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Correspondence.—Correspondence is solicited from every section in regard to Grand Army, Sons of Veterans, Pension, and Military matters, and letters to the Editor will always receive prompt attention. Write on ONE SIDE OF THE PAPER ONLY. We do not return communications or manuscripts unless they are accompanied by a request to that effect and the necessary postage, and under no circumstances guarantee their publication at any special date.

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GUESSING CONTEST.

See page 8 and read our Guessing Contest proposition.

You may make $200 in five minutes by simply sending in a subscriber and making a guess as to Treasury's receipts Jan. 31.

If you do not get the first prize it would be a pretty easy way to make even $25, which is the lowest for successful guessers.

Do not fail to be in this competition by neglecting it until it is too late.

In order to assist competitors by giving an idea of the range of the Treasury receipts, we shall publish from time to time what the amount was for stated days. For example, the receipts for the 26th of last month were $2,390,750, which practically covered two days, as the Treasury was closed on Christmas. The receipts on the 27th were $1,227,410; on the 28th, $1,983,665; on the 29th, $1,609,419.

It will thus be seen that it is not a very difficult task to come very close to the correct amount, since there is comparatively little variation from day to day, except immediately after a holiday.

The date the receipts for which the guess is to be made comes on Wednesday, being in the middle of the week, and not near any holiday, so that the amount will not be subject to any violent fluctuation.

THOSE who are flattering themselves that this means the decadence of the British Empire are not students of British history. Like the Americans, the British require a few terrible knocks to thoroughly wake them up. Remember how we rose up after Bull Run and Fredericksburg.

ONE of the most aggravating features of the present maladministration of the Pension Bureau is the deliberate ignoring of attorneys' calls. One, two, and possibly three years pass before the status of a claim can be ascertained. The average time for reaching a claim for increase is not less than two years, and then there is another year before an examination is ordered, then months, perhaps years, before the results of the examination are communicated to the claimant, no matter how great his stress may be. Then, if he does not die in the meanwhile, the probabilities are at least three out of four that his claim will be rejected.

THE South African campaign is a great victory for the volunteers over the regulars. The British army is certainly equal to any regular army in Europe. In strategy, tactics, personnel of officers and men, education, and discipline it is up to the highest level of German and French ideas, which are assiduously studied and assimilated. Yet the Boers have proved themselves superior both in tactics and strategy. The Boers are very much like the armies on both sides which fought west of the Alleganies, and particularly like those which fought west of the Mississippi River. They fight precisely as our men fought one another at Shiloh, Vicksburg, Stone River, Chickamauga, Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove, and in a hundred other battles of more magnitude than any so far fought in South Africa. The British would have better success if they relied on the Canadian, Australian, Cape Colony, New Zealand, and other volunteers to fight the Boers. These will fight the Boers their own way, and make every-day, common sense study of the country, and methods of their enemies take the place of the theories of military *dilletanti*.

ELEVEN men have been killed in Michigan this year hunting deer. A good way to settle Aguinaldo after we catch him might be to invite him to a deer hunt. He would get a new idea as to the terror of American guns.

MR. ROBERTS always speaks of himself in the third person He wants to be grammatical and agree with his wives in number and person.

ANY further sessions of the Filipino Congress will have to be held in an American guardhouse.

OUR exports of maize have risen in 12 years from 25,000,000 bushels a year to about 200,000,000 bushels. Wait till the teeming millions of Chinese, Japanese and Hindus get a good fair taste of the delights of cornpone, and the exports will run up into billions of bushels, and the product of Kansas and Nebraska and Iowa will stream westward.

THE best use that can be made of Anti-Expansion resolutions is to put them away in cold storage until the next time we think of expanding. They are the day after the fair, now. In the classic language of Arkansas, "we've done expanded."

THE Cubans have advanced far enough in politics to get up party slogans. They are "Cuba Cuban" and "Cuba Yankee."

WHERE THE SUGGESTION CAME FROM.

An examination of the printed testimony taken before the Senate Committee on Pensions is very interesting.

The first witness was the Secretary of the Interior—Hon. E. A. Hitchcock—who said that he held the office since Feb. 20, 1899. He knew that there were such things as Orders No. 164 and 225, but was "not familiar with their practical or administrative operation." He had heard that some had claimed that Order 164 was "too liberal," and that others claimed that Order 225 "was altogether too restrictive," but "*I am told by the Commissioner that in practical operation there is no difference at all*—that is, in the matter of rating disabilities. That is the key-note of the whole matter.

This confirms what we have previously said—that the Secretary knows nothing himself about the pension business, relies wholly on the Commissioner for his information, and is eggregiously misinformed.

