

Miscellaneous.

OUR CHRISTMAS STORY.

The hero of our little tale was born on Christmas eve, among the hollows of a New England hill, whose sloping sides sent down into the vale below whole rafts of broken ice and snow whenever the sun unloosed the icy reign of winter. He grew up, went to school, wapped jack-knives, and rode down hill in the winter as all enterprising lads do. Little Asa P. was a lively brick, and had not a particle of grum melancholy in his disposition. At school he was tormented with a lively passion, called puppy love, the object of which was a gay little witch of a creature, with coal black, laughing eyes, and ringlets of flaxen hair, which danced on her alabaster neck as she coyly ran over the strawberry patch. Our hero had a "taking" for the girl, he knew not why, and the two were always together. How they passed the day in sweet converse, and whiled away the long, dreary hours in telling blue-beard stories, occasionally varying the scene by jumping brooks and chasing great golden winged butterflies, is only repeating the history of all who have happened to be born when very young. The story of youth is the same—the gay season when the heart is uncluttered by care, and the bursting pockets are crammed with pin boxes, basson nuts, and an old rusty nail.

But the plot thickens and our story must hasten along like a traveler carrying a small bundle under his arm. Asa's father was dead. He lived with a hard hearted old guardian, who thrashed him half out of his shoes, and his senses. He determined to run away. So taking his little friend by the hand one day, he imparted to her the resolution he had formed. He must leave her, she implored Asa never to forget her, and then implanted a sweet kiss on his brow, with mutual vows of constancy. Asa, with a sad heart and swelling breast, crept up to his chamber, and packed up his little budget of things. The stairs creaked as he descended to the hall, and he feared every creak would be a signal of alarm to the ears of his detested guardian. Asa nothing daunted shied into the butery and took down a cold Turkey, and lapped the cream from a delicious pan of new milk. The cream whitened his unwiped lips as he passed into the orchard. The trees were whitened with a ocean of white blossoms, and sent down a shower of dew. He passed the old dog kennel and whistled to the "purps." As our little hero with mouth wide open for whatever should turn up, beat his way down the old mill road, and as the sun rose, the water poured over the old dam like a sheet of silver. He knew every pine log by heart where he had extracted gum. He came near being arrested and sent back as a truant boy by an old bespectacled dame, who held her hand over her forehead and said, "now I declare if that ain't Tom Truants boy!" Asa passed behind the barn and managed this masked battery so unadroitly calculated to check his advance. Asa hurried on, and so must this story. After a weeks dreary tramp he arrived in New Bedford, got on a whale ship, went to the Indies, was cast away on a rock bound coast, where he threw up his Turkey.

While our little cast a way is running the gauntlet among jungled tigers and missionary eating cannibals, in search of some friendly port, we are obliged to leave him in this plight rather unceremoniously, and shift the scene to a more congenial part of this most voracious tale. Years must be supposed by our turkey eating reader, to have sped away, when in one of our fashionable boarding schools, the merry laugh of a young maiden is ringing out. Suitors are plenty, and the once joyous girl who kissed Asa, is the charm of every circle. But she heads not the gay brigaded flatteries of her numerous admirers; her heart is somewhere else. The charming virtue of constancy is hers. The gay, charmless, thoughtless

girl of years gone by, becomes in turn, the teacher, accomplished, loving, true, the personification of every angelic virtue. Her parents moved to a little town in Illinois, where the houses stood on four blocks at each corner, and the prairies are bespangled with a thousand red lipped flowers. She accompanies them thither. She becomes domesticated in the homely and invigorating affairs of the household, thus changing gracefully from prouder occupations to more humble pursuits.

One day just as the sun had gone down behind the prairie in golden splendor, a sailor, dressed in a suit of tarpaulin, "hove" into the little village. The boys looked askance and the dogs barked scandalously. The sailor was in a fair way of being discarded; but there was one who recognized him at once. There was a joyful greeting and a making up for long years of parting. Asa told his story. He escaped from the shore where we last left him, went to the Indies, engaged in trade, and became rich. There was a wedding soon after the above-mentioned, and a rustle of satin and fine linen. The war came on, Asa failed, and we doubt not if he had succeeded in getting a Pass from Rolla, he would to day be enjoying a fine turkey for dinner.

FROM MUNFORDSVILLE.

FULL PARTICULARS OF THE ENGAGEMENT.

From the Louisville Democrat, Dec. 19.

From Mr. Henry Myers, of the First Wisconsin Regiment, who came in last night from Munfordsville, we have a full and complete account of the skirmish at the Green river bridge on Tuesday, from which it appears that the engagement was brilliant and hard fought.

Eight companies of the Thirty Second Indiana Regiment, Col. Willich, were sent across the river as a picket guard. On the south bank of the river is a large field, which extends back from the river about half a mile, and then the timber begins. The Thirty Second, not suspecting any danger, were scattered in squads of fifteen and twenty, with their bayonets in their belts. On arriving near the timber, the enemy made an attack.

