THE CAMP FIRE.

GATHERING AROUND IT IN A REMINISCENT MOOD.

Indians as Enlisted Men — A Letter in a Button — Confederate Prisoners on Their Travels, Etc., Etc.

The enlistment of Indians to form 8 troops and 19 companies in as many cavalry and infantry regiments is an important step toward a solution of the "Indian problem." It is, of course, an experiment, but one form from which no harm can come to the new recruits or to the service. It may be productive of good, certainly to the Indians, probably to the Army.

The use of subject tribes under white officers has proved successful in the British occupation of India, and there are many who believe that it solved a difficult problem there. In the use of Indians as scouts our Army made a step toward the present experiment.

The War Department does not expect to escape difficulties in the organization of these Indian companies. It may be very slow recruiting, especially for the infantry, as the Indian has a prejudice to life out of the saddle, but among the Navajos and some other of the tribes of Arizona and New Mexico may be induced to take service in the infantry. These Indians, it is said, do most of their fighting and trailing on foot, and will readily adapt themselves to infantry life.

The conditions of enlistment will be about the same as those governing white recruits, excepting, of course, a requirement of a knowledge of English and testimonials of previous moral character, which the life of the Indian has made it unreasonable to insist upon.

The authorized enlisted strength of the army remains at 25,000, and if the Indian enlistments prove successful the secretary will ask Congress to increase the strength of the army, so as to include the 1,500 Indian recruits that are hoped for. At present the enlisted strength is 23,000, and some difficulty is now encountered in securing white and negro recruits.

The Indian companies will have separate quarters, but in all other respects will be treated as other soldiers are. They will be required to enlist for five years. Doubtless experience will suggest to the War Department and to the officers assigned to the Indian companies variations in clothing, food, equipments, and, perhaps, in discipline; but those most familiar with the Indians when employed as scouts assert that the intelligence of the Indians is likely to be of a higher order than that of the negro or the average white recruit. Those favorable to the present experiment believe that the influence of discipline upon the moral, mental and physical condition of the Indian recruits will be as plainly seen quite as soon as it is upon any other material from which our army is drawn.—Army and Navy Register.

A Letter in a Button.

A most unique relic of the late war is possessed by George Clutch, of Columbus, Ind. It is a button off a private soldier's uniform. During the latter part of the war Mr. Clutch's brother-in-law, J. F. Gallaher, whose home is in Ohio, had the misfortune to be captured by the Confederates and confined in Libby prison. After Mr. Gallaher had been there some time he began to feel the need of money, which would enhance his prospect of reaching the Union lines should he succeed in making his escape. A surgeon of his regiment, who was in the prison, was about to be exchanged. He cut off one of the large brass buttons from his uniform, and separating the two parts of it, made a cavity by taking out the filling. He then wrote on a slip of blank paper, in a small but distinct hand, the following note to his wife, which he inclosed in the cavity and again sealed the button together:

LIBBY PRISON.

DEAR WIFE—If we are not exchanged by the 1st of December, send me $30 in greenbacks. Put in a vial canned up in a can of tomatoes or blackberries. Send it in a box of provisions. J. F. GALLAHER.

This note is well preserved, and was still resting snugly in its place in the button when shown recently by Mr. Clutch. To continue the story the button was made to take the place of another on the uniform of the exchanged surgeon, who reached home and delivered it to Mrs. Gallaher in due time. It could not have escaped the close scrutiny of the officers had it been conveyed out of the prison in any other manner, as the officers were particular to search all of the exchanged prisoners, including the surgeon, most minutely. Mr. Gallaher did not have much hope that his scheme would succeed, even should the note reach his wife, but he was surprised, for the fruit arrived in a short time, and although closely inspected by the prison officials they failed to discover the vial containing the money concealed in one of the jars of thick preserves. Soon after receiving the money Mr. Gallaher succeeded in making his escape from the prison, being one of the chief participants in the great tunnel expedition. He found the $30 obtained in so novel a manner to be of great service to him in reaching the Union lines.—Ex.

