these persuasive efforts he was shouting at the top of his voice words that fairly hissed through the air. Si thought he could smell the brimstone and see the smoke issuing from the old teamster's mouth and nostrils. This is a section of what that experienced mule driver said, as nearly as we can express it:

"_____;;_____!!!**???!!!! ___???_____???!!!!"

Si thanked the veteran for these timely suggestions in the way of language, and said he would remember them. He had no doubt they would help him out the next time.

They finally got the team untied, and Si drove over to the company ground. The regiment had been gone some time, a detail having been left to load the wagon. After getting out upon the road the mules plodded along without objection, and Si got on famously. But having lost his place in the column in consequence of the delay, he was obliged to fall in rear of the division train, and it was noon before he got well started.

Along towards evening Si struck a section of old corduroy road through a piece of swamp. The passage of the artillery and wagons had left the road in a wretched condition. The logs were lying at all points of the compass, or drifting vaguely about in the mire, while here and there were seas of water and pits of abysmal depth.



STUCK IN THE MUD.

To make the story short, Si's mules stumbled and floundered and kicked,—while Si laid on with the whip and used some of the words he had learned from the old teamster before starting.

At length the wagon became hopelessly stalled. The wheels sank to the hubs, and Si yelled and cracked his whip in vain. Perhaps if he had had the old teamster there to swear for him he could have pulled through, but as it was he gave it up, dismounted, hunted a dry spot, and sat down to think and wait for something to turn up.

Just before dark a large detail from Co. Q, which had been sent back on an exploring expedition for Si and

his team, reached the spot. After hours of prying and pushing and tugging and yelling they at length got the wagon over the slough, reaching camp about midnight.

"Orderly," said Si, "I believe I'd like to resign my place as mule-driver. It's a nice, soft thing, but I'd jest as lief let s'mother feller have it, so I'll take my gun an' go to hoofin' it agin!"

CHAPTER XV. UNDER FIRE—SI HAS A FIGHT, CAPTURES A PRISONER

AND GETS PROMOTED.

"SEEMS to me it's 'bout time ter be gitt' into a fite!" said Si Klegg to Shorty one night as they sat around the fire after supper, with their shoes and stockings off, comparing the size and number of their respective blisters. Neither of them had much of the skin they started out with left on their feet. "I always s'posed," he continued, "that bein' a sojer meant fitin' somebody; and here we are roaming over the country like a lot of tramps. I can't see no good in it, nohow."

"Don't be in a hurry. Si," replied Shorty; "I reckon we'll ketch it soon 'nuff. From what I've hearn the old soldiers tell a battle ain't such a funny thing as a feller thinks who don't know anything about it, like you'n me. The boys is always hungry at first for shootin' and bein' shot at, but I've an idee that it sorter takes away their appetite when they gits one square meal of it. They don't hanker after it no more. It's likely we'll git filled full one o' these days. I'm willin' to wait!"

"Wall," said Si, "I sh'd think we might have a little skirmish, anyway. I'd like to have a chance to try my gun and to hear what kind of a noise bullets make. Of course, I'd ruther they'd hit some other feller besides me, but I'm ready to take the chances on that. I don't b'lieve I'd be afeard."

Si was ambitious, and full of the martial ardor that blazed in the breast of every young volunteer. He was really glad when the Orderly came around presently and told them that the 200th Ind. would have the advance next day, and Co. Q would be on the skirmish-line. He told the boys to see that their cartridge-boxes were all full and their guns in good order, as they would be very like to run foul of the rebels.

This was just before the battle of Perryville. The rebels were very saucy, and there seemed to be a fair prospect that the curiosity of the members of the 200th Ind. to "see the elephant" would be at least measurably gratified.

Before Si went to bed he cleaned up his gun and made sure that it would "go off" whenever he wanted it to. Then he and Shorty crawled under the blankets, and as they lay "spoon fashion," thinking about what might happen the next day. Si said he hoped they would both have "lots of sand."

All night Si dreamed about awful scenes of slaughter. Before morning he had destroyed a large part of the Confederate army.

It was yet dark when the reveille sounded through the camp. Si and Shorty kicked off the blankets at first blast of bugle, and were promptly in their places for roll-call. Then, almost in a moment, a hundred fires were gleaming, and the soldiers gathered around them to prepare their hasty breakfast.

Before the sun was up the bugles rang out again upon the morning air. In quick succession came the "general," the "assembly," and "to the colors." The 200th marched out upon the pike, but soon filed off into a cornfield to take its assigned place in the line, for the advance division was to move in order of battle, brigade front, that day.

In obedience to orders, Co. Q moved briskly out and deployed as skirmishers, covering the regimental front. As the line advanced through field and thicket Si Klegg's heart was not the only one that thumped against the blouse that covered it.

It was not long till a squad of cavalymen came galloping back, yelling that the rebels were just ahead. The line was halted for a few minutes; while the Generals swept the surrounding country with their field glasses and took in the situation.

The skirmishers, for fear of accidents, took advantage of such cover as they could find. Si and Shorty found themselves to leeward of a large stump.

"D'ye reckon a bullet 'd go through this 'ere stump?" said Si.

Before Shorty could answer something else happened that absorbed their entire attention. For the time they didn't think of anything else.

'Boom-m-m-m!'

"Great Scott! d'ye hear that?" said Si through his chattering teeth.

"Yes, and there's somethin' comin' over this way," replied Shorty.

A shell came screaming and swishing through the air. The young Hoosiers curled around the roots of that stump and flattened themselves out like a pair of griddle-cakes. If it was Si that the rebel gunners were after, they timed the shell to a second, for it burst with a loud bang just over them. The fragments flew all around, one striking the stump and others tearing up the dirt on every side.



IT BURST WITH A LOUD "BANG."

To say that for the moment those two soldiers were demoralized would be drawing it very mildly. They showed symptoms of a panic. It seemed as though they would be hopelessly stampeded. Their tongues were paralyzed, and they could only look silently into each other's white faces.

Si was the first to recover himself, although it could hardly be expected that he could get over his scare all at once.

"D-d-did it hit ye, Sh-Shorty?" he said.

"N-no, I guess not; b-b-but ain't it aw-awful. Si? You look so bad I th-thought you was k-k-killed!"

"Who's afeard?" said Si. "I was only skeered of you. Shorty. Brace up, now same's I do!"

"Skirmishers—Forward!" was heard along the line. "Come on, Shorty!" said Si, and they plunged bravely ahead.

Emerging suddenly from a thick wood, they came upon the rebel skirmishers in full view, posted on the opposite side of the field.

Crack! Crack!—Zip! Zip!

"Guess there's a bee-tree somewhere around here, from the way the bees are buzzin'," said Si.

"'Taint no bees," replied Shorty; "it's a mighty sight worse'n that. Them's bullets, Si Don't ye see the dumed galoots over yonder a-shootin' at us?"

Si was no coward, and he was determined to show that he wasn't. The shell a little while before had taken the starch out of him for a few minutes, but that was nothing to his discredit. Many a seasoned veteran found himself exceedingly limber under such circumstances.

"Let's give the rascals a dose," said he; "the best we've got in stock!"

Suiting the action to the word, Si crept up to a fence, thrust his gun between the rails, took good aim and fired.



SI TAKES A CRACK AT A REB.

A bullet from one of the other fellows made the splinters fly from a rail a foot or two from Si's head; but he

was getting excited now, and he didn't mind it any more than if it had been a paper wad from a pea-shooter.

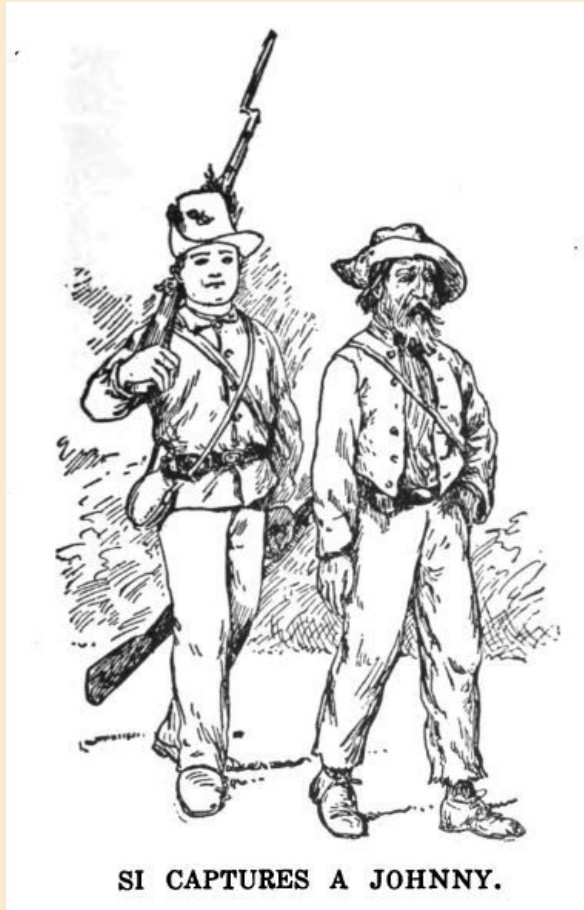
It makes a great difference with a soldier under fire whether he can take a hand in the game himself, or whether he must lie idle and let the enemy "play it alone."

"Did ye hear him squeal?" said Si, as he dropped upon the ground and began to reload with all his might. "I hit that son-of-a-gun, sure. Give 'em H—Hail Columbia, Shorty. We'll show 'em that the 200th Ind. is in front to-day!"

"Forward, men!" shouted the officers. "Go right for 'em!"

The skirmishers sprang over the fence and swept across the field at a "double-quick" in the face of a sputtering fire that did little damage. None of them reached the other side any sooner than Si did. The rebels seemed to have found out that the 200th boys were coming, for they were already on the run, and some of them had started early. Pell-mell through the brush they went, and the blue-blouses after them.

"Halt, there, or I'll blow ye into the middle o' next week!" yelled Si, as he closed up on a ragged specimen of the Southern Confederacy whose wind had given out. Si thought it would be a tall feather in his hat if he could take a prisoner and march him back.



SI CAPTURES A JOHNNY.

The "Johnny" gave one glance at his pursuer, hesitated, and was lost. He saw that Si meant business, and surrendered at discretion.

"Come 'long with me!" said Si, his eyes glistening with pleasure and pride. Si marched him back and delivered him to the Colonel.

"Well done, my brave fellow!" said the Colonel.

"This is a glorious day for the 200th Ind., and you've taken its first prisoner. What's your name my boy?"

"Josiah Klegg, sir!" said Si, blushing to the very roots of his hair.

"What company do you belong to?"

"Company Q, sir!" and Si saluted the officer as nicely as he knew how.

"I'll see your Captain to-night, Mr. Klegg, and you shall be rewarded for your good conduct. You may now return to your company."

It was the proudest moment of Si's life up to date. He stammered out his thanks to the Colonel, and then, throwing his gun up to a right shoulder-shift, he started off on a canter to rejoin the skirmishers.

That night Si Klegg was the subject of a short conversation between his Captain and the Colonel. They agreed that Si had behaved very handsomely, and deserved to be promoted.

"Are there any vacancies in your non-commissioned officers?" asked the Colonel.

"No," was the reply, "but there ought to be. One of my Corporals skulked back to the rear this morning and crawled into a wagon. I think we had better reduce him to the ranks and appoint Mr. Klegg."

"Do so at once," said the Colonel.

Next morning when the 200th was drawn up in line an order was read by the Adjutant reducing the skulker and promoting Si to the full rank of Corporal, with a few words commending the gallantry of the latter. These orders announcing rewards and punishments were supposed to have a salutary effect in stimulating the men to deeds of glory, and as a warning to those who were a little short of "sand."



CORPORAL SI KLEGG.

The boys of Co. Q showered their congratulations upon Si in the usual way. They made it very lively for him that day. In the evening: Si hunted up some white cloth, borrowed a needle and thread, went off back of the tent, rammed his bayonet into the ground, stuck a candle in the socket, and sewed chevrons on the sleeves of his blouse. Then he wrote a short letter:

"Deer Annie: I once more take my pen in hand to tell you there's grate news. I'm an ossifer. We had an awful fite yisterdy. I don't know how menny rebbles I kild, but I guess thare was enuff to start a good sized graveyard. I tuk a prizner, too, and the Kurnal says to me bully fer you, Mister Klegg, or sumthin to that effeck. This mornin they made me a Corporil, and red it out before the hull rijiment I guess youd been proud if you could have seen me. To-night the boys is hollerin hurraw fer Corporal Klegg all over camp. I ain't as big is the Ginrals and gum of the other ossifers, but thars no tellin how hi I'll get in three years.

*"Rownd is the ring that haint no end,
So is my luv to you my friend.*

"Yours, same as before,

"Corporal Si Klegg."

CHAPTER XVI. ONE OF THE "NON-COMMISH"

A NIGHT'S ADVENTURES AS "CORPORAL OF THE GUARD."

"CORPORAL Klegg, you will go on duty to-night with the camp guard!" said the Orderly of Co. Q one evening, as the 200th Ind. filed off into a piece of woods to bivouac for the night, two or three days after Si had been promoted.

The chevrons on his arms had raised Si several degrees in the estimation not only of himself, but of the other members of the company. His conduct in the skirmish had shown that he had in him the material for a good soldier, and even the Orderly began to treat him with that respect due to his new rank as one of the "non-commish."

Like every other man who put on the army blue and marched away so bold, "With gay and gallant tread," Si could not tell whether he was going to amount to anything as a soldier until he had gone through the test of being under fire. There were many men who walked very erect, talked bravely, drilled well, and made a fine appearance on dress parade, before they reached "the front," but who wilted at the "zip" of bullets like tender corn blades nipped by untimely frost. And a good many of them continued in that wilted condition. Perhaps

they really couldn't help it. An inscrutable Providence had seen fit to omit putting any "sand in their gizzards," as the boys expressed it.

It must be confessed that Si was somewhat unduly elated and puffed up over, his own achievements as a skirmisher and his success in climbing the ladder of military rank and fame. It is true, it wasn't much of a fight they had that day, but Si thought it was pretty fair for a starter, and enough to prove to both himself and his comrades that he wouldn't be one of the "coffee coolers" when there was business on hand.

Si was sorry that his regiment did not get into the fight at Perryville. The 200th Ind. belonged to one of the two corps of Buell's army that lay under the trees two or three miles away all through that October afternoon, while McCook's gallant men were in a life-and-death struggle against overwhelming odds. It bothered Si as much to understand it all as it did 30,000 other soldiers that day.

Si responded with alacrity when he was detailed for guard duty. He had walked a beat once or twice as a common tramp, and had not found it particularly pleasant, especially in stormy weather; but now he was a peg higher, and he thought as Corporal he would have a better time. He had already observed that the rude winds of army life were tempered, if not to the shorn lambs, at least to the officers, in a degree proportionate to their rank. The latter had the first pick of everything, and the men took what was left. The officers always got the softest rails to sleep on, thehardtack that was least tunneled through by the worms, the bacon that had the fewest maggots, and the biggest trees in a fight.

