

North Carolina Argus.

NEW SERIES—VOL. IV—NO. 42.]

WADESBOROUGH, N. C., THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1862.

[WHOLE NO. 204.]

CIRCUMLOCUTION AT RICHMOND.

In the Senate, on Wednesday last Hon. B. H. Hill, of Georgia, offered the following resolution:

"Resolved that the secretary of war inform the Senate why it is necessary to require sick and wounded soldiers in Lynchburg, Warrenton, Staunton and other places to send to the office in Richmond to obtain furloughs and discharges; and the rules now required to be observed in furloughing soldiers; what officers have charge of the duty, what are their hours of business, and what are the regulations to enable sick and wounded soldiers to draw their pay, rations, clothing, &c."

Mr. Hill in explanation said he had been informed there were a number of soldiers at the places mentioned in the resolution who were unable to get furloughs on account of unnecessary obstacles which were put in their way. I understand, continued Mr. Hill, from some inquiry I have made, that it is necessary for the friends of the soldiers at these places to send to Richmond to get furloughs. In a great many instances fathers and brothers have made application for furloughs for their invalid relatives and have been told they must go first to Richmond and bring certificates. I have known them to come here, get certificates, go back to Staunton and Lynchburg, come back here and again be compelled to return all on account of some trifling informality. Now it seems this is all an outrage upon humanity and decency. It matters not whether a man is unfit for further service—I have applications from men with arms off, others with hands off, some with wounds in their legs, yet able to travel—it is absolutely necessary for them to send or come all the way to the city of Richmond that the certificates of a Surgeon may be obtained to show his condition, before he can get a furlough. I call the attention of the Senate to a letter I have received this morning, which seems to me to present an argument in favor of the resolution. The writer says he joined the army in May 1861, and continued to discharge his duties without the loss of a day or a cross mark against him up to April, 1862, a period of eleven months. He was sent to a hospital in Lynchburg, where he has been ever since. He obtained a certificate of disability of the Surgeon in charge, which was turned over to the surgeon of division; and he has not heard from it from that day to this. This man says that he is 54 years of age—he has a large family dependent on him for support, and he has been in the army ever since May, 1861; and to this day has not received one cent of pay. Now think of it, Mr. President.

An old man, fifty-four years of age, with a family dependent upon him for life, in the army seventeen months, and not one cent of pay received. How he is to get out I do not know. Mr. Phelan.—Will you give the name, company and number of the regiment. Mr. Hill.—Yes, I will; and hope it will get into the papers and be read by every body. He is a very respectable gentleman from Jefferson county, Georgia, Company D, 10th Regiment Georgia Volunteers; not allowed to go home, not allowed to support his family; not allowed to have one dime of pay—somebody is in fault—I do not know who. If this was a single application, Mr. President, I might make no serious complaint but they are numerous. Again, sir, I cannot for my life know what they are to do in this city. I cannot find out anything about the matter. I did learn the rules, and as the Senate knows I some time ago, when outrages of this kind were mentioned here, expressed the opinion that they were unfounded. I used to know how to advise a sick man who had no other friend to refer to, with reference to getting a furlough. Two days ago a young man, unable to travel, and knowing no man in the city but myself, applied to me to get his furlough. I applied to the physician who was attending on him and obtained a certificate of disability. I carried it to Doctor Moore. The Doctor, knowing the facts, promptly approved of the application, and told me, under the recent rules I must go to General Smith's office to get the furlough. I went off to General Smith's, and told him what I wanted; showed him the certificate and the approval of the Surgeon General. He told me I must go to his Adjutant. I went to his Adjutant, showed my certificate with the approval, &c., &c. The adjutant said it must come from the hospital surgeon directly; that he had no doubt that it was all right; the approval of the Surgeon General was all right, but that it was not in form; it must come from somebody about the hospital. He said if I would go to the hospital surgeon, the furlough would be granted. I was nearly broken down, so I hired a hack. When I got to the hospital I was very politely received, and told I was certainly entitled to a furlough. I thought I began to see daylight again. I took the certificate jumped into a hack, came back to Smith's office but could not find the Adjutant. A gentleman was there, but without the star on his shoulder. I was told he could grant furloughs, but it turned out, after exhibiting all my documents, that he did not have enough gold leaf to

enable him to do the business. Why all this trouble? Did not have the proper certificate? Yes. Did not have the approval of the Surgeon General? Yes. Was it not all in form? Yes. What then? It had been sent in the wrong way; it must be sent by Surgeon. Why, he sent it by me—is not that his signature? Yes; but he must not send it by an individual.

