

54

... me was in a fair way of recovery from his wound. In losing him we have lost a good and faithful officer, and one who was loved and respected by both officers and men—especially those of his own company, who were greatly attached to him. We deeply sympathize with his aged and widowed mother in this her hour of sorrow and affliction.

I also learn of the death of Joseph Larue, of Company H, and late of the 13th Regiment, who died of wounds received in the late battle.

Approaching darkness compels me to close. I will drop you a line from our next halting place. Yours, &c., TRUE BLUE.

OF THE

JUL

A Letter from Smith, the "Razor Strop Man."

We are indebted to Mr. JOHN CHAPMAN for permission to copy the following characteristic letter from Mr. SMITH, the famous "Razor Strop Man," who is a member of the 140th Regiment. Mr. SMITH has acted as a hospital nurse almost all the time since the regiment went into the field. He was wounded in the second day's fight at Gettysburg:

U. S. HOSPITAL, FOUR MILES FROM
GETTYSBURG, Pa., July 13.

We have had some terrible marches for the last ten days, in all of which, to my surprise, I found myself up to the work, not having fallen out in all the marches. I carried a very heavy load; I may say that very few in the regiment carried more. My health has been very good.

On Thursday, July 2, our regiment went into the battle. I was with the Doctor. He keeps close to the regiment, and just as they met the enemy, the bullets flew around us very thick, so we fell behind the rocks and called on them to shelter us. We staid a short time when the rest of the doctor's party fell back further to the rear and established a hospital. I was left alone. As soon as I saw this I came from behind the rocks to go to them, when a ball struck me on the outside of the right leg, just below the knee. Two men carried me off the field. We met a doctor who examined and probed the wound, and said I should not lose my leg. They got me to a house. Here another doctor probed the wound and felt the ball; tried to get it out with his instruments but could not; said I must take chloroform. At dark I was put into an ambulance and taken to a hospital. Here another Doctor probed my wound with his fingers, and told me I should not lose my leg; said he would take out the ball for me in the morning. The morning came another Doctor; saw my wound; probed it with his fingers, and said I should not lose my leg, &c. I have seen the Doctor a number of times since, who said he would take it (the ball) out for me. He tells me I shall be attended to, but it is *eleven days* since I was wounded, and the ball is not taken out yet.

There are three poor young fellows close by me who were wounded on the second, and the balls are in yet. Their names are Geo. Chapman, Co. G, aged 21 years; Wm. Marks, Co. E; Woodruff Brown, Co. I, aged 19—all wounded on the 2d of July. Now, my friend, I read in the paper this morning that Governor Curtin had been offered a number of surgeons and he said he was told we had enough. Now is it better that our bullets should remain in or that they should be out? Com-

55

mon sense says out. Then one would think he would send us more doctors, for if three young men and myself are here suffering under my eyes, how many must there be among the many thousands of wounded that are lying in the hospitals of this neighborhood? We had 85 men wounded in the 140th, and no doctors belonging to the regiment to look after them. The doctor of the 140th Regiment has done all in his power for the boys. His name is Flanders, from Rome, New York.

I see by the Rochester papers a large quantity of things have been sent to the sick—such as eggs, butter, jellies, soft crackers, &c. I will tell you what we have had extra: 1 egg, 1 lemon, 2 slices of bread and butter, a small quantity of chicken soup, one mouthful of chicken, and your mouth must not be large at tant. I could have taken a little more in my mouth. The paper stated 100,000 eggs had been sent. The question is, where are the eggs, or does the paper lie? We have had a loaf of bread each to-day. There are 20 wounded left here in this hospital. The rest are dead or taken to some other hospital. Those who could walk to the depot have been sent to Baltimore, and then distributed to the different hospitals, where they have accommodations. For myself, I have to be carried when I move. How long we shall have to remain here God only knows. I feel in good spirits, but I do not like the treatment. The hospital where I was, on the 3d, was shelled, and one man close to me was killed. This was bad business.

I think I hear you saying, "Are you not sick of the war, SMITH?" I will tell you. I wish, with all my heart, the war was over, but I would not take my discharge if I could get it; and if I was ABRAHAM LINCOLN, I would not give them one pin's point more than he has offered them. I love the country. I have always been well treated, and if I am not worth a cent, it isn't the country's fault.

