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The San Francisco Call

VOLUME LXXXVI—NO. 87. SAN FRANCISCO, SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 1899. PRICE FIVE CENTS.

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ONCE MORE OUR BOYS STEP FOOT ON NATIVE LAND

GRAND MILITARY ESCORT TO THEIR LAST CAMP

Clasped Heart to Heart, Close in the Arms of Their Loved Ones, They Forget Trials and Privations.

CIVIC PAGEANT TO-NIGHT ENDS RECEPTION

After Feasting by Relatives and Tributes by a Rejoicing City the Day Ends in a Blaze of Glory.

MY God, ain't it good to feel California under your feet again!"

The cry was almost hysterical as a young soldier stepped from the big transport Sherman as she lay at Folsom-street wharf yesterday morning. He was one of the first upon the gang-plank and thence to the board dock. A choking sensation seemed to come in all the bronzed throats of the boys as they heard him, and eyes that had borne the blaze of tropic suns unwinking were moist with unshed tears as the returning heroes were brought to a full realization of the fact that they once more trod their native land.

This was the real home-coming. This the end of the long and weary days of waiting. California was once more under their feet, and the joy—the gladness of it swept away all memories of hardships of Luzon swamp and field. They were home and on the threshold of the welcoming tribute such as only California can pay her sons.

At a very early hour the big transport swung into the berth and was docked, ready for the disembarking of her precious load, but early as it was there were many eyes aboard of her that were open and many phantom-like forms crowded her bulwarks, anxious to feel the first tremor of the touch of home land. Just as the strident whistles of the city announced the seventh hour, the first forms appeared in the gangway and the debarkation began. For almost an hour the steady stream of humanity poured from the vessel's side, and company after company lined up along the great dock and stood awaiting orders.

No impatience was shown by the sturdy veterans. They had been trained during those long hours at the enemy's front to wait, and that training stood them in right good stead now when they were about to reap the fruits of their long and wearisome campaign. For fifteen months they had been away fighting for the honor of their country, and in fifteen minutes more they would be in the welcoming arms of relatives or friends who were assembled by thousands and tens of thousands just outside the big fence—also waiting, but with far less patience.

It was a wise decision that precluded a greeting on the dock, for the brief wait gave time to recover from the momentary weakness which had brought lumps to the throat and tears to the eyes. After the Governor had taken from his pocket and read the typewritten address which had been prepared for him, the pathos of it all had passed away, and the smart command of "attention" brought the men quickly into position and the band swung into place at the head of the column, which marched with steady tramp and set faces out toward those who were waiting outside.

There was little cheering as the column came in sight. There was a something which was too deep for cheers which was a more eloquent welcome than all the huzzas that could have emanated from thousands of throats.

Yes, it was good to feel California under foot once more, and when the little woman with the babe in her arms recognized the man who had gone forth from her fireside at his country's call a great sigh that was almost a sob evinced the sympathy of the vast crowd as army rules and regulations were set at naught, while husband and wife were close clasped in each other's arms and their mingled tears fell on the wondering face of the child too young to understand what it all meant.

Then humanity asserted itself and police regulations as enforced by stalwart bluecoats were swept aside while the dun of the khaki was absorbed into the homogeneous mass of color, as the immense throng swarmed into the board roadway and mingled with the loved ones who had returned from the jaws of death.

"Jack! Jack! My God, he's hurt."

What was one fainting woman in a crowd like that? The poor mother's pent-up feelings found vent in that despairing cry, and her unconscious body was borne through the throng which had no time for sentiment other than the selfish one of a struggle to get close to its own loved ones.

Fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers forgot all else except that their own had come back, and as the swelling tide of humanity rolled on toward the great depot where heavily laden tables groaned in waiting, it seemed as if the surging waves would overwhelm the stately edifice in their impatience. All semblance of column formation was lost, and at times it looked as if no earthly power could bring order out of the chaos which reigned in the street. But gradually the excess of emotion exhausted itself, and slowly the long line was re-formed and the steady tramp resumed until the steps leading into the grand nave of the building were reached. Here again were the scenes of the street enacted. The thronging relatives could not bear to be parted even for a few minutes from those who had been so long away, and hysterical rushes were made by women who forget everything except that they wanted to feel again the touch of the dear hand and look again into the precious faces of those who had gone forth to danger and had been returned living and loving.

Tears and kisses, sobs and nervous laughter, hugs and hand-clasps were the vent of feeling, and slowly the column was permitted to pass within the portals where the feast spread by loving hands awaited it.

BREAKFAST AT FERRY DEPOT

Heroes Surround a Long-Looked-For Meal.

Eternal Stews of the Transport Forgotten Under Its Influence.