"Forward—March!" shouted the officer in command, when the detachment was ready. Si stepped off very proudly, thinking how glad his good old mother and sister Marier and pretty Annabel would be if they could see him at that moment. He was determined to discharge his official duties "right up to the handle," and make the boys stand around in lively style.

When the guard reached the place selected for headquarters the officer drily lectured them in regard to their duties, impressing upon them the necessity of being alert and vigilant. There was only a thin picket-line between them and the enemy. The safety of the army depended upon the faithfulness of those appointed to watch while others slept. He gave them the countersign, "Bunker Hill," and ordered them under no circumstances to allow any person to pass without giving it, not even the Commanding General himself.

Then the guards were posted, the "beats" laid off and numbered, and as the fast-gathering shadows deepened among the trees the sentinels paced to and fro around the tired army.

For an hour or two after the guards were stationed all was quiet along the line. The noise of the great camp was hushed for the night, and no sound broke the stillness of the gloomy forest. The moon rose and peeped timidly through the branches.

"Corporal of the Guard; Post No. 6."

Si's quick ear, as he lay curled up at the foot of a tree, caught these words, rapidly repeated by one sentinel after another. It was his first summons. He sprang to his feet, gun in hand, his heart beating at the thought of adventure, and started on the run for "Post No. 6."

"What's up?" he said to the guard, with a perceptible tremor in his voice.

"There's one o' the boys tryin' to run the guards!" was the answer. "He's been out foragin', I reckon. He's got a lot o' plunder he wants to git into camp with. See him, out there in the bush?"

The forager, for such he proved to be, was nimbly dodging from tree to tree, watching for a chance to cross the line, but the alertness of the guards had thus far kept him outside. He had tried to bribe one or two of the boys by offering to "whack up" if they would let him pass or give him the countersign, so that he could get in at some other point in the cordon. But the guards were incorruptible. They were "fresh" yet, and had not caught on to the plan of accepting an offered chicken, a section of succulent pig, or a few sweet potatoes, and then walking off to the remote limit of the beat, with eyes to the front, while the forager shot across the line in safety. They learned all about this after a while.

The raider tried to parley with Si, but Si wouldn't have it. Raising his gun to a "ready" he ordered the man to come in or he would put a hole through him.

The best thing to do under the circumstances was to obey. The forager, who belonged to Si's company, crept up to Corporal Klegg and in a conciliatory tone opened negotiations.

"You jest let me pass, and you may have your pick of this stuff," said he, holding up a fowl in one hand and a ham in the other. "It'll be all right, and nobody 'll ever know nothin' 'bout it!"

Si hesitated; it was human nature. The offer was a tempting one, but he remembered his responsibility to his country, and his stomach appealed in vain. Duty came before stewed chicken or roasted sparerib.

"Can't do it!" said Si. "You've got hold of the wrong man this time. I ain't goin' to have nobody monkeyin' 'round while I'm Corporal of this 'ere guard. Come along with me, and step out lively, too!"

Si marched the culprit back to headquarters and delivered him up to the officer, who commended Si for his fidelity.

Next day the ground back of the Colonel's tent was strewn with feathers, chicken bones, ham rinds, and potato skins, while the unlucky forager who had provided the field officers' mess with such a royal meal was humped around for two hours on "knapsack drill," and condemned to spend 24 hours in the guard-house.

An hour later Si had another experience. The Captain of Co. Q felt a kindly interest, and not a little pride in him, since the skirmish, and he thought he would take a turn that night and see whether his newly-made Corporal was "up to snuff."

"Post No. 3," was Si's second call. He responded promptly, and as he approached the guard the latter said:

"Corporal, here's the Cap'n, and he wants to get in! He hain't got the countersign; shall I pass him?"

"Good evening. Corporal!" said the Captain, as Si came up, at the same time extending his hand.

Si was thrown completely off his guard. Dropping the butt of his gun carelessly to the ground he replied cheerily, "Good evening, Cap'n," touching his hat by way of salute. Then he took the proffered hand, pleased at the Captain's mark of kindly recognition. He didn't understand the scheme then. "How are you getting on, Mr. Klegg?" "First rate!" said Si, with the air of one conscious that he had done his duty well. "I capchered a

forager a little bit ago and took him to headquarters!"



SI DIDN'T TAKE ANY CHANCES.

"Well done, Corporal I have no doubt you will honor the good name of the 200th Ind. in general and Company Q in particular, I got caught outside to night, and I want to get back into camp. Of course, you know me and it's all right!"

"Certainly, sir!" said Si, as he stood leaning on his gun and allowed the officer to pass the magic line. "Good night, Cap'n!"

"Good night, Corporal! By the way," said the Captain, retracing his steps, "I notice that you do not carry your gun just right. Let me show you how to handle it!"

Si didn't know what a flagrant offense it was for a soldier on guard to let his gun go out of his hands; nor had he the faintest suspicion that the Captain was playing it on him. So he promptly handed his piece to the Captain, who immediately brought it down to a "charge," with the bayonet at Si's breast.

"Suppose, now, I was a rebel in disguise," said the Captain, "what kind of a fix would you be in?"

Light began to dawn upon Si, and he started back in terror at the thought of the mistake he had made.

"Of course, I wouldn't let anybody else have it," he stammered; "but I knew you, Cap'n!"

"That makes no difference to a man on duty. Corporal. You hang on to your gun the rest of the night, and if anybody—I don't care if it's Gen. Buell himself—insists on your giving it to him, let him have two or three inches of the point of your bayonet. Don't let anybody pass without the countersign, either! Come to my quarters when you are relieved tomorrow."

All this illustrates the way the officers had of testing new soldiers and teaching them a thing or two, when, as was frequently the case, they were not yet up to the mark. A trick of extra duty for the hapless novitiate was generally the penance for his simplicity.

The cold chills ran up and down Si's back as he took his gun and slowly returned to the guard fire. He felt that he had utterly spoiled his good record.

"Lieutenant," he said to the officer, "I wish you'd please detail a man to kick me for about an hour."

The Lieutenant wanted to know what the matter was, and Si told him all about it, ending with:

"So now I s'pose the Cap'n 'll yank the stripes off'n my blouse!"

The officer quieted his fears by assuring him that there was no cause for alarm. The Captain knew that he was trying to do his duty, and what he had done was for Si's own good.

Si sat down by the fire and was thinking it over when there was another call, "Corporal of the guard!" He was soon at the point indicated and found two officers on horseback, whom he recognized as the Colonel and Adjutant of the 200th Ind. Si's friend Shorty was the guard who had halted them.

"Now, Corporal Klegg," said Si to himself, laying his finger alongside his nose, "you jist watch out this time. Here's big game! Shouldn't wonder if them ossifers had bin out skylarkin', and they're tryin' to git in. Don't ye

let 'em fool ye as the Cap'n did!"

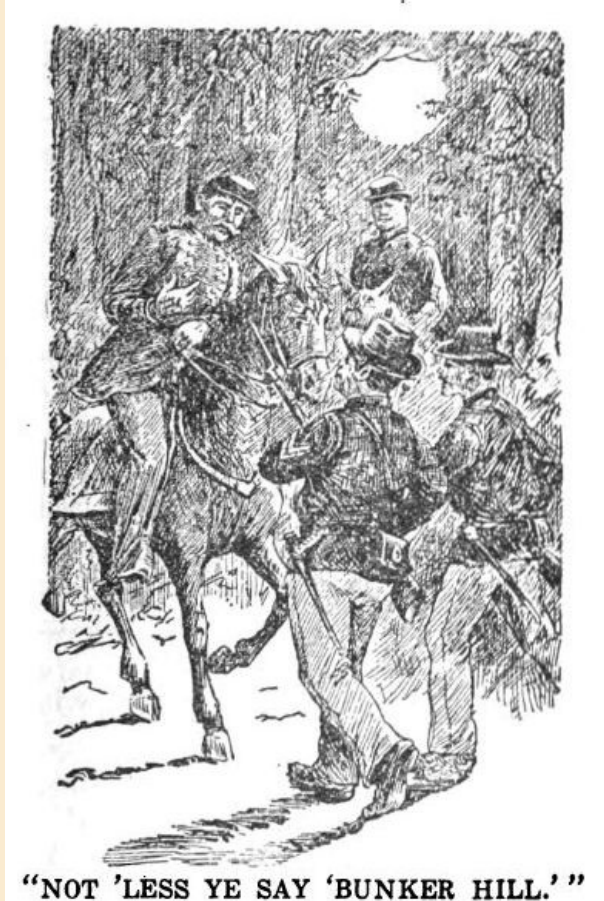
Si was right in his surmise. The Colonel and Adjutant had been enjoying a good supper at a house half a mile away, and had not the slightest idea what the countersign was.

Si was determined not to "get left" this time. As he approached, the Colonel saw that it was soldier he had commended for his gallantry at the time of the skirmish.

"Ah, Corporal Klegg, I'm glad to see you so prompt in your duty. I was sure we had made no mistake when we promoted you. Of course, you can see who I am. I'm your Colonel, and this is the Adjutant. We are, unfortunately, outside without the countersign; but you can just let us through."

The Colonel's taffy had no effect on Si. He just brought himself into a hostile attitude, with his bayonet in fair range of the Colonel, as he replied:

"Colonel, my orders is to pass no livin' man unless he says 'Bunker Hill.' I'd be glad to do ye a good turn, but there's no use talkin'. I'm goin' to obey orders, and ye can't pass here."



"NOT 'LESS YE SAY 'BUNKER HILL.' "

The Colonel chuckled softly as he dismounted and came up to Si.

"It's all right," he said, "of course I know what the countersign is. I was only trying you."

"Hold on there," said Si, "don't come too close. If you've got the countersign, advance and give it. If ye ain't got it, I'll jest call the Officer of the Guard!"

Leaning over the point of Si's bayonet the Colonel gently whispered "Bunker Hill".

"Correct!" said Si, and bringing his gun to a shoulder, he respectfully saluted the Colonel. The latter started to remount, but turned back as he said:

"Just let me show you how to hold your gun. You don't—"

"Not if the court knows herself," said Si, again menacing the Colonel with his bayonet. "That's bin played on me once to-night, and if anybody does it again my name ain't Si Klegg!"

"That's right, Corporal," said the Colonel as he sprang into the saddle; "but don't tell anybody what the countersign is again! Good night!"

"Good night. Colonel," said Si, touching his hat. As the officers rode away Si began to think he had put his foot in it again. He was confirmed in this opinion by seeing Shorty sit down on a log in a paroxysm of laughter.

"You give yerself away bad this time!" said Shorty, as soon as he could speak. "What did ye tell him the countersign for?"

"Whew-w-w-w!" observed Si, with a prolonged whistle. "Shorty," said he, "I wish you'd take a club and see if you can't pound a little sense into me; I don't believe I've got any!" Without another word he shouldered his gun and returned to the guard headquarters. "Now I'm a goner, sure!" he said to himself.

On his way he found a guard sitting by a tree, sound asleep. Carefully taking away his gun Si awoke him, and frightened him half to death by telling him that he would report him and he would be shot for sleeping on post. Si finally said he wouldn't tell on him this time, but he must never do so again, or he would be a dead man.

"Corporal of the guard!" was heard again, sometime after midnight. "If they try any more measly tricks on me to-night somebody 'll git hurt!" thought Si as he walked briskly along the line in response to the call.

This time it was a "contraband"—an old negro, who stood shivering with terror as the guard held him at the

point of the bayonet. Recalling the unlucky adventures of the night. Si imagined that it was one of the officers, who had blackened himself like a minstrel, and had come there purposely to "catch him."

"Ye can't get through unless ye've got the counter sign," said he, decisively; "and I shan't give it to ye, nuther! And ye needn't try to show me how to hold my gun! I can handle it well enough to shoot and punch the Bayonet!"

"Don't know what dat all means, boss," said the frightened negro; "but fer de good Lawd's sake don't shove dat t'ing frew me. I've only bin ober to de nex' place to a 'possum roast and I'se jist gwine home. I didn't know dese yer ge-yards was heah!"

Si didn't propose to take any chances, and so he marched the old contraband back and delivered him to the officer, who kept him till morning and then suffered him to go on his way.

Once more that night Si was called, in addition to his tramps with the "reliefs" and the "grand rounds." It was, perhaps, an hour before daylight, and Shorty was the guard who called him. He told Si there was something walking around in the woods, and he believed it was a rebel trying to creep up on them. He had challenged two or three times, but got no answer. The moon had gone down, and in the dark woods objects at any distance could not be distinguished.

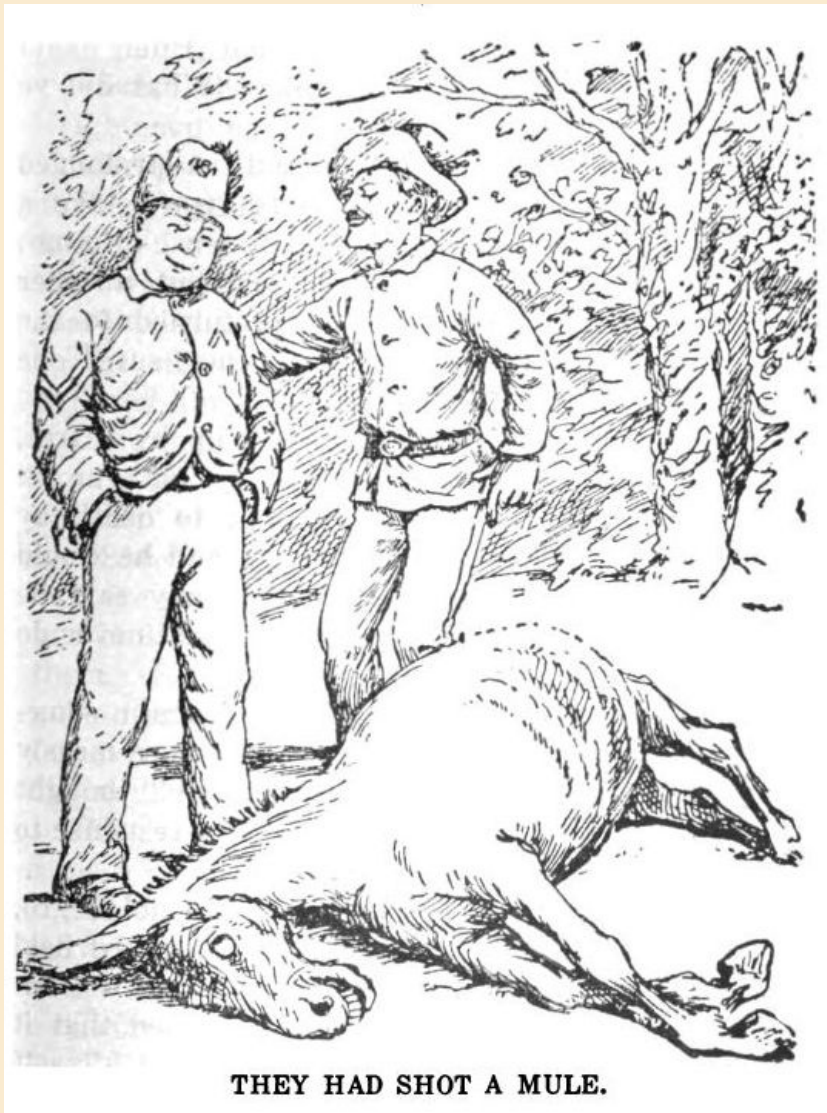
"There, d'ye hear that?" said Shorty, as there came a sound of crackling sticks and rustling leaves.