I have to take morphine every few hours to ease my pains and give me sleep. If the ball was out I believe the pain would leave me. [I have to leave off writing and search my bed. I find five vermin. I feel better now, as I have slain the rebels.] You spoke when you last wrote, of my getting a better position. I thank my good friends, but I want no better position. I love to take by the hand a man whom I have helped when sick but is now well. It is better to be a nurse in a regiment, and be able to fill it properly, than to be a General in the field and not fit for the position.

There is a man with butter, eggs, onions and radishes, at very moderate prices. This makes the boys feel good, after paying such prices to the sutlers. There were five of us that enlisted together in Rochester, at your house, and there is now only Benedict left with the regiment. The rest are either wounded, or discharged on account of sickness. When the 140th left Rochester, we numbered 950 men—since that time we have taken 75 from the old 14th, and now as true as you live, we cannot muster for service more than 350 men. This is a high figure. About one year ago, if you spoke of negro soldiers, some white men would be almost ready to knock you down. But mark what I say—you ask a white man now about negroes fighting, and you find him on the side of letting them fight.

I must tell you what kind of folks we came across. I went into a house in Maryland, saw some fresh rolls; small ones. I asked the woman how much for six. She said twenty-five cents, which was very high. I went out and

56

returned to get six more for Benedict. The woman said she could not sell any more for that price—she must have fifty cents. Did such a one have the love of country at heart, or the dollars? I saw men that said that the damned rebels had stolen horses, money, &c. Then, says I, "Will you fight to help drive them back?" "No." Then says I, "Will you help us on to fight for the Union?" "No. All we want is our horses," &c.

I have had some good fun when marching making speeches to the boys. What is the use of feeling sad? My good friend, how often I have wished I was a good Christian man, so that I could talk to the boys. There is no place in the world where a good man could be of more service than in the army. I mean a good man in all his acts, and here let me tell you, there is no place where a man can do more hurt. Take, for instance, a cold, luke-warm, whisky-drinking minister—for the sinner knows it and despises him, though he is a whisky drinker himself.

We have lost severely since the battle commenced—I mean those who have died of their wounds since taken to the hospitals. I can feel and shed tears with widows, fathers and sisters of the poor fellows I have seen die around me. Your sorrow is my sorrow, your joy is my joy. May God bless their poor mothers, and may God, in His goodness, help them to bear the burthen. There are some bright lights for you. They died true patriots of their country, not traitors; but trying to sustain the best and most humane government on earth.

Please direct your letters to Henry Smith, "Razor Strop Man," 5th Corps, 2d Division, 3d Brigade, United States Hospital, Gettysburg, Penn. From yours, ever truly,

HENRY SMITH.

PENSION AGENCY OF ALFRED G. MUDGE.

The following claims for pension have been admitted and certificates received this day, viz:

George Hartman, late a private in Co. D, 140th Regiment New York Volunteers—full pension.

Michael Toal, late a private in Co. D, 13th Reg. New York Vols.—full pension.

ALFRED G. MUDGE,
Office at Court House.

ALLIES

JUL

The Late Col. O'Rorke.

We have received from the 140th Regiment the following preamble and resolutions, adopted by the officers of that regiment, in relation to their late commander, the lamented Col. O'Rorke:

HEAD QUARTERS, 140TH N. Y. VOL.,
July 15th, 1863.

The following resolution was adopted by the officers of the 140th N. Y. Vols., on the day of the above date:

Whereas, Our Colonel, P. H. O'Rorke, was killed on the 2d day of July last, at the battle of Gettysburg, Pa., while gallantly leading his regiment into action, therefore,

Resolved, That in the death of our Colonel this regiment has sustained an irreparable loss, and the service one of its most devoted and accomplished officers. He came to us a comparative stranger, but by his distinguished military bearing, the firm and decided character he displayed in the performance of duty, and by the continued exhibition of those qualities which make the thorough gentleman, which arouse esteem and beget friendship, he immediately won

59

our respect, which soon ripened into unbounded confidence, love and devotion. As a soldier he was the pride and glory of the regiment. At the battle of Chancellorsville, while in command of the brigade, he seemed to choose the most exposed position as a point of observation, and by a remarkable display of bravery he nerved and strengthened us all. And when his clear and musical voice came down that battle line, every man obeyed the command with an alacrity which confidence in, and devotion to their leader could alone effect.

