RECITALS AND REMINISCENCES

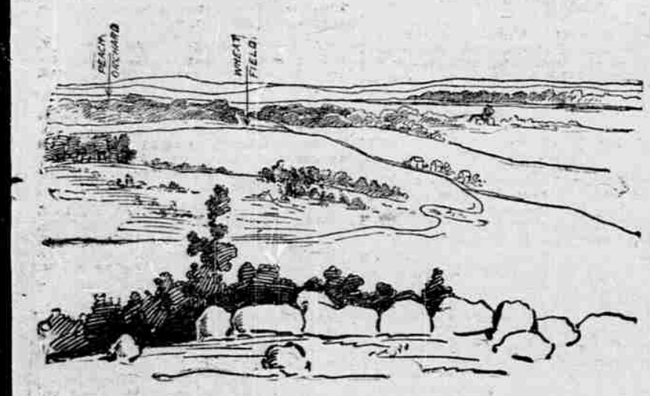
Stories Eminently Worth Telling of Experiences and Adventures in the Great National Struggle.

WHEATON'S BRIGADE.

Its Splendid Advance at Gettysburg on the Afternoon of July 2.

Editor National Tribune: In nearly all the histories or accounts of the fighting at Gettysburg, on the evening of July 2, at the time Longstreet made his attack on Little Round Top, the part that Wheaton's Brigade of the Sixth Corps took in repelling it is ignored. In fact, that there were any troops belonging to the Sixth Corps that were sufficiently near to the battlefield that day, so as to be of assistance in such an emergency is generally unknown or rarely mentioned. On this account members of the corps feel that accounts of the battle have hardly done the corps justice, in describing the exciting scenes of the eventful evening of July 2, 1863.

When Wheaton's Brigade, composed of the 62d N. Y., the 93d, the 98th and 139th Pa., arrived on Round Top Ridge, it certainly appeared that if ever troops arrived anywhere just in the "nick of time" these regiments did. Everything at that point like a Union battle line



WHEATON'S BRIGADE ADVANCED.
(From a wart ime sketch.)

seemed to have gone to smash, and the remnants were making time for the rear of the ridge. What was left of the Regular Division of the Fifth Corps was marching out from the field on the road that crosses to the right of Round Top and the Wheat Field to the Emmitsburg Road, with the victorious rebels following closely after. The Regular troops were going off the field in such good order that the incoming troops thought their going out was on account of having exhausted their supply of ammunition. The guns of some of the batteries, of which all the horses had been killed, were being drawn off by hand by the battery men to save them, and things had, indeed, a desperate look for our side. The yelling and exultant foe, following after in pursuit, seemed to be as much broken up and in disorder as were our men in retreat. It did not, indeed, appear as if they had in sight sufficient men to form a solid line of battle had they been in that order, and their fire was not so heavy as was usually experienced in meeting their lines. But the writer of this would rather cite the written testimony of officers of the brigade, given long ago, in reference to that evening's action, than to advance his unsupported say-so from memory at this late day, providing The National Tribune will permit it.

Time of the Arrival of the Corps.

In the first place, as to the time of the arrival of the Sixth Corps troops.

Gen. Sedgwick in his report states that he reported his corps at Rock Creek at 2 p. m. Capt. Cowan, who commanded Cowan's Battery of the Sixth Corps, and whose admirable statement of the services of his battery appeared in The National Tribune a couple of months ago, stated that his battery arrived at Rock Creek at 1 p. m.

A historian of the 98th Pa., which was the leading regiment of the Sixth Corps that day, gives as to its experiences that evening the following:

"The regiment arrived at Rock Creek at 2 p. m. or shortly after; halted and were allowed to rest an hour, when, with the brigade, were advanced over Rock Creek. Hardly were we again in line when we were ordered forward under Gen. Sedgwick's personal supervision, being directed by a staff officer who accompanied us, and were brought to Little Round Top on the double-quick, and by his direction formed line of battle. Our line was in the immediate rear of other troops, whom we found to be the Pennsylvania Reserves, whose line was overlapped by ours. Before the line was hardly formed our regiment fixed bayonets, and, passing the reserve line, advanced on the charge to and across Plum Run and over the stone fence skirting the Wheat Field. The Reserves, whom we passed, also advanced on the charge at the same time. The opposition seemed more that of straggling and disorganized parties of the enemy, who retreated before our advance with but little firing. Our loss in movements thus far were one killed and 10 wounded. We were then ordered to the right of the brigade, and held that position to the end of the battle."