Senator Gallinger asked the Secretary:

"The other point, as I understand it, that the Grand Army has pressed upon the President and this Department is that in estimating the amount of pension to be allowed the Bureau shall take cognizance of the several disabilities that the soldier may have, and aggregate them, so as to reach a conclusion as to the amount of pension that should be granted. There has been a great deal of agitation on that point, I have noticed, at the meetings of the Grand Army of the Republic, covering a period of 10 or 12 years. Have you any knowledge as to whether or not that is the practice of the Bureau at the present time or whether the complaint made by the Grand Army is well-founded?"

To this the Secretary replied:

"I should not like to give a positive answer, because the details of the practice are properly left with the Commissioner, who can best answer your question."

That is, the Secretary had absolutely no knowledge of any of the practices of the Pension Bureau, and particularly in relation to these special orders, except what he gained by casual conversation with the Commissioner.

Assistant Secretary Davis said substantially the same, and referred the Committee to the Commissioner as to information about combining disabilities. He himself favored raising the limit to widows' incomes to $250. But the most pertinent fact was his testimony as to the origin of the idea of a Codification Commission. He said:

"I would merely say that I feel enthusiastic regarding the first suggestion—the suggestion of a commission. The Secretary of the Interior spoke with me about it at the beginning of the Summer."

The Secretary of the Interior immediately corrected him, saying:

"The Commissioner of Pensions spoke to me about it before. He wrote me on the 20th of July, 1899, a letter making the suggestion of a Commission. I think we are all agreed about its importance, in order to remove all indefiniteness regarding pension legislation, and especially the indefiniteness regarding means of support and daily labor."

Here we have it placed beyond doubt that the Commission was a cunning device of Commissioner Evans to put a shield between himself and those who are indignant at his nullification of the laws, and to stave off a settlement of the question indefinitely, at least until after the Presidential election.

As we have said before, the veterans have no objection to the Codification Commission *per se*. They have little interest whether the laws are codified again or not. But they do most strenuously object to having that device be made an answer to their appeals for immediate justice. They resent being amused by an elaborate and cumbrous commission, which will postpone the day of relief until hundreds of thousands of them are in their graves, and beyond earthly relief. They demand that plain, mandatory laws now on the statute books, and which have seemed sufficiently clear to much abler men than are now in charge of the pension system, shall be executed according to their plain, mandatory terms, and not be juggled with by a man whose main object is to find pretexts for not obeying directions expressed in clear, unmistakable English words.

THE FENIANS AGAIN.

The talk about a Fenian invasion of Canada is supremely silly. A third of a century ago there was some chance for such a thing, for public opinion, and even the Government, gave it countenance. The way the English and the Canadians had acted against us during the rebellion had irritated everybody, and by saying the word the Government could have had 1,000,000 volunteers—most of them veterans—for an expedition to capture Canada, and make it part of the United States. Substantially everybody hoped that the Fenian invasion, preparations for which were made with little concealment, would result in complications which would wrench Canada away from Great Britain. The Government made little pretense of interfering. The Fenian Congresses were held in New York, Philadelphia, and elsewhere, and the newspapers gave them the utmost publicity. Fenian companies and regiments were drilled all over the country; arms were collected all along the border, from Portland, Me., to Duluth; Gen. Thos. W. Sweeny, of the U. S. Army, was put in supreme command, and an immense amount of money was raised. It was supposed that at least 100,000 men would be ready to be launched across the border. The entire Canadian militia of the Western Provinces was ordered to the field under Sir John Mitchell. A Fenian column under Col. O'Neil, which it was expected would number 3,000, but which was actually less than half that number, crossed the Niagara River, June 1, 1866, and took possession of old Fort Erie. Subsequently they advanced to Limestone Ridge, where they had a smart little fight with the Canadians and British, in which they repulsed their assailants, but lost heavily in prisoners, and then withdrew to the United States. They were captured and paroled by our troops, and Gen. Sweeny was arrested with his staff, but later released. Another invasion was attempted in 1870, but it amounted to little, and Gen. Meade succeeded, without much trouble, in preventing any armed parties from crossing the frontier. I then meanwhile Great Britain had agreed to the Geneva Arbitration, to which frame of mind the Fenian demonstrations had powerfully contributed, and American public opinion was far less favorable to such business than it had been. To-day an incursion upon Canada would not be tolerated by the people or the Government, and any serious attempt in that direction would have very unpleasant results upon the agitators and promoters.

INJUSTICE IN INCREASE CLAIMS.

The rule or practice of the Pension Office during the last past Administration, and which continues at present in claims for increase of pension, is to delay sending out an order for examination for from six to 18 months or two years or more, thus saving to the Treasury the amount to which the soldier is justly entitled.

The law makes all increases of pensions (except for specific disabilities) date from the time of examination by an Examining Board. This saving has been from $2 to $8 per month and in some claims much more.

Thus it is readily seen that should this delay average one year there would be a saving of from $24 to $96 or more saved to the Treasury. A saving which justly belonged to the soldier.