And we shall ever remember his conduct on the fatal field of Gettysburgh, when plunging forward into the thickest of the battle he called upon his command to follow. Such noble daring, such heroic action as he then exhibited, must linger in the memory of every observer, and fill with admiration all true and loyal breasts.

Aside from those military virtues which have so won our regard, he possessed qualities which attracted all who were thrown into his society. His uniform courtesy, his modesty of demeanor were marked by all who knew him. And that practical knowledge which was so surprising in one so young, expressed with a peculiar richness of language, made him our acknowledged head in every particular.

When off duty, he formed the centre and attraction of our social circle; and when, after the fatigues of a wearisome march, we gathered in the dusk of evening around his camp fire, we were ever confident of a hearty greeting, ever sure of a happy meeting. We lament, then, the death of him who was not only a brave and efficient officer, but our mutual friend and companion.

No nobler sacrifice has been made upon our country's altar, and "while the tree of freedom puts forth a single shoot to his name, a garland we shall weave," and keep green his memory in our hearts forever.

—Also the following preamble and resolution, adopted by the same organization with reference to the late Lieut. McGraw, who also fell at the battle of Gettysburg.

CAMP OF THE 140TH N. Y. V.,
July 15th, 1863.

At a meeting of the officers of the 140th Regt. N.Y.V., the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

Whereas, It has pleased Almighty God to remove from our midst our late companion and associate Lieut. Hugh McGraw, who died of wounds received at the late battle of Gettysburg, Pa., while in the faithful performance of his duty; therefore,

Resolved, That while we bow in submission to the Divine Will of our Heavenly Father, we deeply and earnestly deplore the loss of one who, from his social qualities, his gentlemanly bearing, and the faithful manner in which he performed the arduous duty imposed upon him, has won the respect and admiration of both officers and men of this regiment, and his loss to us is an irreparable one.

Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with his aged and widowed mother in her declining years, and most earnestly pray that God will shield and protect her in this her hour of sorrow and bereavement, and aid her to bear up under the sad loss which she has sustained by the death of a noble and dutiful son.

FROM THE 140TH REGIMENT.

The Pursuit of Lee--The Fatigues of the March--The Boys Waiting for the Drafted Men----Resolutions on the Death of Col. O'Rourke.

From our own Correspondent.

HEADQUARTERS 140TH REGIMENT, CAMP
NEAR UPPERVILLE, VIRGINIA,
July 21st, 1863.

Dear Express:—On the 24th of June we crossed the Potomac, bidding a farewell to old Virginia, and expressing a hope that it would not be necessary for us to ever return to that State, as we had seen about all we wished to of it; but here we are again, after traveling several

hundred miles through Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, but thank fortune all our hard ships have not been in vain, as we have achieved a glorious victory over our enemy, and succeeded in driving him from Northern soil, and he is now in full retreat towards his fireside, where he will most undoubtedly have to remain until "this cruel war is over."

After driving him across the river our corps immediately retraced its steps in the direction of Harper's Ferry, passing through the Blue Ridge mountain and continuing our march along its base until we arrived at a small village by the Potomac side called Berlin. The march was a very severe one as the weather was dreadfully warm and the men were completely worn out.

I have never seen the men fall out of the ranks as much as they did while passing through the mountain, and groups of them could be seen the entire length of our line of march, completely used up. I do not speak of our own men altogether, for there were plenty of representatives from the different regiments in our corps. In fact, the men of our regiment behaved handsomely, and as we passed by this long and continued line of stragglers, they admitted that we were the best pedestrians on the road. Horses, as well as the men, suffered terribly on this march, and many of them lay by the wayside perfectly exhausted and indifferent to the numerous amount of lashes laid on them by the infuriated drivers, who adopted all manner and means in their power to urge them along; but nary ago did they go, until they got ready, and many of them did not go at all. For two days we marched in this manner, until it became apparent that if we continued there would be none left to march, but those that are fortunate enough to be mounted. Finally, a halt was ordered when we arrived at the river, and I understand it was done by the direction of the Surgeons, who pronounced the men unfit to proceed further, until they had obtained a little rest. This we thought a wise conclusion, at least I did, as I had dwindled away in stature until I am some three inches shorter than at the time we commenced our march from United States Ford, consequently I would like very much to have a few days to sprout in. Even that is denied us, for the very next day we again find ourselves under way as usual, with the mud up to our knees, it having rained all of the previous night. We crossed the river about 5 o'clock in the evening of the 18th inst., and proceeded about five miles into Virginia, where we bivouacked for the night, with the usual instructions after arriving in the enemy's country, not to take any rails for building our fires, or destroy any property whatever. Now, this is all very fine, but you know that when there is no wood to be found in the vicinity, I am not one of those kind of fellows that will go back on a few rails, especially when I want a cup of coffee pretty bad, and I for one think that a rail from an enemy's fence will burn far better than that of a friend's. During our short halt on the Maryland side of the river, the officers were very busy in making out the pay-rolls, which had been neglected on account of our continued marching.

