

JOHN MCELROY

SIKLEGG,
BOOK 1

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Содержание

PREFACE	5
CHAPTER I. GOING TO WAR—SI KLEGG'S COMPLETE EQUIPMENT	6
CHAPTER II. THE DEADLY BAYONET	9
CHAPTER III. THE OLD CANTEEN	11
CHAPTER IV. THE AWFUL HARDTACK	13
CHAPTER V. FAT PORK—INDISPENSABLE BODY TIMBER FOR PATRIOTISM	16
CHAPTER VI. DETAILED AS COOK—SI FINDS RICE ANOTHER INNOCENT	18
CHAPTER VII. IN THE AWKWARD SQUAD	21
CHAPTER VIII. ON COMPANY DRILL	24
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	25

John McElroy

Si Klegg, Book 1 / His Transformation from a Raw Recruit to a Veteran

PREFACE

"Si Klegg, of the 200th Ind., and Shorty, his Partner," were born more than 25 years ago in the brain of John McElroy, editor of The National Tribune, who invented the names and characters, outlined the general plan, and wrote a number of the chapters. Subsequently, the editor, having many other important things pressing upon his attention, called in an assistant to help on the work, and this assistant, under the direction and guidance of the editor, wrote some of these chapters. Subsequently, without the editor's knowledge or consent, the assistant adopted all the material as his own, and expanded it into a book which had a limited sale and then passed into the usual oblivion of shortlived subscription books.

The sketches in this first number are the original ones published in The National Tribune in 1885-6, revised and enlarged somewhat by the editor.

Those in the second and all following numbers appeared in The National Tribune when the editor, John McElroy, resumed the story in 1897, 12 years after the first publication, and continued it for the unprecedented period of seven years, with constantly growing interest and popularity. They gave "Si Klegg" a nation-wide and enduring celebrity. Gen. Lew Wallace, the foremost literary man of his day, pronounced "Si Klegg" the "great idyll of the war."

How true they are to nature every veteran can abundantly testify from his own service. Really, only the name of the regiment was invented. There is no doubt that there were several men of the name of Josiah Klegg in the Union Army, and who did valiant service for the Government. They had experiences akin to, if not identical with, those narrated here, and substantially every man who faithfully and bravely carried a musket in defense of the best Government on earth had sometimes, if not often, experiences of with those of Si Klegg, Shorty and the boys are strong reminders.

Many of the illustrations in this first number are by the late Geo. Y. Coffin, deceased, a talented artist, whose work embellished The National Tribune for many years. He was the artist of The National Tribune until his lamented and premature death, and all his military work was done by daily consultation, instruction and direction of the editor of The National Tribune.

THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

CHAPTER I. GOING TO WAR—SI KLEGG'S COMPLETE EQUIPMENT

AND WHAT BECAME OF IT

AFTER Si Klegg had finally yielded to his cumulative patriotic impulses and enlisted in the 200th Ind. for three years or until the rebellion was put down, with greater earnestness and solemnity to equip himself for his new career.

He was thrifty and provident, and believed in being ready for any emergency. His friends and family coincided with him. The Quartermaster provided him with a wardrobe that was serviceable, if not stylish, but there were many things that he felt he would need in addition.

"You must certainly have a few pairs of homeknit socks and some changes of underclothes," said his tearfully-solicitous mother. "They won't weigh much, and they'll in all likelihood save you a spell of sickness."

"Certainly," responded Josiah, "I wouldn't think of going away without 'em."

Into the capacious knapsack went several pounds of substantial knit woolen goods.

"You can't get along without a couple of towels and a piece of soap," said his oldest sister, Maria, as she stowed those things alongside the socks and underclothes.

"Si," said Ellen, his second sister, "I got this pocket album for my gift to you. It contains all our pictures, and there is a place for another's picture, whose name I suppose I needn't mention," she added archly.

Si got a little red in the face, but said:

"Nothing could be nicer, Nell. It'll be the greatest comfort in the world to have all your pictures to look at when I'm down in Dixie."

"Here's a 'housewife' I've made for you with my own hands," added Annabel, who was some other fellow's sister. She handed him a neatly-stitched little cloth affair. "You see, it has needles, thread, buttons, scissors, a fine-tooth comb, and several other things that you'll need very badly after you've been in camp awhile. And" (she got so near Si that she could whisper the rest) "you'll find in a little secret pocket a lock of my hair, which I cut off this morning."

"I suppose I'll have a good deal of leisure time while we're in camp," said Si to himself and the others; "I believe I'll just put this Ray's Arithmetic and Greene's Grammar in."

"Yes, my young friend," added the Rev. Boanarg, who had just entered the house, "and as you will be exposed to new and unusual temptations, I thought it would be judicious to put this volume of 'Baxter's Call to the Unconverted' in your knapsack, for it may give you good counsel when you need it sorely."

"Thankee," said Si, stowing away the book. Of course, Si had to have a hair-brush, blackingbrush, a shaving kit, and some other toilet appliances.

Then it occurred to his thoughtful sister Maria that he ought to have a good supply of stationery, including pens, a bottle of ink, and a portfolio on which to write when he was far away from tables and desks.

These went in, accompanied by a half-pint bottle of "No. 6," which was Si's mother's specific for all the ills that flesh is heir to. Then, the blanket which the Quartermaster had issued seemed very light and insufficient to be all the bed-clothes a man would have when sleeping on the bare ground, and Si rolled up one of the warm counterpanes that had helped make the Indiana Winter nights so comfortable for him.

"Seems rather heavy," said Si as he put his knapsack on; "but I guess I'll get used to it in a little while. They say that soldiers learn to carry surprising loads on their backs. It'll help cure me of being round-shouldered; it'll be better 'n shoulder-braces for holding me up straight."

Of course, his father couldn't let him go away without giving him something that would contribute to his health and comfort, and at last the old gentleman had a happy thought—he would get the village shoemaker to make Si a pair of his best stout boots. They would be ever so much better than the shoes the Quartermaster furnished for tramping over the muddy roads and swamps of the South. Si fastened these on top of his knapsack until he should need them worse than at present.

His old uncle contributed an immense bowie knife, which he thought would be of great use in the sanguinary hand-to-hand conflicts Si would have to wage.

On the way to the depot Si found some of his comrades gathered around an enterprising retail dealer in hardware, who was convincing them that they could serve their country much better, besides adding to their comfort, by buying from him a light hatchet and a small frying-pan, which he offered, in consideration of their being soldiers, to sell them at remarkable low rates.