"Halt!" exclaimed Si. "Who comes there?"

There was no response, and Si challenged again with like result.

"Shorty," said Si, "let's fire both together," and crack went their muskets.

For a moment there was a great floundering, and then all was still. As soon as it was light, and Shorty was relieved, he and Si went out to see the result of their fire. To their astonishment they found the prowler cold and stiff in death—they had shot a big gray mule.



On the whole, it was a busy and interesting night for Si. He did not lose his chevrons on account of his mistakes. But he learned something, and the lesson was impressed upon his mind by a few kindly words of caution and advice from the Captain of Co. Q.

CHAPTER XVII. FORAGING ON THE WAY

SI HAS SOME VARIED EXPERIENCES WITH SOUTHERN

PRODUCTS.

THE long chase after Bragg from Louisville to the mountains of southeastern Kentucky was rough on the new troops. It weeded them out very fast, and in every town through which Buell's army passed the buildings were turned into hospitals and filled with sick and crippled soldiers, who had found out early that they were not physically able to endure the hardships of an active campaign. At the end of two or three weeks some of the new regiments were as much reduced in numbers as most of those that went out in '61 were during their first six months.

The 200th Ind. jogged along bravely, but its ranks had suffered the common skage. Not less than 400 of its men had fallen by the wayside, and were taking quinine and blue-mass and rubbing arnica on their legs all along the tortuous route.

Corporal Si Klegg and his friend Shorty proved to be "stayers." Full of life and ambition, they were always prompt for duty and ready for a fight or a frolic. No one was more quick than Si to offer a suffering comrade the last drop of fresh water in his canteen or give him a lift by carrying his gun a piece.

One day the regiment started out for an easy, comfortable day's march. The coast was clear of rebels, and there being no excuse for crowding on the steam, the boys were allowed to take their own gait, while the horses of the officers and cavalry had a chance to recover their wind.

It was a warm day late in October. The nights at this time were keen and frosty, but the sun at mid-day still showed much of his Summer vigor. Perspiration flowed freely down the faces of those wandering Hoosiers—faces that were fast assuming the color of half-tanned leather under the influence of sunshine and storm.

Once an hour there was the customary halt, when the boys would stretch their legs by the roadside, hitching their knapsacks up under their heads. When the allotted time had expired the bugler blew "Fall in," the notes of which during the next two years became so familiar to the ears of the 200th. Later in '64, the Indiana boys mingled their voices with the rest of Sherman's hundred thousand veterans as they sang:

*"I know you are tired, but still you must go
Down to Atlanta to see the big show."*

The soldiers were in good spirits. As they marched they fired jests at one another, and laughter rippled along the line.

The only thing that troubled them was the emaciated condition of their haversacks, with a corresponding state of affairs in their several stomachs. The Commissary Department was thoroughly demoralized. The supply train had failed to connect, and rations were almost exhausted. There was no prospect that the aching void would be filled, at least, in the regular way, until they reached a certain place, which would not be until the following day.

Strict orders against foraging were issued almost daily under the Buell dispensation. These were often read impressively to the new troops, who, in their simplicity, "took it all in" as military gospel.



THE 200TH IND. WAS NOT WITHOUT TALENT IN FORAGING.

The effect was somewhat depressing upon the ardor with which otherwise they would have pursued the panting pig and the fluttering fowl, and reveled in the orchards and potato-fields. A few irrepressible fellows managed to get a choice meal now and then—just enough to show that the 200th Ind. was not without latent talent in this direction, which only needed a little encouragement to become fruitful of results.

But these orders against foraging didn't hold the soldiers of the crop of 1861. It was like trying to carry water in a sieve. When rations were short, or if they wanted to vary the rather monotonous bill of fare, they always found a way to make up any existing deficiency.

On the day in question a few hints were thrown out which resulted in a tacit understanding that, in view of the actual need of the soldiers, if they got a good chance to pick up something the eyes of the officers would be closed. In fact, the officers were as hungry as the men, and hoped to come in for a "divide."

Soon after starting in the morning a persimmon tree, well laden with fruit, was seen in a field not far from the road. About fifty men started for it on a run, and in five minutes it was as bare as the barren fig tree.

The persimmon has some very marked peculiarities. It is a toothsome fruit when well ripened by frost, but if eaten before it has reached the point of full maturity, the effect upon one's interior is unique and startling. The pungent juices take hold of the mouth and pucker it up in such manner as to make even speech for a time impossible. The tongue seems as if it were tied in a knot. If the juice be swallowed, similar results follow all along its course. But the novice does not often get far enough for that.

The boys soon found that the 'simmons, although they looked very tempting, were too green to be eaten with any degree of enjoyment. So they filled their pockets with them to pucker up the regiment.

Shorty had joined in the scramble, telling Si he would bring him a good supply.

"Ain't them nice?" he said to Si, holding out three or four of the greenest ones he could find. "Eat 'em; they're jest gorjus! You can't help likin' 'em."

Si had never seen any persimmons before. They were certainly tempting to the eye, and he thought they were sent as manna was supplied to the children of Israel in the wilderness.

Eagerly seizing them, Si tossed one into his mouth and began to chew it with great vigor. The persimmon got in its work at once. It took hold with a mighty grip, wrinkling him up like the skins on scalded milk.

After sputtering vigorously a few minutes, while Shorty laughed at him. Si managed to get his tongue untwisted.

"Yes," said he, "them things is nice—in a horn! 'Twouldn't take many of 'em to make a meal!"

A little farther on Si's quick eye noticed a row of beehives standing on a bench in the yard of one of the natives. Si had a weakness for honey.

"Shorty," said he, "see them hives over there? How'd ye like to have some honey for supper?"

Shorty "allowed" that it would be a good thing. Si stopped and waited a few minutes until his own regiment got past, thinking his plan would be less liable to interruption. Then he leaped over the fence, went up to the hives, and boldly tipped one of them over, hoping he could get out a comb or two, fill up his coffee-kettle, and effect his retreat before the bees really found out what he was up to.

But the bees instantly rallied their forces and made a vigorous assault upon the invader. Si saw that it would be too hot for him, and without standing upon the order of his going he went at once, in a decidedly panicky state of mind. The bees made the most of their opportunity, using their "business ends" on him with great activity and zeal. They seemed to fully' share the common feeling in the South toward the "Yanks."



SI BEAT A RETREAT.

A pretty woman, standing on the porch, had watched Si's raid from the doorway. As he fell back in utter

roust she screamed "Sarves ye right!" and then sat down on the doorstep and laughed till she cried. She enjoyed it as much as the bees did.

The latter took hold of Si in various places, and by the time he had caught up with the regiment one eye was closed, and there was a big lump on his nose, besides several more stings which the bees had judiciously distributed about his person. It was very evident that he had been overmatched and had come out second best in the encounter.

Corporal Klegg presented a picturesque appearance as he reached Co. Q. The boys fairly yelled with delight.

"Whar's yer honey?" said Shorty. "Pears like ye waked up the wrong passenger that time!"

Si laughed with the rest, rubbed salt on his stings, and plodded on, consoling himself with the thought that his was not the only case in which the merit of earnest effort had gone unrewarded.

Soon after noon the 200th came to a large patch of sweet potatoes. Si and Shorty, as well as a good many of the rest, thought it would be a good place to lay in a supply for supper, as they might not have another So good a chance. From all parts of the column the men, by dozens dashed into the field. In a moment there was a man at every hill, digging away with his bayonet, and chucking the tempting tubers into his haversack.



THERE WAS A MAN AT EVERY HILL

Two hours before going into camp the regiment passed a small spring, around which a crowd of soldiers were struggling to fill their canteens. There had been a long stretch without fresh water, and Si thought he would supply himself.

"Gimme your canteen, too, Shorty, and I'll fill it!" he said.

"Here, Si, you're a bully boy, take mine!" "Mine, too!" "And mine!" said one after another of his comrades. Si good naturedly complied and they loaded him down with about 20 canteens.



SI BEING WORKED FOR A "GOOD THING."

"All right," said Si, "I'll be along with 'em full d'reckly!"

He had to wait for his turn at the spring, and by the time he had filled all the canteens he was half an hour behind. Slung around his neck he started on, with just about as big a load as he could carry.

Si forged ahead, gradually gaining a little, through the tardy movement of the column that generally preceded going into camp. The canteen straps chafed his shoulders, his back ached, and perspiration streamed from every pore. The smoke of the campfires ahead told that the end of the day's march was near. He kept on and finally came up with Co. Q just as the 200th was stacking arms on the bank of a clear stream.

Si threw down his burdens of canteens, himself thoroughly blown and well-nigh exhausted.

"Purty good load, wasn't it, Si?" said Shorty. "But what made ye lug all that water in here? When ye saw they was goin' into camp ahead ye might ha' knowed there was plenty o' water. Why in blazes didn't ye turn the water out o' them 'ere canteens?"

"I'll be hanged if I thought o' that!" said Si, while the boys joined in a hearty laugh.

At the command "Break ranks" there was a general scamper to engage in the work of getting supper and preparing to spend the night with as much comfort as possible. The members of each mess scattered in all directions for water, rails, straw, etc., while some went out to scour the adjacent region for edibles.

These exercises the soldiers always entered into with the heartiest gusto, and the scene will be well remembered by all those who marched.

Si threw off his traps and dropped on the ground to rest a few minutes. He got up presently to scratch around with the rest. As he took hold of his haversack he was surprised at its lightness. When he laid it down it was bulging out with sweet potatoes, and a glance showed him that these were all gone.

"Dern my buttons!" exclaimed Si, as he forgot his weariness, and his eyes flashed fire. "If I am a Corporal, I kin jest mash the feller that stole my 'taters, I don't keer if he's ten foot high. Won't somebody show 'im to me? There won't be 'nuff of 'im left to hold a fun'ral over?"

Si pranced around in a high state of inflammation, and it is probable that if he had found the purloiner of his provender there would have been a harder fight than any that occurred between Buell and Bragg.

The boys winked slyly at one another, and all said it was too bad. It was a startling case of turpitude, and Si determined to have revenge by getting even with some other fellow, without pausing to consider the questions of moral philosophy involved.

"Come 'long with me. Shorty!" he said to his friend, and they strode away. Just outside the camp they came upon two members of some other new regiment coming into camp with a fine pig slung over a pole and two or three chickens in their hands. Shorty suggested to Si that this was a good chance for him to even up.

"Halt, there!" shouted Si to the foragers. "We're sent out to pick up such fellows as you!"

The effect was like a discharge from a masked battery. The men dropped their plunder and fled in wild confusion.

"Take hold 'o that pole, Shorty!" said Si, and laying it upon their shoulders they made a triumphant entry into camp.

There seemed to be no danger of immediate starvation in the ranks of the 200th. Each man appeared to have supplied himself during the day. On every hand fires gleamed brightly in the gathering twilight, and

around them crowded the hungry soldiers, intent upon the simple culinary processes incident to the evening meal.

CHAPTER XVIII. A SUNDAY OFF

SI AND SHORTY GET A MUCH-NEEDED WASH-UP.

"YOU can take it easy to-day, boys, for we ain't goin' to move!" said the Orderly of Co. Q one morning at roll-call. "The orders is for to put the camp in nice shape, and for the men to wash up. We're goin' to have an extra ration of soap this mornin', and you fellows want to stir around lively and fix yerselves as if it was Sunday and ye was goin' to meetin'. The fust thing after breakfast all hands 'll turn out and p'leece ther camp."

"What in the world does he mean by p'leecin' the camp?" Corporal Klegg asked Shorty, as they stood by the fire making coffee and warming up the fragments of chicken that had been left over from supper the night before. "I didn't c'pose," said Si, "that we 'listed to be p'leecemen!"

Shorty replied that he didn't know, but he reckoned they'd find out soon enough. The 200th Ind. had been on the jump every day since leaving Louisville, and this was the first time it had been called on to "police" a camp.

As soon as breakfast was over the Orderly directed each man to provide himself with a small bundle of sticks, made by putting together a dozen bits of brush or "switches" three or four feet long, such as are used to rural pedagogs to enforce discipline. These, he said, were the implements used in policing camp, which meant brushing the leaves and loose debris outside the grounds.

"Does Corprils have to do that sort o' thing?" asked Si. He thought army regulations and camp usage ought to show some consideration for his rank. "What's the use of bein' a Corporil," he said to himself, "if it don't give a feller a chance to play off once in a while?"

"Corporals ain't no better'n anybody else," replied the Orderly, "'n' you can jist git some brush and go to work, 'long with the rest!"

Si was disposed to grumble a little, but he obeyed orders and was soon scratching up the leaves and dust with great zeal. He did not find it a particularly pleasant occupation, but the camp looked so much better when the job was done, that he thought it was not a bad thing, after all.

"Now, Shorty," said Si, "let's go down to the creek and do our washin'. My clothes has got to be biled, and I shouldn't wonder if yourn had, too."

"Yes, that's a fact!" said Shorty.

They got a big camp-kettle that had been used, and would be again, for making bean-soup, and started for the stream back of the camp. They had no change of clothing with them. Some days before, in order to lighten their knapsacks, they had taken out their extra shirts and drawers, tied them in a bundle, and put them on the company wagon, and this was somewhere back in the rear, owing to the confusion of the campaign.

"Seems to me," observed Si, "it ain't hardly a fair shake for Uncle Sam to make us do our washin'. They ought to confiscate the niggers 'n' set them at it; or I don't see why the Guvymnt can't furnish a washin' masheen for each comp'ny! 'Twouldn't be no more'n the square thing!"



SI WAS DISPOSED TO GRUMBLE.

"The wimmen does the washin', ye know, Si, up where we live," said Shorty, "'n' I don't quite like the notion o' doin' that kind o' workt, but I can't jest see how we're goin' to git out of it. It's got to be done, that's sure!"

On the bank of the stream they quickly threw off their clothes for a bath. Si cast rueful glances at his nether garments as he laid them on the ground.

"Hadn't we better pile some rocks on 'em, Shorty?" said he. I'm affeared if we don't they'll crawl off into the bush.

"Guess we had," replied Shorty. "I b'lieve mine's started already!"

Having made sure of them, they plunged into the water. Far up and down the stream were hundreds of men, swimming and splashing about.

