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UNLESS the Kentucky detectives soon pick out some man for hanging, that $100,000 will not be available for this year's campaign fund.

REPRESENTATIVE BURTON, of Ohio, now appears in the role of an obstructor to the Nicaragua Canal bill. Of course, he protests that he wants the canal dug. They all do that. They only want to keep it from being dug during their lifetime. The reasons Mr. Burton assigns are immaterial.

THE House Committee on Military Affairs has agreed to raise the amount to be appropriated for the militia of the United States from $400,000, which has been the usual appropriation, to $1,000,000, which is just one-half what was asked for by the National Militia Association. As the National militia amounts to about 10,000,000 men, this will amount to about 10 cents per man.

MAJ. MATTHEW A. BATSON, 4th U. S. Cav., who organized and commanded the first battalion of Macabebe scouts, speaks in the highest terms of their courage, loyalty, and general soldierliness. They were organized in companies of 100, and at first their Sergeants were enlisted men from the Regular Army. Now both Sergeants and Corporals are Macabebes. They receive the same pay as Regular soldiers, but in Mexican dollars. When led by American officers they will go anywhere, and fight anybody, boldly and skilfully Maj. Batson recommends that a regiment of cavalry be organized of Macabebes.

THE Navy Department has at last accepted the Holland submarine torpedo-boat, and signed a contract agreeing to pay $150,000 for the present boat, and $175,000 each for any of the same dimensions it may order hereafter. It is the quiet opinion of most mechanical and naval experts that the whole thing is a good deal of a fake; that the boat will never be able to do a fraction of what is claimed for her, but that nevertheless her possession may have a great moral effect. She will add to the terrors of mines and torpedoes, and thus help protect our seaports. In this view the money is well-enough expended.

MR. EVANS is having the fight of his life in Tennessee, and his political career comes to a crisis in the State Convention, which meets to-day in Nashville. It has been a square fight between him and Representative Brownlow, and the latter has overwhelmingly defeated him at every point where the people had any voice. Brownlow even carried Evans's own County and Ward against him by heavy majorities. It is not believed that, in spite of the earnest support of the Federal office-holders, Evans has more than 100 delegates out of the 756 composing the Convention. But he has trumped up contests in most of the Counties, and announces that he has 390 "instructed delegates." If he had anything like this number of straight delegates, of course he could count on victory, but his claim is as baseless as the many he makes in regard to the pension laws. If turned down in the State Convention he will be dead politically beyond any hope of resurrection.

THE inactivity in South Africa continues to puzzle American veterans. Lord Roberts reached Bloomfontein March 13, or considerably over a month ago, and sat down to rest and refit an army which had had only a few days of really active campaigning. Two weeks later the Boers recovered sufficiently from their demoralization to resume the aggressive, and began moving around Roberts's left flank, toward his communications. March 31 they achieved quite a little triumph by the surprise and capture of a British convoy at Sannas Point. The affair was not at all creditable to the British, who seem to have kept no watch of the enemy's movements. April 4 they effected another surprise by capturing Reddersburg, which brought them to within 20 miles of Roberts's railroad. Since that time they have stopped there, most unaccountably. It is hard to understand why, having arrived in easy striking distance of the railroad, they did not deliver a blow at some point or another of the long line across their front; and it is still more unaccountable, why the British have allowed a small force to remain in such a menacing position so long. Such a condition would not have been maintained two days during our war. If the rebels had advanced a force to within 20 miles of one of our main lines of communication, that night or the next day they would have made a desperate effort to cut the road, and at the same time we would be moving vigorously to cut them off and crush them. Buller continues his masterly inactivity on the other side of the mountains, at Ladysmith.

HOW WILL IT LOOK TO HISTORY.

At the very worst, H. C. Evans must go some time. Then new eyes must study the accumulated correspondence in the Pension Bureau. Different men will pass in judgment upon the proceedings of the Pension Commissioner for the past few years. Other minds than one crazed with a desire for a National advertisement of his own "shrewdness," "smartness," and superlative cunning, will consider the heart-breaking appeals from poor, disabled old men and women for scant justice. The clamors of the selfish, greedy Money Power for a reduced pension expenditure will then have been forgotten, or regarded with just contempt. The pressing exigency for a big campaign fund from it will then seem of as little consequence as the flowers that bloomed in some forgotten Spring. All that these eyes, possibly unfriendly to Mr. Evans's aspirations and those of his immediate friends will see will be the plain text of the laws he was sworn to execute, and his interminable, merciless juggling with them to defeat their purpose and deny their benefit to the poor old men and women whose only hope was the Nation's gratitude and justice. They will see, with their appeals ringing in his ears, with every mail that arrived at the office laden with their supplications for justice, that he would day after day, devise new pretexts for circumventing the laws, new mystifications for plain mandates, new devices for denial.

