PENSION POINTERS.

Inquiries Answered and Suggestions Made.

H. D. R., Warm Springs, Ark.—There is no law absolutely prohibiting the allowance of any pension whatsoever to a widow simply because she was not married to the deceased before a certain date. If you will state your case, you can be advised more particularly.

W. W. D., Akron, Mo.—The fact that a widow is drawing a pension under the act of June 27, 1890 (or May 9, 1900), is no bar to her filing and prosecuting a claim for widow's pension under the general law. If she can prove to the satisfaction of the Pension Bureau that the soldier's death was due to the service and line of duty, pension will be granted her under the general law to date back to the date of the soldier's death. The amount she has drawn on her act of 1890 pension would be deducted from the amount found due her under the general law.

W. H. R., Mill Hall, Pa.—Where general law pension is claimed by adult children for the period of pensionable minority, an application by one will suffice, the other children filing their post-office addresses, each over his own personal signature, with the Commissioner of Pensions.

J. B. B., Greenup, Ky.—Adopted children have no status under the pension laws.

J. R. E., Perry, Kan.—If after being ordered for medical examination, a pension claimant fails to report for examination within the specified time, a new order will not generally be issued unless the claimant expresses his willingness to be examined if a new order is issued. A claimant does not forfeit any rights by failing to report promptly for examination. He may delay as long as he likes and the Pension Bureau will issue an order whenever he says that he is willing to report.

Soldier's Wife.—The State courts would probably afford relief in a case of non-support without actual desertion. To obtain part of a soldier's pension it must be shown that the pensioner has deserted his wife against her wish and consent.

R. G., Philadelphia.—You did not read the answer through. The $100 bounty offered one-year volunteers enlisted after July 17, 1864, was not payable in full unless the soldier served the full term or was discharged before the full term by reason of wound or injury incurred in the service and line of duty. You served less than 10 months and was therefore entitled to only the first and second installments of the bounty, amounting together to $66.67.

E. L. B., Hesperia, Mich.—There is no heirship recognized in pensions of the character you refer to. The dependent father having failed to apply for pension during his lifetime, his rights died with him. The soldier's sister would have been entitled up to 16 years of age, provided she was under 16 at the date of the father's death, and provided she applied before July 1, 1880, if she was over 16 at that date.

R. B. S., Beaver Falls, Pa.—It would seem that under instructions of the Secretary of the Interior, dated July 28, 1897, your pension under the act of June 27, 1890, lately allowed, should have commenced from date of the application filed in August, 1900, instead of from the date of filing of your affidavit in October last.

C. H., Walton, N. Y.—See reply to R. G., above. The bounty referred to was United States bounty. You served only 11 months and it was probably held that the wound of the hand was, alone, insufficient to entile you to a discharge on account of disability.

D. N. Y., Danville, Ill.—Having been discharged from your enlistment of March, 1862, within less than two years, the cause of discharge must have been for wound or injury incurred in service and line of duty in order to entitle you to any bounty on account of that service. Address the "Commissioner of the General Land Office, Washington, D. C.," for information relative to Government lands.

W. W. H., Convene, Me.—If a contract for life support is actually enforceable, the contract being entirely valid, and the person making the contract not being judgment-proof, it could be a bar to widow's pension under the act of June 27, 1890 (or May 9, 1900), or to restoration of widow's pension under act of March 3, 1901. The question as to the sufficiency of the consideration on which the contract was based could not be considered except where filial love and duty entered into the contract, and this could not be regarded as existing except where the person making such contract was a child of the beneficiary. It would not make any difference whether the property was transferred by the husband of the pension claimant or by the pension claimant herself in consideration of such a contract. The sufficiency of the consideration would not be considered in any case beyond the determination of the actual or probable net income therefrom not to be in excess of $250. The claimant should set out clearly her means of support, and the evidence supporting her statements should show all the facts.

C. A. C., Sherbrooke, Canada.—The answer to your last question renders unnecessary the answering of the others. It is that a divorced wife has no claim upon the pension of her former husband. Nor would she have any status as widow under the pension laws in the event of his death.

E. R., Elyria, Kan.—It would be difficult, if not impossible, to collect ration money on veteran furlough without the production of the furlough. Invalid pensioners drawing the maximum rate of $12 under the act of June 27, 1890, and who were formerly pensioned under the general law, can determine whether they can get as much or more under the general law by filing an ordinary claim for increase of pension. The widow's pension title is not determined by the sort of pension that the soldier was drawing at the time of his death. If his death can be shown to be due to his service and line of duty, the widow can obtain pension under the general law. If his death cannot be shown to be due to the service and line of duty, she can obtain pension only under the act of June 27, 1890, as amended by act of May 9, 1900, in which event she must have been married to the soldier before June 27, 1890.