THE emotions crowded into that short march of three blocks from the transport dock to the Tiburon ferry stairs were still manifesting themselves in the faces of the volunteers and their happy relatives when the presence of the civil law stepped in to separate the soldier from his hysterical relatives. As fast as the company officers could get their men into any sort of formation city bluecoats formed in a double row to clear a passage for the boys to the breakfast room above, where they ascended two by two to the grand nave, to be met by still other relatives than those from whom they had been separated below, by brothers and sisters, sweethearts and wives; to be kissed and hugged and patted again and thumped; to be laurel wreathed and cheered, and to be seated at table, Mars magnified many hundred times, and served by bevies of pretty girls. Home again? Well, they should smile! Anything like it anywhere else in the whole, wide world? Nit!

And while those that had ascended first were mingling with the happy crowds, and while still others of the regiment and the batteries were slowly parting from the throngs below, the ladies in charge of the breakfast arrangements were putting the finishing touches on the longest tables on earth. There were six of them, three in the north wing and three in the south wing of the eastern corridor, each five hundred feet long. In the central space, connecting with the grand nave through the great raised doorways, were arranged at right angles short tables for the officers and for the Mayor and invited guests. To the rear of these, separated from the eager crowds in the north and south corridors of the great nave by high grills, was an orchestra.

The tables were artistically decorated. Cloths of spotless white stretched as far as the eye could see. Above them were masses of flowers, festooned evergreens and drooping ferns. Each of fourteen sections, marked by a silken banner lettered to correspond with the letter of the company or battery for which it had been set apart, bore in its center an elaborate floral piece representing guns stacked. The table to the east of the center, reserved for Colonel Duboce and other officers, was specially decorated. Hanging on the wall above was an American shield, the colors picked out in sweet pea blossoms and carnations. At the head of the table itself was an American eagle above a floral shield, across which had been stretched a white ribbon with the inscription, "You will find us ready."

The arrangement of napery, glass and china was as tasteful as could be, and the general effect was heightened admirably by the soft morning light streaming through the wealth of windows facing the bay. To serve the members of each company had been assigned, or rather had been selected from any number of volunteers, a number of pretty young women, relatives of the soldiers they were so glad to see again. They were on hand even before the boys had marched on to the cobbles of East street, making ready for their coming, and as dearly as they would have loved to mingle in the crowd to greet the loved ones they held their desires in abeyance, comforting themselves with the knowledge that they would soon have them for their very own, for an hour at least, far from the smothering throng. They could hear the hum of the happy voices outside, and they knew their time was coming. The ladies in charge of the various tables were:

Company A—Mrs. S. Bert, Miss Dusenberry, Mrs. Dunn.
Company B—Mrs. Baird, Mrs. Proul, Mrs. Knell, Miss Knell.
Company C—Mrs. Hilton, Mrs. Howard, Annie Switzer.
Company D—Mrs. McCreagh, Miss Delmas, Miss Cosgrove, Mrs. Gibson.
Company E—Mrs. Steele, Mrs. Clark, Mrs. O'Connell.
Company F—Miss Dell, Miss Moss, Miss Finigan.
Company G—Miss Henderson, Miss Sparrowe, Miss Anderson.
Company H—Miss Clara Miller, Miss Miller.
Company I—Miss Son, Miss Huber, Miss Byron.
Company K—Miss Burgman, Miss Green, Miss Temple.
Company L—Mrs. Kahn, Miss Lezinsky, Miss Cohn.
Company M—Mrs. Rehn, Miss Shannon, Miss Seymour.

The waitresses were: Miss Edie Ames, Miss Minnie Davies, Miss Ruth Jackson, Miss Knell, Mrs. Fred Pickering, Miss Evelyn Cohn, Mrs. Upright, Miss Barrien, Miss May Bathax, Miss J. Kruse, Mrs. Cohn, Mrs. Charles Dietrich, Miss Higgard, Mrs. E. H. Kenip, Miss Frisbie, Mrs. Pracht, Miss Henderson, Miss Stoltz, Miss Lottie Hessler, Miss Birdie Hessler, Miss Pracht, Miss Burke, Miss M. Crogan, Miss Badt, Miss Ryan, Miss Juliet Bertrand, Mrs. L. J. McLaughlin, Miss McDermott.

All things come to those who wait and a few minutes after 9 o'clock the mess call was sounded by the company buglers and the boys, who were none the less hungry for all the excitement through which they had just passed, filed into the banqueting room through the great door at the northern end. Laurel wreaths for the glory they had won awaited them at the very threshold. The ladies of Seven Pines Circle, G. A. R., had fashioned the circlets of bay for their heroes, and a committee composed of Mrs. J. Mary Benley, Mrs. J. Albert Noble, Mrs. Goodell and Mrs. Julia Duhen, handed them over to the pretty girl relatives to bestow. They did it with a will, many of them with a hug and a kiss, and not a soldier was allowed to pass without his meed of the green aureole of victory.