Meanwhile, a thousand of these baffled, denied, defrauded people, with whose mortal misery he was juggling, were dying every week. He was striving to cover their groans, their lamentations, and the angry exclamations of their friends with noisy trumpetings of his great cunning in saving the Treasury fabulous amounts of money, of blathering falsities about "frauds," "pension attorneys," "claim agent sharks," etc. Were men dying off at the rate of 1,000 a week just to embarrass him? Were "claim agents" filling the wrecked frames with rheumatism, heart failure, prostration, anchylosis, and the thousand other ills that flesh is heir to, just to defeat his purpose in "saving money"? Were men who had served their country faithfully, and broken themselves down in her service, only moved by the machinations of some hungry claim agent, to complain bitterly of the rejection of their applications for the few dollars a month which had been promised them? Could the claim agent feel as keenly the loss of his trifling fee as they did the country's ingratitude in denying them, in their need and old age, that which they had earned by the sacrifice of their health and strength?

How will all this look a few years hence?

How would it look to-day if some investigating historian should bring to light that many years ago there was another Henry Clay Evans, who treated the soldiers of the Revolutionary war and their widows as the present one is treating the veterans of the rebellion and their widows?

Would there be words in our language strong enough to properly condemn such a heartless man, dead to every sentiment of patriotism, humanity and gratitude?

Think of how the history of even one day of Henry Clay Evans's management of the Pension Bureau would read, if applied to the men who fought the Revolutionary war through, and to their widows.

NATIONAL SOLDIERS' HOME IN SOUTH DAKOTA.

Capt. H. E. Palmer, Past Commander of the Department of Nebraska, G.A.R., has been in Washington for some time, urging the passage by Congress of a very meritorious measure—the establishment of a branch of the National Soldiers' Home at Hot Springs, S. D. This bill, which was introduced by Representative R. J. Gamble, of South Dakota, has been referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, which has made a very favorable report upon it. The present accommodations in the various branches of the Soldiers' Home are quite inadequate to the proper care of the increasing number of veterans applying for admission, and much more room is urgently needed. The waters of the South Dakota Hot Springs have achieved a very high reputation for their value in curing that most prevalent affliction of veterans—rheumatism. Gen. Averell reporting upon a careful observation of over 60 cases of veterans treated for rheumatism, says that the results are little short of miraculous. "Every case that has been treated in the State Soldiers' Home (not an exception) has resulted in a perfect cure, or the patient is approaching it." The waters are equally good and effective in treating cases of indigestion, scofula, and all skin or cutaneous diseases. Other competent observers have borne equally strong testimony as to the value of the waters.

The climate, the high altitude of the proposed Home, its freedom from malaria, and its convenience to the great mass of veterans living west of the Mississippi are all strongly in its favor.

The G.A.R. National Encampment at Cincinnati passed a resolution strongly favoring the proposed Home, and several Department Encampments have done the same.

Congress should pass the bill at once, and give the veterans the benefits of a sanatarium of such decided and undeniable benefits.

The Electoral College will number the same this year as in 1896, when it gave McKinley 271 votes and Bryan 176. This was a majority of 95 for McKinley. The Democrats claim confidently that Bryan will not only carry all the States that he did in 1896, but also Delaware (3 votes), Indiana (15), Kentucky (13), Maryland (8) and West Virginia, (6), with a good show of New York (36). The Republicans, on the other hand, claim that they will get the whole of Kentucky, including the one vote given for Bryan in 1896, the one vote in California given for Bryan; the 10 of Kansas, 8 of Nebraska, 4 of South Dakota, and 4 of Washington. Therefore, they figure that they can give Bryan Delaware, Indiana, Maryland and West Virginia, and still beat him.

GOV. ROOSEVELT continues to show a strong aversion to being lassoed by a Vice-Presidential nomination.

OHIO MONUMENT AT ANDERSONVILLE.

Col. R. B. Brown, editor of the Zanesville (O.) *Courier*, and Chairman of the G.A.R. National Committee on Pensions, and a most zealous and efficient comrade, has been for a long time working to secure an appropriation by the State of Ohio to properly commemorate the State's dead at Andersonville. His efforts have been rewarded by the success of the following bill, which passed the House April 12, and the Senate the next day, and is now a law:

Whereas the title to the land on which was located the Confederate military prison at Andersonville, Ga., during the war of the rebellion, embracing the stockade, earthworks, and adjacent territory, comprising 88½ acres, vests in a board of five Trustees elected by and representing the National organization known as the Woman's Relief Corps, auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic; and

Whereas the said Trustees have already expended a considerable sum of money in restoring, in so far as is possible, the historic points of interest, and have provided for the care of the grounds, by the said organization, and their successors; and

Whereas during the time this stockade was used as a military prison in the years 1863 and 1864, 35,000 Union soldiers and sailors were confined under guard on a plot of ground comprising 27½ acres; and

Whereas nearly 14,000 of the prisoners thus held in confinement gave up their lives in defense of the National Government, of whom 1,055 were from Ohio, and whose bodies are buried in the National Cemetery at Andersonville; and

Whereas it is but a just recognition of Ohio's heroic sons that a monument be erected to commemorate their devotion to the flag of their country under circumstances the most trying in a soldier's career; therefore

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio:

Section 1. That the Governor of the State of Ohio shall be and is hereby authorized to appoint a commission, consisting of three citizens, of whom two shall have been prisoners of war at Andersonville, who shall serve without compensation, but whose actual expenses shall be paid, to locate and erect a suitable monument, commemorative of the valor and sacrifices of the soldiers and sailors from Ohio who were held in confinement in this Confederate military prison.

