

ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND.

Molding an Aggregation of Young Wolverines into a Splendid Regiment.

By CAPT. C. E. BELKNAP, 21st Mich.

PETE AND THE TURKEY.

The company was detailed one day to guard a forage train going 10 miles after corn, with strict orders against private raids on pigs and chickens. No one but he who had lived on muddy bacon for six months can appreciate Pete's situation. Pete was one of the best men in the service, never disobeyed an order—that's what made him a favorite. The first time I've served on the 21st Mich. staff. That night he shivered in the division guard tent, and next morning witnessed the General's contraband prepare that gray-pinked color for the 21st Mich. staff. The General had forgotten Pete, who shivered away the morning hours over a few pieces of green wood that smoked but never blazed. The General was great on turkey dinners. Pete saw him strip off the feathers, throw the heart and fixings into a pan of water, then he poured up a yucky concoction of fat with the back of an ax in a trough cut in the top of a log. A lot of chestnut, picked up near by, were roasted and mixed with the broken hardtack, chopped fine. Then a little water, a dash of molasses, whiskey, some salt and pepper, and the gobble was stuffed full and placed in a bake kettle over the coals, with a little water added to the coals. The turkey was in, aromatic mists from the edge of the cover. All the time the cook was singing a "chune" that set the birds to twittering in the trees. Soldiers came out that way, smelling the goodness in the air. It was a time of great anticipation. They witnessed the lifting of the cover and the filling of all the vacant places inside with sweet potatoes. They were to put more coals on the cover. Pete had no college education, but knew a good thing when he saw it, if it was 50 feet away.

The General came out also to get a whiff of the steam. It went to his heart. Pete's guard was relieved, and Pete was told to go and sin no more. The General nodded his head and said he was shivering with cold, he went over to the cook's fire and begged permission to warm himself.

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was not cut out for any kind of a soldier; he couldn't shoot, cook, wash or dig breast-works. He failed as a mule driver, because he couldn't swear, but as a shirk and straggler was a howling success.

The morning of the 31st the Sergeant started for camp, riding when his comrades were falling all about him. A shot struck his ramrod, knocking it out of his hand. A wounded comrade lying at his feet handed him another, with which he tried to load. Before he had time to draw it out of his gun, the gray enemy were on him in a mass and that ramrod was fired into the crowd. Then he picked the flag off the ground, where his bearer lay dead, and raised the regiment behind a fence, where they held the line until a new position could be taken. It was right here the Johnsons got "friendly," the only son of Sunny France in the company. They caught him on the wrong side of the fence and pinned him through the back with a musket ball. With clubbed musket he killed two of his assailants before he himself was killed.

Gen. Sheridan, riding alongside the column, saw the bird. To use a soldier's term, he "cut loose" on Pete. The turkey soon dangled from an orderly's hands, and Pete marching to the rear, said "It's the first time I've served on the 21st Mich. staff." That night he shivered in the division guard tent, and next morning witnessed the General's contraband prepare that gray-pinked color for the 21st Mich. staff. The General had forgotten Pete, who shivered away the morning hours over a few pieces of green wood that smoked but never blazed. The General was great on turkey dinners. Pete saw him strip off the feathers, throw the heart and fixings into a pan of water, then he poured up a yucky concoction of fat with the back of an ax in a trough cut in the top of a log. A lot of chestnut, picked up near by, were roasted and mixed with the broken hardtack, chopped fine. Then a little water, a dash of molasses, whiskey, some salt and pepper, and the gobble was stuffed full and placed in a bake kettle over the coals, with a little water added to the coals. The turkey was in, aromatic mists from the edge of the cover. All the time the cook was singing a "chune" that set the birds to twittering in the trees. Soldiers came out that way, smelling the goodness in the air. It was a time of great anticipation. They witnessed the lifting of the cover and the filling of all the vacant places inside with sweet potatoes. They were to put more coals on the cover. Pete had no college education, but knew a good thing when he saw it, if it was 50 feet away.

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and during the rest of the war we lived in squads of two or three. I don't remember of any sutler in our army who had prayer books to sell, and I also remember that just before every battle the road was checked with playing cards. No fellow wanted to be found dead with a pocket full of nine spots and trays, and yet one day we surprised some Confederates at a game of euchre. A shell had dropped in the midst of four fellows sitting on the ground, with others watching the game. Six of the party lay on their backs dead, the cards remaining in the hands of the players when our boys came up, four of whom picked up the cards and played on the game. I then admired the nerve that would allow a man to handle spades and clubs that were scattered with red something like the color of hearts and diamonds.