Confederate Prisoners on their Travels.

* * * We were to be sent to Johnson's Island, Lake Erie.

Our route lay over the Erie Railroad, and we made the trip on parole. The guards placed at each door of our coach were for our comfort only, as we were objects of marked curiosity during the trip and would have been overrun with visitors had not admittance been refused. At the different stations we mingled freely with the people on the platform and found them, with few exceptions, courteous but inquisitive. We were, no doubt, a disappointing lot. There was nothing in our apparel to mark the Rebel soldier, and as we mingled with the crowd surprise was freely expressed that we were not as their fancy painted us, though just what shape that fancy took I never learned. The ladies, as was the case both North and South, were intensely patriotic, and read us severe and no doubt salutary lectures on the evil of our ways, which were submissively and courteously received and duly pondered.

There was one question that you could safely wager would be asked by five out of ten, and that was, "Do you honestly think you are right?" This conundrum was offered to me so often that were time allowed, being in President Lincoln's country, I answered in President Lincoln's style by stating that it "reminded me," and told them of the couple who took their bridal trip on an ocean steamer with the usual result. As the husband would return from sundry trips to the rail of the vessel his young wife would inquire, "Reginald, darling, are you sick?" To which he at last replied, "Good heavens! Rebecca do you think I am doing this for fun?"—The Century.

What Became of the Cow.

As I have never seen anything in the papers from the boys of the 57th Ill., it would seem that such a regiment never existed. The following incident which is no doubt well remembered by many comrades, should wake them up, and be the cause of letting their old friends know they are still on earth.

In March, 1862, just before the battle of Shiloh, the 57th Ill. was in camp about half a mile back from the river. Only a few weeks before a sleek cow, somewhat resembling a Jersey, made her appearance, and was at once declared "contraband." She became attached to the regiment, and as she was in prime condition, the Hospital Steward was instructed to care for her. She furnished her daily quota of milk, which was relished by all in the hospital at the time, and to state that her presence was welcome would be to state it mildly. During the bloody 6th and 7th days of April she disappeared, only to return to the regiment after the battle was over. During the march to and through the siege of Corinth, she was in constant attendance upon the boys, and gave them a feeling of home-like content. After the siege I was confined in the hospital, and the milk furnished by "Bossy" made a welcome addition to my cup of black coffee.

Some time during October the cow suddenly disappeared. Whether she was made into beef by some other regiment or appropriated for other uses, the 57th never knew. Can any comrade tell anything about "Bossy's" fate?—Wm. Kunth, 57th Ill., in National Tribune.

Lacquer for War Vessels.

There arrived at San Francisco from Japan by the steamer China two packages addressed to the United States Navy Department, Washington, D. C. It was learned that the contents of these cases were four plates of iron and steel, each four feet square. These plates are covered with four coats of anti-fouling and anti-corrosive lacquer. They will be subjected to a test of submergence in salt water for three months, in order to ascertain whether the process can be applied to the ships of the "White Squadron."

It is said by those who have seen the Japanese steel warships having this lacquer on their bottoms, instead of the usual paint, that the plates were thoroughly protected, and that the lacquer coating was perfectly smooth and unbroken. The bottom of the warship Niniwa Kan was coated with this lacquer for nine months. When the vessel was docked it was found that its plates were in excellent condition, and not the least particle of grass or barnacles was found.

Waynesboro.

G. L. Camp, Co. G, 92d Ohio, was glad to see an account of the battle of Waynesboro, as he was a participant in that fight. On the night of Dec. 3 the writer's regiment was camped in the rear of Kilpatrick's headquarters, and the rebels threw some shells into his forces, killing some of his men. He asked Gen. Beard to support him while he charged them the next morning. The cavalry charged and the writer's regiment followed them for six miles, and he never saw so many dead and wounded rebels and horses before or since for the amount of time it took to go over the ground. They passed through Waynesboro and formed in line of battle, the rebels having made a stand on the hill beyond the town. The rebels were plainly to be seen on the opposite side of a clear field in the timber. While the infantry engaged them in front the cavalry went around to turn their flank, but by the time the infantry had advanced half way to where the rebels had formed they "skedaddled."—National Tribune.

