

howling down the road. I looked along the line. It was wonderful what small places men could get into. One fellow was shaking as if he had just taken the chills.

"Deploy as skirmishers" came the order, and away they went tearing through the cane fields. Then there arose a mighty yell. I cannot tell you what it sounds like, only that it makes a man go mad. I forgot that I was not a soldier; that I carried no gun; that men must die that day. My blood seemed on fire; I could see nothing but that ridge of yellow sand and snapping tubes behind; I only thought, "They are trying to kill us, we have a right to kill them." This kept going over and over in my mind. It is excitement that takes one's reason away. Most of the enemy's bullets were flying high, but here and there some poor fellow dropped his gun, tossed both arms in the air as if trying to stop some fleeting shadow, then fell into a tangled mass.

On and on they went and I managed to keep up. I remember being very near one fellow with a red face who kept shooting and yelling all the time, but still trembling like a leaf. All at once there went up a great "hurrah." Across the open hundreds of little brown bodies were running over the fields in wild confusion. The boys fell upon their knees, a long line of khaki brown turned to a thundering cloud of white. "Cease firing," the bugle blew. We stood upon the ridge of yellow sand and out upon the open we could count the dead by ones and twos and threes. I felt something in my hand and for the first time became conscious that I had drawn my revolver. I opened the breech; not a shell had been discharged.

In the rear several ambulance wagons were picking up the wounded. The sun peeped over miles of waving green and the boys went tramping down the long wet road to Mandalong. With the quartermaster I still found my place in the rear.

Shortly after we crossed a small river; the water was up to our shoulders. On the other side we came upon one of the wounded enemy; his knees had been shattered by a ball and the blood slowly dripped from the bamboo poles he rested upon. Two days later I passed the same place. He was still there, but his chin lay upon his breast and the blood no longer dripped. Overhead a vulture, with its long naked neck, flew round and round, with each circle getting nearer, while a myriad of blue flies hovered near the bloated face.

All day long we marched northward. By a great rock I saw a man and child. The latter was nude, while the former had nothing except a torn sack tied around his loins. Near by them on the ground lay a long bow of cocoa wood. I went over and picked it up. The man shrank back with fear. One of the

officers gave the child a quarter and it ran and hid behind the rock.

In our front they were undoubtedly having some heavy fighting for we could hear volley firing with now and then the roar of field artillery. Towards evening it began to rain. We passed an old Spanish monastery, with its cloister; a Filipino ran from the cane brake and entered the cloister. Several of the boys gave chase. He soon came out of the opposite door still carrying his gun. Four shots rang out in quick succession; dropping the rifle he ran across the plaza, jumped high in the air and fell dead.

The wind blew, the rain fell in torrents and with it came darkness. Somehow in the jumble and flying sheets of water I got separated from the command. For an hour or more I wandered about trying to find them, but in vain. Then I could not help thinking of the battles and marches I had read about; they often spoke of the missing ones, that could never be accounted for. Then I realized that I was lost, hopelessly lost, and, sitting down in the black jungle, I awaited for the dawn.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

AN EPISODE.

Looking through the publications of the State Historical Society for something to find fault with, I have come upon the following passage in the reminiscences of the Reverend Samuel Allis:

"Left St. Louis on the sixth of April, 1837—was fourteen days going to Bellevue—got the varioloid from a Jim Beckwith, who resides with the Black-foot Indians. This Beckwith was a negro. He gave the smallpox to several on the boat, three of whom died on their way up the river. Several of the Indian tribes above caught the smallpox. Beckwith and some 20,000 died of it."

Then there is an editorial note at the foot of the page, saying, with reference to the last statement, "this estimate is, of course, an exaggeration; but it has not seemed best to omit the passage."

The figures on the mortality among the Indians are indeed somewhat large. It is likely that the authorities in Hades had heard of the capture of Fort Mackinaw, and would have been too wary to admit 20,000 redskins within their stockade at one time. But there is a certain amount of inaccuracy throughout the whole paragraph quoted. Jim Beckwourth was not a negro. Up to 1837 he had hardly been among the Blackfeet save in the way of scalping. And he makes no mention in his autobiography of having died in 1837, but claims on the contrary to have been still living in the year when he put forth that amazing work, which was 1855.

Mr. Beckwourth's own testimony may be held not to be conclusive on these points. Truthfulness seems not to have

been his strongest point. A contemporary manuscript note in the Mercantile Library in St. Louis characterizes him as a "noted old liar." Captain Logan Enyart owns a ranch in a section of New Mexico where Beckwourth's memory is still kept green, and, being asked whether he is remembered there as a truthful man, he informs me that he never heard him accused of anything of the kind. But as to his having died in 1837, there is testimony available from unprejudiced sources.

The above-mentioned note in the St. Louis library states further that Beckwourth took part, in November, 1864, in a fight with the Cheyennes at a place called Sand Creek, and that some time after that he was living on a ranch of his near Denver. Albert D. Richardson said he saw him in Denver in 1860, and called him "a well-formed elderly man with a devil-may-care expression." Colonel Inman mentions him as discharging a mission to the Crows in connection with the famous Peace Commission of 1866, saying, too, that he died at that time. And even the great Fremont says he met the man on July 9th, 1842, about the mouth of Beaver Fork, while on his first trip outward.

It is, therefore, safe to assume that the report of his death in 1837 was as much "exaggerated" as anything in Mr. Allis' statement.

While Beckwourth was certainly not a negro, he had negro blood in his veins. Some of the old-timers who mention him say that his mother was a negress, others make her no more than a quadroon. Beckwourth himself says that his father was a planter, who had been a major in the revolutionary war, but is silent as to his mother. Most writers speak of him as a half-breed; Fremont called him a mulatto. He must have had some dark-colored blood, or he could never have been taken by the Crow Indians for a lost child of their own tribe; but he could not have been a pure negro, for the very same reason.

As to his living among the Blackfeet, the only stay he ever made among that nation seems to have been a trading-visit of twenty days in the spring of 1824. That brief term was, however, according to his own narrative (which is anything but monotonous) sufficient for him to marry two wives and tomahawk one of them. She went to a dance when he had told her to stay at home. The sojourn among Indians which has really made Beckwourth a conspicuous figure, was made with the Crows.

The chronology of his book is somewhat obscure, but a rather careful survey of it gives me the impression that he lived among the Crows, and was, to all intents and purposes, a Crow, from the fall of 1824 until the summer of 1836. He was taken prisoner by a war-party of three Indians while on a trapping expedition, but was recognized by an old squaw as a long-lost son, and