The soldiers availed themselves of every opportunity to enjoy this luxury.

Having thoroughly performed their ablutions. Si and Shorty turned their energies toward the clothes, which were in such sore need of soap and hot water. Putting their garments into the kettle and filling it with water, they built a fire under it. After half an hour of vigorous boiling they concluded they were "done." Plenty of soap, rubbing and rinsing finished the work, and the clothes sure presented a remarkable appearance, particularly the blue trousers.

"How're we going to git 'em dry?" asked Si, as he wrung out the last of his "wash."

"Hang 'em on the fence in the sun!" replied Shorty.

"But what'll we wear while they're dryin'?"

"Nothin', I reckon!"

So they spread out their garments, and then dashed again into the water. After splashing awhile they came out and drew on their half-dried trousers. Shorty lighted his pipe as they sat down to wait for the sunshine to do its perfect work. All along the stream were soldiers in similar stages of dishabille. It seemed like the Garden of Eden.



SHOWING THE OLD MAN A TRICK.

"Say, Shorty," said Si, "'taint very wicked to smoke, is it?"

"Guess not!" was the reply.

"That's the way it 'pears to me, 'n' I've been kinder thinkin' lately that I'd learn how. The soljers all seem to enjoy their smokin' so much. You know, Shorty, that I was always a reel good boy—never smoked, nor chawed terbacker, nor cussed, nor done nothin' that was out o' the straight an' narrer way. When I jined the regiment my good old mother says to me: 'Now, Si,' says she, 'I do hope ye'll 'member what I've always taught ye. I've beam 'em tell that they does dretful things in the army, and I want ye to see if ye can't be as good a boy as ye've been at home.' Of course, I told her I would, 'n' I mean, ter stick to it; but I don't b'lieve there's any harm in smokin'. Is it hard to learn?"

"Wall, I dunno; I reck'n ye can't most always tell till ye try. Take a whiff, 'nd see how she goes!" And Shorty handed him his pipe, which he had just refilled with whittlings of black "navy plug."

"Derned if I don't try it!" said Si, as he took the pipe and began to puff with great energy. He made a few wry faces at first, but Shorty told him to stick to it, and he bravely pulled away while the clouds of smoke curled above him.

It was not long till the color left his face, his head was in a whirl, and his stomach began to manifest eruptive symptoms.

"Shorty," he gasped, "I'm awful sick. If smokin' makes a feller feel like this I don't want any more of it in mine."

"Where's all yer sand ye brag so much about?" said Shorty, laughing. "You're mighty poor timber for a soljer if ye can't stand a little pipe o' terbacker like that. You'll get over it purty soon, and it won't bother ye any next time ye try it."

Si found that he had on hand about as much as he could manage with his dizzy head and the rebellion that was so actively going on at a point a little lower in his physical system. The feeling wore gradually off, however, and by the time he was able to walk their clothes were well dried. They proceeded to "dress up," and then returned to camp.

During the afternoon the camp was visited by natives, black and white, from the region round about, with corn "pones," alleged pies, boiled eggs, and truck of various kinds, which they sought to dispose of for a valuable consideration. They struck a bad crowd, however, in a financial sense. The members of the 200th Ind. were not at this time in a condition of opulence. Most of them had spent what money they brought from home, and they had not been out long enough yet to receive a visit from the Paymaster. The lank men and scrawny women cried their wares vociferously, but with indifferent results. The boys wanted the stuff, but they were "busted," and trade was dull.

Si looked wistfully at the "pies," and suggested to Shorty a joint investment. Their purses were nearly empty, but the temptation was too strong to be resisted.

"Them looks nice," said Si. They were the first pies he had seen since leaving home, and his judgment was a little "off." As a matter of fact, it was only by the greatest stretch of courtesy that they could be called pies at all. But the word touched Si in a tender spot, and he only thought of such as his mother used to make.

Si and Shorty "pooled in" and bought a pie. Impatiently whipping out his pocket knife Si tried to cut it in two. It was hard work, for the "crust"—so called—was as tough as the hide of a mule. By their united efforts they at length succeeded in sawing it asunder. It was a fearful and wonderful specimen of culinary effort. It was made of two slabs of sodden, leathery dough, with a very feeble layer of dried apples sandwiched between them.

Si tried his teeth on the pie, but it was like trying to chew an old boot-leg.

"I say, old lady," said he, turning to the female of whom he had bought it, "is these pies pegged or sewed?"

"Look a hyar, young feller," said the woman, with considerable vinegar in her tone, "p'raps you-uns-all thinks it's right smart to insult we-uns; it shows how yer wuz broughten up. I don't 'low yer ever seed any nicer dog-g-goned pies 'n them is. Ye needn't try ter argify 'long 'th me, fur I kin jest knock the spots off'n any woman there is 'round here in cookin'."

Si saw that it would be profitless to discuss the matter, and concluded to make the best of a bad bargain. But he wouldn't eat the pie.

On the whole, the hucksters fared rather badly. The boys confiscated most of the stuff that was brought in, promising to pay next time they came that way. There was a good deal of grumbling, but the trouble always ended in the soldiers getting the plunder.

The climax was reached when a putty-faced citizen drove into camp a bony mule tied with straps and ropes and strings to a crazy cart, on which was a barrel of cider, which he "allowed" to sell out to the boys at 10 cents a drink, or a quarter a canteen full. He had a spigot rigged up in one end and an old tin cup, with which he dealt out the seductive beverage to such as would pay.

A thirsty crowd gathered around him, but sales were slow, on account of the scarcity of money. Si and Shorty mingled with the boys, and then drew aside and engaged in a whispered consultation.

"That'll be jest bully!" said Shorty. "If you can raise an auger somewhere we'll git the bulge on that old chap."



WAITING FOR THEIR CLOTHES TO DRY.

Si returned after a brief absence, with an auger which he had borrowed from the driver of an ammunition wagon.

"Now, Shorty," said Si, "you git the boys to stand around and keep up a racket, and I'll crawl under the cart and bore a hole into that 'ere barrel. Then pass in yer canteens and army kettles 'n' we'll show the old man a trick!"

Shorty quietly broached the scheme to a few of his comrades, who fell in with it at once. Gathering around the cart, they cheered and chattered so as to drown any noise Si might make while carrying out his plan, and which would "give it away."

It was not more than a minute till a gurgling sound was heard, and Si began to pass out to the boys the buckets and canteens which they so freely furnished him, filled with the fast-flowing contents of the barrel. It didn't take long to empty it entirely, nor did the citizen discover the state of affairs until the cider no longer ran from the spigot.

He had not sold more than a gallon or two, and he was amazed when the liquid ceased to respond. Then he resolved himself into an investigating committee, and after a protracted search he discovered the trick that had been played on him.

"Wall, I'll be gosh-durned!" he exclaimed. "I've hearn tell 'bout Yankee tricks, but dog my cats if this 'ere don't beat 'em all! I'd like to cut the gizzard outen the rascal that bored the hole in that bar'!"

"I declare, old pard; that was mean!" said Si, who stood looking on, with his hands in his trousers pockets, the very picture of innocence. "I'm jist goin' to flax 'round 'n' help ye find that feller. If I was you I'd pound the stuffin' out of him—when ye catch him!"

CHAPTER XIX. A CLOSE CALL

CORPORAL KLEGG HAS AN EXCITING ADVENTURE GUARDING A FORAGE TRAIN.

"COMPANY Q's bin detailed to go out 'n' help guard a forage train to-morrow," said the Orderly one evening at roll-call. "You fellers wants to all be up 'n' dressed bright 'n' early, with yer cartridge-boxes full 'n' a day's rations in yer haversacks. Be sure yer guns is in good order, fer likely's not we'll have a squirmish afore we git back."

The 200th Ind. had been lying in camp for two or three days, and the ambitious heroes who composed that regiment were getting tired of loafing about. Nothing chafed the raging patriotism of the new troops like a condition, however brief, of masterly inactivity. They refused to be comforted unless they were on the warpath all the time. Their ideal of a soldier's life was to take a rebel battery every morning before breakfast, storm a line of works to give them an appetite for dinner, and spend the afternoon charging with cold steel the serried columns of the foe and wading around through seas of gore.

So Corporal Klegg and Shorty and the rest of the boys betook themselves with alacrity to the work of preparation for the duties of the morrow. Members of the other companies watched the proceedings with jealous eye. They almost turned green with envy because they were not detailed for the expedition instead of Co. Q.

"Say, Si," remarked Shorty, thoughtfully, "hadn't we better write a letter home? Who knows but we'll be as dead as mackerels to-morrer night!"

"Fiddlesticks!" said Si. "What's the use o' havin' a funeral afore there's any corpse! We've bin through one fight 'n' didn't git hurt, 'n' I've made up my mind there's no use gittin' into a stew over a thing that may hap'n 'n' may not. Time 'nuff to fret 'bout it when it comes. I recollect one thing I learned in Sunday-school—let's see, it was 'S'ficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' or suthin' like that. Strikes me that's a good passidge o' Scriptor fer a soldier to keep pasted in his hat. I ain't goin' ter hang back fer fear a billit 'll hit me, nuther. If we're going to be killed we can't help it, so let's not fret our gizzards out!" And Si crammed a handful ofhardtack into his haversack.

Si's cheery view of the case was not without its effect upon Shorty. Indeed, it cannot be denied that there was a great deal of common sense in his homely, good-natured philosophy. Sooner or later every soldier who did not "peter out" came gradually to adopt Si's idea as the governing principle of his military career.

"Shouldn't wonder if you was 'bout right, after all," said Shorty, as he sliced up some bacon to have it ready for an early breakfast. "You're better'n medicine, Si, to a feller w'at gits the blues sometimes!"

The preparations were soon made, and Co. Q went to bed early. In the morning the Orderly came around and stirred the boys up an hour before reveille, as they were ordered to be ready to start at daylight. The primary object of the expedition was forage for the animals, the supply of which had run short. Besides this, each man had a secondary purpose, and that was to gather in something on his own hook that would satisfy his longing for a change from the regulation diet. This was always the unwritten part of the order to "go out foraging." Daylight was just streaking over the camp when Co. Q, equipped in light marching order, leaving knapsacks behind, moved out to where the half dozen wagons detailed from the regimental transportation were ready for the start. Each regiment in the brigade furnished a company and the same number of wagons. The impatient mules were braying and flapping their ears, as if they understood that they were to be the chief beneficiaries of the raid.

"Pile in, boys!" said the Orderly, and they clambered into the wagons. The guards were permitted to ride until there were symptoms of danger.

Then the muleteers, bestriding the big "wheelers," cracked their long whips like pistol-snots, addressed to the mules the usual words of exhortation, and the long procession drew out upon the stony pike and took a brisk trot. Considerable foraging had already been done in the vicinity, and it was expected the train would have to go out several miles in order to fully accomplish its object. The boys were in fine spirits and enjoyed their morning ride, albeit the jolting of the wagons gave them a thorough shaking up.

"I guess they forgot to put any springs in when they built these wagons!" said Shorty, as he shifted his position so that he might catch the bumps in a new place for a while.

"Jest thinkin' that way myself," replied Si; "but all the same, it beats travelin' on the hoof all holler!"

Three or four miles out from camp the train was halted while the officers in command made inquiries of a cadaverous native who was sunning himself on the fence and whose principal occupation seemed to be chewing tobacco and distributing the resultant liquid around in a promiscuous way.

"Good morning, stranger," said the officer, "have you any corn on your place?"

"Haint got a dog-goned ear left!" was the surly answer. "Some o' you-unses men wuz out here yisterdy 'n' tuk every bit I hed."

This may or may not have been true. Inquiries of this nature always developed the fact that it was a man's neighbors who had plenty of corn; he never had any himself.

"There's ole man Scroggs," he continued; "he lives a matter of two miles from hyar. I 'low ye'll git sum if ye go thar. He growed a power o' cawn this yeah; he sold a heap, but I reckon he's got a right smart left."

During this time a couple of men had been making a hasty examination of the outbuildings on the place. They reported that they could find nothing in the way of forage. If the man had any corn he had carefully concealed it. The train started on to pay a visit to old man Scroggs.

"Say, old pard," asked Si as his wagon drove past, "is there any rebs 'round here?"

"There wuz a few Confedrit critter-men ridin' 'bout hyar this mawnin';—mebby ye'll run agin 'em 'afore night."

"How many o' your boys is among em?"

"We'uns is all Union."

"Jest as long as we're 'round, I s'pose!" said Si.

A mile further on those who were in the lead, rising to the crest of a hill, saw—or thought they saw a few vagrant cavalymen far ahead. The train was halted and dispositions were made to meet any emergency likely to arise. The men were ordered to "tumble out" of the wagons. The main body was formed in advance. A line of skirmishers was deployed in front and flankers were thrown out on either side. Thus protected, the mule drivers again cracked their whips and the procession moved cautiously forward.

"Now keep yer eyes skinned," said Si to Shorty as they trailed along through the woods and fields and over fences, on one of the flanks. "If any of them raskils comes dodgin' 'round here let's try 'n' have the first crack at 'em 'n' git the bulge on the rest o' the boys!"

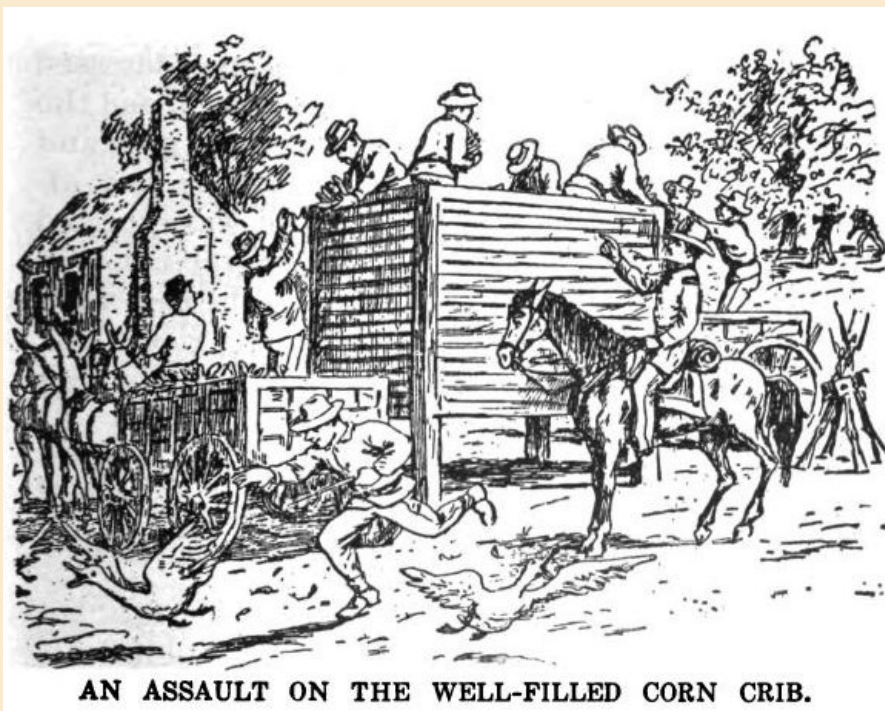
Keenly alert, with muskets loaded and capped, they crept carefully along, poking their noses into every thicket and peering around every building. It was clear that there would not be anything in the nature of a surprise if the whole line was as well taken care of as the particular point guarded by Corporal Klegg and his faithful friend Shorty.