Senator. Perhaps he suspected the messenger.

[Laughter.]

Mr. Hill. Perhaps he did; but he did not say so; if he had I would have suspected him.

[Laughter.] He said that if he allowed applications to be presented by individuals he would have a crew of individuals. The gentleman was too nice, too "trimly dressed" to allow ordinary mortals to come "twixt the wind and his nobility."

The surgeon told me one rule and he another; but I did not learn whether the certificate was sent to his worship in a box or a basket. Anyhow, I left it with the understanding that I could get it next morning. I waited patiently this morning until half past nine o'clock, thinking they had gotten up by that time, and then sent a messenger to the hospital with a note respectfully asking to have the furlough sent up. I was told I sent too early, that they did not attend to business that soon in the day, must wait till evening.

Now, Mr. President, this is a literal statement of a fact. I have been two days laboring to get a furlough for one man. There was no question about the merit of the case; all agreed in the necessity of granting the furlough. It seems the rules about this matter of obtaining furloughs ought to be so plain, that every man could understand them; nor ought they to be changed every twenty-four hours. If I should attend to half the business of this kind placed in my hands, I would never be able to show my face in this chamber. A man comes to you from a State and requests you to assist him. What can you do? You cannot make the reply that these officers do, these dignified gentlemen that cannot bear to have soldiers before their doors, who cannot work before half past 9 o'clock, A. M. You have got to go to work and attend to these poor fellows. If you did not you would soon have no humanity in your bosom.

If they have got any rules I would like to know them; if none, let the matter be attended to in the name of humanity.

ARMY CORRESPONDENCE OF THE SAVANNAH REPUBLICAN.

WINCHESTER, VA., Sept. 26, 1862.

My condition is such as to render it impossible for me to rejoin the army for the present. I was not prepared for the hardships, exposures and fastings the army has encountered since it left the Rappahannock, and like many a seasoned campaigner, have had to "fall out by the way." Indeed I can recall no parallel instance in history, except Napoleon's disastrous retreat from Moscow, where an army has ever done more marching and fighting, under such great disadvantages, than Gen. Lee's has done since it left the banks of the James river. It proceeded directly to the line of the Rappahannock, and moving out from that river it fought its way to the Potomac, crossed the stream and moved on to Fredricks town and Hagerstown, had a heavy engagement at Boonsboro' Gap, and another at Craughton Gap below, fought the greatest pitched battle of the war at Sharpsburg, and then recrossed the Potomac back into Virginia. During all this time, covering the full space of a month, the troops rested but four days? And let it always be remembered to their honor, that of the men who performed this wonderful feat one fifth of them were barefooted, one half of them in rags, and the whole of them half-famished. The country from the Rappahannock to the Potomac had been visited by the enemy with fire and sword, and our transportation was insufficient to keep the army supplied from so distant a base as Gordonsville; and when the provision trains would overtake the army, so pressing were the exigencies of their position, the men seldom had time to cook. Their difficulties were increased by the fact that their cooking utensils, in many cases had been left behind, as well as everything else that would impede their movements. It was not unusual to see a company of starving men have a barrel of flour distributed to them, which it was utterly impossible for them to convert into bread with the means allowed to them. They could not procure even a piece of plank or a corn or flour sack upon which to work up their dough.