W. U.—The mere fact that the wife leaves her husband (and children) before his death would not debar her from widow's pension. If it appeared that she continued to desert the children after his death, or was shown to be an improper person to have the care and custody of them, she would be debarred from pension, at least during the period of their pensionable minority.

F. W., Northfield, Minn.—Section 1 of the act of June 27, 1890, provides "that in considering pension claims of dependent parents, the fact of the soldier's death by reason of any wound, injury, casualty, or disease which, under the conditions and limitations of existing laws, would have entitled him to an invalid pension, and the fact that the soldier left no widow or minor children having been shown as required by law, it shall be necessary only to show by competent and sufficient evidence that such parent or parents are without other present means of support than their own manual labor or the contributions of others not legally bound for their support." This is an amendment of the general law, which required that the dependent parent be shown to have been dependent at the time of the soldier's death. The mother takes precedence over the father; the father is not entitled during the lifetime of the mother.

C. W. M., McMinnville, Tenn.—Evidently you were entitled to $100 additional bounty under the act of July 28, 1866. Your claim is now barred, the law having expired by limitation on June 30, 1880.

H. W., Hanover, Ill.—When a widow is barred from pension under the act of June 27, 1890, by reason of her income exceeding the prescribed limit, a child of the soldier is nevertheless also barred from pension during the lifetime or widowhood of the widow.

O. M., Beverly, Kan.—As you seem to be pensioned under the act of June 27, 1890, and were claiming increase of your act of 1890 pension, the commencement of the increase from the date of medical examination was proper.

P. C.—If your claim for increase on pensioned disability has been rejected by the Pension Bureau, notwithstanding favorable reports and recommendations of the Examining Surgeons, probably you are justified in taking an appeal to the Secretary of the Interior. Your case being rejected, you are at liberty to employ a new attorney, who will be recognized at the expiration of three months after the date of the notice to you of the rejection of the case, provided your former attorney takes no action within the three months.

E. L. C., DeFuniak Springs, Fla.—The rate of pension of widows under the Indian wars service-pension act of 1892, and the Mexican war service-pension act of 1887 is uniformly $8 per month. Under a recent decision it is possible for Mexican war widows drawing under the service-pension act of 1887, to draw certain back pension which the soldier (being a pensioner) might have drawn under the act of Jan. 5, 1893.

G. D. L., Gestown, Pa.—There is no pension law granting a pension of $12 per month to a soldier after he becomes 60 years of age.

A. J. J., Wesleyville, Ky.—The act of March 3, 1899, so far as it relates to the payment of part of the pension of an invalid pensioner to his deserted wife or minor children, does not require that the parties shall have been married before any certain date.

J. M. C., Catlin, Ill.—There is no law rendering invalid any pension checks not presented for payment within 90 days after date thereof. This is merely a matter of regulation.

A. H., San Diego, Cal.—The decision entitling to travel pay those officers who resigned on Surgeon's certificate of disability has reference only to officers of the army.

M. D. H., Waupaca, Wis.—It is not true that the Government gets half or any part of the pension of inmates of State Soldiers' Homes.

S. F., Cedarville, Ark.—A former invalid pensioner under the general law, now drawing under the act of June 27, 1890, could go back to the general law at an increased rate over his present act of 1890 pension, provided his physical condition from former general law pensioned causes warranted a higher rating. In order to have considered by the Pension Bureau in this case any disabilities he was not formerly pensioned for, under the general law, he would have to prove them back to the service in a manner satisfactory to the Pension Bureau.

C. W. S., S. & S. Home, Quincy, Ill.—A pension certificate is reissued for various reasons, such as to correct a clerical error, to add a disability not previously included, to correct a rate, etc. If, as you state, the new "reissue" certificate of the comrade you mention is not different in any respect from the one he formerly had, it is not apparent why a new certificate was issued.

Awaiting Restitution.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: My versatile friend and comrade, Col. Theodore F. Allen, whilom of the valiant and much-enduring 7th Ohio Cav., is "long on figures," especially when he undertakes the computation of interest preparatory to "striking a balance sheet."

In The National Tribune, Jan. 2, the Colonel, at one time Adjutant-General of Garrard's Brigade, tells a little story, entitled "A Confidence Game," in which a sympathetic Federal soldier, for and in consideration of one bogus Confederate dollar, managed to cheer one of Morgan's men, captured at Buffington Island, by the potent contents of his canteen, which, by the way, contained only one drink.

