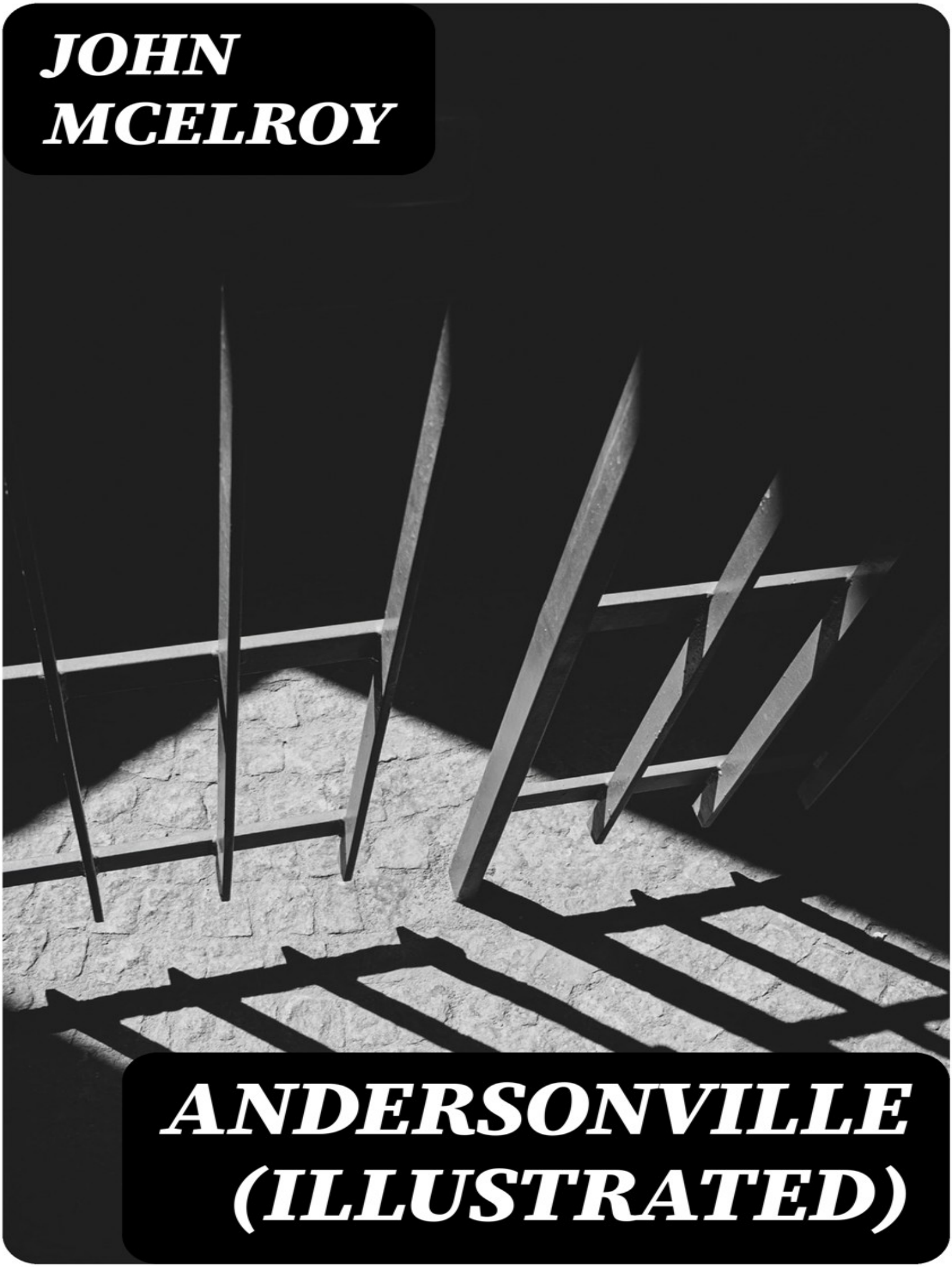
JOHN MCELROY
ANDERSONVILLE (ILLUSTRATED)

John McElroy

Andersonville (Illustrated)

EAN 8596547385813

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ANDERSONVILLE.

View from the North Gate when the Prison contained 35,000 Prisoners. Drawn from Rebel photographs in possession of the Author.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

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Fifteen months ago—and one month before it was begun—I had no more idea of writing this book than I have now of taking up my residence in China.

While I have always been deeply impressed with the idea that the public should know much more of the history of Andersonville and other Southern prisons than it does, it had never occurred to me that I was in any way charged with the duty of increasing that enlightenment.

No affected deprecation of my own abilities had any part is this. I certainly knew enough of the matter, as did every other boy who had even a month's experience in those terrible places, but the very magnitude of that knowledge overpowered me, by showing me the vast requirements of the subject-requirements that seemed to make it presumption for any but the greatest pens in our literature to attempt the work. One day at Andersonville or Florence would be task enough for the genius of Carlyle or Hugo; lesser than they would fail preposterously to rise to the level of the theme. No writer ever described such a deluge of woes as swept over the unfortunates confined in Rebel prisons in the last year-and-a-half of the Confederacy's life. No man was ever called upon to describe the spectacle and the process of seventy thousand young, strong, able-bodied men, starving and rotting to death. Such a gigantic tragedy as this stuns the mind and benumbs the imagination.