This saving in the thousands of claims for increase allowed each year amounts to a few millions of dollars. The practice of the office is to save the money to the Government and let the veteran get along as best he can or die off. Such delays certainly are not creditable to the Commissioner of Pensions.

"COMBINING DISABILITIES."

Commissioner Evans startled the G. A. R. Pension Committee in November by claiming that he had always been "combining disabilities." A little later he equally surprised the Senate Pension Committee by making the same claim. In a letter from the Pension Bureau, signed by Commissioner Evans's own hand—not his facsimile printed signature, but his actual signature—and dated Dec. 16, 1899, he says to a claimant in rejecting his appeal from a rejection:

"There is no warrant in the act of June 27, 1890, for an "aggregate" of disabilities. * * * consequently the rejection of your claim is affirmed."

THE treaty recently concluded with the Argentine Confederation relates to the regulation of the customs duties of that country, and gives a reciprocity with our own. One feature of the Argentine customs is the "aforo," which allows the customs officers to increase the rates at will, even to a prohibitive scale. The convention reduces the duties on Oregon and Southern pine, cotton-seed oil, bacon and other food products, paraffine, dried fruits, windmills, cotton ducking and rope, all of which we sell in great quantities to Argentine, and it fixes the "aforo" within reasonable limits. On the other hand, Argentine receives a reduction of our duties on her wool. This is of the coarsest variety, such as is used in the manufacture of carpets, and is not produced to any extent in this country. Of the 76,736,000 pounds of wool which we buy abroad every year, less than 8,000,000 pounds come from Argentina.

THE negro question is a prominent one in the South African war. There is plenty of negro labor there, but the dispute is as to who shall control it. The Boers want to work the negroes on their ranches, and not pay them at all. The British want to work the negroes in the mines under conditions of abject slavery during their terms of contract, but feeding, housing, and clothing them well, and paying them fair wages. Both sides insist that liquor shall be kept away from the negroes, but the mine-owners are much more strenuous in this demand, and complain that the Boers wink at illicit liquor selling, which is the cause of many accidents and much destruction of life and property.

PERSONAL.

Gen. Alger writes a card to say, in connection with the dispute as to the authorship of the financial plank in the St. Louis platform, that Senator Foraker wrote the original draft, and came to him (Gen. Alger) with it. The clause then read: "We are, therefore, opposed to the free coinage of silver, except by international agreement." Gen. Alger suggested that "international agreement" might be made to mean the agreement of some small and inconsequential nations, and inserted instead the words, "with the leading commercial nations of the world," and this was adopted.

Gov. John R. Tanner, of Illinois, a veteran, and who has had a rather rocky road during his term, has taken the wind out of the sails of a number of politicians who have been organizing a movement to "down" him, by peremptorily declining to be a candidate for re-election, or anything else.

Gen. G. F. McGinnis has been mentioned as Governor of the Indiana Soldiers' Home, to succeed Gen. Packard, but will not, on account of advanced age, accept the place. He served in the Mexican war as a private, and Captain in the 2d Ohio, enlisted in the 11th Ind., became Colonel of the regiment, and then Brigadier-General.

Following his custom of many years, Gen. Russell A. Alger made a handsome Christmas present to the newsboys of Detroit. His gift was $250 to the Newsboys' Association.

Gen. W. S. Hancock's twin brother—Hilary—has resided in Minneapolis since 1855, and is now 76 years old. He is a lawyer, but has retired from practice, and lives in his library. He never married.

Dr. Thos. B. Anderson, Assistant Surgeon, 37th U. S. Vols., and son of Maj. Marion T. Anderson, Past Commander, Department of the Potomac, had a very thrilling experience Oct. 12. He accompanied a party of 120 men of his regiment on a night raid against the "Gogos," and after a toilsome march through the swamps they ran into a large body of rebels, who proceeded to try to wipe out the Americans. They surrounded the latter, who took refuge in a ditch, and a fierce battle ensued. Dr. Anderson got his wounded into a church, where they had the protection of a large stone altar. A Filipino sharpshooter kept popping away at him from the top of a tree. Dr. Anderson tried his revolver on him, without effect, but finally secured a rifle, and settled him. Toward morning the ammunition ran down to about eight rounds per man, and an assault in force was momentarily expected. After several attempts to signal any of our vessels that might be in the bay were made, Capt. Anderson tried it, and at last succeeded in attracting the attention of the gunboat Napidan, which with the greatest difficulty landed ammunition through the surf, and when daylight came gave the beleaguered force the assistance of her guns, which speedily cleared out the swarming Tagals.