Some high-toned fellows played chess and checkers, while occasionally a low-down cuss would rig up a shuck-a-nake game and fleece the entire division.

One of the "B" fellows put up a game of this kind and got every cent that "C" company had. Their deck was made of wood until their Captain, who had \$100 in his pocket, went against the game and busted the banker, getting about \$1000 local money. The Colonel, who had been watching the game from behind a tree, stepped up and confiscated the entire sum, which he turned into the hospital fund. Not until "C" company had a poker game with the officers of the 33rd Ill. did they were silenced.

Messrs. Burgess (Tenn.) and Ransdell (Ind.) introduced a bill for the improvement of the river and harbor improvements, the former urging that they should be doubled and the latter regarding \$100,000,000 as not too much. Mr. Clark (Mo.) made a plea for the improvement of the Missouri River.

A large number of bills of minor importance were passed.

April 12.—The Senate was the scene of a sharp colloquy between Senators Teller and Hanna, growing out of the reading by Mr. Teller of a letter written by the late Gen. H. H. Thomas, of Chicago, attacking the Civil Service administration of the Treasury Department. Mr. Hopkins took exception to the slurs to be insulting. The incident occurred in connection with the discussion of the Post Office appropriation bill. That measure was under discussion during the first half of the session, and was passed, all amendments offered by the Democrats being voted down.

Then, in providing a form of government for the Panama Canal zone was then taken up and read.

The race question again was injected into the proceedings of the House of Representatives, when Mr. Scott (Kan.) delivered a long address, in which he referred to Taylor's bonfire, the first bill of the session, and was passed, all amendments offered by the Democrats being voted down.

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THE SPIRIT OF CONGRESS.

April 11.—The Cullerson amendment to the Post Office appropriation bill, providing for a commission to investigate the Post Office Department, was before the Senate all day, and after being ruled out of order six times, pending the consideration of the bill, it was passed by the Senate, and adjourned. Mr. Gorman made an earnest plea for an investigation, saying the Post Office Department had been a part of general appropriation bill, and that a thorough examination should be had. Mr. Aldrich answered that the amendment as finally modified was to be had, it should be a live one. He said that if any specific charges were brought in, they should be looked into by Congress, but that the demand should not be made a part of general appropriation bill. Semi-political speeches were made by Senators Teller and Simmons.

The House passed a bill reported by the Committee on Rivers and Harbors, appropriating \$3,000,000 for the restoration or maintenance of channels, or of other obstructions upon navigable rivers, and harbor improvements. Mr. Burton, Chairman of the committee, explained its provisions, and urged the adoption of settled principles with regard to the improvement of the Missouri River.

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NEW PENSION BILLS.

April 18.—The day in the Senate was given up to the consideration of a bill for the modification of the agreement with the Indians of Devils Lake Reservation, in North Dakota, for the sale of their lands. Senators Dubs and Teller opposed the bill, because it did not provide for the acquisition of the lands in the reservation under the homestead law, and it was defended by Senators Hansbrough, McCumber and others.

The routine work on the general deficiency bill was nearly completed by the House. Preceding this the District of Columbia was legislated for in several minor matters.

The feature of the day was a speech of criticism on Theodore Roosevelt, the Republican Presidential candidate, by Representative Patterson (Tenn.).

Mr. Keams (Utah): To restore status of veterans of the Walker Indian War, extending to them provisions of Acts of June 27, 1890; July 14, 1892; March 3, 1893; and April 10, 1894, relating to pensions passed by Congress since that date. [S. Res. 62.]

Mr. Ball (Del.): That all persons who enlisted in the military or naval service of the U. S. during War of the Rebellion and were honorably discharged be entitled to pensions, after age of 55 years, \$6 a month; after 60 years, \$12; and such pensions shall be subject to increase in amount in disabilities up to \$36 per month; not to apply to those now receiving \$36 or more; rating for disabilities to be added, up to the existing pension, in the following amounts: widows' pension to be \$12 a month; marriage to be sufficiently proven by fact of parties living as husband and wife; and so regarding themselves; children under eight years \$6 a month; under 10 years \$5; under 12 years \$4; under 15 years \$3; idiots and helpless children, \$2 a month; claimants to be entitled to benefits of doubt. [H. R. 13267.]