I no more felt myself competent to the task than to accomplish one of Michael Angelo's grand creations in sculpture or painting.

Study of the subject since confirms me in this view, and my only claim for this book is that it is a contribution—a record of individual observation and experience—which will add something to the material which the historian of the future will find available for his work.

The work was begun at the suggestion of Mr. D. R. Locke, (Petroleum V. Nasby), the eminent political satirist. At first it was only intended to write a few short serial sketches of prison life for the columns of the TOLEDO BLADE. The exceeding favor with which the first of the series was received induced a great widening of their scope, until finally they took the range they now have.

I know that what is contained herein will be bitterly denied. I am prepared for this. In my boyhood I witnessed the savagery of the Slavery agitation—in my youth I felt the fierceness of the hatred directed against all those who stood by the Nation. I know that hell hath no fury like the vindictiveness of those who are hurt by the truth being told of them. I apprehend being assailed by a sirocco of contradiction and calumny. But I solemnly affirm in advance the entire and absolute truth of every material fact, statement and description. I assert that, so far from there being any exaggeration in any particular, that in no instance has the half of the truth been told, nor could it be, save by an inspired pen. I am ready to demonstrate this by any test that the deniers of this may require, and I am fortified in my position by unsolicited letters from over 3,000 surviving prisoners, warmly indorsing the account as thoroughly accurate in every respect.

It has been charged that hatred of the South is the animus of this work. Nothing can be farther from the truth. No one has a deeper love for every part of our common country than I, and no one to-day will make more efforts and

sacrifices to bring the South to the same plane of social and material development with the rest of the Nation than I will. If I could see that the sufferings at Andersonville and elsewhere contributed in any considerable degree to that end, and I should not regret that they had been. Blood and tears mark every step in the progress of the race, and human misery seems unavoidable in securing human advancement. But I am naturally embittered by the fruitlessness, as well as the uselessness of the misery of Andersonville. There was never the least military or other reason for inflicting all that wretchedness upon men, and, as far as mortal eye can discern, no earthly good resulted from the martyrdom of those tens of thousands. I wish I could see some hope that their wantonly shed blood has sown seeds that will one day blossom, and bear a rich fruitage of benefit to mankind, but it saddens me beyond expression that I can not.

The years 1864-5 were a season of desperate battles, but in that time many more Union soldiers were slain behind the Rebel armies, by starvation and exposure, than were killed in front of them by cannon and rifle. The country has heard much of the heroism and sacrifices of those loyal youths who fell on the field of battle; but it has heard little of the still greater number who died in prison pen. It knows full well how grandly her sons met death in front of the serried ranks of treason, and but little of the sublime firmness with which they endured unto the death, all that the ingenious cruelty of their foes could inflict upon them while in captivity.

It is to help supply this deficiency that this book is written. It is a mite contributed to the better remembrance by their countrymen of those who in this way endured and died that the Nation might live. It is an offering of testimony

to future generations of the measureless cost of the expiation of a national sin, and of the preservation of our national unity.

This is all. I know I speak for all those still living comrades who went with me through the scenes that I have attempted to describe, when I say that we have no revenges to satisfy, no hatreds to appease. We do not ask that anyone shall be punished. We only desire that the Nation shall recognize and remember the grand fidelity of our dead comrades, and take abundant care that they shall not have died in vain.

For the great mass of Southern people we have only the kindliest feeling. We but hate a vicious social system, the lingering shadow of a darker age, to which they yield, and which, by elevating bad men to power, has proved their own and their country's bane.

The following story does not claim to be in any sense a history of Southern prisons. It is simply a record of the experience of one individual—one boy—who staid all the time with his comrades inside the prison, and had no better opportunities for gaining information than any other of his 60,000 companions.

The majority of the illustrations in this work are from the skilled pencil of Captain O. J. Hopkins, of Toledo, who served through the war in the ranks of the Forty-second Ohio. His army experience has been of peculiar value to the work, as it has enabled him to furnish a series of illustrations whose life-like fidelity of action, pose and detail are admirable.

Some thirty of the pictures, including the frontispiece, and the allegorical illustrations of War and Peace, are from the atelier of Mr. O. Reich, Cincinnati, O.

A word as to the spelling: Having always been an ardent believer in the reformation of our present preposterous system—or rather, no system—of orthography, I am anxious

to do whatever lies in my power to promote it. In the following pages the spelling is simplified to the last degree allowed by Webster. I hope that the time is near when even that advanced spelling reformer will be left far in the rear by the progress of a people thoroughly weary of longer slavery to the orthographical absurdities handed down to us from a remote and grossly unlearned ancestry.

Toledo, O., Dec. 10, 1879.

JOHN McELROY.