"It's some like huntin' squirrels up in the woods of Posey County," said Si, as they forced their way through a patch of brambles.

"Pears to be rayther more excitin' than huntin' squirrels," said Shorty. "Ye know squirrels doesn't shute back at a feller as them pesky rebbles does, an' the fun 's all on one side. I reckon ef squirrels c'd shute there wouldn't be so much huntin' of 'em!"

It was really a disappointment to Si that he found no opportunity to squint along the barrel of his musket in range of a foe. If any of his misguided fellow-citizens were in the neighborhood they considered discretion the better part of valor and kept out of harm's way.

In due time the Scroggs plantation was reached. A hasty examination showed that there was an abundance of corn on the place to load the wagons, and arrangements for a sudden transfer of the property were quickly made. A third of the force established a cordon of picket-posts around the marauding party, covering all the avenues of approach, with re serves at convenient points. The remainder of the troops stacked arms and entered briskly upon the work of confiscation.



AN ASSAULT ON THE WELL-FILLED CORN CRIB.

Part of the harvest had already been gathered, and the first assault

was made on a well-filled cornhouse—one of a group of dilapidated out-buildings a little way from the dwelling. "Old man" Scroggs protested with profane vehemence, reinforced by the "old woman" and the entire family of children. We say "entire family," because there could not well have been a more numerous progeny in one household anywhere outside of Utah.

The head of the family cursed and swore, and his wife and the big girls looked as if they wanted to do the same thing, as they stood wringing their hands, their eyes flashing fire while the small-fry stood around and sobbed with a vague idea that some dire calamity had befallen them.

The old Kentuckian declared that he was a "Union man," and that he would demand of the Government full revenge for this outrage. It was noticed that there were no young men around as there should be according to the economy of nature, to preserve the balance of sex in so large a family. The officer in command asked him where all his sons were.

"Wall, I kaint tell yer 'zactly whar they is," was the reply. "They ain't to hum jest now. I 'low they've got a right to g'way ef they want ter."

The officer had been informed that there were several representatives of the Scroggs family in the rebel army. The old man's avowal of loyalty was taken for what it was worth. That it was not rated at a high figure

was well attested by the appearance of the plantation a few hours later.

Meanwhile the soldiers kept right along in the duty assigned them. The corn-house was surrounded by wagons, the roof was gently lifted off, and in scarcely more time than it takes to tell the story six or eight of the wagons were heaped with the contents. The mules wagged their tails and brayed in anticipation of the picnic they would have when they got back to camp.

Then the force moved some distance and attacked a large field of standing corn. The stalks had been "topped," but the ears were yet ungathered. The men started in between the rows and swept through that field like a cyclone, plucking the ears right and left. Bags, baskets and boxes were pressed into the service, and as there were not enough of these to go' round many bore the corn to the wagons by armfuls. It did not take more than two or three hours to strip every ear from the field. A visitation of overgrown Kansas grasshoppers could not have done a more thorough job.

"Fo' de Lawd, boss," said an old darky who had been roosting on the fence watching the spoilers, "I nebber seed de crap gaddered so quick since I'se bawn. You'uns all is powerful smart, da't shuah!"

But where were Corporal Klegg and his comrade. Shorty, while all this was going on?

They had been stationed as sentinels near a house, half a mile beyond, on the pike. They were cautioned to keep a sharp lookout, and for a time they obeyed their instructions to the letter. Their vigilant eyes swept the surrounding country, and no rebel could have crept up on them without getting a pair of bullets from their ready muskets. They saw no signs of an enemy, and after a while it began to grow monotonous.

"Shorty," said Si, "I don't b'lieve there's any seceshers in these parts, an' there ain't any use'n us both keepin' this thing up. You jest watch out awhile 'n' I'll skin around 'n' see what I kin find."

Shorty agreed to this, taking it as an order from his superior officer. Si threw his gun up to a "right shoulder shift" and started off, after again urging upon his companion the importance of attending strictly to business.

Si had not gone far till he saw, penned in a corner of the barnyard, a cow with a full udder, from which a frisky young calf was busily engaged in pumping nourishment. A violent feeling of envy toward that calf began immediately to rage in the 'breast of Si. He had not had a draft of fresh milk since he had left home, and he felt that a little refreshment of that kind would be particularly gratifying to his interior organism. It would strengthen him and give him new courage to stand up to the rack if they should happen to get into a fight.

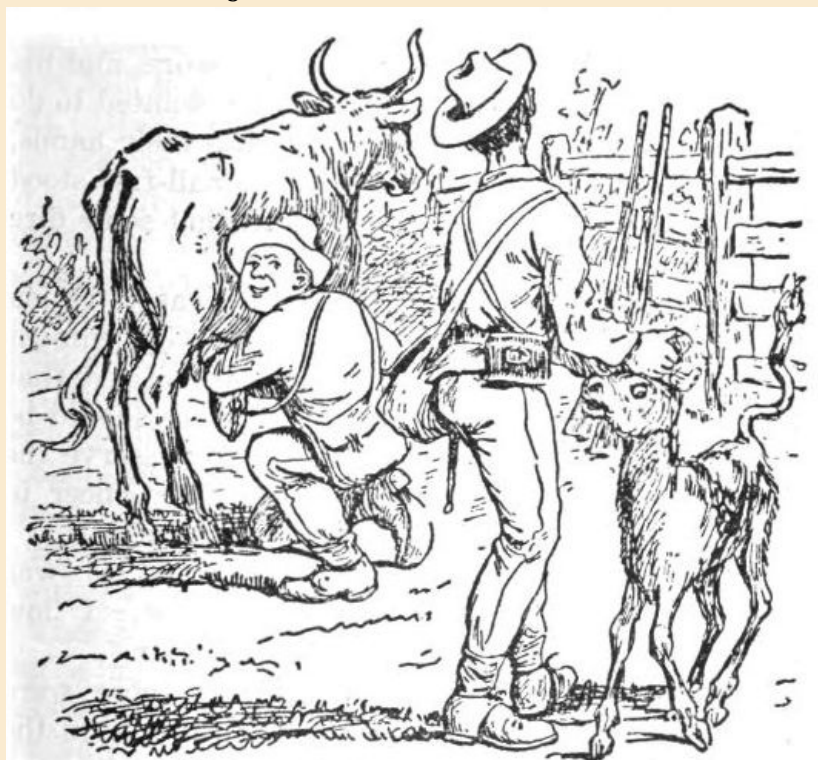
"I say. Shorty," he called, "cum 'ere a minnit, quick!"

Si's conscience smote him for calling Shorty from his duty and leaving the post unguarded, but the temptation was too strong for him to resist, and he yielded to the impulse to take the chances. Shorty came on the run, with eyes wide open, thinking his comrade had discovered some rebels hanging around.

"Look there!" said Si, pointing to the maternal scene that has been alluded to. "Let's have some o' that. We'll git over the fence 'n' you jest hold the calf while I milk our canteens full. 'Twont take more'n a jiffy!"

"We ort n't to leave the post, ort we?" suggested Shorty.

"Oh, there ain't no danger," Si replied; "an' besides, you can keep lookin' out while you're hangin' on to the calf. I was alters a good milker 'n' I'll fill up these canteens in a couple o' minnits." So they climbed over and leaned their muskets against the fence. Shorty seized the calf and held it with a firm grip, in spite of its struggling and bleating. The cow seemed disposed at first to resent the interference, but Si's persuasive "So, bossy" proved effectual in calming her fears, and she stood placidly chewing her cud while Si, spurred on by a guilty conscience, milked with all his might.



SHORTY HELD THE CALF.

The canteens were soon filled, and, without stopping to drink. Si and Shorty hurried back to their post of duty. All was quiet, and no harm had resulted from their brief absence.

"I told ye 'twould be all right," said Si. "Now, we'll jest empty one o' these canteens—here, take a swig—'n' we'll carry the other to camp. It'll be jest bully to have milk in our coffee agin!"

Then they betook themselves to duty with redoubled vigilance, to atone for their derelictions. After watching for an hour without seeing anything, Si said he would take another little turn around the place.

Boldly advancing to the house, which was some distance in front of their post, he was met by a girl of about 18. She was rather pretty, but to Si's ardent imagination she was like a vision of surpassing loveliness. She greeted him pleasantly—for Si was a comely youth—and, if the truth must be told, he actually forgot for the moment all about his duty. When she said she would get him a good dinner, and invited him into the house to sit while she prepared it, he just went right along.

But his conscience began to thump so loudly that after a few minutes he told her he guessed he'd have to go, but would be delighted to return in an hour and partake of her hospitality.

"May I bring Shorty—he's my pard—'long with me?" he timidly asked.

"Certainly!" she replied, with a sweet smile; and Si went away, his nerves tingling with pleasant emotions to the very tips of his fingers.

"Shorty," he said, as he came up to "I've struck it this time. Over to that house there's the purtiest gal I ever see."

"Wha-a-a-t!" interjected Shorty, with a look of astonishment; for he knew something about Si and Annabel—the girl he left behind him—and he was both surprised and pained at Si's treasonable enthusiasm.

Si easily divined his thoughts, for something of the same nature had already caused his own heart to palpitate in a reproving way.

"Of—c-c-course—I d-d-don't—mean th-th-that. Shorty," he stammered "but she's a nice girl, anyhow, 'n' she's gittin' up a dinner fer me 'n' you. Bet ye it'll be a nice lay-out, too!"

Shorty did not feel quite at ease in his mind about leaving the post again, but Si assured him it would be all right. The peculiar circumstances of the case had sadly warped Si's judgment.

So they went to the house and were cordially greeted by their fair young hostess, who was flying around, putting the finishing touches to the meal she had prepared for them.

"Jiminy, don't that smell good?" said Si to Shorty in an undertone, as his sensitive nostrils caught the savory odors that arose from the nicely-spread board.

The young soldiers stood their guns on the floor in a corner of the room, preliminary to an assault on the edibles.

"Ugh!" exclaimed the young woman, with a coquettish shiver, "be them awful things loaded?"

"N—no!" said Si; "they won't hurt ye if ye don't touch 'em!"

Si was learning to fib a little, and he wanted to quiet the girl's fears.

The boys were soon seated at the table, bountifully supplied with ham, chicken, eggs, bread and butter, honey, and all the accessories of a well-ordered repast. They fell to with an eagerness that was, perhaps, justified by the long time that had elapsed since they had had a "square meal." Si thought that never in his life had anything tasted so good.

While they were thus engaged, without a thought of impending danger, the girl suddenly opened the door, leading to the dining room. A wild-eyed man—who proved to be her brother—in the uniform of a rebel soldier, dashed in, and, presenting a cocked revolver, demanded their unconditional and immediate surrender.

They were in a tight place. But Si proved equal to the sudden and appalling emergency. It flashed through his mind in an instant how the girl had "played it" on him. He made up his mind that he would rather be shot than be captured under such circumstances.



SI SPRANG UPON HIM.

Si sprang up, and the rebel, true to his word, fired. Si dodged, and the ball only chipped a piece from his left ear. There was not time to get and use his gun. With the quickness of a cat Si sprang upon him, and with a blow of his fist laid him sprawling upon the floor. Disarming him, he placed the revolver at his head and triumphantly exclaimed:

"Now, gol darn ye, you're my prisoner. I'd like to blow the top o' yer head off fer spilin' my dinner, but I won't do it this time. But you jist git up 'n' come 'long with me!"

With his complete mastery of the situation, Si's confidence returned, and Shorty, who had been dazed and helpless at first, recovered himself and came to his assistance.

But at this instant their ears caught the sound of horses' hoofs galloping down the pike. Si's quick perception told him that it was a dash of rebel cavalymen, and that a few moments later escape would be impossible.

"Grab yer gun an' git!" he said to Shorty, at the same time casting one ferocious glance at the terrified girl, who stood, white and speechless, contemplating the scene.

Si and Shorty dashed out of the house and started for the reserve, at the highest speed of which their legs were capable. On clattered the horses, and a few shots from the carbines of the swift-riding horsemen whistled through the air.

Six feet at a jump, with thumping hearts and bulging eyes, the fugitives almost flew over the ground, throwing quick glances at their pursuers, and then ahead, in the hope of catching a glimpse of succor.



“SHORTY IF WE — ONLY GIT — OUT O’ THIS—”

"Shorty, if we only git out o' this—" but Si found he hadn't any wind to spare to finish the sentence. We must leave to the reader's imagination the good resolutions as to his future conduct that were forming in Si's mind at this critical juncture. He saw the awful consequences of yielding to the influence of that alluring young woman and her seductive dinner. What he had read about Adam and the trouble Eve got him into, in pretty much the same way, flashed before him. It was a good time to resolve that he wouldn't do so any more.

Shorty, long and lank, was swifter on his feet than Si. Hardtack and bacon had not yet reduced the latter's surplus flesh to a degree that enabled him to run well. Shorty kept ahead, but would not desert his comrade, slowing up for an instant now and then to give Si, who was straining to the utmost every nerve, and puffing like a locomotive on an upgrade, a chance to keep within supporting distance.

The soldiers of the reserve taking the alarm, came out at a double-quick and were fortunately able to cover the retreat of Si and Shorty. The half dozen cavalymen, upon the appearance of so large a force, turned their horses and galloped away.

"Hello, Si," said the Orderly of Co. Q, "yer ear's bleedin'. What hurt ye?"

"Fell down and scratched it on a brier!" said Si, as soon as he was able to speak.

That night Si and Shorty sat on a log by the campfire talking over the events of the day.

"Don't ye never blow on this thing," said Si. "It'll be a cold day for us if they'd find it out."

"There ain't no danger o' my tellin'," replied Shorty. "But, say, ain't that a nice girl out there?"

"She's a mean rebel, that's what she is! But that was a smart trick o' her'n, wasn't it?"

"Come mighty near bein' too smart fer us!" replied Shorty. "I don't want no more such close shaves in mine. You 'member the story of the spider and the fly, don't ye? Well, she was the spider 'n' we was two poor little fool flies!"

"Shorty," said Si, "I'd a mighty sight ruther be an angel an' have the daisies a-bloomin' over my grave, than to have been tuk a prisoner in that house. But that dinner was good, anyhow—what we got of it!"

CHAPTER XX. "THE SWEET SABBATH"

HOW THE BLESSED DAY OF REST WAS SPENT IN THE ARMY.

"TOMORROW'S Sunday, ye know," said the Orderly of Company Q one Saturday night at roll-call.