Si saw at once the great convenience a hatchet and a frying-pan would be, and added them to his kit. An energetic dealer in tinware succeeded in selling him, before he reached the depot, a cunning little coffee-pot and an ingenious combination of knife, fork and spoon which did not weigh more than a pound.

When he got in the cars he was chagrined to find that several of his comrades had provided themselves with convenient articles that he had not thought of. He consoled himself that the regiment would stop some time in Louisville, when he would have an opportunity of making up his deficiencies.

But when the 200th reached Louisville there was no leisure for anything. Bragg was then running his celebrated foot-race with Buell for the Kentucky metropolis, and the 200th Ind. was trotted as rapidly as unused legs could carry it to the works several miles from the center of the city.

Everybody who was in that campaign remembers how terribly hot and dry everything was.

Si Klegg managed to keep up tolerably near the head of the column until camp was reached, but his shoulders were strained and blisters began to appear on his feet.

"That was a mighty tough pull, wasn't it?" he said to his chum as they spread their blankets on the dog-kennel and made some sort of a bed; "but I guess after a day or two we'll get so used to it that we won't mind it."

For a few days the 200th Ind. lay in camp, but one day there came an order for the regiment to march to Bardstown as rapidly as possible. A battle was imminent. The roads were dusty as ash-heaps, and though the pace was not three miles an hour, the boys' tongues were hanging out before they were out of sight of camp.

"I say, Captain, don't they never have resting spells in the army?" said Si.

"Not on a forced march," answered the Captain, who, having been in the first three months' service, was regarded as a veteran. "Push on, boys; they say that they'll want us before night." Another hour passed.

"Captain, I don't believe you can put a pin-point anywhere on my feet that ain't covered with a blister as big as a hen's egg," groaned Si.

"It's too bad, I know," answered the officer; "but you must go on. They say Morgan's cavalry are in our rear shooting down every straggler they can find."

Si saw the boys around him lightening their knapsacks. He abominated waste above all things, but there seemed no help for it, and, reaching into that receptacle that bore, down upon his aching shoulders like a glacier on a groundhog, he pulled out and tossed into the fence corner the educational works he had anticipated so much benefit from. The bottle of "No. 6" followed, and it seemed as if the knapsack was a ton lighter, but it yet weighed more than any stack of hay on the home farm.

A cloud of dust whirled up, and out of it appeared a galloping Aid.

"The General says that the 200th Ind. must push on much faster. The enemy is trying to get to the bridge ahead of them," he shouted as he dashed off in another cloud of dust.

A few shots were heard in the rear.

"Morgan's cavalry are shooting some more stragglers," shouted some one.

Si was getting desperate. He unrolled the counterpane and slashed it into strips with his bowie. "My mother made that with her own hands," he explained to a comrade, "and if I can't have the good of it no infernal rebel shall. He next slashed the boots up and threw them after the quilt, and then hobbled on to overtake the rest of his company.

"There's enough dry-goods and clothing lying along in the fence corners to supply a good-sized town," the Lieutenant-Colonel reported as he rode over the line of march in rear of the regiment.

The next day Si's feet felt as if there was a separate and individual jumping toothache in every sinew, muscle, tendon and toe-nail; but that didn't matter. With Bragg's infantry ahead and John Morgan's cavalry in the rear, the 200th Ind. had to go forward so long as the boys could put one foot before the other.

The unloading went on even more rapidly than the day before.

"My knapsack looks like an elephant had stepped on it," Si said, as he ruefully regarded it in the evening.

"Show me one in the regiment that don't," answered his comrade.

Thenceforward everything seemed to conspire to teach Si how vain and superfluous were the things of this world. The first rain-storm soaked his cherished album until it fell to pieces, and his sister's portfolio did the same. He put the photographs in his blouse pocket and got along just as well. When he wanted to write he got paper from the sutler. A mule tramped on his fancy coffee-pot, and he found he could make quite as good coffee in a quart-cup. A wagon-wheel ran over his cherished frying-pan, and he melted an old canteen in two and made a lighter and handier pan out of one-half of it. He broke his bowie-knife prying the lid off a cracker-box. He piled his knapsack with the others one day when the regiment was ordered to strip them off for a charge, and neither he nor his comrades ever saw one of them again. He never attempted to replace it. He learned to roll up an extra pair of socks and a change of underclothing in his blanket, tie the ends of this together and throw it over his shoulder sash fashion. Then, with his socks drawn up over the bottoms of his pantaloons, three days' rations in his haversack and 40 rounds in his cartridgebox, he was ready to make his 30 miles a day in any direction he might be sent, and whip anything that he encountered on the road.

CHAPTER II. THE DEADLY BAYONET

IT IS USED FOR NEARLY EVERYTHING ELSE THAN FOR PRODDING MEN

IN COMMON with every other young man who enlisted to defend the glorious Stars and Stripes, Si Klegg, of the 200th Ind., had a profound superstition concerning the bayonet. All the war literature he had ever read abounded in bloodcurdling descriptions of bayonet charges and hand-to-hand conflicts, in which bayonets were repeatedly thrust up to the shanks in the combatants' bodies just as he had put a pitch-fork into a bundle of hay. He had seen pictures of English regiments bristling with bayonets like a porcupine with quills, rushing toward French regiments which looked as prickly as a chestnut-bur, and in his ignorance he supposed that was the way fighting was done. Occasionally he would have qualms at the thought of how little his system was suited to have cold steel thrust through it promiscuous-like, but he comforted himself with the supposition that he would probably get used to it in time—"soldiers get used to almost anything, you know."

When the 200th Ind. drew its guns at Indianapolis he examined all the strange accouterments with interest, but gave most to the triangular bit of steel which writers who have never seen a battle make so important a weapon in deciding contests.

It had milk, molasses, or even applejack, for Si then was not a member of the Independent Order of Good Templars, of which society he is now an honored officer. Nothing could be nicer, when he was on picket, to bring buttermilk in from the neighboring farm-house to his chum Shorty, who stood post while he was gone.

Later in the service Si learned the inestimable value of coffee to the soldier on the march. Then he stript the cloth from his canteen, fastened the strand with bits of wire and made a fine coffee-pot of it. In the morning he would half fill it with the splendid coffee the Government furnished, fill it up with water and hang it from a bush or a stake over the fire, while he went ahead with his other culinary preparations. By the time these were finished he would have at least a quart of magnificent coffee that the cook of the Fifth Avenue could not surpass, and which would last him until the regiment halted in the afternoon.

The bully of the 200th took it into his thick head one day to try to "run over" Si. The latter had just filled his canteen, and the bully found that the momentum of three pints of water swung at arm's length by an angry boy was about equal to a mule's kick.