Section 2. The said commission shall make a full report of the execution of its trust to the Governor on or before the 15th day of November of each year, during the continuance of said trust.

Section 3. That the sum of $5,500 be and the same is hereby appropriated out of any funds in the State Treasury, to the credit of the general revenue fund, not otherwise appropriated, to be drawn and used by said commission, as hereinbefore provided, for the erection of a monument, and the payment of the expenses of said commission. The monument and its erection complete to cost not less than $5,000.

THEY had the usual row in the House last Friday over special pension bills, and, as usual, Talbert, of South Carolina, made himself obnoxious, on account of his obstructive tactics. Representative Sibley, of Pennsylvania, drew the deadly multiplication table on him, and showed that as the sessions of Congress cost about $7,000 an hour, Talbert's obstructiveness had cost the Treasury more than the amount of all the private pension bills that had been passed. Talbert read an ill-considered letter from Capt. A. J. Knowles, 1st Me. H. A., North Bradford, Me., protesting against the "Congressional Pension Mill."

The plain facts are that if the Pension Bureau was properly administered there would be little need or excuse for Congress passing private bills. All that should come before it should be exceptional cases, not covered by the laws. The Grand Army of the Republic has always been opposed to private pension bills, holding that the laws should be so construed as to give proper relief to worthy applicants, and that all should be treated alike. But so long as the Pension Bureau is conducted as at present, it must be expected that a host of claimants will seek relief from Congress, and that those who have the most political influence will secure a place in the limited number which the Speaker assigns to each member in each session. The remedy consists in putting in a Commissioner of Pensions who will properly execute the laws, and then for Congress to refuse to consider any but very exceptional cases.

PENSION LEGISLATION.

Despite the lateness in the session, the House Committee on Invalid Pensions is still laboring with its general pension bill, and Chairman Sulloway is authority for the statement that it is not yet ready to report, and has given out nothing for publication. A report has been circulated that it had substantially agreed to amend the Senate bill, which was originally that recommended by the National G.A.R. Committee on Pensions, by striking out the phrases injected by the Commissioner of Pensions, and adding a provision by which a pension of $6 a month was to be given every veteran on arriving at the age of 62; $8 at 65; $10 at 68; and $12 at 70. This is now declared to have been an unauthorized statement, and that the members are still figuring on what this and various other suggested amendments will cost. The Commander-in-Chief and Gen. Sickles, representing the G.A.R. National Committee, went before the Committee last week and urged speedy action. They made recommendations, and a number of others have pressed amendments which they think will make the bill more desirable, and, of course, Mr. Evans has used his influence to have the bill carry out his views and sustain his position with regard to the meaning of the laws.

The Commander-in-Chief and Gen. Sickles also exerted themselves in favor of the proposed Court of Pension Appeals, talking to the President and members of the Senate and House in favor of it. The draft of the bill has been submitted to many leading jurists of the country, and been indorsed by them. They think it will secure the objects for which it was framed. It is not yet ready for presentation or publication.

THE Senate Committee on Elections has unanimously decided that Mr. Wm. R. Clark is not entitled to a seat as Senator from Montana. The amount that Mr. Clark expended in securing his election is variously stated all the way from $200,000 to $1,000,000. As Montana had only 132,000 people at the last census, he must have given them a sensation of a very decided increase in the circulating medium. He announces that he is going to continue the fight, and if the Senate adopts the Committee's report, will enter the race again. If so he will find trouble in having raised the Montana ideas as to the price of votes to a fancy pitch.

Si Klegg as a Veteran

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The Third Day's Experience—Escaping Through Georgia.

When the boys were awakened, late the next morning, by the burning heat of the sun and the ravening swarms of musketoes, they found themselves lying in a dense thicket of tall weeds and bushes growing out of the damp soil of a little island formed by the wash of the fertility from the surface of the surrounding land. Si hunted around through the rank growth until he found all of his squad. They were nearly all awake, and very hungry. Shorty had moved little Pete, who was still sound asleep, over into the shade, and broke and laid over his face branches of butternut, to deter the flies and musketoes.

Si first looked around and took an account of stock. He had clung to the shotgun throughout the vicissitudes of the night, as Shorty had the squirrel rifle. But both had only the loads that were in them, the rest of the ammunition having vanished with Gabe and Hez. Si was rejoiced to find that Monty, Gid and Harry, who had taken turns carrying the sack of meal, had brought it through safely, and Sandy Baker had stuck as tenaciously to the remainder of the meat.