This was in the nature of news to the boys. But for the announcement very few of them would have known it. The Orderly was not distinguished for his piety, and it is not likely that the approach of Sunday would have occurred to him if the Sergeant-Major had not come around with orders from the Colonel for a proper observance of the day. The Colonel himself would not have thought of it either, if the Chaplain had not reminded him of it. Everybody wondered how even the Chaplain could keep track of the days well enough to know when Sunday came—but that was chiefly what he wore shoulder-straps and drew his salary for. It was the general impression that he either carried an almanac in his pocket, or else a stick in which he cut a notch every day with his jack-knife, and in that way managed to know when a new week began.

"There'll be guard-mountin' at 9 o'clock," continued the Orderly, "regimental inspection at 10, preachin' at 11, an' dress-parade at 5 in the evenin'. All of ye wants to tumble out right promptly at revelee an' git yer breakfast, an' then clean up yer guns an' put all yer traps in apple-pie order, 'cause the Colonel's goin' to look at 'em. He's got sharp eyes, an' I reck'n he'll be mighty pertickler. If there's anything that ain't jest right he'll see it quicker'n listenin'. Ye know we hain't had any inspections yet, an' the Cap'n wants us to be the boss company. So ye've got to scratch around lively in the mornin'."

"Say," said Corporal Klegg, after the company had broken ranks, "seems to me there wa'n't no use in the Orderly tellin' us to 'scratch around,' fer we're doin' that purty much all the time, now that the graybacks is gittin' in their work on us."

Shorty smiled faintly at what he seemed to consider a rather feeble joke, even for Si.

The 200th Ind. had now been in the field for many weeks, but it had been continually cantering about the country, and the Generals had kept it particularly active on Sundays. Probably this regiment did not manifest any more than the average degree of enthusiasm and fervor in religious matters, but there were many in its ranks who, at home, had always sat under Gospel ministrations, and to tramp on Sundays, the same as other days, was, at first, a rude shock to their moral sensibilities. These were yet keen, the edges had not been worn off and blunted and battered by the hard knocks of army life. True, they could scarcely tell when Sunday came, but they knew that they kept right along every day.

"Shorty," said Si, after they had curled up under the blanket for the night, "'pears to me it'll seem sort o' nice to keep Sunday agin. At the rate we've bin goin' on we'll all be heathens by the time we git home—if we ever do. Our Chaplain haint had no chance to preachify yet. The boys of Comp'ny X, w'at knows him, says he's a staver, 'n' I b'lieve it'll make us all feel better to have him talk to us once. 'Twont do us no harm, nohow, I'd like to be home to-morrer 'n' go to church with mother, 'n' sister Marier, 'n'—er—I mean the rest of the folks. Then I'd jest eat all the afternoon. I ain't goin' ter git homesick, Shorty; but a feller can't help feelin' a little streaked once 'n' a while. Mebbe it's a good idee fer 'em to keep us on the jump, fer then we don't git no chance to think 'bout it. I don't suppose I'm the only boy 'n' the regiment that 'd be glad to git a jest fer to-morrer. I sh'd want ter be back bright 'n' arly to fall in Monday mornin', fer I'm goin' to stick to the 200th through thick 'n' thin, if I don't git knocked out. Say, Shorty, how d'ye feel, any way?"

But Shorty was already fast asleep. Si spooned up to him and was soon, in his dreams, away up in Posey County.

The sound of the bugle and drum, at daylight, fell upon unwilling ears, for the soldiers felt the same indisposition to get up early Sunday morning that is everywhere. One of the characteristics of modern civilization. Their beds were hard, but to their weary limbs no couch of down ever gave more welcome rest than did the rough ground on which they lay. But the wild yell of the Orderly, "Turn out for roll-call!" with the thought of the penalties for non-obedience—which some of them had abundant reason to remember—quickly brought out the laggards.

Si and Shorty were, as usual, among the first to take their places in line. They were pleasantly greeted by the Captain, who had come out on the run at the last moment, and wriggled himself into his coat as he strode along the company street. The Captain did not very often appear at morning rollcall. But one officer of the company was required to be present, and the Captain generally loaded this duty upon the Lieutenants "turn about." If he did show up, he would go back to bed and snooze for an hour while the cook was getting breakfast. If one of the men did that he would soon be promenading with a rail on his shoulder or standing on a barrel with a stick or a bayonet tied in his mouth.

"I think that's a fust rate notion to mount the guards," said Si to Shorty as they sat on a rail by the fire making coffee and frying bacon. "It'll be so much better 'n' walkin' back 'n' forrard on the beats. Wonder 'f they'll give us bosses or mules to ride."

"I'd like to know what put that idee into yer head," said Shorty.

"Whydn't the Ord'ly say last night there 'd be guard-mountin' at 9 o'clock this mornin'? I s'posed that fer a man to be mounted meant straddlin' a boss or s'mother kind of an animal."

"Ain't ye never goin' to larn nuthin'," said Shorty, with a laugh. "Guard-mountin' don't mean fer the men to git on hosses. It's only the name they gives it in the Army Reggelations. Dunno why they calls it that, 'nless it's 'cause the guards has to 'mount' anybody that tries to pass 'thout the countersign. But don't ye fool yerself with thinkin' yer goin' to get to ride. We'll keep pluggin' along afoot, on guard or anywhere else, same's we have all the time."

Thus rudely was shattered another of Si Klegg's bright illusions.

The whole regiment turned out to witness the ceremony of guard-mounting. It was the first time the exigencies of the campaign had permitted the 200th Ind. to do this in regular style. The Adjutant was the most important personage, and stood so straight that he narrowly escaped falling over backward. In order to guard against making a mess of it, he had spent half the night rehearsing the various commands in his tent. Thus prepared, he managed to get through it in very fair shape.



SO STRAIGHT HE LEANED BACKWARD.

The next thing on the program for the day was the inspection. The boys had been industriously engaged in cleaning up their muskets and accouterments, and putting their scanty wardrobes in presentable condition. In arranging his knapsack for the Colonel's eye, each man carefully laid a clean shirt, if he had one, on the top. The garments that were not clean he either stowed away in the tent or put at the bottom of the knapsack. In this he was actuated by the same principle that prompts the thrifty farmer to put the biggest apples and strawberries at the top of his measure.

The clothing of the regiment was already in an advanced stage of demoralization. It was of the "shoddy" sort that a good hard wind would almost blow to pieces.

Corporal Klegg was anxious that not only his person, but all his belongings, should make as good an appearance as possible. He put on the best and cleanest garments he had, and then betook himself to fixing his knapsack so it would pass muster.

"Them duds is a bad lot," he said to Shorty, casting rueful glances at the little heap of soiled and ragged clothes. "Purty hard to make a decent show with them things."

"Wait a minute," said Shorty, "an' I'll show ye a little trick."

Taking his poncho under his arm, Shorty went to the rear of the camp, where the mules were feeding, and presently returned with a bunch of hay.

"What ye goin' to do with that?" asked Si.

"You jest do 's I tell ye, and don't ask no questions. Cram some o' this hay into yer knapsack 'n' fill 'er up 'n' then put a shirt or suthin', the best ye kin find, on top, 'n' the Colonel 'll think she's full o' clothes right from the laundry. I'm goin' to fix mine that way."

"Shorty, you're a trump!" said Si, approvingly. "That 'll be a bully scheme."

It required but a few minutes to carry out the plan. The hay was stuffed into the knapsack, and all vagrant spears were carefully tucked in.

Then a garment, folded so as to conceal its worst features, was nicely spread over the hay, the flaps were closed and buckled, and the young Hoosiers were ready for inspection.

"S'posen the Colonel sh'd take a notion to go pokin' down into them knapsacks," said Si; "don't ye think it'd be purty cold weather for us?"

"P'r'aps it mout," answered Shorty; "but we've got ter take the chances. He's got seven or eight hundred knapsacks to 'nspect, 'n' I don't b'lieve he'll stick his nose down into very many on 'em!"

At the appointed time the battalion was formed and the inspection was gone through with in good style. The Colonel and the field and staff officers, escorted by the Captain of each successive company, moved gradually between the ranks, their swords dangling around and getting mixed up with their legs. The soldiers stood facing inward like so many wooden men, with their open knapsacks lying upon the ground at their feet. The Colonel looked sharply right and left, stopped now and then to commend a soldier whose "straps" were in particularly good condition, or to "go for" another whose slouchy appearance betokened untidy habits. If a button was missing, or a shoe untied, his eye was keen to detect it, and a word of reproof was administered to the delinquent.

As the Colonel started down the line of Company Q Si watched him out of the corners of his eyes with no little anxiety. His heart thumped as he saw him occasionally stoop and fumble over the contents of a knapsack, evidently to test the truth of Longfellow's declaration that "things are not what they seem." What if the Colonel should go down into the bowels of Si's knapsack! Si fairly shuddered at the thought.

Si, being the shortest of the Corporals, was at the foot of the company, while Shorty, on account of his height, was well up toward the head. Si almost fainted when he saw the Colonel stop in front of his "pard" and make an examination of his fatlooking knapsack. Military official dignity gave way when the removal of the

single garment exposed the stuffing of hay. The officers burst into a laugh at the unexpected revelation, while the boys on either side almost exploded in their enjoyment of Shorty's discomfiture.



SI ALMOST FAINTED WHEN THE COLONEL STOPPED.

"Captain," said the Colonel, with as much sternness as he could command, "as soon as your company is dismissed detail a guard to take charge of this man. Have him take the hay out of his knapsack and fill it with stones—and see that it is filled full. Have this man put it on and march him up and down the company street till church-call, and then take him to hear the Chaplain. He needs to be preached to. Perhaps, between the knapsack-drill and the Chaplain, we can straight him out."

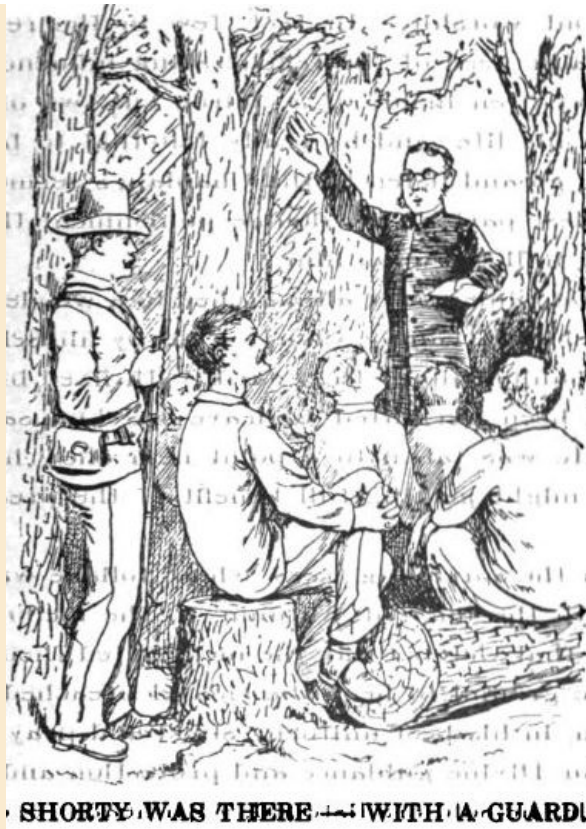
Corporal Klegg heard all this, and he wished the ground might open and swallow him. "These stripes is gone this time, sure!" he said to himself, as he looked at the chevrons on his arm. "But there's no use givin' yourself away, Si. Brace up, 'n' mebbe the Colonel 'll skip ye."

Si had been badly shaken up by the Colonel's episode with Shorty, but by a great effort he gathered himself together and was at his best, externally, when the Colonel reached him, though his thoughts were in a raging condition. His face was clean and rosy, and his general make-up was as good as could be expected under the circumstances.

The Colonel had always remembered Si as the soldier he had promoted to be a Corporal for his gallantry in the little skirmish a few days before. As he came up he greeted the Corporal with a smile and a nod of recognition. He was evidently pleased at his tidy appearance. He cast a glance at the voluptuous knapsack, and Si's heart seemed to sink away down into his shoes.

But the fates smiled on Si that day. The Colonel turned to the Captain and told him that Corporal Klegg was the model soldier of Company Q. Si was the happiest man in the universe at that precise moment. It was not on account of the compliment the Colonel had paid him, but because his knapsack had escaped a critical inspection of its contents.

The inspection over, Company Q marched back to its quarters and was dismissed. Poor Shorty was soon tramping to and fro, under guard, humping his back to ease the load that had been put upon it. Si was very sorry for him, and at the same time felt a glow of pleasure at the thought that it was not his own knapsack instead of Shorty's that the Colonel had examined. He could not help feeling, too, that it was a great joke on Shorty to be caught in his own trap.



SHORTY WAS THERE WITH A GUARDIAN

Shorty took his medicine like a man, marching up and down the row of tents bravely and patiently, unheeding the gibes and jeers of his hard-hearted comrades.

The bugle sounded the call for religious services. Shorty was not in a frame of mind that fitted him for devout worship. In fact, few in the regiment had greater need of the regenerating influence. He had never been inside of a church but two or three times in his life, and he really felt that to be compelled to go and listen to the Chaplain's sermon was the hardest part of the double punishment the Colonel had inflicted upon him.

The companies were all marched to a wooded knoll just outside the camp. Shorty went by himself, save the companionship of the guard, with fixed bayonet. He had been permitted to leave his knapsack behind. He was taken to a point near the Chaplain, that he might get the full benefit of the preacher's words.

Under the spreading trees, whose foliage was brilliant with the hues of Autumn, in the mellow sunshine of that October day the men seated themselves upon the ground to hear the Gospel preached. The Chaplain, in his best uniform, stood and prayed fervently for Divine guidance and protection and blessing, while the soldiers listened, with heads reverently bowed. Then he gave out the familiar Methodist hymn,

"Am I a soldier of the cross,"

and all joined in the old tune "Balerna," their voices swelling in mighty chorus. As they sang,

"Are there no foes for me to face?"

there came to the minds of many a practical application of the words, in view of the long and fruitless chase after the rebels in which they had been engaged for nearly a month.

The Chaplain had formerly been an old-fashioned Methodist circuit-rider in Indiana. He was full of fiery zeal, and portrayed the terrors of eternal punishment so vividly that His hearers could almost feel the heat of the flame and smell the fumes of brimstone that are popularly believed to roll out unceasingly from the mouth of the bottomless pit. It ought to have had a salutary effect upon Shorty, but it is greatly to be feared that he steeled his stubborn heart against all that the Chaplain said.

It was always difficult not to feel that there was something contradictory and anomalous about religious services in the army. Grim-visaged, hideous war, and all its attendant circumstances, seemed so utterly at variance with the principles of the Bible and the teachings of Him who was meek and lowly, that few soldiers had philosophy enough to reconcile them.