There is other important business which they cannot at present transact, such as making out descriptive lists for those that are sick and in hospitals, that they might receive their pay, but it cannot be attended to at present, consequently they will have to be patient until there is an opportunity to supply their wants, which we hope will occur soon.

Since the death of our noble Colonel, the command of the regiment has devolved on Lt. Col. Ernst, who discharges his arduous duty to the satisfaction of both officers and men.— While on the march it was suggested to some of the officers, by one high in command, the propriety of taking some action in regard to who should be our next Colonel, stating for a reason, that if we did not the first thing we would have some stranger over us, and probably one we did not want. Consequently a meeting was called, and the officers, after a few moment's consultation, appointed a committee with instructions to tender the position to Lt. Col. Ernst, which was done, and he respectfully declined, thanking the officer and the committee for their kindness towards him. The committee having returned and reported the result of their interview with the Colonel, were again sent with instruction that the officers insisted that he should accept the position.— After a few minutes deliberation on the part of the Colonel, he accepted the position, but only until we should have time to select another Colonel(!) I think if he waits until then, he will wait a long time.

It will be pleasing to the numerous friends of Orderly Sergeant James Maloy to know that he has been appointed Lieutenant in Co. K, 140th Regt. This is doing justice to a good and faithful soldier, and it is appreciated by the officers and men of the Regiment, as "Jimmy is a brick."

To-morrow Capt. Hoyt, Lieut. McMullen and Pool, with three Corporals and three Privates, start for Elmira, to take charge of the drafted men that are to be sent to this Regiment. I suppose it will not be necessary for them to carry with them their arms and ammunition, as the Monroe County boys will come along without any resistance. We will treat them well, and send them back when their term of service expires—better and wiser men. There is plenty of room here for them. I can accommodate about three dozen of the biggest and fattest fellows you have got, and will furnish them with good board and suitable rooms, so that there is no danger of their being reduced in dimensions.

Mr. Edward Frost, Nurseryman, of your city has just arrived in camp, and is looking well.— We wanted to dress him up in "soger's clothes" immediately, but he says he is not drafted yet.

Enclosed I send you a copy of resolutions drawn up by the officers of the Regiment for publication. Yours, &c., TRUE BLUE.

From the 140th Regiment.

The following is an extract from a private letter from Sergeant Munn, of the 140th Regiment, dated,

WARRENTON, VA., July 26, 1864.

Its Sunday, and a brighter, lovelier day never dawned over the once beautiful city of Warrenton. I have been sitting in front of my tent for the past two hours, watching the movement of the vast number of troops and wagons as they come crowding on from all directions, climb to some elevated spot, and on every side as far as the eye can reach, nothing can be seen except large bodies of men, horses, mules, wagons, &c., &c. We succeeded in getting here safe, and found but few before us. The most of the wagon trains were harrassed by the guerillas and many were fired into before they were aware of any danger, the party were small, however, and did but little danger. Our corps is expected this morning and then we shall have to hitch up again and go to the camp. I don't whether they are to stay here at Warrenton or go to the Junction. some

12 miles below. It makes but little difference which place we stay at, as far as comfort is concerned, for both places are completely stripped of everything that would add to the comfort or convenience of a tired, worn-out soldier.