Dr. B. Albert Leiberman, son of Capt. L. S. Leiberman, of Kansas City, Mo., and Major and Surgeon, 33d U. S. Vols., writes his father that Maj. John A. Logan was killed by the rebel sharpshooters, concealed in trees. Logan had stopped to speak to a wounded Corporal, when he was shot through the head. Leiberman and his Hospital Steward picked up Logan's body, when a sharpshooter shot the Hospital Steward through the heart. Leiberman looked up and saw the sharpshooter about 15 feet above him, and killed him with his revolver. About 150 other rebels were killed and 50 wounded, and 200 guns captured. It was a very decisive little victory.

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On the Train for Andersonville.

"Fall in, all you Yanks, an' git aboard that train thar," shouted the rebel Provost Sergeant, as the boys were swallowing their balls of scorched corn dough and pieces of meat.

In obedience to the command, the men farther off to the right began moving down toward the train, about which was mustered a regiment of "Georgia Militia," or "Reserves," to guard them back to Atlanta and Andersonville.

The appearance of these was the most astonishing to Si of anything that he had yet seen in the rebel army. Dirty, ragged and tattered as scarecrows as the regular rebel soldiers seemed, there was yet something very soldierly about them, especially when seen in line and in masses. They were well-drilled, they handled their guns as if familiar with them, and they moved about with alertness and precision. If there was a difference, the Reserves were much better dressed. They had but recently come out, and their dingy, uncouth, homemade garments were in much better repair. They were of all ages and sizes, from the tall, bent form, with whitening hair and seamed, wrinkled face of the grandfather, to the slouching, ill-knit, gangling grandson, with his vacant face and staring, goggle eyes. The gray-haired men were plentiful, but far more numerous were the boys of 16 and under, who leaned on their guns and stared with eyes and mouths wide open on the prisoners, who were the first they had seen. There was both wonder and fear in their looks. These were "the Yankees," of whom they had been hearing ever since they could remember—the wild, ferocious, cunning, cowardly, merciless, tricky, savage monsters, with all sorts of vile tastes and propensities, stories of whom had filled their minds to the exclusion of tales of Indians, catamounts, bears, "painters," hoopsnakes, and rattlesnakes, upon which their fathers and grandfathers had been reared.

Two or three of the bolder of them had left their company, and timorously ventured down to where they could devour Si and his squad with their eyes, at close range.

"Say, bub, got any terbacker that you'll"——began Shorty, stepping out toward them in a friendly way; but he was interrupted by a wild yell of fear from the boys, who scudded back to where they had left their guns, snatched them up, and leveled them offensively and defensively.

Rebel soldiers standing near laughed uproariously.

"Say, boys," shouted one. "Don't be skeered outen a year's growth. Them Yanks is tame. They'uns won't hurt yo'uns. Hit's only wild ones, like them out in front, as is dangerseome. They haint no horns. Go up and talk to 'em. They'uns won't bite you. See here."

He walked up to Shorty and said:

"Say, Yank, that's altogether too good a hat for a Yank. Reckon I'll trade with you, fer I sho'ly need a better one than I've got."

When they had started Shorty had with provident forethought picked up the sugar trough, thinking that he might have future use for it. He was so cumbered with this that the rebel succeeded in getting away with his hat before he could drop the trough and strike him. The rebel disappeared in the laughing crowd, who thought it a good joke. Shorty swore a blue streak, but his hat was gone. This was a signal for the other rebel soldiers, hanging around, and soon every hat in the squad was gone.

One of the more honestly-disposed had said to Si:

"Say, Yank, you're a-gwine ter lose yer hat anyhow. Yer never kin git ter keep hit long, nohow. Y'd better swap with me now. I'll done gin this hyah one o' mine, an' a half-plug o' terbacker ter boot."

He produced the tobacco, and held out his hat, while Si kept a firm hold of his own. Si looked curiously and somewhat disdainfully at that of the rebel. It was a heavy, excessively clumsy affair, made by sewing together tufts of the long-leaved pine.

"Looks like a cross between a door-mat and a havcock, and feaded in a mudhole," said Si; "but I expect I'd better trade, as I want the terbacker. Here, take it."

The sun was pouring down burning rays, and seeing Si set the example, Harry Joslyn picked up another pine leaf hat which had been thrown at his feet, and after beating it on the ground to dislodge any occupants, put it on. Gid Mackall and Monty Scruggs did the same.

"Blamed if I'm goin' to put on any o' their dirty rags," said Shorty, turning the sugar-trough over, and putting it on his head. "I never saw one o' their hats yit that I'd more'n teleh with the pint o' my bayonet. I'm goin' to make this do until I git something better."

As they drew nearer the train Si looked over the reserves more carefully. He found a number of middle-aged men among them, who had so far escaped conscription. Some had but one eye, some were manifestly very hard of hearing, some wheezed with the asthma, some halted badly in their stens.