Just as he was beginning to properly appreciate his canteen, he learned a sharp lesson, that comes to all of us, as to how much "cussedness" there can be in the simplest things when they happen to go wrong. He went out one day and got a canteen of nice sweet milk, which he and "Shorty" Elliott heartily enjoyed. He hung the canteen upon the ridge-pole of the tent, and thought no more about it until the next day, when he came in from drill, and found the tent filled with an odor so vile that it made him cough.

"Why in thunder don't the Colonel send out a detail to find and bury that dead mule? It'll pizen the hull camp."

He had been in service just long enough to believe that the Colonel ought to look out for and attend to everything.

"'Taint no dead mule," said Shorty, whose nose had come close to the source of the odor. "It's this blamed canteen. What on earth have you been putting in it. Si?"

"Ha'int had nothin' in but that sweet milk yesterday."

"That's just what's the matter," said the Orderly, who, having been in the three-months' service, knew all about war. He had come in to detail Si and Shorty to help unload Quartermaster's stores. "You must always scald 'out your canteens when you've had milk in 'em. Don't you remember how careful your mother is to scald her milk pans?"

After the company wagon had run over and hopelessly ruined the neat little frying-pan which Si had brought from Posey County, he was in despair as to how he should fry his meat and cook his "lobscouse." Necessity is the mother of invention. He melted in two a canteen he picked up, and found its halves made two deep tin pans, very light and very handy. A split stick made a handle, and he had as good a frying-pan as the one he had lost, and much more convenient, for when done using the handle was thrown away, and the pan slipped into the haversack, where it lay snug and close, instead of clattering about as the frying-pan did when the regiment moved at the double-quick.

The other half of the canteen was useful to brown coffee, bake hoe-cake, and serve for toilet purposes.

One day on the Atlanta campaign the regiment moved up in line to the top of a bald hill. As it rose above the crest it was saluted with a terrific volley, and saw that another crest across the narrow valley was occupied by at least a brigade of rebels.

"We'll stay right here, boys," said the plucky little Colonel, who had only worn Sergeant's stripes when the regiment crossed the Ohio River. "We've preempted this bit of real estate, and we'll hold it against the whole Southern Confederacy. Break for that fence there, boys, and every fellow come back with a couple of rails."

It seemed as if he hardly ceased speaking when the boys came running back with the rails which they laid down along the crest, and dropped flat behind them, began throwing the gravelly soil over them with their useful half-canteens. In vain the shower of rebel bullets struck and sang about them. Not one could penetrate that little ridge of earth and rails, which in an hour grew into a strong rifle-pit against which the whole rebel brigade charged, only to sustain a bloody repulse.

The war would have lasted a good deal longer had it not been for the daily help of the ever-useful half-canteen.

CHAPTER III. THE OLD CANTEEN

THE MANY AND QUEER USES TO WHICH IT WAS AT LAST PUT

WHEN Josiah (called "Si" for short) Klegg, of the 200th Ind., drew his canteen from the Quartermaster at Louisville, he did not have a very high idea of its present or prospective importance. In the 22 hot Summers that he had lived through he had never found himself very far from a well or spring when his thirst cried out to be slacked, and he did not suppose that it was much farther between wells down South.

"I don't see the use of carrying two or three pints o' water along all day right past springs and over cricks," he remarked to his chum, as the two were examining the queer, cloth-covered cans.

"We've got to take 'em, any way," answered his chum, resignedly, "It's regulations."

On his entry into service a boy accepted everything without question when assured that it was "regulations." He would have charged bayonets on a buzz-saw if authoritatively informed that it was required by the mysterious "regulations."

The long march the 200th Ind. made after Bragg over the dusty turnpikes the first week in October, 1862, taught Si the value of a canteen. After that it was rarely allowed to get empty.

"What are these grooves along each side for?" he asked, pointing out the little hollows which give the "prod" lightness and strength.

"Why," answered the Orderly, who, having been in the three-months' service, assumed to know more about war than the Duke of Wellington, "the intention of those is to make a wound the lips of which will close up when the bayonet is pulled out, so that the man'll be certain to die."

Naturally so diabolical an intention sent cold shivers down Si's back.

The night before Si left for "the front" he had taken his musket and coutermenets home to show them to his mother and sisters—and the other fellow's sister, whose picture and lock of hair he had safely stowed away. They looked upon the bayonet with a dreadful awe. Tears came into Maria's eyes as she thought of Si roaming about through the South like a bandit plunging that cruel steel into people's bowels.

"This is the way it's done," said Si, as he charged about the room in an imaginary duel with a rebel, winding up with a terrifying lunge. "Die, Tur-r-rraitor, gaul durn ye," he exclaimed, for he was really getting excited over the matter, while the girls screamed and jumped upon the chairs, and his good mother almost fainted.

The attention that the 200th Ind. had to give to the bayonet drill confirmed Si's deep respect for the weapon, and he practiced assiduously all the "lunges," "parries," and "guards" in the Manual, in the hope that proficiency so gained would save his own dearly-beloved hide from puncture, and enable him to punch any luckless rebel that he might encounter as full of holes as a fishing net.

The 200th Ind.'s first fight was at Perryville, but though it routed the rebel force in front of it, it would have taken a bayonet half-a-mile long to touch the nearest "Johnny." Si thought it odd that the rebels didn't let him get close enough to them to try his new bayonet, and pitch a dozen or two of them over into the next field.

If the truth must be told, the first blood that stained Si's bayonet was not that of a fellow-man.

Si Klegg's company was on picket one day, while Gen. Buell was trying to make up his mind what to do with Bragg. Rations had been a little short for a week or so. In fact, they had been scarcely sufficient to meet the demands of Si's appetite, and his haversack had nothing in it to speak of. Strict orders against foraging had been, issued. It was the day of "guarding rebel onion patches." Si couldn't quite get it straight in his head why the General should be so mighty particular about a few pigs and

chickens and sweet potatoes, for he was really getting hungry, and when a man is in this condition he is not in a fit mood to grapple with fine-spun theories of governmental policy.

So when a fat pig came wabbling and grunting toward his post, it was to Si like a vision of manna to the children of Israel in the wilderness. A wild, uncontrollable desire to taste a fresh spare-rib took possession of him. Naturally, his first idea was to send a bullet through the animal, but on second thought he saw that wouldn't do at all. It would "give him away" at once, and, besides, he had found that a single shot on the picket-line would keep Buell's entire army in line-of-battle for a whole day.