They numbered two regiments of infantry, a regiment of cavalry, the Texas Rangers, and a battery of six guns. It is a wonder that the whole force was not cut to pieces. At the command they began to rally till they had gathered some three hundred and fifty in one body. Upon this body the cavalry made a dash, but they held their ground, and, drawing their bayonets from their belts, managed to kill a number of horses and men. Without falling back one foot the entire force of eight companies succeeded in rallying, and stood their ground bravely, fighting like tigers. At one point in the field was a haystack, where twelve of the Thirty Second were stationed, in command of Lieut. Saxe, of Cincinnati. A company of cavalry surrounded them and ordered Lieut. Saxe to surrender. His reply was, "Never." He was armed with two revolvers, and it is stated that he shot eight of the cavalry, when he was pierced with eight or nine shots and fell. Of the twelve men, ten were killed, while fourteen of the cavalry, with their horses, were completely riddled.

Captain Stone's Louisville battery, on the north bank of the river, fired three shells at the enemy. One went over, another fell short, but the third went directly to the mark. The Thirty Sixth Indiana and Sixteenth Ohio Regiments were sent to their relief, but the battle was ended and the enemy in full retreat before their arrival. To the glorious Thirty Second belongs all the honor of this brilliant engagement, except so much as was done by Captain Stone's battery.

The Texan Rangers are reported as being superb riders, well armed, with Enfield rifle, one pair of revolvers, and sabre to each man.

The firing by the infantry and artillery is represented as being very poor, often falling wide of the mark. Had it not been for the men killed by the cavalry at the haystack, where they were completely surrounded there would have been but three deaths in the Thirty Second.

INSTRUCTIONS IN PREPARING CLAIMS FOR SOLDIERS' PAY.

To enable those who may have claims upon the United States, for money due deceased officers and soldiers, on account of military services rendered, whether in the regular or volunteer service, to obtain the same, with the least delay, the following information is furnished:

Order of Payment.

Order First—If the deceased was married, payment will be made—1st, to the widow; 2d, if no widow, to his child, or children; (if minors, to the guardian.)

Order Second—If he died unmarried—1st, to the father; 2d, if the father is dead, to the mother, if both parents are dead, to the brothers and sisters, collectively; lastly, to the heirs general; (to be distributed in accordance with the laws of the State in which the deceased had his domicile.)

Application, Proof, Authentication.

Application—The claimant or claimants must make a written application, under oath, and over his, her, or their own signature, stating his, her or their name, age, residence, connexion to the deceased, with the letter or name of the captain of the company and regiment to which he belonged; time of his death and the nature of the pay claimed; whether "arrears of pay," &c.; and the "\$100 bounty," under act of July 22, 1861.

Proof—To satisfy the accounting officers that the person or persons thus claiming is or are entitled to the money in the character, he, she, or they claim, the depositions of two credible witnesses will be required, stating that they are acquainted with the claimant or claimants, the connexion held to the deceased, and that they (the deponents) are disinterested.

Authentication—The application and depositions, above required, to be subscribed and sworn to before a judge, commissioner, notary public, or justice of the peace, duly authorized to administer oaths, accompanied by the certificate and seal of a court of record as to the fact of the said judge, &c., being duly commissioned and acting in his official capacity at the time of the execution of the foregoing papers.

If the soldier died unmarried, it must be so stated in the applications of those claiming to be the father, mother, brothers, or sisters, as well as by the witnesses.

Proof of marriage (record evidence, if possible) must always accompany the applications of those claiming to be widows.

Administration—As the taking out of "letters of administration" is attended with considerable expense, often unnecessary, it is suggested that it be done only when required by the Auditor.

Discharged Soldiers—When a soldier or volunteer is discharged, he is or should be furnished with a regular "Discharge" and two (duplicate) "Pay Certificates." Upon these papers he can be paid by a paymaster of the army upon their presentation. Should he fail to present them for payment to a paymaster, or, having presented them, and payment refused, and they are sent to this office, the applicant must state the reasons for such refusal, accompanied by proof of identity and authentication, as in the case of deceased soldiers. In no case should the "oath of identity," on the back of the "Discharge," be filled up, as the "Discharge" is returned to the soldier after his claim has been acted upon. Where "Pay Certificates" have been withheld, he must send all other papers given to him at the time of his discharge.

Bounty—No discharged volunteer can receive the bounty provided by the act of July 22, 1861, unless "he shall have served for a period of two years, or during the war, if sooner ended;" but "the widow, if there be one, and if not, the legal heirs of such as die, or may be killed in the service, in addition to all arrears of pay and allowances, shall receive the sum of one hundred dollars."

Pensions—Applications for pensions, on account of "disability" received in the service, should be made to the Commissioner of Pensions.

Mode of Payment—Payments will be made by an order from the accounting officers on any paymaster of the army. Such order will require the signature of the claimant on its face before it will be paid.