Do you wonder then that there should have been strugglers from the army? That brave and true men should have fallen out of line from sheer exhaustion, or in their efforts to obtain a mouthful to eat along the roadside? Or that many seasoned veterans, the conquerors in the valley, at Richmond and Manassas, should have succumbed to disease and been forced back to the hospital? I look to hear a great deal more about the stragglers. Already lazy cavalry men and dainty staff officers and quartermasters, who

are mounted and can forage the country for something to eat, are condemning the weary private, who, notwithstanding his body may be covered with dust and perspiration, and his feet with stone bruises, is expected to trudge along under his knapsack and cartridge box, on an empty stomach, and never to turn aside for a morsel of food to sustain his sinking limbs. Out upon such monstrous injustice! That there has been unnecessary stragglers, is readily admitted; but in a large majority of cases, the men have only to point to their bleeding feet, tattered garments and gaunt frames for an answer to the unjust charge.

No army on this continent has ever accomplished as much or suffered as much, as the army of Northern Virginia within the last three months. At no period during the first revolutionary war—not even at Valley Forge—did our forefathers in arms encounter great hardships, or endure them more uncomplainingly.

But great as have been the trials to which the army has been subjected, they are hardly worthy to be named in comparison with the sufferings in store for it this winter, unless the people of the Confederate States, everywhere and in whatever circumstances, come to its immediate relief.

The men must have clothing and shoes this winter. They must have something to cover themselves when sleeping, and to protect themselves from the driving sleet and snow storms when on duty. This must be done, though our friends at home should have to wear cotton and sit by the fire. The army in Virginia stands guard this winter, over every hearthstone throughout the South. The ragged sentinel who may pace his weary rounds this winter on the bleak spurs of the Blue Ridge, or along the frozen valleys of the Shenandoah and Rappahannock, will also be your sentinels, my friend, at home. It will be for you and your household that he encounters the wrath of the tempest and the dangers of the night. He suffers, and toils, and fights for you, too, brave, true-hearted women of the South. Will you not clothe his nakedness then? Will you not put shoes and stockings on his feet? Is it not enough that he has written down his patriotism in crimson characters along the battle road from the Rappahannock to the Potomac? And must his bleeding feet also impress their mark of fidelity upon the snows of the coming winter? I know what your answer will be. God has spoken through the women of the South, and they are his holy oracles in this day of trial and tribulation.

It is not necessary to counsel violent measures; but it is not expected that any person will be permitted to accumulate leather and cloth for purposes of speculation. The necessities of the army rise up like a mountain, and cannot, and will not be overlooked. It was hoped at one time, that we might obtain winter supplies in Maryland. This hope was born after the army left Richmond, and has now miserably perished. The government is unable to furnish the supplies; for they are not to be had in the country. If it had exercised a little foresight last spring and summer, when vessels were running the blockade, with cargoes of calico, linen and other articles of like importance, a partial supply at least of hats, blankets, shoes and woolen goods might have been obtained from England. But foresight is a quality of the mind that is seldom put in practice in these days.

But whatever may be done by the people, should be done immediately. Not one moment can be lost that will not be marked, as by the second hand of a watch, with the pangs of a sufferer. Already the hills and valleys in this high latitude have been visited by frost, and the nights are uncomfortably cool to the man who sleeps upon the ground. Come up, then, men and women of the South, to this sacred duty. Let no thing stand between you and the performance of it. Neither pride, nor pleasure, nor personal ease and comfort, should withhold your hands from the holy work. The supply of leather and wool, we all know, is limited; but do what you can, and as soon as you can. If you cannot send woolen socks, send half woolen or cotton socks; and so with under clothing, coats and pants. And if blankets are not to be had, then substitute comforts made of dyed osenaburgs stuffed with cotton. Anything that will keep off cold will be acceptable. Even the speculator and extortioner might forego their gains for a season, and unite in this religious duty. If they neither clothe the naked, nor feed the hungry, who are fighting for their freedom and for their homes and property, what right have they to expect anything but eternal damnation, both from God and man?