We wait beneath the furnace blast
The pangs of transformation;
Not painlessly doth God recast
And mold anew the nation.
Hot burns the fire
Where wrongs expire;
Nor spares the hand
That from the land
Uproots the ancient evil.

The hand-breadth cloud the sages feared
Its bloody rain is dropping;
The poison plant the fathers spared
All else is overtopping.
East, West, South, North,
It curses the earth;
All justice dies,
And fraud and lies
Live only in its shadow.

Then let the selfish lip be dumb
And hushed the breath of sighing;
Before the joy of peace must come
The pains of purifying.
God give us grace
Each in his place
To bear his lot,
And, murmuring not,
Endure and wait and labor!

WHITTIER

CHAPTER I.

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A STRANGE LAND—THE HEART OF THE APPALACHIANS—THE GATEWAY OF AN EMPIRE —A SEQUESTERED VALE, AND A PRIMITIVE, ARCADIAN, NON-PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE.

A low, square, plainly-hewn stone, set near the summit of the eastern approach to the formidable natural fortress of Cumberland Gap, indicates the boundaries of—the three great States of Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. It is such a place as, remembering the old Greek and Roman myths and superstitions, one would recognize as fitting to mark the confines of the territories of great masses of strong, aggressive, and frequently conflicting peoples. There the god Terminus should have had one of his chief temples, where his shrine would be shadowed by barriers rising above the clouds, and his sacred solitude guarded from the rude invasion of armed hosts by range on range of battlemented rocks, crowning almost inaccessible mountains, interposed across every approach from the usual haunts of men.

Roundabout the land is full of strangeness and mystery. The throes of some great convulsion of Nature are written on the face of the four thousand square miles of territory, of which Cumberland Gap is the central point. Miles of granite mountains are thrust up like giant walls, hundreds of feet high, and as smooth and regular as the side of a monument.

Huge, fantastically-shaped rocks abound everywhere—sometimes rising into pinnacles on lofty summits—sometimes hanging over the verge of beetling cliffs, as if placed there in waiting for a time when they could be hurled

down upon the path of an advancing army, and sweep it away.

Large streams of water burst out in the most unexpected planes, frequently far up mountain sides, and fall in silver veils upon stones beaten round by the ceaseless dash for ages. Caves, rich in quaintly formed stalactites and stalagmites, and their recesses filled with metallic salts of the most powerful and diverse natures; break the mountain sides at frequent intervals. Everywhere one is met by surprises and anomalies. Even the rank vegetation is eccentric, and as prone to develop into bizarre forms as are the rocks and mountains.

The dreaded panther ranges through the primeval, rarely trodden forests; every crevice in the rocks has for tenants rattlesnakes or stealthy copperheads, while long, wonderfully swift “blue racers” haunt the edges of the woods, and linger around the fields to chill his blood who catches a glimpse of their upreared heads, with their great, balefully bright eyes, and “white-collar” encircled throats.

The human events happening here have been in harmony with the natural ones. It has always been a land of conflict. In 1540—339 years ago —De Soto, in that energetic but fruitless search for gold which occupied his later years, penetrated to this region, and found it the fastness of the Xualans, a bold, aggressive race, continually warring with its neighbors. When next the white man reached the country—a century and a half later—he found the Xualans had been swept away by the conquering Cherokees, and he witnessed there the most sanguinary contest between Indians of which our annals give any account—a pitched battle two days in duration, between the invading Shawnees, who lorded it over what is now Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana—and the Cherokees, who dominated the country the southeast of the

Cumberland range. Again the Cherokees were victorious, and the discomfited Shawnees retired north of the Gap.

Then the white man delivered battle for the possession the land, and bought it with the lives of many gallant adventurers. Half a century later Boone and his hardy companion followed, and forced their way into Kentucky.

Another half century saw the Gap the favorite haunt of the greatest of American bandits—the noted John A. Murrell—and his gang. They infested the country for years, now waylaying the trader or drover threading his toilsome way over the lone mountains, now descending upon some little town, to plunder its stores and houses.

At length Murrell and his band were driven out, and sought a new field of operations on the Lower Mississippi. They left germs behind them, however, that developed into horse thieve counterfeiters, and later into guerrillas and bushwhackers.

When the Rebellion broke out the region at once became the theater of military operations. Twice Cumberland Gap was seized by the Rebels, and twice was it wrested away from them. In 1861 it was the point whence Zollicoffer launched out with his legions to “liberate Kentucky,” and it was whither they fled, beaten and shattered, after the disasters of Wild Cat and Mill Springs. In 1862 Kirby Smith led his army through the Gap on his way to overrun Kentucky and invade the North. Three months later his beaten forces sought refuge from their pursuers behind its impregnable fortifications. Another year saw Burnside burst through the Gap with a conquering force and redeem loyal East Tennessee from its Rebel oppressors.

Had the South ever been able to separate from the North the boundary would have been established along this line.