Si and Shorty went to different sides of the island, to look out and try to gain some idea as to where they were, and the lay of the surrounding country, but could see nothing for the rank growth along the sides of the creek.

"Them dogs," said Shorty, when they came together again for consultation, and referring to the barking in the distance, "don't seem to be barking at nothin' in partickler. They're barkin' just to show that they can be mean even when there aint no occasion for it. I s'pose we may as well git breakfast while we're thinkin' o' the next thing to do."

"Durst we build a fire, and where kin we?" asked Si, looking around doubtfully.

"Yes, we kin, if we don't make no smoke," said Shorty. "A very little smoke won't be seen this hot day. Find some flat stones that will keep it off the damp ground, and I'll go across to the land and pick up some dry wood, that won't make no smoke."

Si broke down the weeds and brush in the middle of a field, and succeeded in finding a flat stone that would serve for a hearth. Shorty crossed to the mainland, and picked up some dry branches, carefully reconnoitering the open country in front, before he ventured from the cover of the swamp.

He saw at a distance through the wide columnar space between the towering pines a field of the sparse, stunted corn common in that section. But one slender stalk stood in each hill, and the hills were wide apart, so that the field made little obstruction to the view. It was such a field as excited the derision of the farmer boys from the fat lands of the North, where the great corn-stalks stood like thick-growing saplings. Several negroes were working languidly through the field, scratching the ground with bull-tongue plows, each drawn by a single mule, muzzled to keep him from feeding off the corn. They were apparently "laying-by" the corn for the Summer.

"Good thing they've got them mules muzzled," said Shorty. "One good healthy mule 'd eat up the whole field, and then not be foundered. Don't seem to be no white man around, from the way them nigger's slouchin' around their work. I'll come over and take another look after we git something to eat."

He made his way back with his load of wood. They shaved down a few whittlings from a bit of dry pine, and started a little blaze with one of their carefully-preserved matches. They fed on bits of dry wood, rejecting anything wet or rotten, and soon had quite a hot fire burning, from which no perceptible smoke arose. They made a fairly satisfactory meal off Hez Grubwood's booty, but the sack looked sadly shrunken when they got through, and there was but little of the meat left but the rind.

"The bottom of our flour-barrel 's always poppin' up into sight," soliloquized Si, surveying the remainder, while the boys, their hunger satisfied, were trying to find some place out of reach of the musketoes, where they could continue their rest. "Pervidin' for this expedition is attended with difficulties, having no regler Commissary to draw upon. I wonder how we're going to git anything more."

"We've got to trust to Providence, Si," said Shorty hopefully. "We're trusting Him for so much anyway, that He won't mind a little thing more like a daily snack o' meat and cornmeal. All that we want is enough to travel on till we kin strike old Sherman, when we will take ourselves off Providence's hands, with thanks."

"Pap always says," responded Si, "that Providence helps them that helps themselves. That's what we've bin doing so far, and I hope that we kin keep it up. I'm like Gabe Boneset, the State o' Georgy owes us our board while we're here, and we've got to collect it wherever and whenever we kin. It'll be rough on the fellers that we collect from, but they've no bizniss bein' rebels."

"Le's slip over and see if we can't interview them darkies, and see if we can't find out something about the lay o' the country," suggested Shorty.

Cautioning the boys to keep as quiet as mice, while they were gone, which was hardly necessary, for they were dead tired, the two partners slipped across the creek, and after much strategic dodging from tree to tree, at last came up, apparently unnoticed, to the brush-and-stump fence surrounding the cornfield. They had chosen their time for the last advance, when the negroes had turned their backs and were all plowing away from them. The negroes halted it seemed an interminable length of time on the opposite side of the field, where there was some shade, but at length they turned their mules around and began coming slowly toward them, stopping from time to time to pull up an especially aggressive weed that was devouring the nutriment intended for a corn stalk, and to adjure their mules with a rich vocabulary of insult and contumely.

"Hyah, yo' lumbasted, white-eyed, whopper-jawed, foolation of a fowlery," would shout one, more with a view of astonishing his companions with the fluency of his diction than its effect upon his mule, "what on airth flabbergasts yo'? What foh yo' stop an' put yo' rotten laid down ter nip de cawn? Is dat de way yo' airn yo' vittles and clothes? Walk off, dah, on yo' tail, afo' I done break chery bone in yo' wuffless karkiss, an' snortgibbet yo' ter def."

Then another plowman, envious of this outburst, would try to surpass it.

Next, without rhyme or reason, they would all stop and burst out in a melodious improvisation, chanted in perfect time and harmony.

"De Lawd send down his rabens to ter feed
de good ole 'Lijah,
Lawd, send dem down ter me.
Dey brung de prophet pork an honey—
Lawd, send dem down ter me."