A statement concerning the 93d Pa., another regiment of Wheaton's Brigade, is as follows: "About 3 p. m. were ordered into a field to the left of the Baltimore Pike, and the men, too much exhausted to eat, threw themselves down and lay like logs. In an hour an order came to advance to support the lines in front that were hard pressed. Col. Nevin, of the 62d N. Y., in command of the brigade, moved promptly. Gen. Sedgwick in person led the brigade, and formed it on the brow of a low, rocky knoll, covered with scattered trees, just to the right of Little Round Top, the left of the brigade joining with the Pennsylvania Reserves. It got into position just as the troops which had been contesting the ground in the open fields along the Emmitsburg Road, broken and almost annihilated, were coming back in disorder, followed closely by the victorious enemy. A fire from the brigade line checked their advance. The whole brigade then advanced, and after a short contest the rebels were driven in tumult. In the charge the 93d took 25 prisoners. The 93d had 33 officers and 237 men present for duty, and had one officer and nine men wounded, one mortally."

The Brigade in Action.

Capt. Herbert, at the dedication of the monument of the 139th Pa. regiment of Wheaton's Brigade, in reference to the part the regiment had in the action on the afternoon of the 2d, said:

"At 3 p. m. Rock Creek was reached, and we turned into a big field on the south bank and stacked arms. Immediately on reaching the creek we discovered the First Division, Fifth Corps, massed in reserve, just in front of us on the opposite bank of the stream, and some of our boys soon had visits from brothers and acquaintances of the 62d Pa. Alas! in several instances the visitors of that afternoon were sleeping their last sleep ere the sun went down on the bloody field. Very soon after we halted the roar of artillery broke upon our ears. The Fifth Corps fell in and moved rapidly to the front. The rattle of musketry grew louder and louder. A staff officer rode hurriedly into the field, seeking the brigade commander. He was followed quickly after by our glorious old corps commander, Gen. Sedgwick, who, without waiting for brigade or regimental officers, sung out, 'Fall in, boys; move quickly.' Instantly the lines were formed, arms taken, and following the old General right thru the creek, over the field and up the hillside, and soon were at the road at the right of Little Round Top. The brigade, fortunately, was in the lead of the corps that day, and thus came our honor of being engaged in the brilliant action and in some measure adding to the glory of the Sixth Corps. As we reached the crest of Round Top Ridge and obtained our first sight of the battle, we knew we had arrived none too soon, for the enemy was gaining ground. The brave and dashing Sickles and his splendid Third Corps, with broken and bleeding lines, had been forced back. Half of the First Division, Fifth Corps, had fallen in the Wheat Field. Longstreet, emboldened by his success, was pressing vigorously to capture the strategic key to the whole position. The Greek cross of the Sixth Corps was planted alongside of the Maltese cross of the Fifth, and the tide of battle changed. Gen. Sedgwick, when we reached the crest, directed Col. Nevin, who was in command of the brigade, to form his line from left to right. The impetuous and fiery New Yorker in executing the order found Gen. Crawford and his division of the Fifth Corps in his way and unwilling to move. Nevin relieved his mind in language more vehement than elegant, giving no heed to the rank of the offending General, who doubtless overlooked his violence in consideration of the sulphurous surroundings.

"Without waiting so long as I have taken to relate this incident we advanced, touching elbows with the gallant Pennsylvania Reserves, and with exultant cheers were soon in the conflict. With our well-directed fire and steady lines the enemy is soon driven from our front, discomfited and defeated. The victory is ours. The rebel yell no longer is heard, but the victorious Union cheers roll along the lines. As we pushed down the north side of Round Top Ridge our regiment captured and turned over some 20 prisoners. Here we halted, where the 139th Pa. Monument now stands, and remained all next day." * * *

Gen. Sedgwick Leads in.