Between the main ridge upon which Cumberland Gap is situated, and the next range on the southeast which runs parallel with it, is a narrow, long, very fruitful valley, walled in on either side for a hundred miles by tall mountains as a City street is by high buildings. It is called Powell's Valley. In it dwell a simple, primitive people, shut out from the world almost as much as if they lived in New Zealand, and with the speech, manners and ideas that their fathers brought into the Valley when they settled it a century ago. There has been but little change since then. The young men who have annually driven cattle to the distant markets in Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, have brought back occasional stray bits of finery for the “women folks,” and the latest improved fire-arms for themselves, but this is about all the innovations the progress of the world has been allowed to make. Wheeled vehicles are almost unknown; men and women travel on horseback as they did a century ago, the clothing is the product of the farm and the busy looms of the women, and life is as rural and Arcadian as any ever described in a pastoral. The people are rich in cattle, hogs, horses, sheep and the products of the field. The fat soil brings forth the substantials of life in opulent plenty. Having this there seems to be little care for more. Ambition nor avarice, nor yet craving after luxury, disturb their contented souls or drag them away from the non-progressive round of simple life bequeathed them by their fathers.

CHAPTER II.

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SCARCITY OF FOOD FOR THE ARMY—RAID FOR FORAGE—ENCOUNTER WIT THE REBELS —SHARP CAVALRY FIGHT—DEFEAT OF THE "JOHNNIES"—POWELL'S VALLEY OPENED UP.

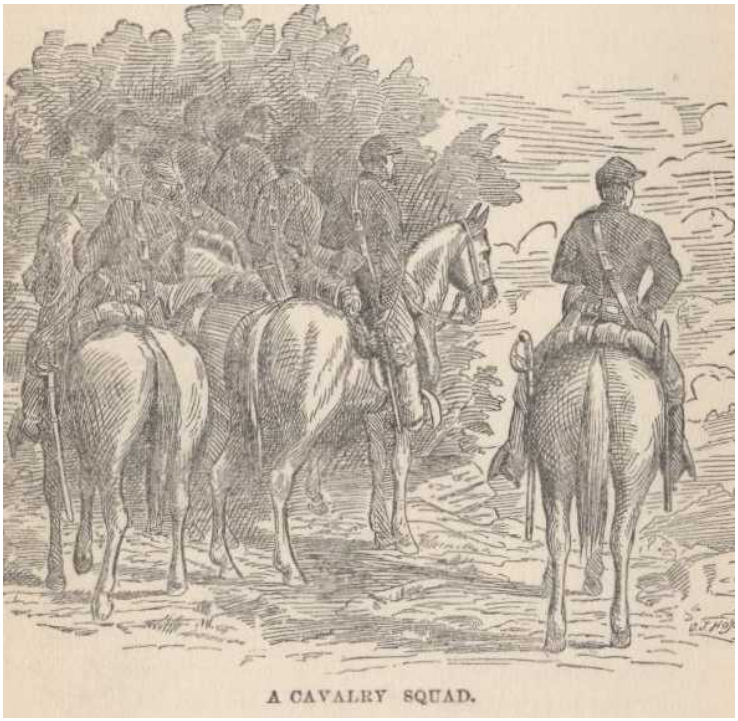
As the Autumn of 1863 advanced towards Winter the difficulty of supplying the forces concentrated around Cumberland Gap—as well as the rest of Burnside's army in East Tennessee—became greater and greater. The base of supplies was at Camp Nelson, near Lexington, Ky., one hundred and eighty miles from the Gap, and all that the Army used had to be hauled that distance by mule teams over roads that, in their best state were wretched, and which the copious rains and heavy traffic had rendered well-nigh impassable. All the country to our possession had been drained of its stock of whatever would contribute to the support of man or beast. That portion of Powell's Valley extending from the Gap into Virginia was still in the hands of the Rebels; its stock of products was as yet almost exempt from military contributions. Consequently a raid was projected to reduce the Valley to our possession, and secure its much needed stores. It was guarded by the Sixty-fourth Virginia, a mounted regiment, made up of the young men of the locality, who had then been in the service about two years.

Maj. C. H. Beer's third Battalion, Sixteenth Illinois Cavalry —four companies, each about 75 strong—was sent on the errand of driving out the Rebels and opening up the Valley for our foraging teams. The writer was invited to attend the excursion. As he held the honorable, but not very lucrative

position of “high, private” in Company L, of the Battalion, and the invitation came from his Captain, he did not feel at liberty to decline. He went, as private soldiers have been in the habit of doing ever since the days of the old Centurion, who said with the characteristic boastfulness of one of the lower grades of commissioned officers when he happens to be a snob:

For I am also a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go; and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.

Rather “airy” talk that for a man who nowadays would take rank with Captains of infantry.



A CAVALRY SQUAD.

Three hundred of us responded to the signal of “boots and saddles,” buckled on three hundred more or less trusty sabers and revolvers, saddled three hundred more or less

gallant steeds, came into line “as companies” with the automatic listlessness of the old soldiers, “counted off by fours” in that queer gamut-running style that makes a company of men “counting off”—each shouting a number in a different voice from his neighbor—sound like running the scales on some great organ badly out of tune; something like this:

One. Two. Three. Four. One. Two. Three. Four. One. Two. Three. Four.