Colored People Pleased.

The colored citizens of Washington are happy. The war department has definitely decided to bring a troop of colored cavalry—I of the Ninth—to Fort Meyer as a reward for its services in the recent Indian campaign. No greater honor could be paid a troop, white or colored, than this, for in addition to being the most delightful cavalry station in the country, Fort Meyer has been officially designated as the haven of rest for the troops that have made themselves conspicuous in military achievements. Besides, the troops stationed there have the additional distinction of being the guard of honor to the President on occasions of official ceremony. Troop K of the Seventh Cavalry (white) will also be rewarded for its gallant conduct in the Wounded Knee battle by a period at Fort Meyer. The troops named will come East, relieving the two troops at present stationed here, about May 1.

Grant's Monument.

A former officer of the United States Army, who saw General Sherman in New York several weeks before his death, said that the latter expressed great indignation at the continued talk and inaction about a monument for General Grant. He said: "It is enough to make General Grant turn in his grave to have all this talk and begging going on for a monument over his body. I know that all Grant would have ever wished would have been a plain marble slab, something to mark his last resting-place, and no more. I hope that when I am gone no one will talk about a monument over me. A good piece of white marble is enough for any soldier or anybody."

A POLAR REFRIGERATOR.

MAMMOTHS KEPT ON ICE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.

Legends and Relics of Past Ages in the Frozen North—The Giant Rat of China and the Huge Mastodon—Ancient Meat.

When the first Europeans visited China and began to obtain information regarding the traditions of the country they learned, among other things, that in the natural history of the people was an enormous subterranean rat called tyn-schu.

The rat was five or six times as large as a horse, had terrible teeth, and lived chiefly in the northern country, where it forced its way beneath mountain ranges, so that when a tremor of an earthquake was heard in China the parents would turn to the child and say:

"My son, behave yourself. The tyn-schu is burrowing beneath the mountains, making the earth tremble."

Thus it came to be believed by all that the big rat was an actual fact. No one could be found, however, who had met with the tyn-schu until a hunter from the far north was discovered who said he had seen one, and here is his story:

"I am a fisherman, and some years ago I traveled in Northern China and Siberia, following up the rivers to the northern ocean. One winter the cold had been more severe than usual, and we started down the Lena before the ice had gone. It was still very cold, but we kept on, hoping to secure many fish to dry and carry into the interior later on.

"One day we were passing a high cliff that was partly undermined by a turn in the river when my comrade asked me if I had ever seen a tyn-schu. I replied no. 'Well,' he said, 'there is one coming out.'

"I looked up and there, about forty feet from the beach, was a big black mass of something. I could see two long teeth, a long tail and its shaggy fur, and it was evidently struggling to get out, as the ice cliff was cracked.

"'When he sees the sunlight,' my comrade said, 'it will kill him and when we come back we shall find him dead.' And this was true, for several months later when we went back there lay the monster on the beach dead. It had crawled out of its hole and died in the sunlight and was mostly eaten up by bears and wolves. We cut off the big teeth, which were as much as two men could lift, and took them up the river where I sold one, which I heard was sent to the Emperor."

Such was the Chinaman's story, and that he believed that the rat was really a living creature there can be no doubt; and the belief is supported by the finding in China of gigantic bones, beneath the surface, of these rats that have accidentally been caught by rays of sunlight.

The origin of this superstition is a veritable giant of the ice, says a writer in the New York Herald—a huge elephant which existed thousands of years ago in nearly all countries, and especially about Northern Europe and Siberia.