After a burst or two of this kind the song would wander off inconsequentially into—

Dar wuz a purty li'l yaller gal,
Dey called her Savannah Sal,
And she tied up her har wid a string,
O, she is so cute and frisky,
She make me drunker'n whisky,
De gal what ties up her har wid a string.

"Sich corn-plowin'," muttered Si, whose thrifty farmer instincts came uppermost. "I wouldn't have sich plowin' in a hog-lot, and if I couldn't plow more in a day than them whole six niggers in a month, I'd never throw a line over a mule."

The man coming up opposite where Si and Shorty lay concealed was a sedate old negro, who struck Si with his resemblance to the pictures of Benjamin Franklin. He was doing better and much more work than his companions, carefully pulling up the weeds as he came along, and apparently trying to make his plowing of real benefit to the crop. Nor did he waste any time in rhetorial displays on the depravity of his mule, but came steadily on, leading the rest of the line by several lengths. He stopped at the end of the row, and carefully turned his mule into the next, without any of the objurgations that his companions were using on their animals, but controlled his by light, regular pulls on the single line. He pulled up some weeds in the margin, and as he did so, seemed to be going over aloud texts from the Bible. Si heard him distinctly saying:

"Fo' God so lubbed de world dat he gib His only begotten Son dat whosoeber believeth in Him should not perish, but hab eberlastin' life."

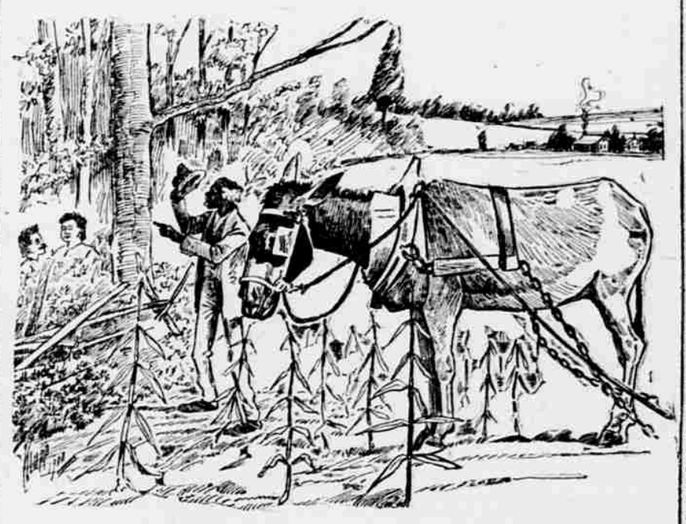
"Uncle," whispered Si, as the old man turned to start his mule in the next row.

"O, God! What dat? Is dat de Angel Gabrel?" said the old man, starting and trembling.

"Don't be scared, uncle," whispered Si. "Keep quiet. We're friends.

"Who is yo' anyhow?" asked the old man, with the white of his eyes growing bigger and bigger as they were bent with painful anxiety on the source whence the voice had come. "Foh de lub ob God, whar 'd yo' come f'om? Air yo' ob dis worl', or de next? Yo' aint angels, air yo'?"

"Come, come, don't be a fool, uncle," said Si, impatiently. "Don't be scared.



"OH, GOD, WHAT DAT? IS DAT DE ANGEL GABREL?"

We're only men. We're Yankees and your friends, and——

"Yankees—O, lub ob de good God," gasped the old man, his eyes getting more white in them than ever. "Whar in de libin' worl' did yo' come f'om?"

"Yes, yes! Yankees. Real, live Yankees, and without horns, and we walked right up here on our two feet, same as other men. We want to have a little talk with you. Can you come over here?"

As the idea of who his visitors really were filtered into the old man's mind, the look of bland benevolence and philosophic introspection vanished from his broad face, to be succeded by one of deep shrewdness, even cunning.

"Keep down dar. Don't show yo'selves," he whispered, "ontwell I done go ter de udder end ob de fiel' an' cum back. De next hand ter me's a wuffless house-niggeh dat yo' can't trust more'n yo' kin a yaller hound. Him powerful cur'us erbout ebery ting, too. Him no good, no way yo' kin put hit, an' he's lazier'n a mudturkle. W'en I git ter de udder eend, I'll done let him go off fishin', a-promisin' ter do his sheer. De udders is all right. I'll talk ter yo' w'en I comes back. Git up dar, Jeems."

"Them 'd be good parties to send for the doctor, if the devil was sick," remarked Shorty, watching with impatience the slow progress across the field. "Wisht I I had as many dollars as they're lazy."

"I declare," said Si, "that old darky looks more and more every minute like Ben. Franklin done in charcoal. And that look in his face, when he got over his hysterics that we 'd dropt down from the sky, and begun to understand that we wuz really meat and bone, showed that he's a lot o' sense in that big gourd o' his. He's likely a preacher to some nigger congregation, and does their marrying, baptizing and burying. I knowed I could trust him the moment I set eyes on him. Wonder what his name is?"