Col. Allen, a mathematical genius, has been doing some marvelous "figuring," and announces, as the result, that, by some process of evolution, the one drink of mean whisky imbibed long years ago on the transport en route to Cincinnati has grown in "interest" to two full gallons of Kentucky's famous, good liquor. The daring Colonel modestly (?) suggests that the "two gallons" shall be sent to him in payment for the aforesaid "one drink" of "villainous lightning" with which one of his soldiers unsuccessfully tried to kill a home-sick prisoner in "the long ago."

Now we surrendered "Confedrits," disposed to be liberal, despite the fact that we are not in financially opulent condition, will send Col. Allen the two gallons of "Old Kentucky Elixir," provided he shall practice reciprocity by returning to us the two thoroughbred horses, or their value, with interest, that he stole from our camp at Rogersville, Tenn., when he unceremoniously and surreptitiously rode away in the "still, starry night," going down the valley and o'er the hills far away in East Tennessee. He never returned, and to this good day we have never received restitution for those stolen horses. In all conscience, the stealing of one horse and "giving us the slip" was enough, but the "appropriation" of two horses was the unkindest cut of all. By this time, adopting the Colonel's magic method of computing interest, he must owe us a whole battalion of thoroughbred Kentucky horses.

If he will forward those horses to me, in advance, I hereby pledge him my word, which, of course, is as good as my bond—perhaps better—that I will send him the "two gallons." That much "powerful liquor" will probably make him as drunk as a "biled owl," but I shall have no conscientious scruples if I succeed in "knocking him out," and putting him in a hors-de-combat condition with "two full gallons." Like the Indian, I can neither forget nor forgive. The Adjutant-General of Garrard's Brigade had no business stealing two horses "at one time in two motions."

In a recent issue of The National Tribune my friend, Col. Allen, referring to my story, "The Crossing of the River," very pleasingly compliments me, but calls attention to the fact that it was the 7th Ohio Cav. and the 8th Mich. that made the day unpleasant to Morgan and his men at Buffington Island; that the 7th Mich. was "not in it." Well, my getting the 7th Mich. and the 7th Ohio mixed was simply a slip of the pen. Of course, I meant the 7th Ohio Cav. The fact is, we had met the "Michiganders" and the "Ohioans" so often in battle array down in Tennessee that the two had become convertible terms, the cavalrymen from Michigan and those from the Buckeye State being "holy terrors"—the one the same as 'tother. Now, when Col. Allen shall have filled up one more time with fried chicken and blackberry pie, and washed the "fillin'" down with two gallons of Kentucky Bourbon, and I shall have received the battalion of equines, all will be lovely and the goose will be swinging altitudinously.—GEO. DALLAS MOSGROVE.

A Lost Opportunity.

Cohen—Did you hear dot Meyer haf failed for two hundert thousand?

Levi—Vot? Two hundert tousand? Und I refused to let him marry my Rachel. Ach, Cohen, if you lofe me kick me hard.

A Great Remedy.

Dr. Blosser's Catarrh Cure Has Cured More Cases of Catarrh Than Any Other Remedy—Samples Mailed Free.

This is the only remedy that goes directly to the diseased parts and is at the same time "constitutional." It reduces the inflammation, heals the ulcerated surfaces, stops the discharge, restores the hearing when impaired by Catarrh, prevents the disease from going to the lungs, or removes it if already there. It gives speedy relief and effects a permanent cure.

Dr. Blosser's Catarrh Cure is put up in boxes containing enough medicine for one month's treatment, which is sent postage paid for $1.00. If you have not had a sample, we will send one free by mail, postpaid. Address: Dr. J. W. Blosser & Son, 320 Walton St., Atlanta, Ga.

WHO GOES THERE?

(Continued from first page.)

my lips, saying, "Not yet; I'll do the talking for both of us."

He rose and brought me water, and I drank.

Then he sat by me again and said, "The fight which one must make with his will against impulse is not easy, especially with some natures; and a single defeat makes the fight harder. To yield once is to become weaker, and to make it easy to yield."

I understood. He could read me. He knew my weakness. How he knew I could not know; nor did I care. He was a profound soul; he knew the mind if ever yet mere man knew mind; he could read what was going on in the mind by the language of the features and the body. Especially did he know me. But possibly his knowledge was only general; he might infer, from apparent symptoms, that some mental trouble was now pressing hard upon me, and, without knowing the special nature of the trouble, might be prescribing the exercise of the will as a general remedy. Yet it mattered nothing to me, at the moment, I thought, how he knew.

"You will not yield?" said he.

I closed my eyes and thought of Lydia, and of my father, and of Willis, and of Jones, and of nothing connectedly.