The soldiers spent the afternoon in reading what few stray books and fugitive, well-worn newspapers there were in camp, mending their clothes, sleeping, and some of them, we are pained to add, in playing eucher, old sledge, and other sinful games. Dress parade closed the day that had brought welcome rest to the way-worn soldiers of the 200th Ind..

"Shorty," said Si, after they had gone to bed that night, "I sh'd be mighty sorry if I'd ha' got up that knapsack trick this mornin', 'cause you got left on it so bad."

"There's a good many things," replied Shorty, "that's all right when ye don't git ketched. It worked tip top with you, Si, 'n' I'm glad of it. But I put ye up to it, 'n' I shouldn't never got over it if the Colonel had caught ye, on account of them stripes on yer arm. He'd ha' snatched 'em baldheaded, sure's yer born. You're my pard, 'n' I'm jest as proud of 'em as you be yerself. I'm only a privit, 'n' they can't rejuce me any lower! Besides, I 'low it sarved me right 'n' I don't keer fer the knapsack drill, so I didn't git you into a scrape."

CHAPTER XXI. SI AND SHORTY WERE RAPIDLY LEARNING

THE GREAT MILITARY TRUTH

THAT IN THE ARMY THE MOST LIKELY THING TO HAPPEN IS SOMETHING ENTIRELY UNLIKELY.

COL. TERRENCE P. McTARNAGHAN, as his name would indicate, had first opened his eyes where the blue heavens bend over the evergreen sod of Ireland. Naturally, therefore, he thought himself a born soldier, and this conviction had been confirmed by a year's service as Second Lieutenant of Volunteers in the Mexican War, and subsequent connection with the Indiana Militia. Being an Irishman, when he went in for anything, and especially soldiering, he went in with all his might. He had associated with Regular Army officers whenever there was an opportunity, and he looked up to them with the reverence and emulation that an amateur gives to a professional. Naturally he shared their idea that an inspection and parade was the summit of military art. Consequently, the main thing to make the 200th Ind. the regiment it should be were frequent and rigid inspections.

Fine weather, two days of idleness, and the prospect that the regiment would remain there some time watching the crossing of the Cumberland were enough and more than enough to set the Colonel going. The Adjutant published the following order:

*Headquarters 200th Indiana,
In the Field, on the Cumberland,*

Nov. 25, 1862.

*I. The Regiment will be paraded for inspection tomorrow
afternoon at 4 o'clock.*

*II. Captains will be expected to parade the full strength of
their companies.*

*III. A half hour before the parade. Captains will form their
companies in the company streets and inspect every man.*

*IV. The men will be required to have their clothes neatly
brushed, blouses buttoned up, clean underclothes, shoes
blacked, letters and numbers polished, and arms and
accouterments in best condition. They will wear white
gloves.*

*V. The man who has his clothes, arms and accouterments in
the best order will be selected for the Colonel's Orderly.*

By command of

Attest: COL. TERRENCE P. McTARNAGHAN, Colonel.

B. B. LAUGHLIN, Adjutant.

When Capt. McGillicuddy marched Co. Q back to its street, he called attention to the order with a few terse admonitions as to what it meant to every one.

"Get at this as soon as you break ranks, boys," urged the Captain. "You can do a whole lot between now and tattoo. The others will, and you must not let them get ahead of you. No straw in knapsacks this time."

Company spirit was high, and it would be little short of a calamity to have Co. Q beaten in anything.

There was a rush to the Sutler for white gloves, blacking, needles, thread, paper collars, sweet oil and rotten stone for the guns.

That genial bird of prey added 50 per cent to his prices, because it was the first business he had done for some weeks; 50 per cent more for keeping open in the evening, another 50 per cent for giving credit till pay day, and still another for good will.

The Government had just offered some very tempting gold-interest bonds, of which he wanted a swad.

"Tain't right to let them green boys have their hull \$13 a month to waste in foolishness," he said. "Some good man should gather it up and make a right use of it."

Like Indiana farmer boys of his class. Si Klegg was cleanly but not neat. Thanks to his mother and sisters, his Sunday clothes were always "respectable," and he put on a few extra touches when he expected to meet Annabel. He took his first bath for the year in the Wabash a week or two after the suckers began to run, and his last just before the water got so cold as to make the fish bite freely.

Such a thing as a "dandy" was particularly distasteful to him.

"Shorty," said Si, as he watched some of the boys laboring with sandpaper, rotten stone and oil to make the gunbarrels shine like silver, "what's the cense o' bein' so partickler about the outside of a gun? The business part's inside. Making them screw heads look like beads don't make it no surer of getting Mr. Butternut."

"Trouble about you folks on the Wabash," answered Shorty, as he twisted a screw head against some emery paper, "is that you don't pay enough attention to style. Style goes a long ways in this vain and wicked world," (and his eyes became as if meditating on worlds he had known which were not so vain and wicked), "and when I see them Kokomo persimmon knockers of Co. B hustling to put on frills, I'm going to beat 'em if I don't lay up a cent."

"Same here," said Si, falling to work on his gunbarrel. "Just as' nice people moved into Posey County as squatted in Kokomo. Gang o' hoss thieves first settled Howard County."

"Recollect that big two fister from Kokomo who said he'd knock your head off if you ever throwed that up to him again?" grinned Shorty. "You invited him to try it on, an' he said your stripes stopped him. You pulled off your blouse, and you said you had no stripes on your shirt sleeves. But I wouldn't say it again until those Co. B fellers try again to buck us out of our place in the ration line. It's too good a slam to waste."

Tattoo sounded before they had finished their guns and accouterments. These were laid aside to be completed in the full light of day.

The next morning work was resumed with industry stimulated by reports of the unusual things being done by the other companies.

"This Tennessee mud sticks closer'n a \$500 mortgage to a 40-acre tract," sighed Si, as he stopped beating and brushing his blouse and pantaloons.

*"Or,
"Aunt Jemima's plaster,
"The more you try to pull it off the more it sticks
the faster."*

hummed Shorty, with what breath he had left from his violent exercise.

So well did they work that by dinner time they felt ready for inspection, careful reconnoissances of the other companies showing them to have no advantages.

Next to the Sutler's for the prescribed white gloves.

Si' had never worn anything on his hands but warm, woolen mittens knit for him by his mother, but the order said white gloves, and gloves they must have. The accommodating sutler made another stoppage in their month's pay of \$1 for a pair of cheap, white cotton gloves. By this time the sutler had accumulated enough from the 200th Ind. to secure quite a handful of gold interest-bearing bonds.

"Well, what do you think of them. Si?" said Shorty, as he worked his generous hands into a pair of the largest sized gloves and held them up to view.

"If they were only painted yaller and had a label on them," said Si, "they could be issued for Cincinnati canvas covered hams."

Shorty's retort was checked by hearing the bugle sound the officers' call. The Colonel announced to them that owing to the threatening look of the skies the parade and inspection would take place in an hour.

There was feverish haste to finish undone things, but when Capt. McGillicuddy looked over his men in the company street, he declared himself proud to stack up Co. Q against any other in the regiment. Gun barrels and bayonets shone like silver, rammers rang clear, and came out without a stain to the Captain's white gloves.

The band on the parade ground struck up the rollicking

*"O, ain't I glad to git out of the wilderness,
Out of the wilderness-Out of the wilderness,"*

and Capt. McGillicuddy marched proudly out at the head of 75 broad-shouldered, well-thewed young Indianians, fit and fine as any south of the Ohio.

The guides, holding their muskets butts up, indicated where the line was to form, the trim little Adjutant, glorious as the day in a new uniform and full breasted as a pouter-pigeon, was strutting over toward the band, and the towering red-headed Colonel, martial from his waving plume to his jangling spurs, stood before his tent in massive dignity, waiting for the color company to come up and receive the precious regimental standard.

This scene of orderly pomp and pageantry was rudely disturbed by an Aid dashing in on a sweating horse, and calling out to the statuesque commander:

"Colonel, a train is stalled in the creek about three miles from here, and is threatened with capture by Morgan's cavalry. The General presents his compliments, and directs that you take your regiment on the double-quick to the assistance of the train. You v'e not a moment lose."

"Tare and 'ounds!" swore the Colonel in the classic he used when excited, "am I niver to have a dacint inspection? Orderly, bring me me harse. Stop that band's ijiotic blatting. Get into line there, quick as love will let you, you unblessed Indiana spalpeans. Without doubling; right face! Forward, M-a-r-c-h!"

Col. McTarnaghan, still wearing his parade grandeur, was soon at the head of the column, on that long-striding horse which always set such a hot pace for the regiment; especially over such a rough, gullied road as they were now traveling.

Still, the progress was not fast enough to suit the impatient Colonel, who had an eye to the report he would have to make to the Brigadier General, who was a Regular.

"Capt. McGillicuddy," commanded he, turning in his saddle, "send forward a Corporal and five men for an advance guard."

"Corporal Klegg, take five men and go to the front," commanded the Captain.

"Now you b'yes, get ahead as fast as you can. Get a move on them durty spalpanes of tamesters. We must get back to camp before this storm strikes us. Shove out, now, as if the divil or Jahn Morgan was after yez."

It was awful double-quicking over that rocky, ruddy road, but taking Shorty and four others. Si went on the keen jump to arrive hot and breathless on the banks of the creek. There he found a large bearded man wearing an officer's slouched hat sitting on a log, smoking a black pipe, and gazing calmly on the ruck of wagons piled up behind one stalled in the creek, which all the mules they could hitch to it had failed to pull out.

It was the Wagon Master, and his calmness was that of exhaustion. He had yelled and sworn himself dry, and was collecting another fund of abuse to spout at men and animals.

"Here, why don't you git a move on them wagons?" said Si hotly, for he was angered at the man's apparent indifference.

"Tend to your own business and I'll tend to mine," said the Wagon Master, sullenly, without removing his pipe or looking at Si.

"Look here, I'm a Corporal, commanding the advance guard," said Si. "I order you!"

This seemed to open the fountains of the man's soul.

"You order me?" he yelled, "you splay-footed, knock-kneed, chuckled-headed paper-collared, whitegloved sprat from a milk-sick prairie. Corporal! I outrank all the Corporals from here to Christmas of next year."

"The gentleman seems to have something on his mind," grinned Shorty. "Mebbe his dinner didn't set well."

"Shorty?" inquired Si, "how does a Wagon Master rank? Seems to me nobody lower'n a Brigadier-General should dare talk to me that way."

"Dunno," answered Shorty, doubtfully. "Seems as if I'd heard some of them Wagon Masters rank as Kurnels. He swears like one."

"Corporal!" shouted the Wagon Master with infinite scorn. "Measly \$2-a-month water totter for the camp-guard, order me!" and he went off into a rolling stream of choice "army language."

"He must certainly be a Kurnel," said Shorty.

"Here," continued the Wagon Master, "if you don't want them two shoat-brands jerked offen you, jump in and get them wagons acrost. That's what you were sent to do. Hump yourself, if you know what's good for you. I've done all I can. Now it's your turn."

Dazed and awed by the man's authoritativeness the boys ran down to the water to see what was the trouble.

They found the usual difficulty in Southern crossings. The stupid tinkerers with the road had sought to prevent it running down into the stream by laying a log at the edge of the water. This was an enormous one two feet in diameter, with a chuckhole before it, formed by the efforts of the teams to mount the log. The heavily laden ammunition wagon had its hub below the top of the log, whence no amount of mule-power could extricate it.

Si, with Indiana commonsense, saw that the only help was to push the wagon back and lay a pile of poles to make a gradual ascent. He and the rest laid their carefully polished muskets on dry leaves at the side, pulled off their white gloves, and sending two men to hunt thru the wagons for axes to cut the poles. Si and Shorty roused up the stupid teamsters to unhitch the mules and get them behind the wagon to pull it back. Alas for their carefully brushed pantaloons and well-blackened shoes, which did not last a minute in the splashing mud.

The Wagon Master had in the meanwhile laid in a fresh supply of epithets and had a fresh batch to swear at. He stood up on the bank and yelled profane injunctions at the soldiers like a Mississippi River Mate at a boat landing. They would not work fast enough for him, nor do the right thing.

The storm at last burst. November storms in Tennessee are like the charge of a pack of wolves upon a herd of buffalo. There are wild, furious rushes, alternating with calmer intervals. The rain came down for a few minutes as if it would beat the face off the earth, and the stream swelled into a muddy torrent. Si's paper collar and cuffs at once became pulpy paste, and his boiled shirt a clammy rag. In spite of this his temper rose to the boiling point as he struggled thru the sweeping rush of muddy water to get the other wagons out of the road and the ammunition wagon pulled back a little ways to allow the poles to be piled in front of it.

The dashing downpour did not check the Wagon Master's flow of profanity. He only yelled the louder to make himself heard above the roar. The rain stopped for a few minutes as suddenly as it had begun and Col. McTarnaghan came up with all his parade finery drenched and dripping like the feathers of a prize rooster in a rainy barnyard. His Irish temper was at the steaming point, and he was in search of something to vent it on.

"You blab-mouthed son of a thief," he shouted at the Wagon Master, "what are you ordering my men around for? They are sent here to order you, not you to order them. Shut that ugly potato trap of yours and get down to work, or I'll wear my saber out on you. Get down there and put your own shoulders to the wheels, you misbegotten villain. Get down there into the water, I tell you. Corporal, see that he does his juty!"

The Wagon Master slunk down the hill, where Shorty grabbed him by the collar and yanked him over to help push one of the wagons back. The other boys had meanwhile found axes, cut down and trimmed up some pine poles and were piling them into the chuckhole under Si's practical guidance. A double team was put on the ammunition wagon, and the rest of Co. Q came up wet, mad and panting. A rope was found and stretched ahead of the mules, on which the company lined itself, the Colonel took his place on the bank and gave the word, and with a mighty effort the wagon was dragged up the hill. Some other heavily loaded ammunition wagons followed. The whole regiment was now up, and the bigger part of it lined on the rope so that these wagons came up more easily, even tho the rain resumed its wicked pounding upon the clay soil.

Wading around thru the whirling water. Si had discovered, to his discomfiture, that there was a narrow, crooked reef that had to be kept to. There were deep overturning holes on either side. Into one of these Si had gone, to come again floundering and spurting muddy water from his mouth.

Shorty noted the place and took the first opportunity to crowd the Wagon Master into it.

A wagon loaded with crackers and pork missed the reef and went over hopelessly on its side, to the rage of Col. McTamaghan.

"Lave it there; lave it there, ye blithering numbskulls," he yelled, "Unhitch those mules and get 'em out. The pork and wagon we can get when the water goes down. If another wagon goes over Oi'll rejuce it every mother's son of yez, and tie yez up by the thumbs besides."

Si and Shorty waded around to unhitch the struggling mules, and then, taking poles in hand to steady themselves, took their stations in the stream where they could head the mules right.

Thru the beating storm and the growing darkness, the wagons were, one by one, laboriously worked over until, as midnight approached, only three or four remained on the other side. Chilled to the bone, and almost dropping with fatigue from hours of standing in the deep water running like a mill race. Si called Al Klapp, Sib Ball and Jesse Langley to take their poles and act as guides.

