

RELIVING HIS WAR DAYS.

Old Soldier Camps Before His Fire in Fairmount Park.

What is the secret of the magic power of a crackling fire to conjure up memories of days that are dead?

The answer to this abstruse question may be left to psychologists. Few will deny that a crackling fire has such power. In the leaping sparks and the reddening logs one finds the stimulus to muse and to meditate in moods that range from melancholy to merriment.

This, in brief, is the line of thought that obsesses Major James H. Workman, a Civil War veteran, who recently determined to become a hermit. In the winter of life his mind harked back to the days of battle and sudden death. He longed once more for the alluring freedom of the simple life of a soldier. He determined to live once more, as nearly as possible, the life of his soldier days by camping in the open, beside a roaring fire, to prepare his own meals, to bid defiance to cold and wet and, in imagination at least, to campaign again with Sherman and Grant.

Had the old soldier been friendless and alone he might have buried himself permanently in some secluded spot and revelled in his campfire dreamings until "taps" sounded for the last time. But the major is blessed with a devoted wife and a host of friends, and no one would listen to his suggestion that he retire to the woods to end his days with the birds and the squirrels for companions. So he compromised by pitching his camp in an out of the way ravine in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, where he is as completely off the beaten track as he would be in the wilderness. The park authorities humored the old soldier's whim.

Joyfully the major selected his campground, in a picturesque spot, where the trees shelter him to some extent from the wind, and here he can be found, no matter how severe the weather.

The major will first offer the visitor a cup of coffee. He never forgets that, every time a halt was made in war time coffee, the great recuperator, was in requisition. The coffee he boils over the blazing logs in true camp style. If you catch him at meal time he will offer you a share of the contents of his haversack, another habit he acquired in the days of the 60's. He is not a hermit of the kind that shuns society. The campfire was what the old soldier craved. The more visitors he has to his open air home the better pleased he is. But the veteran is perfectly contented when alone. He reclines for hours on a park bench that he has moved to the spot. Behind this he has improvised a wind shield, and in the little clearing in front he makes his log fire. Lying thus he gazes steadily into the blaze, dreaming of the old stirring days of the war, living once more in the halcyon time when life was like wine that bubbles and sparkles in the glass. The musing old soldier sees in the blaze the figures of men in blue leaping to the charge, he catches the glint of steel as the yelling lines clash and hears the sound of cannon as the artillery gets to work.

In the same magic element the major conjures up the dark days he spent in Libby Prison, the scenes of carnage in the many battles in which his regiment, Rush's Lancers, took part. From the heart of the fire sad faces rise to greet him once more. Some are marred and red with



MAJOR JAMES H. WORKMAN IN CAMP AGAIN.
From the heart of the fire old faces rise to greet him once more.

wounds. He sees them as he last saw them, lying dead or dying on a hundred battlegrounds. Old comrades of the camp and the field, fellow veterans of the Grand Army who have preceded him into the beyond, privates, captains, majors, colonels, a great army of them, they rise up before the old man, as he muses in front of his campfire, salute him gravely and pass upward with the smoke.

The soldier hermit says he will live by his campfire all the winter, no matter what the weather. Although he hasn't been heard to say so, those who know him believe he would be quite happy in the thought of being found dead by the fire in the ravine, for in so dying his last hours would be solaced by the presence of his comrades of the days when the lancers fought for the Union. The old man's glazing eyes would see them to the last, coming out of the heart of the fire to salute him gravely, this time not to pass upward with the smoke, but to form his bodyguard into the other world.

WHAT HE HAD DONE.

Tactful and delicate, even for a Frenchman, was the reply made by a Parisian who had not found "a life on the ocean wave" all which one could wish. He was sinking, pale and haggard, into his steamer chair when his neighbor cheerily asked:

"Have you breakfasted, monsieur?"

"No, m'sieur," answered the Frenchman with a wan smile, "I have not breakfasted. On the contrary!"—Everybody's Magazine.