"Do you remember," he asked, "the first time you came with me to the little cottage in Charleston?"

I nodded.

"At that time you were passing a crisis. I would not tell you to will. Do you remember it?"

Again I nodded assent.

"To will at another's dictation is impossible. The will is free. If I should tell you to will any certain thing, it would do no good. All that I can do is to say that the will is free."

His fingers were yet on my lips. My mind had taken in all that he said, although my thought was giddy. He was clearly right. If I should surrender once, it would be hard to recover my former ground. Yet I doubted my power to will. The doubt brought terror. I wished that he would speak again.

"The power of habit is not lost in a moment. It may be unobserved, or dormant even, but it is not destroyed. No man accustomed to keep himself in subjection can fail to distinguish temptation from surrender."

How well he could read me!

"The desire to will may momentarily fail through bodily weakness, or through fear—which is the same thing. But he who can will when he desires to will not, conquers himself doubly."

I put his hand away and rose.

"What time is it, Doctor?" I asked.

"Half-past 10," said he, without looking at his watch.

"I must report to Gen. Morell at 11," I said.

"We must not waste time, then," he said; "who accompanies you?"

"I go alone."

He looked at me searchingly, then grasped my hand. He understood.

"You have strengthened your will; good. Now I will strengthen your body."

He went to a small chest, from which he took a flask. He poured a spoonful of liquid into a glass. I drank.

"It will be slow and last long," said he.

He brought me the gray clothing and helped me to dress; he turned the pockets of my blue clothes and selected such things as I needed.

"Do you go armed?" he asked.

"Yes; apparently. I shall take the Enfield—unloaded."

He brought the cartridge-box and the canteen; he brought the haversack, and put food in it.

Said he, "I wish you would humor one of my whims."

"Anything you wish, Doctor."

"Put the palmetto buttons on your coat."

It was soon done. I was passive; he was doing the work.

"Now," he said, "one other thing. Take this pencil, and this book. Turn to May 23. I will dictate."

It was a small blank-book, a little soiled, with the pages divided into sections, which were headed with dates for the year 1862.

"Turn to May 23," he had said.

"I have it," said I.

"Read the date," said he.

"Friday, May 23, 1862."

"Now write."

The Doctor dictated; I wrote:

"Arrived after furlough. Drilled a. m. and p. m. Weather clear."

"Saturday, May 24, 1862.

"On camp guard. Letters from home. Showers. Marched at night."

"Sunday, May 25, 1862.

"Marched all day. Bivouacked in woods at night."

"Monday, May 26, 1862.

"Marched but a few miles. Day very hot. Weather bad. Heavy rain at night."

"Tuesday, May 27, 1862.

"Rain. Heard a battle ahead. Marched past"——

"What brigade was that you saw at Hanover Court-House?" the Doctor asked.

"Branch's."

"Yes, Branch's; write, 'Marched past Branch's Brigade, that had been fighting.'"

Then the Doctor said: "Now turn to the fly-leaf of the book and write"—he paused a moment—"simply write Jones. Here—turn the book lengthwise and write Jones."

I wrote Jones—lengthwise the book.

"Wait," said he; "put a capital B."

"Let me see," said he.

I showed him the book.

"No," said he; "erase that B and put another one before Jones."

"Have you an eraser?"

"I'll get one."

The B after Jones was erased, leaving a dark splotch. I wrote B before Jones.

"We must get that dark spot out," said he.

He took the book and very carefully tore out part of the leaf, so that there remained only B. Jones and the part of the fly-leaf above the writing.

"Now," said he, "put that in your pocket."

"What is all this for, Doctor?"

"For a purpose. Keep it in your pocket; it may serve to protect you."

"What time is it, Doctor?"

"Ten minutes to 11."

"I must go."

He said no word; but he put up his hands to my face, and made me bend to him, and kissed me.

* * * * *

Before midnight one of Gen. Morell's Orderlies had passed me through our cavalry pickets beyond Mechanicsville.

The Doctor's stimulant, or something else, gave me strength. My mind was clear and my will firm. True, I felt indifferent to life; but the lesson which the Doctor had given me I had clearly understood, and I had voluntarily turned the die for duty after it had been cast for ease. All my hesitation had gone, leaving in its place disgust kept down by effort, but kept down. I wanted nothing in life. Nothing? Yes, nothing; I had desire, but knew it unattainable, and renounced its object. I would not hope for a happiness that might bring ruin on another.

To die in the work begun this night seemed to me appropriate; life at the present rate was worse than worthless. Yet I had not yielded to this feeling even; I would be prudent and would accomplish what was hoped for, if my strength should serve.