I received a call yesterday afternoon from Edwin Frost. He has been down here several days looking for his Brother Henry, of the 8th Cavalry; he has found their wagon train and remains with Q. M. Pope; they have not heard from their regiment in 5 or 6 days, and know nothing of its whereabouts, I think it must be coming in to-day, for there is a great body of cavalry coming from the rear of the infantry. He thinks this army rather of a large institution, and can't see how it has been in operation now over two years, and yet people at the north know so little of it. No person visiting the army should be satisfied with less than two visits, one in the summer or fall, when the weather is warm and the ground dry; and another in the winter, when the snow is falling or has fallen to the depth of three or four inches. The first season will show one how many different ways the soldiers have to keep themselves comfortable from the rays of the burning sun in summer, and the snows and frosts in winter.

Every move now seems a repetition of the made last year by McClellan and Burnside. — Only think, now this army must remain here or elsewhere (probably here) till the drafted men are competent to fight, which, of course, will be a long time. I am anxious to hear who the drafted men are in Rochester. We shall soon have some of them among us. Our boys are having all sorts of fun in store for the "conscripts," as they call them. I heard some of them saying a few days ago that they weren't going to draw any more new clothes this summer; but would wait till after the C's have marched one day in the hot sun — they would throw away enough clothing so that the others could clothe themselves comfortably without cost.

FROM THE 140TH.

HEADQUARTERS 140th N. Y. V.)
IN CAMP NEAR WARRENTON, VA.)
July 28th, 1863. }

DEAR EXPRESS:—After driving the Rebs from Manassas Gap, we took up our line of march for this point, where we arrived yesterday, about noon. The town presented a very lively appearance, from the number of soldiers that were constantly roving about, and those that were encamped in the vicinity. Everything seemed to be in a perfect bustle, all evidently making preparations to remain a few days at least. This was a pleasant and agreeable sight to us, as we were in hopes that we would be numbered among the fortunate ones, granted a few days respite from the fatigues of the past two month's active operations. Our hopes were soon realized, for we had not proceeded over two miles from the village when we were marched into a large and beautiful meadow where we received orders to pitch our tents, as prescribed by the regulations. We were then informed that in all probability we would remain four or five days, and the men should make themselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit. They are almost destitute of clothing; in fact, more so than at any time since we have been in the service; but now as we have halted, we are almost confident that this evil will be speedily remedied by a regular issue of clothing. Officers suffered alike with the men in this respect; and

61
yesterday when our Regimental wagons arrived, containing our baggage, it was amusing to see the rapidity with which valisees were displayed about the camp to their respective owners.

Soap and towels were now in great demand, especially the first named article, as it needed considerable to take the rust off from long and arduous marches.

Now everything goes on as merry as we could possibly wish for, with but one exception, and that is that we have not received a mail in some time, so that we are almost ignorant in regard to the news outside of our camp. Our mail agent just informed me, that we will probably receive our mail this afternoon, so that we are anxiously looking forward for "good news from home," and reading matter enough to last us a few days. The health of the regiment at present is remarkably good, considering the season of the year. At Doctor's call this morning, not over one dozen appeared for medical treatment, and but two of the number were pronounced as being unfit for duty; they were sent to Warrenton there to await transportation to Washington. It is very strange to me that more of our men are not taken sick, for they are constantly eating green fruit, and it is next to an impossibility to keep them from it. As I am writing I learn that we have orders to report at Rappahannock Station, about 12 miles distant from this point. We will most undoubtedly start for that point in the morning, so that you see we will once more favor that locality with our presence. It is surmised by some that we will remain there until we receive reinforcements, but I can't see it.— Although I would think it a good plan to await there until we received our 300,000 conscripts, and then make one grand effort to capture Richmond. With a force like this, a failure would be next to an impossibility, while if we advanced with the small force that is now in the field, it may prove a sad calamity and be the means of continuing this war longer than there is any necessity for; so hurry up your conscripts and we will show them the road to Richmond, and also the road to a speedy restoration of peace and the Union.

Col. Girard, of the 146th regiment, who has been in command of a brigade since the battle of Gettysburg, has received his commission as Brigadier General of the 3d Brigade. He is an officer of long experience, and thoroughly understands his business, being about as good a disciplinarian as there is in the service. He is also a thorough gentleman. We all feel proud of his appointment, as we have the utmost confidence in him as a military commander, and wherever he leads, we will cheerfully follow.

I understand that there is to be another change in our brigade—the two Pennsylvania regiments are to be removed and the 130th N. Y. Vols. are to take their place, so that our entire brigade will be composed of New York troops. Our division at present is probably the smallest in the service, having lost terribly in the last engagement, especially the Regulars, of which the 2d brigade lost 500 out of 800.— Their loss in officers was also very heavy—losing 36 in all. The mail leaves in a few moments, so au revoir,
TRUE BLUE.