Here is an extract from the oration made at Gettysburg by Col. F. C. Newhall at the dedication of the 6th Pa. Cav. Monument, which is directly in point as to the manner Wheaton's Brigade made their appearance on the evening of the 2d at Gettysburg. Col. Newhall said:

"On the afternoon of the 2d, when hurrying towards the ridge, where the fighting was very heavy, to find and report to Gen. Pleasonton, if I could, I encountered Gen. Sedgwick, just leading the Sixth Corps into action. There never was a better commander of a better corps. I had served at his headquarters and knew him, and stopped to say a word to him. A fine-looking Major of Meade's staff galloped up and ordered Sedgwick to hasten forward. Matters were evidently serious just in front. There was a fearful crash of musketry, and thru the smoke I saw some men with clubbed muskets in their hands. It was just at the time Longstreet's famous charge of the second day had reached its climax. Sedgwick turned to his leading brigade commander and said: 'Hurry up there; never mind forming your brigade; pitch in by regiments.' And nothing could be finer than the way they did it."

From a letter written by Gen. Wheaton to a member of his old brigade, and dated Fort Coeur d'Alene, I. T., June 23, 1886, I copy the following in regard to the service of his brigade on the evening of the 2d:

"You remember its glorious advance under Sedgwick's eyes at Gettysburg, and its shouts of delight as it poured volley after volley into the retreating Confederates to the right of the Devil's Garden, when they made their last desperate effort for Little Round Top. I quite agree with you that Crawford's innate modesty never prevented his appropriating his full share of all that was done by his own division and by Newton's, temporarily under my command, that afternoon, the 2d, at Gettysburg."

The letter from which the above is quoted was written when Gen. Crawford's reminiscences were being printed in The National Tribune.

It is hoped by the writer hereof that the editor will close his eyes to the length of this article, and allow it to slide into the columns of The National Tribune. Sometimes it has appeared as if, somehow, the old Sixth Corps hardly got the recognition and credit justly coming to it for its share in the lively and strenuous doings on the slopes of Little Round Top on the evening of July 2, 1863. This may be on account of the small loss the corps sustained in the entire action, so that the corps was hardly regarded as being in it at all. The writer has in his possession a History of the Sixth Corps that even contains the statement that the corps did not arrive at Gettysburg until 5 o'clock p. m. To correct any impressions caused by such erroneous statements as that is the main purpose of this article.—W. George, Co. E, 139th Pa., Warren, Pa.

MILROY AT WINCHESTER.

The Commander Was Not Court-martialed, but Given Another Command.

Editor National Tribune: I have been greatly interested in the communications of Comrades Warfel and Valentine, as it is rarely I see anything about the operations of which they write, and I don't think that the services of that little force at Winchester is generally credited with the important part it played in the Gettysburg campaign. The under dog in a fight seldom does receive much applause.

Comrade Warfel invites correction of any errors. Little inaccuracies are to be expected from a soldier in the ranks writing from his limited field of observation or hearsay at the time, after the lapse of 45 years. His dates are one day ahead, the correct date being from Friday, June 12, to Monday, June 15.

The one error which I wish to correct is the statement that Gen. Milroy was dishonorably discharged from service. He was not even court-martialed. Judge-Advocate-General Holt, in reviewing the case, concluded his report to the Secretary of War as follows: "Gen. Milroy in holding his post at Winchester, and continuing to resist the attack of the enemy until June 15, when it was evident that a large force of the enemy was confronting him, may have acted wisely. The three days' delay of the Confederate army in its northern invasion, caused by the stand Milroy made at Winchester, may have been fully worth to the country the sacrifice it cost. It is true that during the retreat the troops of Gen. Milroy were not kept well in hand, being very much dispersed, but that was in great part owing to the sudden attack upon them in the darkness of the night. Another cause of confusion was that his troops on the retreat were obliged to force their way thru a body of the enemy's troops, superior in numbers."

On Oct. 27 President Lincoln wrote his indorsement to Judge Holt's report, from which the following is taken: "Upon inquiry it has been discovered that Gen. Schenck, the Department commander, only advised the withdrawal of Milroy's Division from Winchester, but never positively ordered Milroy to withdraw. He believed the services of the forces at Winchester worthy of the hazard, and so did not positively order their withdrawal until it was so late that the enemy cut the wire and prevented the order reaching Milroy. I find that Milroy disobeyed no order upon the subject. No court-martial is necessary or proper in the case."

Gen. Milroy's Division was scattered, so he was left for a time without a command, but was later given a command in the West, where he maintained his reputation as a fighter, if he did not win any great achievement.