In Gen. Morell's tent I had been offered a Lieutenant's commission—a blank fully signed and ready to fill, but had rejected it, through vanity perhaps—the vanity that told me to first perform a duty for which the honor had been soothingly offered.

My plans—I had no plans. I had started.

What was the weather when I started that night? I do not know. I was making for the swamp; I would go to the swamp; I would look for an opportunity—that was all.

The swamp was soon around me. I filed right. I found mire and bush, and many obstacles. The obstacles stirred my reason. To follow every crook of this winding stream was absurd. I came out of the swamp and began to skirt its edge. I looked toward my right—the northeast; the sky reflected a dim glow from many dying camp-fires. I could see how the low swamp's edge bent in and out, and how I could make a straighter course than the river. In some places a path was found. Our pickets were supposed to be on the edge of the hills behind me.

My course was northwestward. I crossed two roads which ran at right angles to my course and probably entered Richmond. On each of them successively I advanced until I could see a bridge, upon which I knew it would not be safe to venture, for it was no doubt held by the Confederates. I continued up the stream, approaching it at times to see if it had narrowed.

About two miles, I supposed, from our cavalry videts, I crossed a railroad. On the other side I turned southward. The ground was covered with dense undergrowth and immense trees, and was soft and slippery from recent high water. My progress was soon interrupted by a stream, flowing sluggishly to my left. I sought a crossing. The stream was not deep, but the slippery banks gave me great difficulty in the darkness. The water came to my waist; on the further side were hollows filled with standing water left by the freshet. I had crossed the main branch of the Chickahominy.

Within a mile I expected to find Brook Run, behind which it was supposed the Confederate left extended, and where I must exercise the greatest care lest I run foul of some videt. How to avoid stumbling on one of them in the darkness was a problem. Very likely they were placed from 100 to 200 yards apart, and near the bank of the stream, if practicable, especially at night, for the stream itself would not only be their protection, but also, by its difficulty and its splashing, would betray any force which should attempt to cross to the south side.

But I found the creek very crooked, and I considered that a line of videts, 200 yards apart by the course of the stream, would require probably a man to every 50 yards in a direct line, and such a line of videts could not well be maintained constantly—never is maintained, I think, unless an enemy's approach is momentarily feared, in which case you frequently have no videts at all. Following up this thought I concluded that the videts were, most likely, watching their front from the inner bends of the stream, and that, at a bend which had its convex side toward the north, was my opportunity.

I was not long in finding such a bend. And now my caution became very great, and my advance very slow. The bank sloped, but was almost completely hidden in the darkness. I could not see the edge of the water.

Lying flat, I thrust the butt of my gun ahead of me, and moved it up and down and right and left, trying the inequalities of the ground. To make no sound required the very greatest care; a slip of an inch might have caused a loud splash.

Slowly I gained ground until I reached the water, and stood in it to my knees. I listened—not a sound. I slowly moved forward, raising my foot not an inch from the muddy bottom, straining eye and ear to note the slightest sign of danger. The water deepened to my middle.

I crawled up the farther bank. Again I lent ear. Nothing. I crawled forward for 50 yards or more, hoping, rather than believing, that I was keeping half-way between the sides of the bend.

I rested a while, for such work is very hard. Before a minute had passed I heard a noise—and another: one at my right, the other at my left. The sounds were repeated. I knew what they meant—the videt on either side of me was being relieved. My course had been right—I was midway between two sentinels.

How to get through the picket-line ahead of me? I reasoned that the pickets were not in the swamp, but on the edge of the hills. Lying there between the two videts I imagined a plan. I knew that a picket-line is relieved early in the day when troops are in position, as the armies were now. If I could see the relief coming, I would show myself just at the time it arrived, hoping that each party would take me to belong to the other.

But suppose I should not see the relieving company, or suppose any one of a thousand things should at the last moment make my plan impracticable, what then?

I saw that I must have some other plan to fall back on; I would make some other plan as I crawled forward.

At what moment should I strike the line of Confederate pickets? That the country outside was in their cavalry lines I well knew, and I hoped that for this reason their infantry would be less watchful; but this thought did not make me any the less prudent and slow in my advance. I had easily succeeded in passing the videts; to avoid the videt reliefs might not be easy.

When I reached the edge of the swamp daylight was just beginning to show. Could I hope to remain long between videts and pickets? Impossible. But impossible is a strong word, I thought. Why not climb? Trees were all around me; I might easily hide in the thick boughs of a cedar near by. But that would do me no good; at least, it could do no good unless in case of sudden necessity. I must get through the picket-line; outside I could do nothing. Once in rear of the Confederate pickets I should have little or no trouble in remaining for days in the camps and in the main lines; getting through was the difficulty. Daylight was increasing.