"Benjamin Franklin" came back to their side of the field more briskly than before.

"Is yo' dar?" he asked eagerly, as he reached the end of his row and halted, unmuzzled his mule, and pulled up some handfuls of grass from the fence row to hand him, and took the opportunity to look over and see what manner of men he had been conversing with.

"Yes; we're here, waitin' for you, uncle. What might your name be?"

"W'en I wuz young dey uster call me Strickland's Pete, but arter I'd got older, an' bin ordained ter preach de gospil, dey got ter callin' me Strickland's Ben. Franklin. I reckon 'caze Ben Franklin wuz a great Babtis' preacher 'way up Norf, somewhar, warn't he? Massa Strickland 's the gemmen I belongs ter. So yo' is rayly Yankees, is yo'? Yo' done got de blue cloze on, same as dey tell about—same as de Bible says dat shall be wore by de captains and rulers, and desirable young men, ridin' upon hosses. Dat's what de prophet says about de host dat shall come down upon de land." He made another gathering of grass to excuse his lingering about and looking over the fence, while he studied Si and Shorty with fascinated eyes. He gave a look back to see that his companions were no more than half-way across the field, and had stopped to refresh their souls with a burst of song. "Whar did yo' cum f'om. Air yo' spies sent out like Joshua's men, to spy out de land foh de army ob de Lawd and ob Freedom? Air dey comin' jest behine yo?"

"They're comin', but not just yit. They'll be along before the persimmons ripen, to set you all free. They'll be here, sure. We ain't no spies, though. We're prisoners, just got away from Andersonville. We're tryin' to git back to the Yankees above Atlanty. We want you to tell us the best way to take, and if you kin, where we kin get some grub to take along."

Ben Franklin pulled up some more grass and took over to his mule, apparently to gain time to think over this startling communication.

"How many is dar ob yo'?" he asked, coming back to the fence.

"Eight," answered Si. "The rest are back on the island.

"Den yo's de men dey's arter. Bent Wheeler done come ter Massa Strickland dis mornin', wid word f'om Wash Stiggins. Massa Strickland wuz out stirrin' up de hands fer ter git ter wuk. Massa Strickland's got ter be his own oberseer now, sence dey done tuk away his oberseer ter put him in de almy. As Massa Strickland haint got 20 niggers, dey won't 'low him no oberseer, lack dey do de big plantation men. He's only a pine-woods fahrner, what haint no right ter an' oberseer. He had Wils Tucker foh oberseer, who was glad ob de job, an' done tuck hit for his bo'd, so's ter keep out ob de almy, but de conscripters wouldn't 'low no six-nigger fahmer ter hab no oberseer, so dey tuck Wils away, jest as we wuz puttin' in de crap. I couldn't heah all dat Bent Wheeler said, foh I had ter purtend ter be busy hitchin' up, but I gaddered dat dey'd done kotched Gabe Bonset, an' strung him up, an' he'd offered if dey'd spar' his life he'd done tell dem sumfin, an' hit war dat dere wuz a lot o' men loose in de country dat dey could kotch. Bent Wheeler he done tole Massa Strickland, fer Massa Stiggins, ter gedder up de neighbors, an' watch de country from to'd the headwaters ob de Tucsawhatchee Crick, while he, Massa Stiggins'd beat up from Hogcrawl Crick, and kotch dem, or drive dem to ter Massa Strickland. Massa Stiggins's got de hounds out arter you."

"That's pleasant information, I'm sure," said Si. "Huntin' us down with dogs, and from the rear, and headin' us off in front with an aroused neighborhood, armed with shotguns, pitch-forks, axes, grabbin' hoes and scythes."

"No; dey haint got no pitch-forks an' scythes an' t'ings. Massa Strickland he done tuck his yawger rifle, dat he used ter kill b'ar wid, an' now uses ter kill cattle when we butcher, runs 16 ter de pound. De most of dem, dough, will hab shotguns."

"Can't you tell us some way that we kin go that'll take us around these people? Do you s'pose they're watchin' every road and path?"

"Le' me plow down to'd de udder eend, while I gedders up my mind. I can't think, wile I'm a-standin' talkin' ter yo'. Hit perfuses me. I tink things out best w'en I'm a-holdin' de plow-handles."

He replaced the muzzle, and worked across the field. When he came back, he removed the muzzle, and gathered more grass for the mule.

"Hyah, yo' Ben Franklin," shouted the next man to him. "What fo' yo' loafin' so much at de eends foh? Got de Spring feber, yo'self, haint yo?"

"Yo' done min' yo' own bizniss, an' I'll min' mine, Hunkey," answered Ben Franklin. "I's a studdyin' out sumfin fer yo' salvation. All yo' niggers go ahead, and plow back. I've done plowed more'n any ob yo' ter-day, an' I'll hab more done when night comes. Go ahead, dar, an' don't wait foh me."