Si wrote to his mother that his bright new bayonet was stained with Southern blood, and the old lady shuddered at the awful thought. "But," added Si, "it was only a pig, and not a man, that I killed!"

"I'm so glad!" she exclaimed.

By the time Si had been in the service a year there was less zeal in the enforcement of orders of this kind, and Si had become a very skillful and successful forager. He had still been unable to reach with his bayonet the body of a single one of his misguided fellow citizens, but he had stabbed a great many pigs and sheep. In fact, Si found his bayonet a most useful auxiliary in his predatory operations. He could not well have gotten along without it.

Uncle Sam generally furnished Si with plenty of coffee—roasted and unground—but did not supply him with a coffee mill. Si thought at first that the Government had forgotten something. He saw that several of the old veterans of '61 had coffee mills, but he found on inquiry that they had been obtained by confiscation only. He determined to supply himself at the first opportunity, but in the meantime he was obliged to 'use his bayonet as a substitute, just as all the rest of the soldiers did.

We regret to say that Si, having thrown away his "Baxter's Call to the Unconverted" in his first march, and having allowed himself to forget the lessons he had learned but a few years before in Sunday-school, soon learned to play poker and other sinful games. These, at night, developed another use for the bayonet. In its capacity as a "handy" candlestick it was "equaled by few and excelled by none." The "shank" was always ready to receive the candle, while the point could be thrust into the ground in an instant, and nothing more was necessary. This was perhaps the most general sphere of usefulness found by the bayonet during the war. Barrels of candle-grease flowed down the furrowed sides of this weapon for every drop of human blood that dimmed its luster.

CHAPTER IV. THE AWFUL HARDTACK

THE HARD AND SOLID STAFF OF MILITARY LIFE

"APPETITE'S a queer thing," said Si to Shorty one day, when both were in a philosophical mood. "It's an awful bother when you haven't it, and it's a great deal worse when you have it, and can't get anything for it." "Same as money," returned sage Shorty. During the first few months of Si Klegg's service in the army the one thing that bothered him more than anything else was his appetite. It was a very robust, healthy one that Si had, for he had grown up on his father's farm in Indiana, and had never known what it was to be hungry without abundant means at hand for appeasing his desires in that direction. His mother's cupboard was never known to be in the condition of Old Mother Hubbard's, described in the nursery rhyme. The Kleggs might not have much tapestry and bric-a-brac in their home, but their smoke-house was always full, and Mrs. Klegg's kitchen could have fed a camp-meeting any time without warning. So it was that when Si enlisted his full, rosy face and his roundness of limb showed that he had been well fed, and that nature had made good use of the ample daily supplies that were provided. His digestive organs were kept in perfect condition by constant exercise.

After Si had put down his name on the roll of Co. Q of the 200th Ind. he had but a few days to remain at home before his regiment was to start for Louisville. During this time his mother and sisters kept him filled up with "goodies" of every sort. In fact, it was the biggest thing in the way of a protracted picnic that Si had ever struck.

"You must enjoy these things while you can, Si," said his mother, "for goodness knows what you'll do when you really git into the army. I've heerd 'em tell awful things about how the poor sogers don't have half enough to eat, and what they do git goes agin' any Christian stomach. Here, take another piece of this pie. A little while, and it'll be a long time, I reckon, till ye git any more."

"Don't keer if I do!" said Si, for there was scarcely any limit to his capacity.

And so during those days and nights the old lady and the girls cooked and cooked, and Si ate and ate, until it seemed as if he wouldn't want any more till the war was over.

Si was full, and as soon as Co. Q was, it was ordered to camp, and Si had to go. They loaded him down with good things enough to last him a week. The pretty Annabel—the neighbor's daughter who had solemnly promised Si that she wouldn't go with any other fellow while he was away—came around to see Si off and brought him a rich fruit cake.

"I made that for you," she said.

"Bully for you!" said Si, for he felt that he must begin to talk like a soldier.

The first day or two after reaching Louisville the 200th received rations of "soft bread." But that didn't last long. It was only a way they had of letting the fresh soldier down easy. Orders came to get ready to pull out after Bragg, and then Si's regiment had its first issue of army rations. As the Orderly pried open a box of hardtack and began to distribute them to the boys, exclaimed:

"Them's nice-looking soda crackers. I don't believe the grub is going to be so bad, after all."

Si had never seen a hardtack before.

"Better taste one and see how you like it!" said one of Buell's ragged Indiana veterans, who had come over to see the boys of the 200th and hear the latest news from "God's country."

It happened that this lot was one of extra quality as to hardness. The baker's watch had stopped, or he had gone to sleep, and they had been left in the oven or dry-kiln too long. Si took one of them and carried it to his mouth. He first tried on it the bite which made such havoc with a quarter section of custard pie, but his incisors made no more impression upon it than if it had been a shingle.

"You have to bear on hard," said the veteran, with a grim smile.

"Je-ru-sa-lem!" exclaimed Si after he had made two or three attempts equally barren of results.

Then he tried his "back teeth." His molars were in prime order, and his jaw power was sufficient to crack a hickory nut every time. Si crowded one corner of the hardtack as far as he could between his "grinders," where he could get a good "purchase" on it, shut his eyes and turned on a full head of steam. His teeth and jaws fairly cracked under the strain, but he couldn't even "phase" it.

"If that ain't old pizen!" said Si. "It beats anything I ever seen up in the Wabash country."

But his blood was up, and laying the cracker upon a log, he brought the butt of his gun down upon it like a pile-driver.

"I thought I'd fix ye," he said, as he picked up the fragments, and tried his teeth upon the smaller ones. "Have I got to eat such stuff as that?" with a despairing look at his veteran friend. "I'd just as soon be a billy-goat and live on circus-posters, fruit-cans and old hoop-skirts."

"You'll get used to it after a while, same's we did. You'll see the time when you'll be mighty glad to get even as hard a tack as that!"

Si's heart sank almost into his shoes at the prospect, for the taste of his mother's pie and Annabel's fruit cake were yet fresh in his mouth. But Si was fully bent on being a loyal, obedient soldier, determined to make the best of everything without any more "kicking" than was the inalienable right of every man who wore a uniform.

For the first time in his life Si went to bed hungry that night. Impelled by the gnawings of his appetite he made repeated assaults upon the hardtack, but the result was wholly insufficient to satisfy the longings of his stomach. His supper wasn't anything to speak of. Before going to bed he began to exercise his ingenuity on various schemes to reduce the hardtack to a condition in which it would be more gratifying to his taste and better suited to the means with which nature had provided him for disposing of his rations. Naturally Si thought that soaking in water would have a beneficial effect. So he laid five or six of them in the bottom of a camp-kettle, anchored them down with a stone, and covered them with water. He thought that with the aid of a frying-pan he would get up a breakfast that he could eat, anyway.