Then, as the bugle sounded “Right forward! fours right!” we moved off at a walk through the melancholy mist that soaked through the very fiber of man and horse, and reduced the minds of both to a condition of limp indifference as to things past, present and future.

Whither we were going we knew not, nor cared. Such matters had long since ceased to excite any interest. A cavalryman soon recognizes as the least astonishing thing in his existence the signal to “Fall in!” and start somewhere. He feels that he is the “Poor Joe” of the Army—under perpetual orders to “move on.”

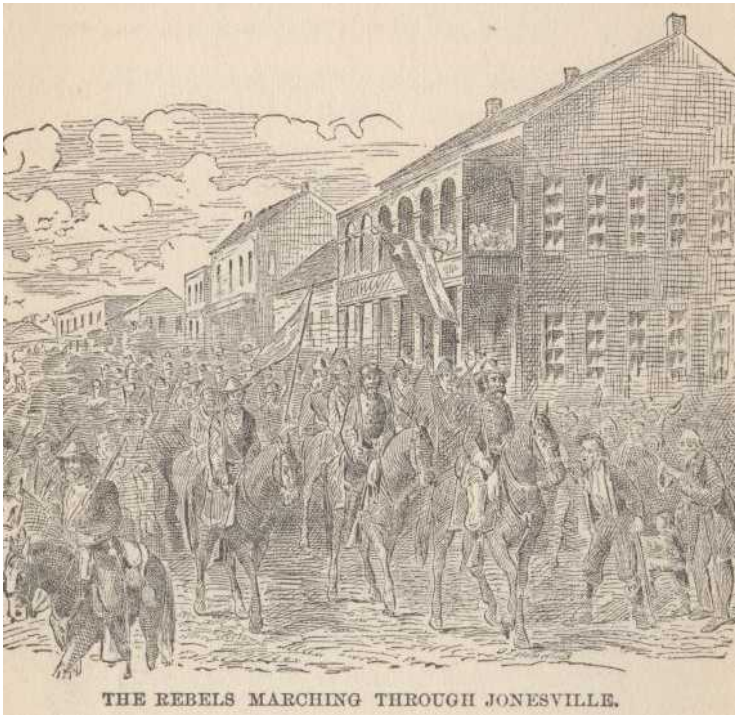
Down we wound over the road that zig-tagged through the forts, batteries and rifle-pits covering the eastern ascent to the Flap-past the wonderful Murrell Spring—so-called because the robber chief had killed, as he stooped to drink of its crystal waters, a rich drover, whom he was pretending to pilot through the mountains—down to where the “Virginia road” turned off sharply to the left and entered Powell's Valley. The mist had become a chill, dreary rain, through, which we plodded silently, until night closed in around us some ten miles from the Gap. As we halted to go into camp, an indignant Virginian resented the invasion of the sacred

soil by firing at one of the guards moving out to his place. The guard looked at the fellow contemptuously, as if he hated to waste powder on a man who had no better sense than to stay out in such a rain, when he could go in-doors, and the bushwhacker escaped, without even a return shot.

Fires were built, coffee made, horses rubbed, and we laid down with feet to the fire to get what sleep we could.

Before morning we were awakened by the bitter cold. It had cleared off during the night and turned so cold that everything was frozen stiff. This was better than the rain, at all events. A good fire and a hot cup of coffee would make the cold quite endurable.

At daylight the bugle sounded “Right forward! fours right!” again, and the 300 of us resumed our onward plod over the rocky, cedar-crowned hills.



THE REBELS MARCHING THROUGH JONESVILLE.

In the meantime, other things were taking place elsewhere. Our esteemed friends of the Sixty-fourth Virginia,

who were in camp at the little town of Jonesville, about 40 miles from the Gap, had learned of our starting up the Valley to drive them out, and they showed that warm reciprocity characteristic of the Southern soldier, by mounting and starting down the Valley to drive us out. Nothing could be more harmonious, it will be perceived. Barring the trifling divergence of yews as to who was to drive and who be driven, there was perfect accord in our ideas.

Our numbers were about equal. If I were to say that they considerably outnumbered us, I would be following the universal precedent. No soldier-high or low-ever admitted engaging an equal or inferior force of the enemy.

About 9 o'clock in the morning—Sunday—they rode through the streets of Jonesville on their way to give us battle. It was here that most of the members of the Regiment lived. Every man, woman and child in the town was related in some way to nearly every one of the soldiers.

The women turned out to wave their fathers, husbands, brothers and lovers on to victory. The old men gathered to give parting counsel and encouragement to their sons and kindred. The Sixty-fourth rode away to what hope told them would be a glorious victory.

At noon we are still straggling along without much attempt at soldierly order, over the rough, frozen hill-sides. It is yet bitterly cold, and men and horses draw themselves together, as if to expose as little surface as possible to the unkind elements. Not a word had been spoken by any one for hours.

The head of the column has just reached the top of the hill, and the rest of us are strung along for a quarter of a mile or so back.