"Yah! yah! yah!" roared the others with laughter and jibes, but doing as bidden.

"While I wuz down ter de udder eend," said Ben, speaking to Si and Shorty, "a brat cum come down f'om de big house, an' said dat de boy Massa Strickland tuck wid him ter wait on him had come back wid orders ter Missus ter hab a lot ob vittles cooked up and sent out ter him, whar he's watchin', fer supper fer him, an' some ob dem dat's wid him. Missus hab got a fire under de wash-biler, an' is cookin' a lot ob truck. As dat wufless Bonypart hab gone off fishin', I hab ter tote de grub out ter Massa. I'll go erbout sundown. Whar is hit dat yo' boys 's layin'?"

Si described the island to him.

"Yes, I done knows all erbout hit. Hit's all right. De hounds' s not likely ter fin' yo' dar. Hit's whar Brindle Bob goes, whenever Massa Strickland sets out ter lick him, an' hides ontwell Massa Strickland gits ober his mad. Yo' stay dar ontwell de sun begins ter sink behin' de tree-tops, an' den walk up in de crick ontwell yo' cross de big road. Dat'll keep de hounds f'om fin'in' yo' tracks on de big road. Den yo' come out by a dead sycamore on de right han', an' walk froo de open woods, not gittin' fur away f'om de crick, ontwell yo' come ter a patch o' sweet gums growin' close tergedder. Stay in dem ontwell hit's plum dark, an' wait dar ontwell yo' ha'r a whip-po'-will whip free times, de last time wid a whit-r-r-r, as if somebody had skeered her. Den yo' walk right to'd de sound, an' hit'll be me dat yo' fin'. Den I'll tell yo' mo, foh I'll hab done foun' out whar dey's a-watchin', an' how ter git 'round dem. Go back now ter yer hidin'-place."

It was time that Si and Shorty returned, for the boys had all awakened, and were in a state of alarm as to what had become of their leaders, and little Pete, in particular, was in a condition of abject despair. The long afternoon passed away in impatient contests with the swarms of torturing musketoes, and in listening to the distant baying of dogs. Si and Shorty strained their ears, with nervous eagerness, to catch the sounds of these. They would hear for a little while, and then not, which they interpreted to mean that the dogs were coursing around, and back and forward. Presently the sound seemed more continuous, and then it was unmistakably so. Shorty looked at Si with a glance that showed his certainty that the dogs were really after them, and had more than once found their trail.

"We kin do nothin' but wait," said Si in a low tone, "we're as safe here as we will be movin', at least, until near dark. There's a chance that they 'll lose it again."

The dogs did lose it, but they found it again soon, and as the sun was beginning to dip below the tops of the tall pines, it seemed as if the hounds had certainly reached the point where they had entered the creek to come up to the island.

Si and Shorty arose and almost nervously led their boys in single file up the creek, making as little noise as possible. Hundreds of water-snakes darted through the water around them, and long serpents lying in the sun on the bank fell with a splash into the water, deadly moccasins glided off through the leaves and brush, and a thousand forms of repulsive swamp life, which they scarcely thought of before, manifested themselves in astonishment at the invasion of their marshy domain. Poor little Pete was sorely frightened at all he saw, and clung closely to Shorty's side.

From the break in the sky-line ahead, Si saw that they were approaching the crossing of the big road. He motioned to the others to halt and hide, and moved noiselessly forward to reconnoiter. It was well that he did so.

A couple of horsemen, carrying shotguns, and followed by a pack of dogs, had come down the road, and were splashing into the water. They had evidently ridden a good distance, and rapidly, for both horses and dogs stopped to drink lavishly. As they did so, the men scanned the country around. It seemed to Si that they were looking directly at the sweet gum sapling behind which he stood, and they handled their guns as if to bring them down. He was so desperate that he cocked his shotgun, and he heard the click of Shorty's behind him.

"Take the rear one, Shorty," he whispered; "I'll drop the other."

But at that instant the front horse plunged, apparently scared at a water-snake, and his rider swore at him to keep quiet.

"Better git out o' hyah, Bill," said the rear rider. "I done seed two or three moccasins. They're powerful bad in hyah. I don't want ter lose my hoss. Haint got my crap laid by yit."

The men pulled up their horses' heads, and rode on across the swamp, but the younger dogs, after satisfying their thirst, seemed to want to explore the morass, and alarmed the boys a great deal. But the older dogs seemed to have as much fear of the moccasins as their masters, and trotted ahead, and the younger ones presently followed them.

Si carefully worked up to the ford, assured himself that the men were out of sight, and no more coming, and motioned to the rest to come ahead.

It was growing quite dark when they reached the dead sycamore and turned out of the creek onto the dry ground, and by the time they reached the clump of sweet gums, Si could only make sure of their character by feeling the characteristic ridges of those trees, on the limbs, and finding quantities of the spiky round seed-pods on the ground. The night had come down very black. Si had scarcely finished his examination, and assured himself that all his squad had come up, when he heard among the whip-poor-will calls one that sounded very natural, and yet a little different from the rest, and the third one ended with a whirr.