Si felt a little blue as he lay curled up under his blanket with his head pillowed on his knapsack. He thought some about his mother, and sister Maria, and pretty Annabel, but he thought a good deal more about the beef and potatoes, the pies and the puddings, that were so plentifully spread upon the table at home.

It was a long time before he got to sleep. As he lay there, thinking and thinking, there came to his mind some ether uses to which it seemed to him the hardtack might be put, which would be much more consistent with its nature than to palm it off on the soldiers as alleged food. He thought he could now understand why, when he enlisted, they examined his teeth so carefully, as if they were going to buy him for a mule. They said it was necessary to have good teeth in order to bite "cartridges" successfully, but now he knew it was with reference to his ability to eat hardtack.

Si didn't want to be killed if he could help it.

While he was lying there he determined to line one of his shirts with hardtacks, and he would put that on whenever there was going to be a fight. He didn't believe the bullets would go through them. He wanted to do all he could toward paralyzing the rebels, and with such a protection he could be very brave, while his comrades were being mowed down around him. The idea of having such a shirt struck Si as being a brilliant one.

Then, he thought hardtack would be excellent for half-soling his shoes. He didn't think they would ever wear out.

If he ran short of ammunition he could ram pieces of hardtack into his gun and he had no doubt they would do terrible execution in the ranks of the enemy.

All these things and many more Si thought of until finally he was lost in sleep. Then he dreamed that somebody was trying to cram stones down his throat.

The company was called out at daylight, and immediately after roll-call Si went to look after the hardtacks he had put to soak the night before. He thought he had never felt so hungry in his life. He fished out the hardtack and carefully inspected them, to note the result of the submerging and to figure out the chances on his much-needed breakfast.

To any old soldier it would be unnecessary to describe the condition in which Si found those hardtacks, and the effect of the soaking. For the information of any who never soaked a hardtack it may be said that Si found them transformed, to all appearances, into sole-leather. They were flexible, but as tough as the hide that was "found in the vat when the tanner died."

Si tried to bite a piece off one of them to see what it was like, but he couldn't get his teeth through it. In sheer desperation he laid it on a log, seized a hatchet, and chopped off a corner. He put it in his mouth and chewed on it a while, but found it as tasteless as cold codfish.

Si thought he would try the frying-pan. He chopped the hardtacks into bits, put in equal parts of water and grease, sifted over the mixture a little salt and pepper, and then gave it a thorough frying. Si's spirits rose during the gradual development of this scheme, as it seemed to offer a good prospect for his morning meal. And when it came to the eating. Si found it really good, comparatively speaking, even though it was very much like a dish compounded of the sweepings from around a shoemaker's bench. A good appetite was indispensable to a real enjoyment of this—which the soldiers called by a name that cannot be given here—but Si had the appetite, and he ate and was thankful.

"I thought I'd get the bulge on them things some way or other," said Si, as he drank the last of his coffee and arose from his meal, feeling like a giant refreshed with new wine.

For the next two or three months Si largely devoted his surplus energies to further experimenting with the hardtack. He applied every conceivable process of cookery he could think of that was possible with the meager outfit at his command in the way of utensils and materials. Nearly all of his patient and persevering efforts resulted only in vexation of spirit.

He continued to eat hardtack from day to day, in these various forms, but it was only because he had to do it. He didn't hanker after it, but it was a military necessity—hardtack or starvation. It was a hard choice, but Si's love of life—and Annabel—induced him to choose the hardtack.

But for a long-time Si's stomach was in a state of chronic rebellion, and on the whole he had a hard time of it getting used to this staple article of army diet. He did not become reconciled to it until after his regiment had rations of flour for a week, when the "cracker-line" had been cut by the guerillas and the supply of that substantial edible was exhausted. Si's experience with the flour swept away all his objections to the hardtack. Those slapjacks, so fearfully and wonderfully made, and those lumps of dough, mixed with cold water and dried on flat stones before the fire, as hard as cannon balls, played sad havoc with his internal arrangements. For the first time he was obliged to fall into the cadaverous squad at sick-call and wobble up to the doctor's shop, where he was dosed with castor-oil and blue-mass. Si was glad enough to see hardtack again. Most of the grumbling he did thereafter concerning the hardtack was because he often couldn't get enough.

About six months taught Si what all the soldiers learned by experience, that the best way to eat the average hardtack was to take it "straight"—just as it came out of the box, without any soaking or frying or stewing. At meal-time he would make a quart or so of coffee, stab the end of a ramrod through three or four slices of sowbelly, and cook them over the coals, allowing some of the drippings to fall upon the hardtack for lubricating purposes, and these constituted his frugal repast.

CHAPTER V. FAT PORK—INDISPENSABLE BODY TIMBER FOR PATRIOTISM

IT WAS told in the last chapter how the patriotic impulses of Si Klegg, of the 200th Ind., reached his stomach and digestive apparatus, and brought them under obedient subjection to hardtack. He didn't have quite so rough an experience with that other staple of army diet, which was in fact the very counterpart of the hardtack, and which took its most popular name from that part of the body of the female swine which is usually nearest the ground. Much of Si's muscle and brawn was due to the fact that meat was always plenty on his father's farm. When Si enlisted he was not entirely free from anxiety on the question of meat, for to his appetite it was not even second in importance to bread. If bread was the "staff of life" meat was life itself to Si. It didn't make much difference to him what kind it was, only so it was meat. He didn't suppose Uncle Sam would keep him supplied with quail on toast and porterhouse steaks all the time, but he did hope he would give him as much as he wanted of something in that line.

"You won't get much pork, unless you're a good forager," said one of Si's friends he met at Louisville, and who had been a year in the service.

Si thought he might, with practice and a little encouragement, be fairly successful in foraging on his' own hook, but at the same time he said he wouldn't grumble if he could only get plenty of pork. Fortunately for him he had not been imbued with the teachings of the Hebraic dispensation which declared "unclean" the beast that furnished the great bulk of the animal food for the American defenders of the Union.

Co. Q of the 200th Ind. received with the first issue of army rations at Louisville a bountiful supply of bacon of prime quality, and Si was happy at the prospect. He thought it would always be that way.

"I don't see anything the matter with such grub as that!" said Si. "Looks to me as though we were goin' to live like fighting-cocks."