THE ROOT HOMESTEAD.

Secretary of State Recently Acquired Complete Ownership.

Utica, N. Y., Jan. 4.—A mile and a half climb almost due westward from the public square at Clinton, N. Y., will bring one to the top of College Hill and to The Hemlocks. At the very crest of the long ascent and facing the Hamilton College campus the Root homestead stands. Two happenings have called especial attention to The Hemlocks at this time. One is the recent purchase by Secretary of State Root from the widow of his brother, Dr. Oren Root, who died recently, of her half interest in The Hemlocks. The property comprises the homestead and about nine and one-quarter acres of beautiful grounds. Secretary Root, it is said, paid \$10,000 for the half interest. The second occurrence is the recent marriage of Secretary and Mrs. Root's son, Ellhu Root, jr., to Miss Alida Stryker, daughter of President Stryker of Hamilton College. They are now living in New York and it is announced that their summer home will be The Hemlocks.

Since Secretary Root obtained complete title to the property, it is said, he has given it to the bride and bridegroom. Few handsomer gifts could be made. Standing on the top of the hill the front of the house commands a complete view of the college buildings and campus. The veranda on the eastern side overlooks the beau-

tiful Sauquoit Valley. Secretary Root's father was a lover of nature and possessed an artistic temperament. He surrounded his home with a wonderful collection of trees, shrubs and plants, and personally superintended the planting of the trees on the campus. Back of the Root homestead are beautiful gardens. The home contains many commodious and airy rooms open to the sunlight and fresh air. The original lines of the building have been preserved, but the equipment has kept pace with the times. The furniture, however, includes quaint and valuable old specimens. Building and grounds are kept with scrupulous care and the estate is one of the most delightful in this part of the country. By securing complete ownership of The Hemlocks, which adjoined his own beautiful home, Secretary Root has an estate extending far to the west of the college campus and one worth many thousands of dollars.

WHERE PRICES RUN HIGH.

"The late Henry O. Havemeyer," said a sugar jobber of New Orleans, "possessed in a marked degree the kindly virtue of charity."

"On my last visit to New York—it was some months before the panic—I spoke harshly of a millionaire who had been accused of double dealing in a banking transaction."

"Said Mr. Havemeyer, 'Let us not condemn this man unheard. Remember that his guilt has not yet been proved, nor has he yet told his own side of the story.'"

"Then Mr. Havemeyer laughed and said that in the most untoward conditions accused men were often able to clear themselves. He told of a young girl who a week or so after Christmas complained bitterly to her mother:

"'Mamma, I doubt if I shall be happy with George. I fear he is of a deceptive nature.'"

"'Why, darling, what do you mean?' the mother asked."

"'Well, mamma,' said the young girl earnestly, 'you know that collar pin he gave me for Christmas? He swore to me that he paid \$25 for it, but to-day I saw its exact counterpart priced at \$5 at a jeweller's.'"

"'Ah, but, my child,' said the mother, 'you must remember how very religious George is. Undoubtedly he bought the pin at a church fair.'"

A QUIANT COMPLIMENT.

On Mark Twain's seventy-second birthday a Hartford clergyman said of him:

"No wonder he finds happiness in old age. All the aged would be happy if they were as sympathetic and as kind as he. He is constantly going out of his way to please others, and the result is that he is continually pleasing himself."

"Listen, for instance, to the quaint compliment he paid me the last time he came to hear me preach. He waited for me at the church door at the end of the service and, shaking me by the hand, said gravely:

"'I mean no offence, but I feel obliged to tell you that the preaching this morning has been of a kind that I can spare. I go to church, sir, to pursue my own train of thought. But to-day I couldn't do it. You interfered with me. You forced me to attend to you, and lost me a full half hour. I beg that this may not occur again.'"



THE HEMLOCKS.

Front view of the Root homestead at Clinton, N. Y., taken from entrance to campus of Hamilton College. Photograph by Gibbon.

The John St. Gallery

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