Suddenly a few shots ring out upon the frosty air from the carbines of the advance. The general apathy is instantly,

replaced by keen attention, and the boys instinctively range themselves into fours—the cavalry unit of action. The Major, who is riding about the middle of the first Company—I—dashes to the front. A glance seems to satisfy him, for he turns in his saddle and his voice rings out:

"Company I! FOURS LEFT INTO LINE!—MARCH!!"

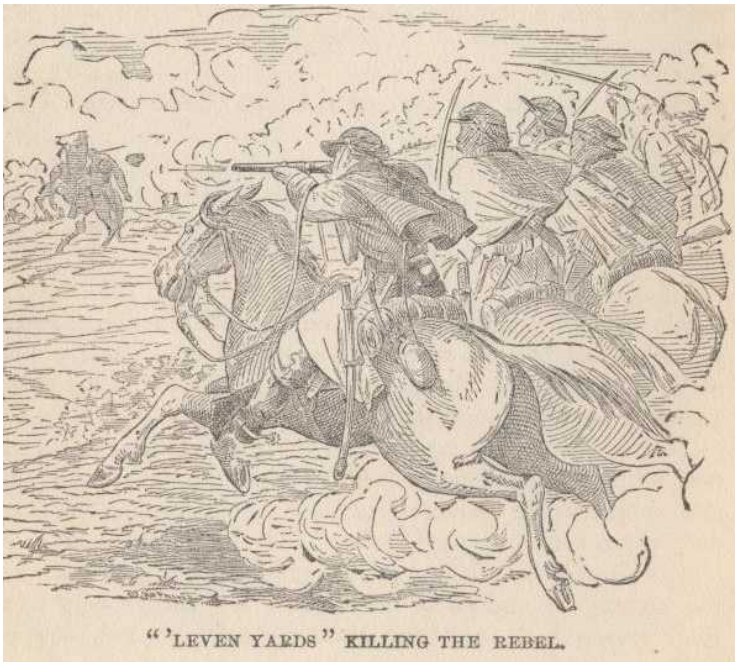
The Company swings around on the hill-top like a great, jointed toy snake. As the fours come into line on a trot, we see every man draw his saber and revolver. The Company raises a mighty cheer and dashes forward.

Company K presses forward to the ground Company I has just left, the fours sweep around into line, the sabers and revolvers come out spontaneously, the men cheer and the Company flings itself forward.

All this time we of Company L can see nothing except what the companies ahead of us are doing. We are wrought up to the highest pitch. As Company K clears its ground, we press forward eagerly. Now we go into line just as we raise the hill, and as my four comes around, I catch a hurried glimpse through a rift in the smoke of a line of butternut and gray clad men a hundred yards or so away. Their guns are at their faces, and I see the smoke and fire spurt from the muzzles. At the same instant our sabers and revolvers are drawn. We shout in a frenzy of excitement, and the horses spring forward as if shot from a bow.

I see nothing more until I reach the place where the Rebel line stood. Then I find it is gone. Looking beyond toward the bottom of the hill, I see the woods filled with Rebels, flying in disorder and our men yelling in pursuit. This is the portion of the line which Companies I and K struck. Here and there are men in butternut clothing, prone on the

frozen ground, wounded and dying. I have just time to notice closely one middle-aged man lying almost under my horse's feet. He has received a carbine bullet through his head and his blood colors a great space around him.



"'LEVEN YARDS" KILLING THE REBEL.

One brave man, riding a roan horse, attempts to rally his companions. He halts on a little knoll, wheels his horse to face us, and waves his hat to draw his companions to him. A tall, lank fellow in the next four to me—who goes by the nickname of "'Leven Yards"—aims his carbine at him, and, without checking his horse's pace, fires. The heavy Sharpe's bullet tears a gaping hole through the Rebel's heart. He drops from his saddle, his life-blood runs down in little rills on either side of the knoll, and his riderless horse dashes away in a panic.

At this instant comes an order for the Company to break up into fours and press on through the forest in pursuit. My four trots off to the road at the right. A Rebel bugler, who hag been cut off, leaps his horse into the road in front of us.

We all fire at him on the impulse of the moment. He falls from his horse with a bullet through his back. Company M, which has remained in column as a reserve, is now thundering up close behind at a gallop. Its seventy-five powerful horses are spurning the solid earth with steel-clad hoofs. The man will be ground into a shapeless mass if left where he has fallen. We spring from our horses and drag him into a fence corner; then remount and join in the pursuit.

This happened on the summit of Chestnut Ridge, fifteen miles from Jonesville.

Late in the afternoon the anxious watchers at Jonesville saw a single fugitive urging his well-nigh spent horse down the slope of the hill toward town. In an agony of anxiety they hurried forward to meet him and learn his news.

The first messenger who rushed into Job's presence to announce the beginning of the series of misfortunes which were to afflict the upright man of Uz is a type of all the cowards who, before or since then, have been the first to speed away from the field of battle to spread the news of disaster. He said:

“And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.”