"You're just a little bit brash," said his veteran friend, who had just been through the long, hungry march from Huntsville, Ala., to Louisville. "Better eat all you can lay yer hands on now, while ye've got a chance. One o' these days ye'll git into a tight place and ye won't see enough hog's meat in a week to grease a griddle. I've bin there, myself! Jest look at me and see what short rations 'll bring you to?"

But Si thought he wouldn't try to cross a bridge till he got to it, nor lie awake nights worrying over troubles that were yet in the future. Si had a philosophical streak in his mental make-up and this, by the way, was a good thing for a soldier to have. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," was an excellent rule for him to go by.

So Si assimilated all the pork that fell to his share, with an extra bit now and then from a comrade whose appetite was less vigorous. He thrived under its fructifying influence, and gave good promise of military activity and usefulness. No scientific processes of cookery were necessary to prepare it for immediate use. A simple boiling or frying or toasting was all that was required.

During the few days at Louisville fresh beef was issued occasionally. It is true that the animals slain for the soldiers were not always fat and tender, nor did each of them have four hind-quarters. This last fact was the direct cause of a good deal of inflammation in the 200th Ind., as in every other regiment. The boys who got sections of the forward part of the "critter," usually about three-quarters bone, invariably kicked, and fired peppery remarks at those who got the juicy steaks from the rear portion of the animal. Then when their turn came for a piece of hind-quarter the other fellows would growl. Four-fifths of the boys generally had to content themselves with a skinny rib or a soupshank.

Si shared the common lot, and did his full quota of grumbling because his "turn" for a slice of steak didn't come every time beef was issued.

The pickled pork was comparatively free from this cause of irritation. It was all alike, and was simply "Hobson's choice." Si remembered the fragrant and delicious fried ham that so often garnished his mother's breakfast table and wondered why there was not the same proportion of hams and sides in the Commissary that he remembered in the meathouse on the Wabash. He remarked to Shorty one day:

"I wonder where all this pork comes from?"

"It comes from Illinoy, I suppose," said Shorty. "I notice the barrels are all marked 'Chicago'."

"Must grow funny kind o' hogs out there—a mile long each, I should say. What do you mean?"

"Why, we've drawn a full mile o' sides from the Commissary, and haint struck a ham yit. I'm wonderin' jest how long that hog is!"

"Well, you are green. You oughter know by this time that there are only enough hams for the officers."

Now and then a few pigs' shoulders were handed round among the boys, but the large proportion of bone they contained was exasperating, and was the cause of much profanity.

Sometimes bacon was issued that had really outlived its usefulness, except, perhaps, for the manufacture of soap. Improperly "cured," it was strong and rancid, or, occasionally, so near a condition of putrefaction that the stench from it offended the nostrils of the whole camp. Some times it was full of "skippers," that tunneled their way through and through it, and grew fat with riotous living.

Si drew the line at this point. He had an ironplated stomach, but putrid and maggoty meat was too much for it. Whenever he got any of this he would trade it off to the darkies for chickens. There is nothing like pork for a Southern negro. He wants something that will "stick to his ribs."

By a gradual process of development his appetite reached the point when he could eat his fat pork perfectly raw. During a brief halt when on the march he would squat in a fence corner, go down into his haversack for supplies, cut a slice of bacon, lay it on a hardtack, and munch them with a keen relish.

At one of the meetings of the Army of the Cumberland Gen. Garfield told a story which may appropriately close this chapter.

One day, while the Army of the Cumberland was beleaguered in Chattanooga and the men were almost starving on quarter rations, Gen. Rosecrans and his staff rode out to inspect the lines. As the brilliant cavalcade dashed by a lank, grizzled soldier growled to a comrade:

"It'd be a darned sight better for this army if we had a little more sowbelly and not quite so many brass buttons!"

CHAPTER VI. DETAILED AS COOK— SI FINDS RICE ANOTHER INNOCENT

WITH A GREAT DEAL OF CUSSINESS IN IT

IT WOULD have been very strange, indeed, if Si Klegg had not grumbled loudly and frequently about the food that was dished up to him by the company cooks. In the first place, it was as natural for a boy to grumble at the "grub" as it was for him to try to shirk battalion drill or "run the guard." In the next place, the cooking done by the company bean-boiler deserved all the abuse it received, for as a rule the boys who sought places in the hash foundry did so because they were too lazy to drill or do guard duty, and their knowledge of cooking was about like that of the Irishman's of music:

"Can you play the fiddle, Pat?" he was asked. "Oi don't know, sor-r-r—Oi niver tried."

Si's mother, like most of the well-to-do farmers' wives in Indiana, was undoubtedly a good cook, and she trained up her daughters to do honor to her teachings, so that Si undoubtedly knew what properly-prepared food was. From the time he was big enough to spank he had fared sumptuously every day. In the gush of patriotic emotions that prompted him to enlist he scarcely thought of this feature of the case. If it entered his mind at all, he felt that he could safely trust all to the goodness of so beneficent a Government as that for the preservation of which he had offered himself as a target for the rebels to shoot at. He thought it no more than fair to the brave soldiers that Uncle Sam should furnish professional cooks for each company, who would serve everything up in the style of a first-class city restaurant. So, after Si got down among the boys and found how it really was, it was not long till his inside was a volcano of rebellion that threatened serious results.

When, therefore, Si lifted up his voice and cried aloud, and spared not—when he said that he could get as good coffee as that furnished him by dipping his cup into a tan-vat; when he said that the meat was not good soap-grease, and that the potatoes and beans had not so much taste and nutrition in them as so much pine-shavings, he was probably nearer right than grumblers usually are.

"Give it to 'em, Si," his comrades would say, when he turned up his loud bazoo on the rations question. "They ought to get it ten times worse. When we come out we expected that some of us would get shot by the rebels, but we didn't calculate that we were going to be poisoned in camp by a lot of dirty, lazy potwrestlers."

One morning after roll-call the Orderly-Sergeant came up to Si and said:

"There's been so much chin-music about this cooking-business that the Captain's ordered the cooks to go back to duty, and after this everybody'll have to take his regular turn at cooking. It'll be your turn to-day, and you'll stay in camp and get dinner."

When Co. Q marched out for the forenoon drill. Si pulled off his blouse and set down on a convenient log to think out how he should go to work. Up to this time he had been quite certain that he knew all about cooking that it was worth while to know. Just now none of his knowledge seemed to be in usable shape, and the more he thought about it the less able he seemed to be to decide upon any way of beginning. It had always appeared very easy for his mother and sisters to get dinner, and on more than one occasion he had reminded them how much better times they had staying in the house cooking dinner than he had out in the harvest field keeping up with the reaper. At this moment he would rather have kept up with the fastest reaper in Posey County, on the hottest of July days, than to have cooked the coarse dinner which his 75 comrades expected to be ready for them when they returned, tired, hot and hungry, from the morning drill.