"What's this we've struck?" Shorty inquired from beneath his sugar-trough. "Is this the emptyings of the rebel asylum for orphans and idiots, the home for incurables and the old men's wards of the poorhouses?"

"It certainly looks like it," answered Si. "And them officers look like Township Trustees, come out on parade with the lame and halt paupers. And see them guns. They're young cannon, mounted on handspikes for stocks."

The ancient guns with which the Georgia Reserves were armed were old "Queen Anne muskets" that had been furnished the Colony in the French and Indian wars, and since preserved in the Georgia armory, where, after being altered to percussion locks, they were issued in 1864 to the "Goober Militia." They had an enormous bore, were very rough and clumsy in construction, and the boys and weaker men bent under their weight.

The bellowing report of one of the guns a little farther up the line attracted all attention. One of the Reserves, a loose-jointed, gawky boy, with an evil, lowering look, had been inspired by the example of the rebel veterans, to run down to the line and snatch a fine hat from the head of an Ohio soldier, who ran shouting after him, trying to recover it. The boy sprang to his gun, snatched it up, whirled and fired with incredible swiftness. The heavy charge tore through the Ohio's boy breast, and he fell a bloody corpse. The Reserves ran to their guns, and it looked for an instant as if they would open an indiscriminate fusillade upon the prisoners. The Colonel of the Reserves, a large, pompous man, with a bull-like voice, shouted:

"Hold on, thar, men. Don't shoot no more unless they make a rush, or you git ordehs. That thar man got jest what he desarved, but don't shoot no more onless hit's needed. Let that be a lesson to 'em, which mebbe they'll heed. You Yanks, stand right whar you air. Don't you move a step till I gin the ordeh, or I'll mallaroo you offen the face o' the airth."

In the impotence of his rage Shorty swore himself hoarse, and made all manner of imprecations and threats against the Colonel and the murdering boy.

"I'm goin' to wipe every other name off my scoundrel-book, except them two," he yelled. "I'll foller them as long as I live till I kill both of 'em, the merciless villains."

Si said less, but he meant quite as much.

The order came for them to march down and get on the cars. These were the cars in which cattle had been hauled up to Johnston's army, and were indescribably filthy. Si glanced at them, and momentarily hesitated to get in, but the Reserves were closing down, and he divined what refusal might mean to him and the rest.

"Capt. Smoots," roared Col. Tate, of the Reserves, "you'll take charge o' the rear send o' the train with your company. I'll hold you responsible fer the last three kyars. Put four o' your men at the door of each kyar, and the rest o' them on top. Don't stand no foolishness from the Yanks. You've guns and bayonets, and you know what they're fer. Don't stand a minit's foolishness from ary one o' them whelps. Ef he gives you any lip, or don't mind your ordehs, or makes a motion ter git away, sock a bayonet into him, or give him a load o' buckshot, and quiet him. They all oughter be killed. Hit's a mercy that we let any o' them live at all."

"Listen to the bomb-proofer heller," sneered Shorty. "These are the first Yankees he's ever seen."

"Shet up yer head, an' git inter the kyar, afore I blow yer head off," said Capt. Smoots, putting his hand on a large pepper-box revolver.

Handing their things to the other boys to hold, Si and Shorty picked up an old tie on which to sit, and climbed into the car with it. They wanted to place it across the car, so that they could look out of the door, but were compelled to put it lengthwise, and they so arranged it that they could lean back against the side of the car. Other prisoners were crowded in as long as there seemed standing room. Finally the four guards got in, looking very nervous and excited at their close companionship with the Yankees, but being reassured that they had a strong reinforcement, should anything happen, in the squads which mounted to the roof and lay down there. Capt. Smoots walked up and down, superintending this, in compliance with orders bawled by Col. Tate, and adding his own loud voice to the din. He was a red-faced, fussy, important man, and clearly felt that this was the biggest job that he had ever been given. His homespun coat, ornamented with big horn buttons, he had buttoned to his chin, in severely military style, and beside the big pepper-box revolver in a holster to his belt, he had an old-fashioned broad-bladed sword, with a fancy, curved hilt, such as had been worn earlier in the century by an officer of the militia. He was perspiring freely, from the heat of the day, added to his boiling feeling of importance, and in the intervals between issuing his orders he mopped his blazing face with a large yellow bandanna. When he had gotten all in, he wanted to climb to the top of the car, but that was too nimble a task for his girth and stiffness. He decided to get into the car where Si and Shorty were, called a negro, who piled up ties to make steps, and placed inside a box for him to sit on. Then the Captain got in, glared around with official severity, to impress every one that he was not to be trifled with for an instant, and seated himself stiffly, with one hand on the hilt of his antique sword and the other on the handle of his almost as antique revolver.