Had it taken me two hours to crawl from the line of videts to this edge of the swamp? The question rose in my mind from seeing a relief come down the hill at my right; two men, supposedly a non-commissioned officer and a private, were going to pass in 50 yards of me. I let them pass. They went into the swamp. Five minutes later two men returned by the same route, or almost so, but came a little nearer to me; I saw them coming and felt for my glass, but did not find it. I supposed that Dr. Khaynac had forgotten to put it in my haversack. Yet the men—no doubt the same non-commissioned officer, with the private he had just relieved from duty as a videt—passed so near me that I could distinctly see their dress, and and could note its worn and bedraggled appearance. These men had seen hard service, evidently.

Five minutes more passed. The east was aglow with day. Two men at my left were now coming down the hill. They passed into the swamp. These men wore uniforms fresh and clean.

The thought came upon me at once that I had passed between two videts belonging to different regiments. I cast about for some way to take advantage of this circumstance, but racked my brains to no purpose. Finally, however, an odd idea was born. Could I not go back to the videt and talk to either the right or the left man of the connecting line? He would probably think that I belonged to the command joining his. No doubt I could do this; but what should I gain? I should merely be losing time.

Then another idea came. Could I not post myself as a Confederate videt between the connecting men? But for what? Even if I could do so there was no profit in this romantic idea. I gave it up.

Yet I must do something. I considered the chances of going forward boldly, walking straight between two pits, and on up the hill. The pickets would see that I was a Confederate. If I could strike between the connecting pits of the two commands, the thing might be done. Yet I wanted a better way.

Before the second relief had returned I was hidden in the boughs of a tree. The Corporal and a man passed back as they had come. They were talking, but I could not hear what they said.

I watched them from the tree. A gully was in front of me, a large gully, only in parts visible from my position; it seemed to be on their route. The two men became hidden by this gully. I saw them no more. My interest was excited. Why had the men gone into this gully? There was smoother ground outside. They had a purpose; I must find it out.

Until the next relief should come I was comparatively safe. I was on neutral ground, or unobserved ground, for an hour at least. I could not know whether the reliefs came as ordinarily—once every two hours. There would probably be nobody passing between videts and pickets—unless, indeed, some officer should go the rounds of the sentinels; that was something I must risk.

I came down from the tree and cautiously approached the mouth of the gully. I climbed another tree, from which I had a better view. I could now see that the gully extended far up the hill, and I suspected that the picket-line stretched across it; but there was no indication of the purpose which had caused the men to go into the gully. My position was a good one, and I waited. I could see a part of the picket-line—that is, not the men, but the rifle-pits.

Ten minutes went by. Coming down the hill from the right in an oblique direction toward the gully, I saw an unarmed rebel. He disappeared. He had gone down into this gully, which, I was now confident, separated by its width the pickets of different commands. What could this unarmed man be doing in the gully? Nothing for me to do but to wait; I was hoping that an opportunity had been found.

Soon I saw another man coming down toward the gully; he was coming from the other side—the left; he was armed. At nearly the same instant the unarmed man reappeared; his back was toward me; he held his canteen in his hand. The situation was clear; there was water in the gully; my opportunity had come.

I came down from the tree. Almost an hour would be mine before the videts were relieved. Cautiously I made my way to the mouth of the gully. I lay flat and watched. A man was climbing the side of the gully; he was going to the left; he was armed—doubtless the man I had seen a moment before. I went into the gully. I must get to that spring or pool, or whatever it was, before another man should come.

Before the man had reached the picket-line, I was at the spring—and it was a good one, at least for that swamp. A little hollow had been made by digging with bayonets, perhaps, or with the hands, on one side of the gully, just where a huge bulk of unfallen earth would protect the hole from the midday sun, the only sun which could reach the bottom of this ravine, defended by its wall on either hand. The hole was so small that only one canteen could be filled at a time; but the water was good compared with that of the Chickahominy. Doubtless it was the difficulty of getting pure water that justified the relaxation of discipline which permitted the men to have recourse to this spring in rear of their videt lines.

Canteen in hand, I sat down by the spring. Fully three minutes I sat and waited. Seeing how muddy I was, I took out my knife and began scraping the mud from my shoes and clothing.

I heard a step. I put my canteen into the water and held it down with one hand, continuing to scrape mud with the other.

"Fill mine, too," said a voice.

I did not look up.

"Ain't this a swamp to read about? Did you ever see the likes o' musketoes?"