So this fleeing Virginian shouted to his expectant friends:

> “The boys are all cut to pieces;
> I'm the only one that got away.”

The terrible extent of his words was belied a little later, by the appearance on the distant summit of the hill of a

considerable mob of fugitives, flying at the utmost speed of their nearly exhausted horses. As they came on down the hill as almost equally disorganized crowd of pursuers appeared on the summit, yelling in voices hoarse with continued shouting, and pouring an incessant fire of carbine and revolver bullets upon the hapless men of the Sixty-fourth Virginia.

The two masses of men swept on through the town. Beyond it, the road branched in several directions, the pursued scattered on each of these, and the worn-out pursuers gave up the chase.

Returning to Jonesville, we took an account of stock, and found that we were “ahead” one hundred and fifteen prisoners, nearly that many horses, and a considerable quantity of small arms. How many of the enemy had been killed and wounded could not be told, as they were scattered over the whole fifteen miles between where the fight occurred and the pursuit ended. Our loss was trifling.

Comparing notes around the camp-fires in the evening, we found that our success had been owing to the Major's instinct, his grasp of the situation, and the soldierly way in which he took advantage of it. When he reached the summit of the hill he found the Rebel line nearly formed and ready for action. A moment's hesitation might have been fatal to us. At his command Company I went into line with the thought-like celerity of trained cavalry, and instantly dashed through the right of the Rebel line. Company K followed and plunged through the Rebel center, and when we of Company L arrived on the ground, and charged the left, the last vestige of resistance was swept away. The whole affair did not probably occupy more than fifteen minutes.

This was the way Powell's Valley was opened to our foragers.

CHAPTER III.

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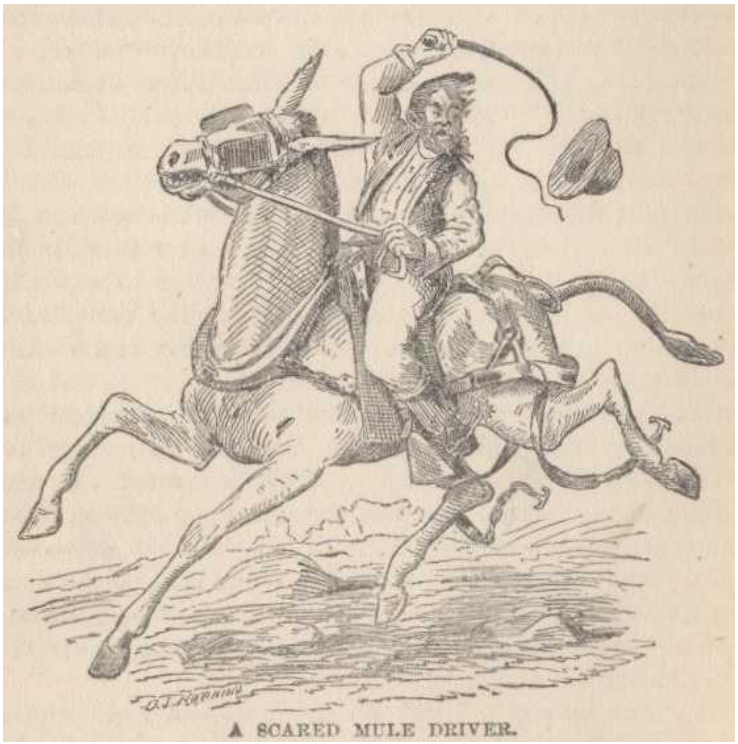
LIVING OFF THE ENEMY—REVELING IN THE FATNESS OF THE COUNTRY—SOLDIERLY PURVEYING AND CAMP COOKERY—SUSCEPTIBLE TEAMSTERS AND THEIR TENDENCY TO FLIGHTINESS—MAKING SOLDIER'S BED.

For weeks we rode up and down—hither and thither—along the length of the narrow, granite-walled Valley; between mountains so lofty that the sun labored slowly over them in the morning, occupying half the forenoon in getting to where his rays would reach the stream that ran through the Valley's center. Perpetual shadow reigned on the northern and western faces of these towering Nights—not enough warmth and sunshine reaching them in the cold months to check the growth of the ever-lengthening icicles hanging from the jutting cliffs, or melt the arabesque frost-forms with which the many dashing cascades decorated the adjacent rocks and shrubbery. Occasionally we would see where some little stream ran down over the face of the bare, black rocks for many hundred feet, and then its course would be a long band of sheeny white, like a great rich, spotless scarf of satin, festooning the war-grimed walls of some old castle.

Our duty now was to break up any nuclei of concentration that the Rebels might attempt to form, and to guard our foragers—that is, the teamsters and employee of the Quartermaster's Department—who were loading grain into wagons and hauling it away.