After the war he was appointed Indian Agent in the then Territory of Washington, and died in Olympia several years ago, an honored member of the Presbyterian Church. A few years later his widow died there also. She received a pension of $75 a month, secured, partly at least, thru the efforts of an officer who was with the General at Winchester, Maj. Edson Gerry, of the 12th Pa. Cav., who died at Bellingham in February or March, 1904. If he had lived until May he would have been 89 years old.

I cannot write from personal knowledge of the fighting around Winchester, as I never got away from Bunker Hill until the Confederates fell back from Gettysburg and took me to Winchester, on the 16th of July (on my back). Cos. G and H of the 87th Pa. and two companies of the 116th Ohio (about 300 men) were attacked Saturday evening, June 13, by Jenkins's Brigade, which history gives at 1,500, but my host, a Confederate Sergeant, estimated his force at from 2,000 to 3,000. A small company of the 13th Pa. Cav. was there, but they went with the wagon train that preceded the Confederates from Berryville. They cut their feeding short and struck the pike for a more northern clime on the first approach of the enemy, and finally reached Carlisle, Pa. After the wagon train escaped, finding that we were being flanked by overwhelming numbers, we fell back to the churches. I, however, never reached the church, being shot thru a leg as I was running thru a yard, and was taken into the house of a Confederate Sergeant, and cared for for over a month, passing for a paroled prisoner, with my arms hid in the house. Other wounded prisoners were quartered in an old house, except a member of the 116th Ohio, with a broken leg, I think, was cared for in another family. Our little force held the churches until night, and made their escape, and marched 12 miles to Winchester to join their regiment. Three or four of my company were left behind, two were concealed in Martinsburg until hiding became monotonous and risky, and they surrendered, but one made his escape to his home in York County, and was ashamed to be seen. The Second Lieutenant and a Corporal of my company were killed at Bunker Hill on Saturday evening, June 13, and the Captain was killed Monday morning at Carter's Woods. I will not pretend to give the details of that unequal contest, but may be able to give some additional data of interest. According to official accounts, Gen. Milroy's force consisted of 6,900 effective men. Of the 87th Pa. not more than 650 were present for duty June 12, two officers and 12 enlisted men were killed and two officers and 24 men wounded, nine officers and 190 men taken prisoners. The regiment became divided. The Colonel, with 154 men, reached Harper's Ferry, and 221 officers and men escaped to Bloody Run, Pa., and 50 reached York, which still left a few to be accounted for. The total loss in the First Brigade, under Gen. Elliott, was reported to be 1,949; the Second Brigade, under Col. Ely, 1,430; the Third Brigade, under Col. McReynolds, 1,054; making a total loss of 4,433.

Gen. Edward Johnson, who commanded the Confederate forces at Carter's Woods, reports the capture of 2,300 prisoners and about 175 horses and 11 stands of colors. He says: "The enemy fought with earnestness. They made four successive attempts to carry the bridge. Two sets of my cannoneers (13 out of 16) were killed or disabled. Col. Andrews, in command of my artillery, fell at this bridge."

Where the battle would have been if Lee's army had reached Pennsylvania two or three days sooner may be difficult to tell, but evidently they would have found less resistance, and might have gone on to Harrisburg, as was reported at Bunker Hill. The cavalry did overrun my home, 20 miles from Gettysburg, in the direction of Harrisburg, and some amusing incidents might be related of their operations thru the country.—J. M. Griffith, Sergeant, Co. H, 87th Pa., Billingham, Wash.

The 93d Pa.

Editor National Tribune: Will you please give a sketch of the 93d Pa.?—William B. Peffer, Soldiers' Home, Columbia Falls, Mont.

The 93d Pa., one of the fighting regiments, was organized at Lebanon from September to October, 1861, and finally, after a second enlistment, mustered out June 27, 1865. It was commanded by Cols. James M. McCarter, John M. Mark and Charles W. Eckman in succession. The regiment was raised thru the efforts of Col. McCarter, a Methodist clergyman, who had served as a Chaplain in the three-months service. At Fair Oaks it was in the thickest of the fight, displaying a remarkable steadiness. Col. McCarter was severely wounded in this fight, and had two horses shot from under him. It took an active part in 16 battles, among which were Gettysburg, Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, etc., and was present at seven more. It belonged to Getty's Division, Sixth Corps, and lost 172 killed and 102 from disease. Its total of killed and wounded was 641.—Editor National Tribune.