Mode of Presenting Claims—All claimants wishing to obtain information, or to present claims, can communicate with this office by mail, and will receive as speedily a reply as the business of the office will allow.

Postage—The government pays all postages on such communications, whether received or transmitted by this office.

A compliance with the above rules will insure a prompt settlement of all claims, without unnecessary delay.

Address **ERA B. FRENCH,**
Second Auditor of Treas. Dep't,
Washington City, D. C.

Mr. Trumbull's Bill.

The bill introduced in the Senate by Mr. Trumbull, provides for the absolute forfeiture of all property of rebels who are beyond the reach of judicial process. The property in insurrectionary districts is to be seized and appropriated by military powers. That in the districts where it can be reached by legal process is to be confiscated through the courts. The proceeds, after the payment of the expenses and just claims of loyal creditors, are to be applied to reimbursing loyal citizens despoiled of their property by rebels, and the balance to paying the expenses of suppressing insurrection. Rebel owners of slaves are to forfeit their right to them and the negroes are to become free. The president is to be provided for their colonization, if willing to go, in some tropical country where they will have the protection of the Government.

Never Saw the Sea—Each branch of the fine arts has contributed its quota to the roll of unexpected successes and sudden bounds into celebrity. There is the story of Paganini impatiently dashing his sponge against his canvas, and producing the precise effect, the foam on a horses' mount, which he had been long and vainly laboring for, and there is a similar one told of Hayden, the musical composer, when required to imitate a storm at sea. He kept trying all sorts of passages, ran up and down the scale and exhausted his ingenuity in heaping together chromatic intervals and strange discords. Still Curtiz, the author of the libretto, was not satisfied. At last the musician, out of patience, extended his hands to the two extremities of the keys, and bringing them rapidly together, exclaimed, "The deuce take the tempest! I can't make nothing out of it." "That is the very thing!" exclaimed Curtiz, delighted with the truth of the representation. Neither Hayden nor Curtiz, adds the author from whom we quote, had ever seen the sea.

The Carbonate Times, on reliable information, announces that the spread of the treasonable order of the "Knights of the Golden Circle" is startling in all the border States. It says that in Southern Illinois there are now probably 10,000 men enrolled. The members are exclusively what are called peace men.

Mrs. Lincoln has received a present of a very costly bonnet from the ladies of New York. On the strings is a likeness of "Old Abe," surrounded by a wreath, and this surmounted by national emblems.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

We learn that the Press on which the Springfield (Mo.) Mirror was printed, has been hauled off to Arkansas by the rebels, and the type and other material of the Office destroyed. The editor, who is now here, says he hopes he will be able to return the compliment some day.

DEAD—On Saturday, December 21st, Peter Schryver, Fifer of Co. E, 36th Ills. Reg., of Little Rock, Kendall co., Illinois.

The blockading fleet, off Cape Henry, boarded two hundred and fifty seven vessels between September 8th and November 27th.

The Beaufort negroes are picking cotton for the Government at three cents per pound.

Senator Lane, of Kansas, has been tendered a Brigadier Generalship by the President.

Lieut. Col. W. S. Ketchum, Acting Inspector General of this Department, is now here inspecting the troops.

Purser equised to give his men a Christmas dinner in St. Louis. Part of his rabble taken at Milford, arrived in that city last evening, where they will have a liberal allowance of Turnkeys instead of Turkeys.

The prisoners occupied thirty-four car loads.

Gen. Scott has returned with health much improved. The General had an interview with Napoleon before leaving Paris.

About one mile of the North Missouri Railroad has been torn up by the rebels.

A large portion of Platte City was recently destroyed by fire. Supposed to be the work of an incendiary.

The Kentucky correspondent of the St. Louis Republican writes as follows:

"I venture to predict that the 10,000 additional troops for the sole defence of the State, can be raised in ten days. Our people are burning with a desire to expel the invaders from our soil—we have resolved by the help of God, not only to drive them from our soil which they now pollute, but to follow them into their homes and hovels in Tennessee and Arkansas, and at the very doors and hearth-stones of these uncivilized vagabonds, wipe out the unprovoked insult they have offered us. They have mistaken the temper and spirit of Kentuckians, if they for a moment imagine that we will tamely submit to the outrages they have heaped upon us by the invasion of our soil. They must and will be chastised, and that right severely and right soon."

It is stated that the war news from England, and the pressure of Congress will have the effect to force McClellan to advance.

Col. Mulligan has not a very high opinion of Home Guards. He thinks them, like the Wide Awakes, "invincible in Peace and invisible in War."—Mo. Dem.

The body of a middling sized man contains a pound of phosphorus, which if in a free state, and inflamed, would burn him up and every thing around him.

Can't be! says the Hartford Times, we know lots of old bachelors and antiquated maidens who haven't phosphorus enough in 'em to make a match.

The federals are now said to have complete control of all the principal crossing points on the Missouri river.