This last was an arduous task. There is no man in the world that needs as much protection as an Army teamster. He is worse in this respect than a New England manufacturer, or an old maid on her travels. He is given to

sudden fears and causeless panics. Very innocent cedars have a fashion of assuming in his eyes the appearance of desperate Rebels armed with murderous guns, and there is no telling what moment a rock may take such a form as to freeze his young blood, and make each particular hair stand on end like quills upon the fretful porcupine. One has to be particular about snapping caps in his neighborhood, and give to him careful warning before discharging a carbine to clean it. His first impulse, when anything occurs to jar upon his delicate nerves, is to cut his wheel-mule loose and retire with the precipitation of a man having an appointment to keep and being behind time. There is no man who can get as much speed out of a mule as a teamster falling back from the neighborhood of heavy firing.



A SCARED MULE DRIVER.

This nervous tremor was not peculiar to the engineers of our transportation department. It was noticeable in the gentry who carted the scanty provisions of the Rebels. One

of Wheeler's cavalrymen told me that the brigade to which he belonged was one evening ordered to move at daybreak. The night was rainy, and it was thought best to discharge the guns and reload before starting. Unfortunately, it was neglected to inform the teamsters of this, and at the first discharge they varnished from the scene with such energy that it was over a week before the brigade succeeded in getting them back again.

Why association with the mule should thus demoralize a man, has always been a puzzle to me, for while the mule, as Col. Ingersoll has remarked, is an animal without pride of ancestry or hope of posterity, he is still not a coward by any means. It is beyond dispute that a full-grown and active lioness once attacked a mule in the grounds of the Cincinnati Zoological Garden, and was ignominiously beaten, receiving injuries from which she died shortly afterward.

The apparition of a badly-scared teamster urging one of his wheel mules at break-neck speed over the rough ground, yelling for protection against “them Johnnies,” who had appeared on some hilltop in sight of where he was gathering corn, was an almost hourly occurrence. Of course the squad dispatched to his assistance found nobody.

Still, there were plenty of Rebels in the country, and they hung around our front, exchanging shots with us at long taw, and occasionally treating us to a volley at close range, from some favorable point. But we had the decided advantage of them at this game. Our Sharpe's carbines were much superior in every way to their Enfields. They would shoot much farther, and a great deal more rapidly, so that the Virginians were not long in discovering that they were losing more than they gained in this useless warfare.

Once they played a sharp practical joke upon us. Copper River is a deep, exceedingly rapid mountain stream, with a very slippery rocky bottom. The Rebels blockaded a ford in such a way that it was almost impossible for a horse to keep his feet. Then they tolled us off in pursuit of a small party to this ford. When we came to it there was a light line of skirmishers on the opposite bank, who popped away at us industriously. Our boys formed in line, gave the customary, cheer, and dashed in to carry the ford at a charge. As they did so at least one-half of the horses went down as if they were shot, and rolled over their riders in the swift running, ice-cold waters. The Rebels yelled a triumphant laugh, as they galloped away, and the laugh was re-echoed by our fellows, who were as quick to see the joke as the other side. We tried to get even with them by a sharp chase, but we gave it up after a few miles, without having taken any prisoners.

But, after all, there was much to make our sojourn in the Valley endurable. Though we did not wear fine linen, we fared sumptuously—for soldiers—every day. The cavalryman is always charged by the infantry and artillery with having a finer and surer scent for the good things in the country than any other man in the service. He is believed to have an instinct that will unfailingly lead him, in the dankest night, to the roosting place of the most desirable poultry, and after he has camped in a neighborhood for awhile it would require a close chemical analysis to find a trace of ham.

We did our best to sustain the reputation of our arm of the service. We found the most delicious hams packed away in the ash-houses. They were small, and had that; exquisite nutty flavor, peculiar to mast-fed bacon. Then there was an abundance of the delightful little apple known as “romanites.” There were turnips, pumpkins, cabbages,

potatoes, and the usual products of the field in plenty, even profusion. The corn in the fields furnished an ample supply of breadstuff. We carried it to and ground it in the quaintest, rudest little mills that can be imagined outside of the primitive affairs by which the women of Arabia coarsely powder the grain for the family meal. Sometimes the mill would consist only of four stout posts thrust into the ground at the edge of some stream. A line of boulders reaching diagonally across the stream answered for a dam, by diverting a portion of the volume of water to a channel at the side, where it moved a clumsily constructed wheel, that turned two small stones, not larger than good-sized grindstones. Over this would be a shed made by resting poles in forked posts stuck into the ground, and covering these with clapboards held in place by large flat stones. They resembled the mills of the gods—in grinding slowly. It used to seem that a healthy man could eat the meal faster than they ground it.

But what savory meals we used to concoct around the campfires, out of the rich materials collected during the day's ride! Such stews, such soups, such broils, such wonderful commixtures of things diverse in nature and antagonistic in properties such daring culinary experiments in combining materials never before attempted to be combined. The French say of untasteful arrangement of hues in dress “that the colors swear at each other.” I have often thought the same thing of the heterogeneities that go to make up a soldier's pot-a feu.

But for all that they never failed to taste deliciously after a long day's ride. They were washed down by a tincupful of coffee strong enough to tan leather, then came a brier-wood pipeful of fragrant kinnikinnic, and a seat by the ruddy, sparkling fire of aromatic cedar logs, that diffused at once