THE EVENING E

FROM THE 140TH.

The Conscription and what is Thought
of it in the Army--Sunday in Camp.

CAMP OF THE 140TH REGIMENT, NEAR }
WARRENTON, VA., Aug. 2, 1863. }

62

DEAR EXPRESS:—To-day is the Sabbath day and one of the warmest days of the season, consequently the Colonel has dispensed with the usual Sunday inspection, much to the satisfaction of the boys, who are usually required to remain under a burning sun from one to two hours while undergoing an inspection of their arms, ammunition and clothing, and in fact their general appearance as soldiers. Sunday in camp is far different from those observed in your quiet city. Here it is observed in numerous ways. Some are snugly stowed away in some shady nook busily engaged in repairing their torn and tattered garments, others again can be seen collected in groups around some fortunate individual who has been the recipient of a late issue of your valuable sheet, in order to learn the latest and most reliable news from home relative to the enforcement of the Conscription act, which seems to be the most important topic of the day and which is freely discussed by almost every soldier in camp. All seem to agree upon the propriety of its speedy enforcement, as it is the only reliable method of putting an end to this rebellion. Our soldiers, and in fact the entire masses of the troops express themselves perfectly disgusted with the cowardly acts of barbarity that have lately been enacted in the city of New York and other places, by home traitors who are now endeavoring to deprive us of the only reliable means of obtaining the required number of men called for by the President. Our only regret is that we were not called upon to assist in quelling that riot; had we been, you would have seen fine work accomplished, without the aid of kid gloves or blank cartridges.

But to return to my "Sunday in Camp." On the banks of a small stream, not far distant from camp, may be seen large groups chiefly engaged in cleaning up, or doing their "week's washing," an occupation which is by no means second nature to the sterner sex. Again there are others who are busily engaged in writing to friends at home. In this there is quite an extensive business done, and the accumulation of mail matter during the day at headquarters is about as much as the mail carrier can conveniently "tote." Last, but not least, we have those among us who have cast aside all of the business pursuits forbidden on the Lord's Day, and have devoted themselves to the reading of their Bibles, and such other religious books as they can conveniently obtain. I have noticed many, more so than at any other time, who are devoting themselves to the study of religious works. To be sure there are others whom I am certain it would not injure in the least to occupy a portion of their time in this manner. Before closing my description allow me to say a few words in regard to the *good* boys of the Regiment. Such we call "Flankers." Their business is to scour the country in all directions, in search of any article of subsistence that they can purchase, borrow or "lift." If the article is not to be purchased, they endeavor to persuade the owner that they are really in need of it, and if they are not successful in procuring it, they take it. This we call "lifting"—sometimes they lift pretty hard; for, towards evening they can be seen coming across the country, some with chickens, turkeys, bread, butter, milk, and, in fact, all kinds of produce. Occasionally you will see a fellow with a small pig on his back making all possible haste for camp, where his pigship is knocked in the head, and in less time than I can describe it to you, he is distributed around upon the different frying pans belonging to those who were fortunate

to come in for a share. This morning we received orders that the first division and second division of our corps, the latter which we have the honor of belonging to, are to go into camp here with the usual instructions. To-morrow we are to commence our routine of camp duty, camp drill twice a day, battalion drill once a day and guard mounting also, brigade drills twice a week. So you will observe that we are not to be allowed to remain idle very long. This will be pretty hard on us, as the weather is getting dreadful warm, and we have scarcely had time to recover from our tedious marches; but as long as those in command think us capable of performing or complying with the above programme, I suppose that it is all right enough, and we have only to pitch right in, regardless of expense. The health of the regiment at present continues remarkably good and the doctors are having but little duty to perform. I hope they will continue idle.

TRUE BLUE.

Democrat & American.

THURSDAY MORNING, FEB. 18.

From the 1st 20th Regiment.

Correspondence of the Democrat and American.

CAMP 140TH N. Y. VOLUNTEERS,
WARRENTON JUNCTION, VA.,
February 6, 1864.