The train pulled out, and Si and Shorty craned their necks to get a view of the country, and what further obstacles the army was likely to encounter in its advance upon Atlanta. But Capt. Smoots sternly ordered them back to their places, and made those standing near turn their faces inward.

"Hain't a-gwine ter have you spyin' out the country fer your army, and sendin' the news back," he said. "You Yanks is jest too sneakin'ly cunnin' ter live. Mebbe some o' you done got tuck ter have a chanst ter spy out the land fer ole Sherman—rot him. He's the meanest white man alive—ef he is white, which I much misdoubt. Staid down in Louisiana amongst us till he got all the information he could an' then sneaked off an' jined the Yankees."

A shot, followed by a scattering fusillade, rang out from the top of a forward car, and produced great excitement. The train was passing through a shallow cut, where the brush came close to the edge of the bank. A daring man had made a bold dash for liberty by suddenly jumping past the guard and up on to the bank. But there he was caught by a charge of buckshot from one of the guards on the roof, and fell, while the others emptied their guns at him. As the train ran on his mangled body could be plainly seen from the car. This had a deterring effect upon Si and Shorty, who had been contemplating, when the train should pass near the woods, making a rush, toppling over the Captain and his guards, and getting into the cover of the brush.

"Them spavined idiots mayn't know anything else," Shorty whispered to Si, "but they kin shoot, and are mighty quick on the trigger. Guess we'll have to give it up. Even if we could git away they'd kill some o' the boys."

The train pounded on monotonously for hours, there was no further incident, the day was broiling hot, the stench was stifling, and the Captain's dignity began to sit very heavily upon him. He relaxed his grip on his sword-hilt in order to ply his bandanna, and then let go the handle of his revolver. Presently his fat, coarse face showed unmistakable signs of general tiredness with the whole business. Nobody had spoken a word for a long time, or done anything to call forth stern warnings. Si thought he would open up a conversation, and something might develop.

"Mighty hot day, Captain, and guard dooty's hard work," he ventured in a friendly tone.

The Captain started, scowled for a moment at the thought of a possible derogation to his dignity in having a neighborly remark addressed to him by a prisoner, and then answered curtly:

"Silence in the coaht." Then, remembering himself, he added: "Who gave you lief, sah, ter speak ter me?"

"Nobody done so," Si answered pleasantly. "My tongue got tired layin' on one side, and I thought I'd turn it over. I heard them call you Capt. Smoots. We have a Judge Smoots up in our country."

"A Judge, did you say?" said the Captain, a little mollified. "Probably some kin. The Smoots all take nachernally ter the law."

"You resemble him much," continued Si. "I noticed it when I first saw you. Are you on the bench?"

"I've done bin Justice o' the Peace an' Magistrate o' the Oconee District for 11 years hand-runnin' now," answered the Captain, swelling up. "One o' my Constables is with me as Fust Lootenant, an' t'other is Second Lootenant. If I live through this war I expect to be Ordinary o' my County."

"O, you'll live," Si assured him. "You ain't the kind to die or git killed (when ther's a big office in sight"), he added under his breath.

"O, he'll live," echoed Shorty *sotto voce*. "Unless he breaks a blood vessel running away from our cavalry."

"Your voice reminds me o' Judge Smoots's," pursued Si. "Now, the Judge"——

"A great many call me Judge," interrupted the Captain, "though I'm not really entitled to hit till I'm an Ordinary, or what is in some places called a Probate Judge. But I've bin so long a Magistrate, and decided so many important cases, that I'm often called Judge. I've had afore me some o' the weightiest cases that ever come up in Jawgy. I've tried two men that was afterwards hung. I've"——

He stopped, looked around him and rose. He saw an audience larger than he had ever before addressed, and one which could not get away from him. He could get off his favorite speech where it would do the most good, by impressing alien enemies with the greatness and intelligence of Georgia and her people. He inflated his chest, and put on his most judicial air.

"I tell you"—he began, pompously, and then hesitated, as for the next word. His auditors were not fellow-citizens, and he would not dignify them by calling them gentlemen. He got out of the dilemma by fixing his eye on Si, as if he was a prisoner at the bar, and beginning again:

"I tell you, sah, the State o' Jawgy's the greatest State in the universe, sah. Hit's the largest State in our glorious South land, except Texas, which is mostly cactus desert, and has more free, happy, intelligent, justice-loving people, sah, nor any other on airth. Hit's people air brave men and beautiful women, and they air now foutin' with glorious courage a great war agin the swarmin' hordes of a wicked an' merciless despotism, which is tryin' ter reduce us ter slavery—make niggers of we'uns. But the people of Jawgy air too brave and free ter ever be conquered. They're the grandest people on airth, sah. They have the best Gover'ment an' the best laws, an' the wisest and best Judges. The Jawgy judiciary has no equils anywhar. I as a member of hit kin say"——

He hesitated for breath and words, and Si put in:

"That's just what I was thinkin' about you. I know you understand the law, and that you're a first-class 'Squire ("that is," he saved his conscience a reservation under his breath, "you're first class for a country that thinks such as you first-class.")