In the long ago of geological ages the climate of the far north was much milder than at present, and the Siberian islands in the Arctic Ocean were covered with trees and were the home of vast herds of monster elephants. When the first white men visited this desolate region they found the shore in some instances literally covered with the tusks, everywhere protruding from the sand, partly hidden by it, showing that here was a graveyard of monsters of the olden time. When the account reached the centers of civilization men went out to see if it was true, and in a short time an extensive ivory trade in these ancient relics sprang up.

There was then an indefinite idea of the animal which bore them, but gradually the fact became known that they were the tusks of an enormous elephant known as the mammoth.

Imagine Jumbo a third longer, a third higher, and covered with a coat of woolly hair from two to three feet in length, and some idea can be formed of this king of the elephants that lived in the long ago. For a long time a very exaggerated idea of the animal was entertained, and some curious pictures of it were made, but finally a specimen was found and then another.

The first and best specimen was discovered by a native fisherman. He saw its tusk protruding from the bank or tunda, and watched it for several seasons, until finally he found it lying upon the beach. The wild animals had been feeding on it, and think of it! the mammoth may have been dead anywhere from five to fifty thousand years, yet its flesh was so perfectly preserved and the eye so fresh that a scientific man said he could hardly distinguish between it and the eye of a living animal.

Thousands of years ago this gigantic creature had perished, perhaps falling into a crevasse in the ice, and ever since had been frozen up like solid rocks. Gradually undermined by the river the body had fallen out, as we have seen.

About thirty pounds of the red hair and wool was collected by the fisherman, the tusks and portions of the feet, and all sold to a Russian official, who immediately sent word to St. Petersburg, whereupon the Emperor ordered that the entire skeleton should be preserved. The skeleton was secured, with some of the skin and hair, and all are now in the Royal Museum of St. Petersburg, illustrating the enormous size of this prehistoric giant.

This was in the last century, and ever since people have been on the lookout for the giants of the ice. Several specimens have been found, the most remarkable by a Russian engineer named Ben Kendorf, in 1846.

Look Out for Cheats in Rubber.

There is nothing that an unscrupulous salesman can outwit the unwary purchaser in as easily as in rubber. All rubber, unless it is the hard vulcanized kind used years ago for jewelry, becomes disintegrated or spoiled by age. It is a vegetable matter and this change cannot be prevented—at least no process has been discovered yet by which it has been. Rubber overshoes, gossamers, waterproofs or any goods that have been long manufactured become perfectly useless, and at a slight cause will fall to pieces. A new pair of overshoes fresh from the factory will last three times as long as one of last year's stock. The gossamer waterproofs fall to pieces sometimes at the touch. This old rubber, it is said, is bought up at the shops and manufactured over, but it cannot be made durable. At best it is only shoddy of a detestable kind.

CURIOUS SPRINGS.

A Dip in a Warm Spring at Banff, Alberta.

One of the springs fills a basin at the foot of a low cliff writes a traveler, and is fenced about so that swimmers may enjoy their bath undisturbed. I tried a dip in this pool one chill September afternoon when the mountains were freshly powdered with snow, and a cold rain was falling in the valleys. Emerging from the adjacent cottage in a shiver, I leaped into the water, and was at once as comfortable, so far as warmth was concerned, as if I had been sitting at the hotel fireside, and though the temperature was but little below blood heat the bath conferred something of the pleasure that a swimmer feels in buffeting with breakers. The immediate effect is bracing, and while those who remain long in the water say that they feel lassitude and enervation afterward, I experienced nothing of the kind, though I swam about for not less than twenty minutes. The presence of lime and sulphur makes the water at least as dense as that of the sea, and the bather feels more buoyant and swims with slighter effort than in fresh water. Though displeasing to the nostrils, it does not offend the taste; and if, by chance, it gets into the nose or throat, it does not nauseate, as salt and river waters are apt to do. At two or three points the surface is marked by currents rising from below, and over the spot where the boiling was most perceptible I descended, staying down as long as I could hold my breath. At that point the pool was about seven feet deep, and the bottom was formed, for a foot or so, of dark sand. In this I could work my way down, slowly and slightly, but the earth was unwilling to receive me, and it was easier to float than sink in the heavy water while there was air in the lungs, so I bobbed to the top again, like a piece of wood. The attendant told me that when the water was drawn off he had been able to lower himself into the sand to the armpits and he had less trouble in getting out, with the gush of water, than he had in getting down. The appearance of spruce cones and chips of wood on the bottom is remarkable, inasmuch as there are no trees close by and they seem to be cast up from below. A tree trunk is slowly working its way up from the gravely depths, the ends being broken off as it rises, so that bathers may not be inconvenienced by it. How it got there under the bed of the spring, and how many centuries it has been buried, who can tell?