The 144th N. Y.

Editor National Tribune: Will you please give a short history of the 144th N. Y., and was the regiment in the battle of Bull Run?—Ray S. Ball, Huron, Ohio.

The 144th N. Y. was organized at Delhi, Sept. 27, 1862, and mustered out June 25, 1865. It was commanded by Col. Robert S. Hughston, who resigned in May, 1863, succeeded by Col. David E. Gregory, who resigned in October of the same year. Col. Wm. J. Slidell then took command, resigning in September, 1864, and followed by Col. James Lewis, in command at the time of muster out. It belonged to Hatch's Division, Department of South Carolina, and lost 39 killed and 178 from disease, etc. It did not take part in either of the Bull Run battles.—Editor National Tribune.

The 152d N. Y.

Editor National Tribune: Please give me a short history of the 152d N. Y.—John C. Brainerd, St. Andrews, Fla.

The 152d N. Y. was organized at Mohawk in October, 1862, and mustered out July 13, 1865. It was commanded by Col. Leonard Boyer, who resigned Jan. 10, 1863, followed by Col. Alonzo Ferguson, who was discharged in November of the same year. Lieut.-Col. Geo. W. Thompson then took command, retaining the same till the expiration of his term of service, May 30, 1865, when he was mustered out and the command assumed by Lieut.-Col. James E. Curtis. The regiment took an active part in the following battles: Wilderness, Spotsylvania, North Anna, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Strawberry Plains, Deep Bottom, Ream's Station and Boydton Road. It belonged to Gibbon's Division, Second Corps, and lost 69 killed and 92 from disease, etc.—Editor National Tribune.

Battles in Pennsylvania.

Editor National Tribune: How many battles and skirmishes were fought on Pennsylvania soil during the civil war, and when did they occur?—Scott S. Hann, 22d Pa. Cav., Webster Mills, Pa.

There was a fight at Greencastle, Pa., June 20, 1863, in which the 1st N. Y. Cav. participated. July 30, 1864, Chambersburg was burned by the Confederates. There were a number of skirmishes preceding and following the battle of Gettysburg, July 1, 2 and 3, 1863.—Editor National Tribune.

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The 3d Neb.

Percy G. Danico, 1st Me. H. A., Spanish War, Madison, Me., says that the 3d Neb. did leave the country and were in Cuba. He saw them there. His regiment and the 3d Neb. decorated the graves of the Maine's victims just a year from the time when the vessel was blown up in Havana Harbor.

The Break at Danville.

S. McCall, Corona, Ill., wants some one to give the particulars of the break at Danville led by Serg't William Durken.

Scattering.

Comrade Aaron Ossman, 50th Pa., Tremont, Pa., inquires and remarks: "What is the meaning of 'veteran?' I thought while we were engaged in our spat with our neighbors of the South that a soldier was a 'veteran' only after he re-enlisted. I am one who re-enlisted, and after re-enlistment, and not before, we were designated 'veterans.' I notice now that soldiers of but a few months' service in the Spanish-American or Philippine troubles are called 'veterans,' which I don't understand."

Comrade J. J. Sanson, Co. F, 26th Ky., Bay Fork, Ky., writes: "Inclosed find $1 to renew my subscription to The National Tribune, the old soldiers' best friend. I take several other papers, but I read The National Tribune before I read any other on its delivery. It is sad to realize how fast we are being mustered out and how few of us are left to greet each other."

Comrade Felix L. Wells, Stowe, Vt., wants address of Dr. Henry Spohn, Assistant Surgeon, 17th Vt.

Comrade Henry Rader, Daleville, Ind., wants some one to inform him what is the name of the Paymaster who paid the troops at Helena, Ark., Oct. 8, 1862.

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PICKET SHOTS

From Alert Comrades Along the Whole Line.

The 44th N. Y.

George W. Webster, 44th N. Y., Cortland, N. Y., says that when his regiment enlisted each man was required to bring an affidavit from the officer of the town that he was a good, moral citizen, and also to bring $30 to procure a uniform which was furnished the men. When there was an extra parade the men wore these uniforms, and after the prade they were turned over to the Quartermaster, to be boxed up and sent to the rear. They had these uniforms long before they ever saw Prince de Joinville or Duc de Chartres. Comrade Webster was with the regiment thru the Peninsula, and lost an arm at the Second Bull Run.