"That's equal to saying that he's respectable for hell," inwardly commented Shorty.

"And knowin' you know the law," continued Si, "I wanted your honest opinion of such a cold-blooded murder as that back there of that boy who was trying to git his stolen hat. Ain't that something that Injuns orter to be ashamed of? Is there anything in military law, or any other kind"—

The Captain's red face grew purple as he gathered Si's meaning, conveyed in words that had sounded so fair at first. He clutched the hilt of his sword and stood up, and gasped for a moment for words severe enough.

"You onhung villain," he shouted; "you come down heah ter murder our people, and then abuse and slander 'em. You hain't no right ter speak ter me that way or at all. Hit's contemnt o' coaht an' agin military discipline. That e'er man wuz rightfully shot. He desarved hit. Hit wuz a case o' self-defense, as plain as I ever seed. The Yankee wuz attackin' the boy—hit wuz criminal assault, an' the boy shot ter defend hisself. I'd' a' cleared him in a minuit if hit'd come afore myecoaht. Set back thar in your place, an' don't you dar open your sassy head agin, or I'll split hit with my sword."

"Another name for my scoundrel-book muttered Shorty. "That makes three red-ribboners first prizes—that I've got to settle with."

Si having had his say leaned back against the car, and remained silent.

The Captain sank back upon his box and glared awhile at Si. Then his eyes traveled down to Si's feet, and an idea struck him. "Put out your foot," he ordered. Si had only drawn shoes the day before. Si knew what was coming, but there was no help for it. He extended his foot.

"Them's mouty good shoes you wear, and they're just my size. You hain't no right to such good shoes, when better men than you, who are foutin' for their country, have ter go barefooted. Take 'em off an' give 'em ter me."

Si hesitated a moment, but he saw the folly of resistance. The guards handled their guns as if ready to use them at the least sign of resistance. With a wry face he untied his shoes and handed them over.

"That gives me an idee," said the Captain. The train had stopped on a switch. "I kin pervide my whole company with good shoes. Lootenant Bets, Lootenant Bets, he called.

"Here I am. What's wanted, 'Squire—I mean, Captain," answered the ex-Constable, coming up.

"I command you in the name o' the State o' Jawgy," said the Captain, forgetting the officer in the 'Squire, "to take a sufficient posse o' men, an' go through these kyars and seize, impress, distrain and replevin all sich good and suitable shoes as you may find on the prisoners there confined, for the use and benefit of the men o' this company, and fer so doin' this order shall be your warrant. Fail not on your peril."

"All right, 'Squire; I'll make return o' the goods and chattels ter you, right off," answered the Lieutenant.

"You remind me more o' Judge Smoots every minit," Si could not forbear saying. "He's the meanest, orneriest, rum-suckin' politician in our whole County, and never was Judge o' any thing but whisky and hoss races."

The Captain looked as if he would murder him, but Si felt that fate had done its worst in taking away his shoes.

The train rolled on, and finally came to Atlanta, but the most the boys could see of the great objective of Sherman's army was a wide spread of railroad switches, incumbered with freight trains carrying supplies to Johnston's army, other trains carrying men to the front, or bringing wounded back, and a row of dismantled locomotives, from which pieces were taken daily to supply those broken upon the engines still in active service. The train stopped there awhile, and then rambled on.

An hour or two south of Atlanta the train had to stop at a bridge which our cavalry had destroyed. The hasty structure which replaced it was still in shaky condition, and it was decided to wait a little until the workmen could strengthen it so as to risk the engine upon it. The prisoners would be taken out, and the cars pushed over by hand. After the prisoners marched across to the other bank, and while waiting for the completion of the work, they built little fires, and began trying to cook what scanty rations they had to appease their raging hunger. Our cavalry had thrown a freight train from the track, and partially burned it. An expedient occurred to the ingenious Sandy Baker. He held a strip of the tin roof over the fire until the solder at the joints was melted, and thus sampled each one of the squad with a sheet-iron plate upon which to bake his bread. With a spike for a chisel and a bolt for a hammer, he turned up other pieces into pans. The Reserves had by this time become somewhat accustomed to the presence of the Yankees, and not so nervous, so they allowed Shorty to go down to the creek, under close guard, where he washed out his trough, and came back with enough water in it to mix the meal. The boys all got satisfactory hoe-cakes, which they sopped in the grease fried out in one of Sandy Baker's pans, and made a better meal than they had expected. Shorty finding his bare feet hurt by the stones and the prickly pear which abounded on the banks of the creek, made a virtue of necessity, and picked up a pair of old shoes thrown aside by one who had been benefited by Capt. Smoots's confiscation. They were badly dilapidated, and the soles were coming apart, but Shorty bound them together with strips of paw-paw bark until they would stay on. While the boys were eating, and Capt. Smoots was standing in rigid superintendence of the crowd, Col. Tate strolled up, and after complimenting the Captain upon his success in getting the prisoners so far, remarked in a gossipy way:

"They tell me, Captain, that you've done sold your boy Bounce?"