He went back to the barracks and inspected the company larder. He found there the same old, coarse, greasy, strong, fat pork, a bushel or so of beans, a few withered potatoes, sugar, coffee, bread,

and a box of rice which had been collected from the daily rations because none of the cooks knew how to manage it. The sight of the South Carolina staple recalled the delightful rice puddings his mother used to make. His heart grew buoyant.

"Here's just the thing," he said. "I always was fond of rice, and I know the boys will be delighted with it for a change. I know I can cook it; for all that you've got to do is to put it in a pot with water and boil it till it is done. I've seen mother do that lots o' times.

"Let's see," he said, pursuing his ruminations.

"I think each boy can eat about a cupful, so I'll put one for each of 'em in the kettle."

"There's one for Abner," he continued, pouring a cupful in for the first name on the company-roll; "one for Acklin, one for Adams, one for Barber, one for Brooks," and so on down through the whole well-known list.

"It fills the old kettle tol'bly full," he remarked, as he scanned the utensil after depositing the contribution for Williams, the last name on the roll; "but I guess she'll stand it. I've heard mother tell the girls that they must always keep the rice covered with water, and stir it well, so that it wouldn't burn; so here goes. Won't the boys be astonished when they have a nice mess of rice, as a change from that rusty old side-meat!"

He hung the kettle on the fire and stepped out to the edge of the parade-ground to watch the boys drilling. It was the first time he had had the sensation of pleasure of seeing them at this without taking part in it himself, and he began to think that he would not mind if he had to cook most of the time. He suddenly remembered about his rice and hurried back to find it boiling, bulging over the top like a small snowdrift.

"I was afraid that kettle was a little too full," he said to himself, hurrying off for another campkettle, in which he put about a third of the contents of the first. "Now they're all right. And it'll cook better and quicker in two than one. Great Scott! what's the matter? They're both boiling over. There must be something wrong with that rice."

Pretty soon he had all the company kettles employed, and then all that he could borrow from the other companies. But dip out as much as he would there seemed no abatement in the upheaving of the snowy cereal, and the kettles continued to foam over like so many huge glasses of soda water. He rushed to his bunk and got his gum blanket and heaped upon it a pile as big as a small haycock, but the mass in the kettle seemed larger than it was before this was subtracted.

He sweat and dipped, and dipped and sweat; burned his hands into blisters with the hot rice and hotter kettles, kicked over one of the largest kettles in one of his spasmodic rushes to save a portion of the food that was boiling over, and sent its white contents streaming over the ground. His misery came to a climax as he heard the quick step of his hungry comrades returning from drill.

"Right face; Arms a-port; Break ranks—March!" commanded the Orderly-Sergeant, and there was a clatter of tin cups and plates as they came rushing toward him to get their dinner—something to stay their ravenous stomachs. There was a clamor of rage, ridicule, wrath and disappointment as they took in the scene.

"What's the matter here?" demanded the Captain, striding back to the company fire. "You young rascal, is this the way you get dinner for your comrades? Is this the way you attend to the duty for which you're detailed? Waste rations in some fool experiment and scatter good food all over the ground? Biler, put on your arms and take Klegg to the guard-house. I'll make you pay for this nonsense, sir, in a way that you won't forget in a hurry, I'll be bound."

So poor Si marched to the guard-house, where he had to stay for 24 hours, as a punishment for not knowing, until he found out by this experience, that rice would "s-well." The Captain wouldn't let him have anything to eat except that scorched and half-cooked stuff cut of the kettles, and Si thought he never wanted to see any more rice as long as he lived.

In the evening one of the boys took Si's blanket to him, thinking he would want it to sleep in.

"I tell ye, pard, this is purty derved tough!" said Si as he wiped a tear out of the southwest corner of his left eye with the sleeve of his blouse. "I think the Cap'n's hard on a feller who didn't mean to do nothin' wrong!" And Si looked as if he had lost all his interest in the old flag, and didn't care a pinch of his burnt rice what became of the Union.

His comrade "allowed" that it was hard, but supposed they, had got to get used to such things. He said he heard the Captain say he would let Si out the next day.

CHAPTER VII. IN THE AWKWARD SQUAD

SI HAS MANY TRIBULATIONS LEARNING THE MANUAL OP ARMS

WHEN Si Klegg went into active service with Co. Q of the 200th Ind. his ideas of drill and tactics were exceedingly vague. He knew that a "drill" was something to make holes with, and as he understood that he had been sent down South to make holes through people, he supposed drilling had something to do with it. He handled his musket very much as he would a hoe. A "platoon" might be something to eat, for all he knew. He had a notion that a "wheel" was something that went around, and he thought a "file" was a screeching thing that his father used once a year to sharpen up the old buck saw.

The fact was that Si and his companions hardly had a fair shake in this respect, and entered the field at a decided disadvantage. It had been customary for a regiment to be constantly drilled for a month or two in camp in its own State before being sent to the front; but the 200th was rushed off to Kentucky the very day it was mustered in. This was while the cold chills were running up and down the backs of the people in the North on account of the threatened invasion by Bragg's army. The regiment pushed after the fleeing rebels, but whenever Suell's army halted to take breath, "Fall in for drill!" was shouted through its camp three or four times a day. It was liable to be called into action at any moment, and it was deemed indispensable to begin at once the process of making soldiers out of those tender-footed Hoosiers, whose zeal and patriotism as yet far exceeded their knowledge of military things. Most of the officers of the 200th were as green as the men, though some of them had seen service in other regiments; so, at first, officers and non-commissioned officers who had been in the field a few months and were considered veterans, and who knew, or thought they knew, all about tactics that was worth knowing, were detailed from the old regiments to put the boys through a course of sprouts in company and squad drill.

One morning three or four days after leaving Louisville, word was passed around that the regiment would not move that day, and the boys were so glad at the prospect of a day of rest that they wanted to get right up and yell. Si was sitting on a log, with his shoes off, rubbing his aching limbs and nursing his blisters, when the Orderly came along.

"Co. Q, be ready in 10 minutes to fall in for drill. Stir around, you men, and get your traps on. Klegg, put on them gunboats, and be lively about it."

"Orderly," said Si, looking as if he hadn't a friend on earth, "just look at them blisters; I can't drill to-day!"