Al Klapp had it in for the sutlers. He was a worm that was ready to turn. He had seen some previous service, and had never gone to the Paymaster's table but to see the most of his \$13 a month swept away by the sutler's remorseless hand. He and Jesse got the remaining army wagons over all right. The last wagon was a four-horse team belonging to a sutler.

The fire of long-watched-for vengeance gleamed in Al's eye as he made out its character in the dim light. It reached the center of the stream, when over it went in the rushing current of muddy water.

Al and Jesse busied themselves unhooking the struggling mules.

The Colonel raged. "Lave it there! Lave it there!" he yelled after exhausting his plentiful stock of Irish expletives. "But we must lave a guard with it. Capt. Sidney Hyde, your company has been doing less than any other. Detail a Sergeant and 10 men to stand guard here until tomorrow, and put them two thick-headed oudmahouns in the creek on guard with them. Make them stand double tricks.

"All right. It was worth it," said Al Klapp, as the Sergeant put him on post, with the water running in rivulets from his clothes. "It'll take a whole lot of skinning for the sutlers to get even for the dose I've given one of them."

"B'yes, yoi've done just splendid," said the Colonel, coming over to where Si and Shorty were sitting wringing the water and mud from their pantaloons and blouses. "You're hayroes, both of yez. Take a wee drap from my canteen. It'll kape yez from catching cold."

"No, thankee, Kurnel," said Si, blushing with delight, and forgetting his fatigue and discomfort, in this condescension and praise from his commanding officer. "I'm a Good Templar."

"Sinsible b'y," said the Colonel approvingly, and handing his canteen to Shorty.

"I'm mightily afraid of catching cold," said Shorty, reaching eagerly for the canteen, and modestly turning his back on the Colonel that he might not see how deep his draft.

"Should think you were," mused the Colonel, hefting the lightened vessel. "Bugler, sound the assembly and let's get back to camp."

The next day the number of rusty muskets, dilapidated accouterments and quantity of soiled clothes in the camp of the 200th Ind. was only equaled by the number of unutterably weary and disgusted boys.

CHAPTER XXII. A NIGHT OF SONG

HOME-SICKNESS AND ITS OUTPOURING IN MUSIC.

IT WAS Sunday again, and the 200th Ind. still lingered near Nashville. For some inscrutable reason known only to the commanding officers the brigade had been for nearly a week in camp on the banks of the swift running Cumberland. They had been bright, sunshiny days, the last two of them. Much rain in the hill country had swollen the swift waters of the Cumberland and they fiercely clamored their devious way to the broad Ohio. The gentle roar as the rippling wavelets dashed against the rock bound shores sounded almost surf-life, but to Si, who had never heard the salt waves play hide-and-go-seek on the pebbly beach, the Cumberland's angry flood sang only songs of home on the Wabash. He had seen the Wabash raging in flood time and had helped to yank many a head of stock from its engulfing fury. He had seen the Ohio, too, when she ran bank full with her arched center carrying the Spring floods and hundreds of acres of good soil down to the continent-dividing Mississippi, and on out to sea. His strong arms and stout muscles had piloted many a boat-load of boys and girls through the Wabash eddies and rapids during the Spring rise, and as he stood now, looking over the vast width of this dreary waste of waters, a great wave of home-sickness swept over him.

After all, Si was only a kid of a boy, like thousands of his comrades.' True, he was past his majority a few months, but his environment from youth to his enlistment had so sheltered him that he was a boy at heart.

"The like precurse of fierce events and prologue to the omen coming on" had as yet made small impression upon him. Grim visaged war had not frightened him much up to that time. He was to get his regenerating baptism of blood at Murfreesboro a few weeks later. Just now Si Klegg was simply a boy grown big, a little over fat, fond of mother's cooking, mother's nice clean feather beds, mother's mothering, if the truth must be told. He had never in his life before been three nights from under the roof of the comfortable old house in which he was born. He had now been wearing the blue uniform of the Union a little more than three months, and had not felt mother's work-hardened hands smoothing his rebellious hair or seen her face or heard a prayer like she could make in all that three months.

"Shucks!" he said fretfully to himself as he looked back at the droning, half asleep brigade camp, and then off to the north, across the boiling yellow flood of waters that tumbled past the rocks far below him.

"A feller sure does git tired of doin' nothin'."

Lusty, young, and bred to an active life, Si, while he did not really crave hustle and bustle, was yet wedded to "keeping things moving." He had already forgotten the fierce suffering of his early marching—it seemed three years to him instead of three months back; he had forgotten the graybacks, the wet nights, the foraging expeditions, the extra guard duty and all that. There had been two days of soft Autumn sunshine in a camp that was almost ideal. Everything was cleaned up, mended up, and the men had washed and barbered themselves into almost dude-like neatness. Their heaviest duties had been lazy camp guard duty, which Shorty, growing indolent, had declared to be "dumned foolishness," and the only excitement offered came from returning foraging parties. There was no lurking enemy to fear, for the country had been cleared of guerrillas, and in very truth the ease and quietness of the days of inactivity was almost demoralizing the men.

There had been no Sunday services. The 200th Ind. was sprawled out on the ground in its several hundred attitudes of ease, and those with whom they were brigaded were just as carelessly disposed.

As Si sauntered aimlessly back to look for Shorty, the early twilight began to close in as the sun slid down behind the distant hills. Campfires began to glow as belated foragers prepared their suppers, and the gentle hum of voices came pleasantly to the ear, punctuated by laughter, often boisterous, but quite as often just the babbling, cheery laugh of carefree boys.

Si felt—well, Si was just plain homesick for mother and the girls, and one particular girl, whose front name was Annabel, and he almost felt as though he didn't care who knew it.

The air was redolent with the odor of frying meat. Mingled with this were vagrant whiffs of cooking potatoes, onions, chickens, and the fragrance of coffee steaming to blackest strength, all telling tales of skillful and successful foraging, and it all reminded Si of home and the odors in his mother's kitchen.

Si couldn't find Shorty, so he hunched down, silent and alone, beside his tent, a prey to the blue devils. It would soon be Christmas at home. He could see the great apple bins in the cellar; the pumpkins in the hay in the barn; the turkeys roosting above the woodshed; the yards of encased sausages in the attic; he could even smell the mince meat seasoning in the great stone jar; the honey in the bee cellar; the huge fruit cake in the milk pan in the pantry; since he could remember he seen and smelled all these, with 57 varieties of preserves, "jells," marmalades, and fruit-butters thrown in for good measure at Christmas time. He had even contemplated with equanimity all these 21 Christmases, the dose of "blue pills" that inevitably followed over-feeding at Mother Klegg's, and now on his 22d Christmas he might be providing a target for a rebel bullet.

Suddenly Si noticed that the dark had come; the fragrance of tobacco from hundreds of pipes was filling the air, and from away off in the distance the almost Indian Summer zephyrs were bringing soft rhythmic sounds like—surely—yes, he caught it now, it was that mighty soother of tired hearts—

*"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly.
While the billows near me roll.
While the tempest still is high."*

Si shut his eyes lest the tear drops welling suddenly up fall on his uniform, not stopping to think that in the gloom they could not be seen.

Miles away the singers seemed to be when Si caught the first sounds, but as the long, swinging notes reached out in the darkness, squad after squad, company after company, regiment after regiment took up the grand old hymn until Si himself lifted up his not untuneful voice and with the thousands of others was pleading—

*"Hide me, oh, my Savior hide,
'Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide.
Oh, receive my soul at last."*

and the song rose and swelled out and up toward heaven, and stole away off to the horizon till the whole vast universe seemed filled with the sacred melody. As the last words and their music faded out in space. Shorty lunged down beside Si.

"Say, Pard," he began banteringly, "you've missed yer callin'. Op'ry oughter have been yer trade."

"Oh, chop off yer chin music for a minute. Shorty," broke in Si. "In the dark here it seemed most as though I was at home in the little old church with Maria and Annabel and Pap and Mother, and us all singing together, and you've busted it—ah! listen!"

From not far away a bugler had tuned up and through the fragrant night came piercingly sweet—

"I will sing you a song of that beautiful land—"

Then near at hand a strong, clear, musical tenor voice took up the second line,

"The far away home of the soul,"

and almost instantly a deep, resonant bass voice boomed in—

*"Where no storms ever beat on that glittering strand
While the years of eternity roll,"*

and soon a hundred voices were making melody of the spheres as they sang Philip Phillips's beautiful song.

"That was Wilse Hornbeck singin' tenor," said Si, as the song ended.

"And it was Hen Withers doin' the bass stunt," returned Shorty.

"You just oughter hear him do the ornamental on a mule whacker. Why, Si, he's an artist at cussing. Hen Withers is. Sodom and Gomorrah would git jealous of him if he planted himself near 'em, he's that wicked."

"Well, he can sing all right," grunted Si.

Just then Hen Withers, in the squad some 50 feet away broke into song again—

"Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light"

It welled up from his throat like the pipe from a church organ, and as mellow as the strains from a French horn. When the refrain rolled out fully 3,000 men were singing, yelling and shouting in frenzied fervor—

*"And the Star Spangled banner,
In triumph shall wave,
O'er the land of the free,
And the home of the brave."*

While Hen Withers rested on his well-earned laurels, a strong, clear voice, whose owner was probably thinking of home and the shady gloom of the walk through the grove to singing school with his sweetheart, trilled an apostrophe to the queen of light.

*"Roll on, silvery moon,
Guide the traveler on his way,"*

but he had it pretty much to himself, for not many knew the words, and he trailed off into

"I loved a little beauty, Bell Brandon,"

then his music died out in the night.

It was now the "tenore robusto" who chimed in bells, on a new battle song that held a mile square of camp spellbound:

"Oh, wrap the flag around me, boys,

*To die were far more sweet
With freedom's starry emblem, boys.*

*To be my winding sheet.
In life I loved to see it wave*

*And follow where it led,
And now my eyes grow dim, my hands*

*Would clasp its last bright shred.
Oh, I had thought to meet you, boys,*

*On many a well-worn field
When to our starry emblem, boys,*

*The trait'rous foe should yield.
But now, alas, I am denied*

*My dearest earthly prayer,
You'll follow and you'll meet the foe,*

But I shall not be there."

Wilse Hornback knew by the hush of the camp as the sound of his wonderful voice died on the far horizon that he had his laurels, too, and so he sang on while the mile square of camp went music-mad again as it sang with him—

*"We are springing to the call of our brothers gone before,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.
And we'll fill the vacant ranks with a million freemen more.
Shouting the battle cry of freedom."*

Chorus:

*"The Union forever! Hurrah, boys. Hurrah;
Down with the traitor and up with the Star,
While we rally 'round the Flag, boys,
We'll rally once again,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.*

*We will welcome to our numbers the loyal, true and brave.
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,
And although they may be poor, not a man shall
be a slave.
Shouting the battle cry of freedom.*

*So we're springing to the call from the East and from the West,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom,
And we'll hurl the rebel crew from the land we love the best,
Shouting the battle cry of freedom."*

In the almighty hush that followed the billows of sound, some sweet-voiced fellow started Annie Laurie, and then sang—

"In the prison cell I sit"

with grand chorus accompaniment. Then Wilse Hornback started and Hen Withers joined in singing the Battle Hymn—

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,"

and oh, God of Battles! how that army of voices took up the refrain—

"Glory, glory, hallelujah,"

and tossed and flung it back and forth from hill to hill and shore to shore till it seemed as though Lee and his cohorts must have heard and quailed before the fearful prophecy and arraignment.

Then the "tenore robusto" and the "basso profundo" opened a regular concert program, more or less sprinkled with magnificent chorus: singing, as it was easy or difficult for the men to recall the words. You must rummage in the closets of memory for most of them! The Old Oaken Bucket; Nellie Gray; Anna Lisle; No, Ne'er Can Thy Home be Mine; Tramp, Tramp, Tramp; We are Coming, Father Abraham; Just as I Am; By Cold Siloam's Shady Rill—how those home-loving Sunday school young boys did sing that! It seemed incongruous, but every now and then they dropped into these old hymn tunes, which many a mother had sung her baby to sleep with in those elder and better days.

The war songs are all frazzled and torn fragments of memory now, covered with dust and oblivion, but they were great songs in and for their day. No other country ever had so many.

Laughter and badinage had long since ceased. Flat on their backs, gazing up at the stars through the pine and hemlock boughs, the boys lay quietly smoking while the "tenore robusto" assisted by the "basso profundo" and hundreds of others sang "Willie, We Have Missed You," "Just Before the Battle, Mother,"

"Brave Boys Are They," and the "Vacant Chair."

In a little break in the singing. Hen Withers sang a wonderful song, now almost forgotten. It was new to the boys then, but the bugler had heard it, and as Hen's magnificent voice rolled forth its fervid words the bugle caught up the high note theme, and never did the stars sing together more entrancingly than did the "wicked mule whacker" and that bugle—

*"Lift up your eyes, desponding freemen.
Fling to the winds your needless fears.
He who unfurled our beauteous banner
Says it shall wave a thousand years."*

On the glorious chorus a thousand voices took up the refrain in droning fashion that made one think of "The Sound of the Great Amen."

*"A thousand years, my own Columbia!
'Tis the glad day so long foretold!
'Tis the glad mom whose early twilight
Washington saw in times of old."*

By the time Hen had sung all of the seven verses the whole brigade knew the refrain and roared it forth as a defiance to the Southern Confederacy, which took on physical vigor in the days that came after, when the 200th Ind. went into battle to come off victorious on many a fiercely contested field.

Then the tenor sang that doleful, woe begone, hope effacing, heart-string-cracking "Lorena." Some writer has said that it sung the heart right out of the Southern Confederacy.

*"The sun's low down the sky, Lorena,
The snow is on the grass again."*

As Wilse Hornbeck let his splendid voice out on the mournful cadences, Si felt his very heart strings snap, and even Shorty drew his breath hard, while some of the men simply rolled over, and burying their faces in their arms, sobbed audibly.

Wilse had not counted on losing his own nerve, but found his voice breaking on the melancholy last lines, and bounding to his feet with a petulant,

"Oh, hang it!"

"Say, darkies, hab you seen de Massa"

came dancing up from the jubilating chords of that wonderful human music box, and soon the camp was reeling giddily with the jolly, rollicking,

*"Or Massa ran, ha! ha!!
The darkies stay, ho! ho!!"*

Then, far in the distance a bugle sounded "lights out," and the songfest was at an end; as bugler after bugler took it up, one by one the campfires blinked out, and squad after squad sank into quiet.

"I feel a heap better somehow," remarked Si, as he crawled under his blanket.

"Dogged if I hain't had a sort of uplift, too," muttered Shorty, as he wrapped his blanket round his head. In the distance a tenor voice was singing as he kicked out his fire and got ready for bed—

"Glory, glory, hallelujah."

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK SI KLEGG, BOOK 1 ***

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