WAITING TILL MEN DIE.

Life History of Prominent People Always Kept in Readiness.

Newspaper obituaries are not always written on the spur of the moment. In fact, the reverse, as a rule, is the case, and the lives of great men or other personages are written by the hand of the journalistic biographer long before death knocks at the door.

In every important newspaper office in the United States is a department devoted to the preparation and preservation of the biographers of prominent people and where they are available for immediate use, and where memoirs, shorter or longer, according to the public importance of the subject, are regularly classified and "pigeon-holed," ready for use when the fatal moment arrives. From time to time these records are added to and brought up to date for the purpose of avoiding confusion or delay in case that the biography is to be made use of at brief notice. To a large part of the public this information will be in the nature of news and will serve to explain to their wondering minds how a two or three column obituary of some public man appears in the daily papers in conjunction with the announcement of his sudden death.

It is a curious fact that the practice of writing obituaries of great men seems almost invariably to have the effect of keeping them alive. At any rate they rarely die very soon after their biographies are written, and very frequently many years elapse before their death gives an opportunity for their posthumous praises to be founded.

Keep Early Hours.

It is a known fact among physicians, nurses and those generally interested in the restoration of health that the percentage of women among the middle and upper classes who retire early is alarmingly small, says the Jenness-Miller Magazine. The term "alarmingly" is used advisedly, because the growing tendency to keep late hours cheats nature out of her just dues and compels her to retaliate in a manner that often threatens not only health but life, most seriously.

There are few women so constituted but that the wear and tear of daily life consumes to a great extent their vitality, which can only be restored by means of perfect repose.

Especially are long, unbroken hours of rest necessary for wives and mothers, all of whom are giving of their strength unreservedly and getting little physically in return save that which is derived from sleep.

The growing tendency of the age toward physical culture training is not well sustained in the late hours so universally kept by many of the most enthusiastic advocates of that movement. Those who earnestly desire to use the most effective means at hand for the preservation of health and beauty should not fail to keep early hours.

The Importance of Language.

One of the great faults of the young men of to-day is they do not attach sufficient importance to language and its meaning. A youth will visit a girl say at 8 o'clock in the evening and vows repeatedly he only called to stay a few moments and yet it is all the maiden can do to get him out the door by 12.

March of Progress.

It might be a good plan to the bell punches to up-town real-estate men, to see how much money they have made from people they have induced to "move up."—Puck.

FOR THE LADIES.

SERIOUS AND LIGHT READING MATTER FOR THE GENTLE SEX.

A Kiss in the Dark—Debasement of Women—Who Should Bow First?—Minor Items—Pithy Points.

It was in the dark at the foot of the stairs
Where after the dance I traced her,
I heard her step and I caught her there
And fondly kissed and embraced her.

She did not seem to take it amiss,
And finding myself in clover,
I wasn't content with a single kiss,
But I kissed her a dozen times over.

And I knew that I was not giving offense
To her, for she seemed to like it.
Ah, me! 'twas a blissful experience—
How lucky I was to strike it!

Then a light appeared and flight I took,
With my mind on distraction's borders;
I had caught and been kissing the colored cook
Who was going up stairs for orders.
—Cape Cod Item.