Ex-Prisoners of War.

T. R. Stotler, Bernardo, Cal., is deeply distressed over the attitude of Chairman Sulloway toward the prisoners of war bill. He feels that this is the last chance of the prisoners of war, who have been knocking at the doors of Congress for 28 years. He belonged to Wessel's Brigade, Fourth Corps, and enlisted Sept. 21, 1861. After the Peninsular Campaign his brigade was sent to North Carolina, and was taken prisoner at Plymouth. It would have been better for him if he had been shot on the last day of the fight than to have gone to Andersonville. He was a walking skeleton when he reached Annapolis after his release, and three days more would have finished him entirely. He has been unable to do any labor since, and has been suffering for 40 years.

Widows' Pensions.

A. W. Kelley, Indian River, Me., protests against the injustice of the limitation of widows' pensions. It is all wrong to cut off the woman who marries in 1891, and takes care of a poor old soldier up to the time of his death. He also finds fault with the rating for those who lost arms and legs. Those who have the leg amputated above the knee and cannot use an artificial limb get $55 per month, but those that had their legs off at the knee joint only $46 per month. How much more labor can a man do on crutches, with his leg off at the knee joint, than he could if it was off above the knee?

Did You Know Grayson?

George Grayson has lost his discharge papers. He cannot remember the number of his regiment or names of his officers. He knows that he enlisted at Memphis, Tenn. A comrade's name was Louis Stokes; he is dead. So is his Corporal, George Owens. He was in Co. F. Who can help him? Who knew him? Who can tell him the number of his regiment, names of his Colonel, his Captain, his Lieutenants, his non-commissioned officers and his comrades in the ranks? Write to his mail carrier, Louis Jackson, Carrier 75, Memphis, Tenn. Do it now.

Recognizing Comrades.

J. J. Waterman, 37th N. Y., Genesee, Pa., makes an unusual complaint that there are some prosperous, wealthy comrades who do not put themselves out of the way to recognize poor veterans, tho they may wear the badge. He had this experience recently on a train out West, and was hurt at the indifference which the other comrades showed him. We do not think that cases of this kind occur frequently. We have always noted the great readiness on the part of comrades to recognize and to go out of their way to be civil to everyone who they saw wearing the Grand Army button. They should do this.

Andrew Johnson's Brother.

Replying to a question as to Andrew Johnson's brother, Comrade George George, Loveland, O., writes to say that he thinks he was killed in Brazoria County, Tex., and was buried by Capt. Andrew Cochran's company (Co. C, 48th Ohio), who were camped a short time after the close of the war at Columbia, Tex.

The Pennsylvania Pension Bill.

S. H. Sloan, 148th Pa., Ashland, Okla., thinks that every soldier from Pennsylvania who fought to preserve the grand old Commonwealth from destruction should have a share in that pension bill.

The 114th Ill.

Editor National Tribune: Kindly publish a short sketch of the 114th Ill. I have never seen anything in The National Tribune about it.—Joseph J. Askins, 1222 N. Main St., Decatur, Ill.

The 114th Ill. was organized at Camp Butler, Sept. 18, 1862. Those members whose terms would have expired previous to Oct. 1, 1865, were mustered out Aug. 3, 1865, and the remaining members transferred to the 58th Ill. It was commanded by Col. James W. Judy, who resigned Aug. 4, 1863, succeeded by Lieut.-Col. John F. King, who also resigned Dec. 8, 1864. At the time of muster-out Lieut.-Col. Samuel N. Shoup was in command. It belonged to Tuttle's Division, Fifteenth Corps, and lost 47 killed and 163 from disease, etc.—Editor National Tribune.

A Happy, Bald-headed Man.

H. Dayton, a chemist of St. Louis, Mo., accidentally discovered a mixture that made his hair grow. He has tried it on his bald-headed friends with the same results. He is so proud of his remedy that he has had the recipe printed by the thousands, and is sending it to all who write him care of P. O. Box 1164-J, and inclose a stamp.

George W. Donaghey, Governor of Arkansas, actually carried out his foolish superstition by refusing to be inaugurated on the 13th of January. He said he would miss climbing the ladder of fame if he had to walk under it first. Of course, a State which elected Jeff Davis to the Senate must have other uncreditable men to the fore in its politics, but Gov. Donaghey reaches the silly limit.

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