"Yes," answered the Captain; "niggers is resky property jest now, an' Bounce is a resky nigger. He's young an' a lolluble hand, but thar's no tellin' what night he mout take hit inter his head ter walk over ter Sherman or foller off the Yankee cavalry. So I let Nate Strawn have him fur a mere nothin', so ter speak—$700 in money, a yok o' likely steers, a fresh cow, and his ole mare. I don't know as I've bettered myself much, fo' the $700 won't buy a heap nowadays, and the Confedrit Gover'mint is likely ter impress the cattle fer Johnston's army. But I didn't like the look I sometimes seed in Bounce's eyes, an' I thought I mout as well git something fer him while I could. Let Nate lay awake nights now, thinkin' about him I'm done tired of hit. Nate done seed me in Atlanty, an' gin me the money, so hit's a sale."

"I reckon you've done made a good bargain, Captain," answered the Colonel. "Niggers is a good thing ter git shet of now, if you kin git anything at all fo' them. They're about the onlikeliest property that a man kin have, an' are gittin' onlikelier every day. If we can't drive Sherman back they won't be wuth nothin' at all. Your cattle you kin hide from the impressin' agent, especially if you don't let nobody know you have 'em. That's probably what made Nate willin' ter trade. Everybody knowed he had 'em. He kin take Bounce down inter the country, an' work on a contract. I wisht somebody'd come along an' trade me cattle for some o' my niggers. He could have 'em at a bargain. We've got ter make sacrifices fer the country, and I'd sacrifice them."

A gleam came into Shorty's eyes, and a look of resolve into his face, as he overheard about the Captain having received the money at Atlanta.

"It's money that he received for human flesh and blood, and it'll be all right to take it," he muttered to himself. "Besides, it'll pay him up for stealin' our shoes. I don't believe that even Maria or the Deacon would say a word agin it."

The prisoners were put back into the cars, and the journey resumed. Shorty took his seat on the end of the tie next to the Captain. The night came on as they passed Macon, but there was no abatement of the heat. Si was still meditating plans of escape, but none suggested themselves which seemed feasible. He was in hopes that darkness would bring something, but the moon rose clearly.

The Captain, anxious to get the draft, had shifed himself over to the side of the car, where the air made by the motion of the train would strike him full in the face. He sat on his box, and leaned his head against the side of the door. His dignity had melted away considerably since the morning, and he at last unbuttoned his coat, that the cooling breeze might strike his fevered breast. In spite of himself, his eyes would close in cat-naps, from which he would rouse himself and look sternly at the guards and the prisoners. Presently Shorty could hear his snoring mingling with the rumbling of the train. Shorty rose, and took off Si's big pine-leaf hat, which he held in both hands, and edged around the Captain as if trying to get as near the door as possible. Others were doing the same, in the tired, restless movement of men kept on their fee without an opportunity to sit down fort hours. From time to time the guards would make them stand back. Shorty held the hat in his left hand, and under its cover slipped his right down in the Captain's breast as softly and carefully as if lifting a butterfly from a flower, without hurting its gauzy wings. He touched a leather wallet, and gently catching it between the nail of his forefinger, and his second finger, without bending his hand, a trick which he had learned from an expert pickpocket in his gambling days, gently drew it out, behind the cover of the hat. Another large man had crowded in between him and the door, and the guard ordered him back. Shorty went back with him, made his way to a seat on the farthest end of the tie, handed the hat back to Si, and for hours seemed engaged in fixing up his shoes with the paw-paw strips he had brought with him.

The awful long wearisome night finally ended as the train halted at a shabby little station which differed from the others they had been passing in that poverty-stricken country since leaving Macon in having quite a show about it of camps, military appurtenances and soldiers.

Hyah's Andersonville, 'Squire. Wake up," called the middle-aged, asthmatic guard, who was the only one really awake.

"I declar', I raylly believe I dropped off inter a little doze," exclaimed the Captain, rubbing his eyes and entirely unconscious that he had been sound asleep for hours. "I didn't intend ter, but I wuz powerful hot an' tired. I only got about 40 winks anyway."

The excitement of the arrival possessed him. He buttoned up his coat to his chin and assumed his sternest official air.

"Come down, up thar," he called to the men on the roof. "Git down, an' form a string out thar around these prisoners as they git off. Be spry, now, fo' we want ter turn these varmints over, an' git shet o' them."

(To be continued.)