This is the first idle afternoon for over two months, when I could write; because if off duty, I was too unwell to do more than rest. The fatigue party did not go out to the fortifications to-day, because of a brigade review; and the review does not come off, because of a very lively rain.

The last connected account of our wanderings must have been on the 21st of Nov. I am not sure that I told you much while the Regiment was lying at Paoli Mills, our Mountain Run. Every brook here is a "run"—Cub Run, Bull Run, Kettle Run, Cedar Run, Mountain Run, Mine Run—and it takes some run out of us boys to run them all down.

The night of the 23d was rainy; the morning of the 24th extremely so. At 4 o'clock the bugle called to "strike tents," and off we went at fair daylight. Mountain Run was howling already; its waters up to the bridge; (said bridge went down stream that afternoon.) In a drenching rain we straggled on some two miles. In a hollow we found the Division—artillery and wagons stuck in the soft bottom. We pushed through the hollow and reached the high land beyond, when, as old Jehu used to drive, so came an Aid. Marching orders were countermanded. "Shoulder arms!" Counter-march, file left!" "Right shoulder shift arms!" "Forward march!" and we were going back to camp—and lucky too, though wet to the skin. This march seemed a second edition of Burnside's "stick in the mud," for the special benefit of the new recruits, subs, and cons.

The boys were musical on going back to camp; "Homeward Bound," "We'll be Gay and Happy Still," "Dixie's Land," and the "Happy Land of Cannan," were loudly sung and laughed over.

By the way, I've always heard it said that the regiment never marched so easily, so cheerily, or sang so lively, as during the night of their march from Hanover to Gettysburg, though Col. O'Rourke told them before starting that they were to march all night, and go into bat-

tle next day. And during all that Centerville movement, day or night, one might hear some one singing, and from the song you might get the character of the soldier. Here's one—"Johnny fill up the bowl;" or "Old Dog Tray," or "John Brown"—shows more fun than sober thought. Another, more sentimental, is doing full justice to "Hard times, hard times, come again no more." I'll wager his toes were blistered, and he was thinking of home. Another, marching more easily, is singing quite to himself, "'Tis the grave of Eulalie." That sounds quite prettily in the woods on the night march. Once, straggling to the right of the regiment, I heard several of company A's men singing,

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee!"

The night was still and warm, the marching good, the movement slow, the branches of the forest trees interlacing overhead—the sentiment and the music were worth a night's march to hear.

But one oftener hears, for they are favorites with the boys, "When this cruel war is over," "Rally round the flag, boys." These they all sing. From the better class of singers you will be more likely to get "Annie Laurie," or "Nellie with the light brown hair;" else some of the beautiful Sunday-school hymns that have become so popular within a few years. Sometimes the march becomes too exhausting for music or mirth; be sure then that the soldier boy is almost "played out." Next to his discipline, the joke and the song cling to the soldier the longest.

On the 26th we were called at 3 A. M., our rations made up to eight days, and we started off again at 6 o'clock. Some three miles across lots of indifferent marching brought us out on a very good road, that gave us rapid marching till almost noon. About 12 we were at the Rapidan—at Culpepper Mine Forde. Crossing, we were halted an hour or two, but without a chance for coffee. Just before sundown we had made some miles of crooked road through the woods, then striking the Fredericksburg and Gordonsville Plank Road, how we went! As fast as we could walk, a double quick, hurried up as fast as we could run. The sun went down clear, the stars were out as thick as a swarm of bees, the moon came up, the road was good, and still we ran.

I remember a halt of perhaps a half hour, a short march, and a bivouack in an old cornfield close by the roadside, where were two extravagantly large oak rail fences. There are several times in my memory when a guard was stationed over any fence which by any possibility might be converted into coffee! But to-night no such farce was enacted; no imposition practiced upon the noble Union defenders. Water, clear and abundant, was running close by, though fifty feet below the level we lay on.—Theodore gave me enough corn meal to make a pudding in my coffee kettle. I never ate a bet-one. I furnished sugar for his pudding and mine. Levelling the ground with rails, near 11 o'clock we lay down, two blankets and a poncho over us, a big fire of rails at our feet; no tents up. In the morning the ice was nearly an inch thick. Yours truly, ANSEL.

Welcome Tidings to Many in Sorrow.

The mails this morning brought a large number of letters, the first that have been received from our prisoners taken by the Rebels in the recent battles in Virginia. These letters carry