He led his squad in the direction of the sound, which was repeated at intervals, and presently heard it almost in his ear. He turned with a start, to make out Benjamin Franklin standing in the deep shadow of a large holly.

"Done got hyah, hass yo?" he asked. "I wuz moutily afeared dat yo'd done run agin Sime Bradstreet and Tod Brooks, who went down de road to'd sundown."

"We come purty nigh," said Si, "and there come purty near bein' two dead Georgians."

"Twouldn't bin no great loss. A good riddance. Bofe ob dem mouty po' white trash. Hyah's some grub I done brung yo'. Missus cooked lots more fer Massa dan I t'ought he orter hab, an' I brung what I t'ink he did n't need fer yo'. We raked up some, too, f'om de quarters, foh yo'. All ob de hands gib some. Dar's a good-sized poke foh yo."

Si lifted it, and found that it was a fair load for a strong man, and was profuse in his thanks.

"Now," continued Benjamin Franklin, "Massa Strickland, an' two udder men air down dar ter de right, watchin' de mill-road. Ole Jim Sawyer, an' some mo' air ober ter de left watchin' de gum spring road, an' de rest air scattered around a-watchin' de woods roads. I've done got de boys all out, a-watchin dem. Brindle Bob's a-watchin' Massa Strickland, and de udders air scattered round. Dese whip-po'-wills dat yo' hear is dem, sayin' dat de watchers are layin' still, an' hit's all right. If dey starts ter move around, you'll hear a catbird squallin', as if a night-hawk had got her. Now, pick up yo' vittles, an' foller close arter me, and don't even break a twig if yo' kin help hit."

Si and Shorty rapidly apportioned the contents of the sack among the boys, and started off in the wake of Benjamin Franklin, who gave a peculiar intonation to the whip-poor-will cry, to signify to his companions that he had started.

How in the world Benjamin Franklin ever found his way in the pitchy darkness along the tortuous paths through the cedar thickets by which he led them at a pace swifter than he had been seen to walk by day, Si and Shorty could not understand. But he walked as quickly and certainly as if on the plain road by daylight, and strained the boys to keep up with him. Every little while he would answer the whip-poor-whills from his friends with a call of his own, and Si's quick ears began to note the difference in the notes.

They went ahead for more than a long hour this way, and at length emerged from undergrowth on the ridge, and saw a light streak through the darkness, a little way from them.

"Now, yo're froo all safe," said Benjamn Franklin, announcing this fact with a night-bird note to his friends in the distance. "Dat's de big road right dar. Dat road 'll take yo' ter de Ocmulgee Ribber, erbout de mouf ob Injun Crick. Afo' mornin' yo'll come ter a swamp whar yo' kin stay endurin'" de day. Le' me gib yo' dis warnin' afo I go. Yo' kin trust ebery field hand as if he was yo' own brudder. He'll do anyt'ing in de libin' worl' foh yo'. But don't trust no wufless house nigger mor'n yo' would a copperhead. Good-by; I'm gwine ter offer up a pra'r ter God Almighty ter take yo' froo safely as He did de Children ob Israel from de house ob bondage."

The boys tried to find words in which to express their gratitude.

(To be continued.)

SPREAD OF AMERICAN IDEAS.

Another significant development has been made, showing that American ideas are displacing antiquated European ones, and particularly German methods, in the conduct of wars. The London *Times's* war correspondent has written an elaborate article explaining the success of the Boer style of warfare over that of the British. He says that the Boers do not have any of the rigid military discipline and blind obedience which the German military teachers have so sedulously taught as the prime requisite of a soldier. Instead, every Boer is told as much as possible of the plan of the campaign or the battle, and his intelligence is relied on to make him do his share toward winning success. This is found to be far better than the old European way of having the objects to be accomplished kept a profound secret in the breast of the Commanding General, and everybody else trained to unquestioningly obey what he orders. No matter how wise a man may be, he can not foresee all the contingencies of even a small battle, and thus the British officers and men are frequently found utterly at a loss what to do at some important crisis, and must halt and wait for orders, when perhaps the occasion for what they have set out to do has passed.

American commanders, very early in the war, found their best reliance was in the intelligence of the men and minor officers, and the Generals who succeeded best, like Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Thomas, etc., confined their orders to a general indication of the purpose to be accomplished, and left their subordinates to work out the problem as best they could. On the Atlanta campaign, and that against Richmond, the men around the campfires knew pretty nearly as much of what was going on, what was being attempted, and what success was being achieved as at Headquarters. At Mission Ridge they showed that they knew a great deal more as to what ought to be done, and what could be done, than any General in command, even those as near to them as the commanders of divisions. It is not on record that any division commander suggested the assault on the principal hight