To complete the ecstasy of those who believe in the degradation of human labor, says a traveler, in Christian at Work, need I say that at Stockholm the debasement of woman is perhaps more thorough and complete than in any city of northern Europe? She, here, practically supplants the beasts of burden. And I am not altogether unfamiliar with woman's work in Europe. I have seen her round the pit mouth, at the forge, and bare-footed in the brick yards of "merry England," filling blast furnaces and tending coke ovens in "sunny France." I have daily watched her bearing the heat and burden of the day in the fields of the "Fatherland," and in Austria-Hungary doing the work of man and beast on the farm and in the mine.

I have seen women emerge from the coal-pits of "busy Belgium," where little girls and young women graduate under-ground as hewers of coal and drawers of carts, for it is no uncommon thing in Europe to hitch women and dogs together, that manufacturing may be done cheaply.

Aged, bent and sunburned, I have seen women, with rope over shoulders, toiling on the banks of canals and dykes in picturesque Holland. Having witnessed all this, I was yet surprised to find in a city so beautiful and seemingly so rich and prosperous as Stockholm, women still more debased.

In Stockholm she is almost exclusively employed as hod-carrier and bricklayer's assistant. She carries bricks, mixes mortar, and, in short, does all the heavy work about the building. At the dinner-hour you see groups of women sitting on the piles of wood and stones eating their frugal repast. They wear a short gown, coming a trifle below the knee, with home-knitted woollen stockings and wooden shoes. Over the head a handkerchief is tightly tied. Those engaged in mixing mortar and tending plasterers wear aprons.

They are paid for a day of hard work of this toil, lasting twelve hours the magnificent sum of one kroner (equivalent to 1s. 1d.).

Who Should "Bow" First.

A great deal of nonsense has been talked about the question of whose place it is to bow first when a lady and gentleman meet upon the street or in any public assembly.

It is very absurd to say that a man should always wait until a lady has recognized him. In this, as in most other matters, common sense and mutual convenience are the only guides. Many ladies are near-sighted; many others find great difficulty in remembering faces. Are they, because of these drawbacks, to be always debarred of the pleasure of a chance meeting with some agreeable man?

The important thing, of course, is that a man should not presume; that, for instance, he should not speak to a lady to whom he has been merely introduced, unless she shows some sign of willingness to continue the acquaintance. Not to lift his hat to her with deference would be a rudeness, but he should not stop to speak unless she makes the first movement in that direction.

When two people meet who are really acquainted, it is not the man who should necessarily bow first, or the lady—it is whichever of them is the first to perceive and recognize the other.

If a lady is walking and meets a man whom she knows well, and who desires to speak with her, he will, of course, not commit the awkwardness of keeping her standing in the street, but if he has time will beg permission to join her for a few moments and walk beside her long enough for a brief chat.

The lady, on her part, will make it easy for him to leave her when they have exchanged the few pleasant sentences that belong to such a meeting.—Louise Chandler Moulton, in American Cultivator.

She Stopped the Train.

A train in Georgia was lately held up by a lone woman. It had got about 200 yards from a station when a negro woman was seen running frantically after it. The conductor saw her, pulled the bell, and the train came to a stop. A colored brakeman stood on the steps and reached his hand out to help the woman on. But she ran on by, and a negro boy hung himself out of the window and kissed her. The conductor was naturally a little wrathy, and told her so. She told him that her boy was going off, and they didn't give her time to tell him good-by, and she had to do it if she would have to follow the train ten miles.—Chicago Tribune.

Hints to Housekeepers.

A teaspoonful of salt dissolved in one-half glassful of water is excellent to allay nausea in sick headaches.

Shabby leather chair seats, vallses and bags can be brightened by rubbing them with the well-beaten white of an egg.

Never throw away the pieces of lemons after they have been squeezed with the lemon squeezer. They will come in handy for removing the stains from the hands and other articles. Dipped in salt, they will scour copper kettles nicely, and remove stains from brass work. They will take stains and dirt and odor from pans and kettles as nothing else will. The odor of fish and onions can thus be removed easily.—Rural World.

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—OF—

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