It took less time than it takes to tell to seat each company of soldiers. The great corridor filled up with the flower-covered, brown-clad men, the daintily clad handmaidens to the young gods of war moved in serried lines, there was a clattering of dishes, a clinking of glasses, the jingle of knives and forks and spoons, smoke curled from a thousand steaming cups of coffee, and the feast was on.

How the veterans fell to! How they charged the trenchers and mowed down the fields of lettuce. They went at the double quick through the oysters and the relishes and attacked the turkey and the barnyard fricasee on the run, Walsh's band very thoughtfully playing at this stage of the sortie, "Who say dat chicken in dis crowd?"

What appetites they had! What elasticity was displayed by stomachs no longer fearful of the "stew" of the Sherman! It was marvelous, even if once for the spectators who witnessed the onslaught.

There were some late-comers to the feast, notably Colonel Duboce and Chaplain McKinnon, who had been detained outside by the press of people desirous of clasping their hands. They got through at last, flanked by other members of the regimental staff, and as they went down to the officers' table they were loudly cheered all along the line. Notwithstanding their rank hunger gnawed at their vitals as it did at those of the high private, and they stretched their legs under the board with avidity.

At the head of the central table were seated Mayor Phelan and A. M. Lawrence of the citizens' executive committee, Mr. and Mrs. John F. Merrill, Mrs. W. B. Harrington, Congressman and Mrs. Julius Kahn, Judge and Mrs. Robert Ferral; Mrs. R. R. Mackenzie; Mrs. J. M. Griffiths, president of the Los Angeles Red Cross Society; Rev. William R. Rader, Captain Nat Messer, Captain James B. Lankershim of Los Angeles, Rev. M. S. Levy, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Sonntag, Grove P. Ayres, Mrs. A. S. Townsend, the fairy godmother of all the volunteers; Miss N. J. Radigan, Rabbi Nieto and Miss Harriet Levy.

Miss L. C. Knight, Dr. Rose Beere of Denver, Colo., and Miss Anna J. Garlick, who returned with the volunteers, having served as nurses for nearly a year, were guests at the colonel's table. Miss Garlick was with the Californians from the start and has ministered to them during their service. Every man in the regiment has a high regard for the little woman because of her kindness to them while in hospital. As the volunteers entered the breakfast hall they greeted her with handshakes and pleasant words as if they had not seen her for some time. Although it was their usual custom, their greetings attracted attention to the nurse. Miss Garlick was attired in a military dress of the same material used in the uniforms of the volunteers. Dr. Beere was the first woman to be granted permission by the War Department to go to the Philippines as a nurse. She returned on the Sherman.

For a full half hour nothing was allowed to interfere with the stocking of the commissary of the department of the interior, not even the presence of half a dozen photographers with cameras as big as Krupp guns. One course after another was pursued on the menu card until the boys came, under the heading of dessert, to the word "cheese." Being soldiers, accustomed to obeying commands, and having no more holes in their belts to let out, they did so.

Then from the far end of the corridor came sounds of cheering. "Rah! rah! rah!" The boys of a company seated there were cheering the sisters and mothers and wives and sweethearts who had waited on them. The idea took like wildfire, and down the long line came a succession of cheers from the other companies for the respective groups of young women who had feasted them. There is an end to everything, and the breakfast was no exception to the rule. At a few minutes past 10 o'clock the last volunteer had arisen, fortified for the march through the city. The Colorado regimental band, which had come in during the breakfast, played a selection while the boys were again exchanging greetings with their new-found friends and readjusting their belts to the new conditions beneath. Miss Preciosa Pracht, whose brother is a member of Company M, First California Volunteers, was heard on the cornet in a number of patriotic airs, accompanied by the Coloradans.

By this time it was half-past 10 o'clock, the hour set for the starting of the triumphal march through the city, and the men, broken up into groups by their friends and relatives, made their way downstairs, to be greeted again by waiting crowds, to be kissed and patted, hugged and thumped and pelted with flowers and cheered and cheered again. It needed not the sign of "Welcome" on the ferry front to let them know they were.

THROUGH THE CITY STREETS

IT is worth a year of war, worth all the horrors of the trenches, all the sufferings of the hospital, worth death itself, to march up the streets of a city and meet such a welcome as awaited the boys from across the sea. No hardship is too heavy, no waiting too long, if it lead to such a swirl of wild enthusiasm. It started when the

FEASTING ON THE GOOD THINGS AT THE FERRY.

TO-DAY'S PROGRAMME.

11 a. m. till 1 p. m.—Band concerts at Union Square and Columbia Park.

8 p. m.—Grand electrical display and parade. Parade moves through the illuminated parade-way from Van Ness avenue to Market street to the ferry, where the column will swing and countermarch up Market to Montgomery, to California, to Kearny, to Market, and out Market to Van Ness avenue.

10:30 p. m.—Grand banquet in the ferry depot.