"I couldn't see 'em," said I; "supposin' you mean whilst I was on videt."

He laughed. "Bet you had to fight 'em, though. Say—you won't git that mud off that-away; let it dry."

I did not reply. He was standing almost over me, upon a sort of shelf in the side of the gully, as there was not room at the water for more than one man.

"Gimme your canteen," said I.

He handed it to me. It was a bright new tin canteen of the cheap Confederate make—uncovered. I knew at once that this man belonged to the fresh regiment. The old Confederates had supplied themselves, from battlefields and prisoners, and the greater capture of stores, with good Union canteens. Even while I was thinking this, he said, "What'll you take to boot 'twixt your canteen and mine?"

"Don't want to swap," said I.

I filled his canteen.

"Now, gimme your hand," said I.

He held out his hand, which I grasped, and he pulled hard; it took two pulls to bring me to his side. I did not look at him, but knew that he was a small man.

He turned away. I followed him. I could see that his uniform was new. We reached the edge of the gully, and stood still.

Now I could see the pits. The gully was deeper up the hill. There was a pit on either side of the gully, which was about 40 feet wide. Had I known of the existence of that gully, I could have stolen through the picket-line in the night—but perhaps they had it guarded at night.

"Say," said my companion, "why didn't you go back on your own side?"

"Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no lies," said I.

He was two steps ahead of me—a man of small stature. His shoes and his clothing up to his knees were almost as muddy as mine. He walked slowly up the hill. In a very few minutes we would be within the picket-line; it took all my will to preserve composure; I was glad the man was in front of me. We stepped slowly up the hill.

I could see nobody at the pits. The pickets were lying down, probably, half of them asleep, the other half awake but at ease. I was wishing my leader would speak again. The nervous tension was hard. What should I do when we reached the line? I had no plan, except to walk on. I wished my leader would continue to march, and go past the pits—then I could follow him; the trivial suggestion aroused self-contempt; I was thinking of straws to catch at. I must strengthen my will.

He had made four steps; he said, "Sun's up."

This was not much of an opening. I managed to respond, "Don't see it, myself."

"Look at that big pine up yonder," said he.

"Be another hot day," said I; "wish I was up there."

"What for?"

"So I could get some sleep."

"You won't git any down here in this old field; that's shore."

"That's what's a-troublin' me," said I; "and I've got to take care of myself."

"Ben sick?"

"No, not down sick; but the hot sun don't do me any good."

"Bilious, I reckon," said he.

"No," said I; "not bilious; it's my head."

"Bet I'd go to the Surgeon, then, ef it was me," he said.

"Wish I could see the Doctor," I replied, spelling the word, mentally, with a capital.

"Well, why don't you tell your Captain to let you go back?"

"You don't know my Captain," said I.

"Hard on you, is he?"

"Well, hard ain't the word; but I wouldn't risk asking him out here."

"Bet I'd go, anyhow, ef it was me," said he.

"If he should see me going, know what he'd do?"

"What?"

"Send a man after me."

"Well, you jest come along with me. Bet our men won't stop you; you don't belong to them."

This was just what I wanted; but I was afraid to show any eagerness. We were almost at the picket-line, and I had no doubt that my friend was marching straight toward his own rifle-pit; he was surely on the left of his company—he was such a small man.

"Stop," said I.

He halted, and turned to me. He was a good-looking young fellow. He had the palmetto button on his coat. Our eyes met.

"You won't give me away?" I said.

"What do you take me for?" he asked.

"Oh, you're all right; but if you should happen to say anything to anybody, it might get out. If you won't tell any of your men, I'll go."

"Oh, come along; you needn't be afeared of my tellin' on you. I don't know your name, and—not to cause hard feelin's—I don't want to know it; come on."

He stopped at the pit on the edge of the gully. I passed on. I saw men lying, sitting, and a very few standing down the line at some of the other pits. I heard no talk. The men at the pit where my friend had halted did not speak to him. There was nothing to cause them to speak. He handed his canteen to one of the men; even this man did not speak; he drank.

I walked up the hill, going straight toward the big pine. The sun itself could now be seen. What I have narrated had not taken five minutes, for the pits were not more than a hundred yards from the edge of the swamp.

Now, once out of sight of the picket-line, I should feel safe. How far in the rear the Confederate fortifications were, I could not yet tell—but that mattered little; I should have no fears when I reached them.

As long as I thought it possible that I could be seen from the pits I went toward the big pine; soon I knew that I was hidden by bushes, and I went as rapidly as I could walk in a southeast direction for nearly an hour. I passed in full sight of the picket-line in many places, and fortifications far to my right could be seen upon the hills. My purpose was to enter the main Confederate intrenchments as nearly as possible opposite New Bridge—opposite the position from which I had started on the night before.