"You'll have to or go to the guard-house," was the reply. "You'd better hustle yourself, too!"

Si couldn't think of anything to say that would do justice to his feelings; and so, with wailing and gnashing of teeth, and a few muttered words that he didn't learn in Sunday school, he got ready to take his place in the company.

As a general combustion of powder by the armies of Buell and Bragg was hourly expected, it was thought best for the 200th to learn first something about shooting. If called suddenly into action it was believed the boys could "git thar," though they had not yet mastered the science of company and battalion evolutions. Co. Q was divided into squads of eight for exercise in the manual of arms. The man who took Si's squad was a grizzled Sergeant, who had been "lugging knapsack, box and gun" for a year. He fully realized his important and responsible functions as instructor of these innocent youths, having at the same time a supreme contempt for their ignorance. "Attention, Squad!" and they all looked at him in a way that meant business.

"Load in nine times—Load!"

Si couldn't quite understand what the "in" meant, but he had always been handy with a shotgun, to the terror of the squirrels and coons up in Posey County, and he thought he would show the Sergeant how spry he was. So he rammed in a cartridge, put on a cap, held up his musket, and blazed away, and then went to loading again as if his life depended upon his activity. For an instant the Sergeant was speechless with amazement. At length his tongue was loosened, and he roared out:

"What in the name of General Jackson are you doing, you measly idiot! Who ordered you to load and fire your piece?"

"I—I th—thought you did!" said Si, trembling as if he had the Wabash ague. "You said for us to load nine times. I thought nine loads would fill 'er chuck full and bust 'er and I didn't see any way but to shute 'em oft as fast as I got 'em in."

"No, sir! I gave the command according to Hardee, 'Load—in—nine—times!' and ef yer hadn't bin in such a hurry you'd 'a' found out what that means. Yer'll git along a good deal faster ef you'll go slower. Yer ought ter be made ter carry a rail, and a big one, for two hours."

Si protested that he was sorry, and didn't mean to, and wouldn't do so again, and the drill went on. The master went through all the nine "times" of "Handle—Cartridge!" "Draw—Rammer!" etc., each with its two or three "motions." It seemed like nonsense to Si.

"Boss," said he, "I kin get 'er loaded in just half the time ef yer'll let me do it my own way!"

"Silence!" thundered the Sergeant. "If you speak another word I'll have ye gagged 'n' tied up by the thumbs!"

Si had always been used to speaking right out when he had anything to say, and had not yet got his "unruly member" under thorough subjection. He saw that it wouldn't do to fool with the Drill Sergeant, however, and he held his peace. But Si kept thinking that if he got into a fight he would ram in the cartridge and fire them out as fast as he could, without bothering his head about the "one time and three motions."

"Order—Arms!" commanded the Sergeant, after he had explained how it was to be done. Si brought his gun down along with the rest like a pile-driver, and it landed squarely on the foot of the man next to him.

"Ou-ou-ouch!" remarked the victim of Si's inexperience.

"Didn't do it a'purpose, pard," said Si compassionately; "'pon my word I didn't. I'll be more keerful after this."

His suffering comrade, in very pointed language, urged upon Si the propriety of exercising a little more care. He determined that he would manage to get some other fellow to stand next to Si after that.

"Shoulder—Arms!" ordered the Sergeant, and the guns came straggling up into position. Then, after a few words of instruction, "Right shoulder shift—Arms!"

"Don't you know your right shoulder?" said the Sergeant, with a good deal of vinegar in his tone, to Si, who had his gun on the "larboard" side, as a sailor would say.

"Beg yer pardon," said Si; "I always was lefthanded. I'll learn if yer only gimme a show!"

"Silence!" again roared the Sergeant. "One more word, sir, and I will tie ye up, fer a fact!"

The Sergeant got his squad down to an "order arms" again, and then, after showing them how, he gave the order, "Fix—Bayonets!"

There was the usual clicking and clattering, during which Si dexterously managed to stick his bayonet into the eye of his comrade, whose toes were still aching from the blow of the butt of Si's musket. Si assured him he was sorry, and that it was all a mistake, but his comrade thought the limit of patience had been passed. So he confidently informed Si that as soon as drill was over he was going to "pound the stuffin'" out of him, and there wouldn't be any mistake about it, either.

When the hour was up the Captain of the company came around to see how the boys were getting along. The upshot of it was that poor Si was immediately organized into an "awkward squad" all by himself, and drilled an extra hour.

"We'll see, Mr. Klegg," said the Captain, "if you can't learn to handle your arms without mashing the toes and stabbing the eyes out of the rest of the company."

CHAPTER VIII. ON COMPANY DRILL

SI GETS TANGLED IN THE MAZES OF THE EVOLUTIONS

"ALL in for company drill!"

These words struck the unwilling ears of Co. Q, 200th Ind., the next time Buell halted his army to draw a long breath.

"Wish somebody would shoot that durned Orderly," muttered Si Klegg. "For two cents I'd do it myself."

"Don't do it, Si," admonished Shorty, "They'd git another one that'd be just as bad. All orderlies are cusses."

Si believed it would be a case of justifiable homicide, and, if the truth must be told, this feeling was largely shared by the other members of the company. For more than a week the boys had been tramping over a "macadamized" Kentucky pike. Feet were plentifully decorated with blisters, legs were stiff and sore, and joints almost refused to perform their functions.

It had rained nearly all the previous day, and the disgusted Hoosiers of the 200th went sloshing along, wet to the skin, for 20 dreary miles. With that diabolical care and method that were generally practiced at such times, the Generals selected the worst possible locations for the camps. The 200th was turned into a cornfield, where the men sank over their shoetops in mud, and were ordered to bivouac for the night. The wagons didn't get up at all. How they passed the slowly-dragging hours of that dismal night will not be told at this time. Indeed, bare mention is enough to recall the scene to those who have "been there."

In the morning, when the company was ordered out for drill, Si Klegg was standing before the sputtering fire trying to dry his steaming clothes, every now and then turning around to give the other side a chance. The mercury in his individual thermometer had fallen to a very low point—in fact, it was a cold day for Si's patriotism. He had reached that stage, not by any means infrequent among the soldiers, when he "didn't care whether school kept or not."

"Well, Si, I s'pose you love your country this mornin'!" said Shorty. He was endeavoring to be cheerful under adverse circumstances.

"I ain't quite as certain about it," said Si, reflectively, "as I was when I left home, up in Posey County. I'm afeared I haven't got enough of it to last me through three years of this sort of thing!"

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