The sun was an hour high. I had come three miles, I thought; I sat in a shady place and endeavored to think what course was best. I believed I had come far enough. I had nothing to do but go forward. I could see parts of fortifications. No one would think of hindering my entrance. I would go into the lines; then I would turn to the right and follow out my instructions.

Again I started, and reached the brow of the hill; it was entirely bare of trees. Three or four hundred yards in front were lines of earthworks. I did not pause; I went straight ahead.

A body of men marched out of the breastworks—about a company, I thought. They were marching forward; their line of march would bring them near me. I held my course; I judged that the company was some regiment's picket for the next 24 hours; they were going to relieve the last night's picket.

The last man of the company had hardly appeared; suddenly I heard a cannon roar, apparently from a Federal battery almost directly in my rear, and at the instant a shell had shrieked far above my head.

At once the Confederates replied. I did not think that I was in any danger, as the shells went high in the air in order to attain their object on the other side of the Chickahominy.

The company of infantry had countermarched, and was again behind the line of earthworks.

I looked around for shelter from the Federal cannon; although the shells went high, it would be folly for me to go forward into the place of danger. The hill was bare. There was no depression, no tree, no fence, nothing but the open windswept hill—desolate and bare. I was on this bare hill.

A man passed me from the rear. He was armed. He, too, like myself, had no doubt come from the picket-line.

"Better leg it!" he cried—and I legged it with him, making for the breastworks. The shells from the rear seemed to fly over at a less hight.

One of the shells burst over my head.

Suddenly I saw my companion throw up one hand—his left hand—with great violence, and fall flat; hardly was I conscious that I saw him fall; at the instant there was a deafening noise, and I was conscious of nothing.

(To be continued.)

Work of the Pension Office.

The report of certificates issued for the week ended Jan 18, shows:

Army invalid: Original 7; increase, 159; reissue, 47; restoration, 5; renewal, 21; supplemental, 6; duplicate, 24; accrued, 152. Total, 421.

Army widows, etc.: Original, 70; reissue 2; renewal, 46; duplicate, 6; accrued, 1. Total, 125.

Navy invalids: Original, 3; increase, 1; reissue, 1; accrued, 1. Total, 6.

Navy widows, etc.: Original, 3; duplicate, 1. Total, 4.

Army invalids (war with Spain): Original, 59; increase, 1; reissue, 1; duplicate, 2. Total, 63.

Army widows, etc (war with Spain): Original 6.

Navy invalids (war with Spain): Original, 2.

Army invalids (act of June 27, 1890): Original, 201; increase, 746; additional, 159; reissue, 14; restoration, 1; renewal, 28; supplemental, 8; duplicate, 40; accrued, 179. Total, 1,397.

Army widows, etc. (act of June 27, 1890): Original, 323; increase, 2; reissue, 3; restoration, 1; renewal, 4; supplemental, 2; duplicate, 10; accrued, 3. Total, 348.

Navy invalids (act of June 27, 1890): Original, 13; increase, 2; reissue, 1; renewal, 2; accrued, 7. Total, 25.

Navy widows, etc. (act of June 27, 1890): Original, 12.

Mexican war survivors: Reissue, 38; supplemental, 1; duplicate, 1; accrued, 9. Total, 49.

Mexican war widows: Original, 13; duplicate, 3. Total, 16.

Indian Wars (1832-1842)—Survivors: Accrued, 2.

Indian Wars (1832-1842)—Widows: Original, 5; duplicate, 1. Total 6.

Totals—Original, 717; increase, 911; additional, 159; reissue, 107; restoration, 7; renewal, 101; supplemental, 17; duplicate, 88; accrued, 354. Total, 2,452.

Si Klegg and Shorty.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: I see some of your readers favor the discontinuance of Si and Shorty. Not so with "yours truly." My father was a veteran of '61, and I have heard him remark many times that the author of "Si Klegg and Shorty" was no novice, but "had been there" and knew all about war, its pathetic, humorous and serious sides. Keep it up. Let us know what the boys did from start to finish. It is the article looked for first when The National Tribune arrives. I hope you have not set a pace you cannot maintain when Si and Shorty are played out. I admire your position on the pension question. I know of several old "vets" who are not able to do one thing to earn a living who are insulted once in three months with a little nasty check of $24.—F. G. NOBLE, Norway, Me.

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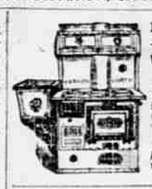

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