If the army of Virginia could march through the South just as it is—ragged and almost barefooted and hatless—many of them limping along and not quite well of their wounds or sickness, yet cheerful and not willing to abandon their places in the ranks—their clothes riddled with balls and their banners covered with the smoke and dust of battle, and shot into tatters, many of them inscribed with "Williamsburg," "Seven Pines," "Gaines Mill," "Garnett's Farm," "Front Royal," "St. Modwell," "Gods Run," and other victorious fields

—if this army of veterans, thus clad and shod, with tattered uniforms and banners, could march from Richmond to the Mississippi, it would produce a sensation that has no parallel in history since Peter the Hermit led his swelling hosts across Europe to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre.

I do not write to create alarm, or to produce a sensation, but to arouse the people to a sense of the true condition of the army. I have yet to learn that anything is to be gained by suppressing the truth, and leaving the army to suffer. If I must withhold the truth when the necessities of the service require it to be spoken, I am quite ready to return home.

P. W. A.

GEN. TAYLOR'S PLANTATION PLUNDERED.

The Montpelier Journal contains a letter from a soldier of the Vermont 8th, dated Camp Alloumand, August 29th, in which he states that on the previous Thursday, the property of General Richard Taylor, a son of old General Taylor (by whom it was bequeathed to him), was confiscated, the son being now in the Rebel army. The slaves 150 in number, were all declared emancipated while the plantation was plundered by the Union soldiers. According to the writer:

"It is one of the most splendid plantations that I ever saw. There are on it 700 acres of sugar cane, which must rot upon the ground if the Government does not harvest it. I wish you could have seen the soldiers plunder this plantation. After the stock was driven off, the boys began by ordering the slaves to bring out everything there was to eat and drink. They brought out hundreds of bottles of wine, eggs, preserved figs and peaches, turkeys, chickens and honey in any quantity.

I brought away a large camp kettle and frying pans that belonged to old General Taylor, and also many of his private papers. I have one letter of his own hand writing, and many from Secretary Marcy—some from General Scott and some from the traitor Floyd. I brought to camp four bottles of claret wine. Lieutenant—brought away half a barrel of the best syrup from the sugar house, and a large can of honey.

The camp kettle and pans I intend to send home. They are made of heavy tin covered with copper. I think I will send home the private papers by mail if I do not let any one have them. The camp is loaded down with plunder—all kinds of clothing, rings, watches, guns, pistols, swords, and some of General Taylor's old hats and coats, belts, swords—and, in fact, every old relic he had, is worn about the camp.

* * * You and every one may be thankful that you are out of the reach of plundering armies. Here are whole families of women and children running in the woods—large plantations entirely deserted—nothing left except slaves too old to run away—all kinds of the best mahogany furniture broken to pieces. Nothing is respected."

SOLDIER'S CLAIMS.—Many of our brave soldiers have recently been killed in battle or have died from wounds or disease contracted in camp. It is likely the government was in debt to many of them, and their wives and children may be in much need. To such widows and other claimants, we again suggest the easiest method of obtaining it. According to the law, we believe, the wife is the first claimant, the children next, father next, mother next; if he have neither wife, child, father or mother, then the claim goes to the nearest of kin.

Let the soldier's widow, therefore, if he have one, and if not the child, or father, or mother, as the case may be, apply to any intelligent magistrate, and make oath that the deceased soldier, naming him, who belonged to such a company and such a regiment, and died, or was killed at such a time and place, and was the husband, father or son of the witness, and that there is no nearer claimant living than the witness. Let the magistrate then testify on the same affidavit to the credibility of the witness. Then take the affidavit to the Clerk of your County Court, and get the Clerk to certify, under the County seal, that the above named magistrate is a bona fide Justice of the Peace for said County. Get any responsible friend to take the affidavit to Richmond, if going, or send it to the member of Congress from your district, paying the postage, &c., to collect it for you from the War Department. We make this suggestion to guard poor soldiers' widows and orphans against seeking the claim to agents for collecting such claims, who make exorbitant charges for their labor. Some charge 10 cents for collecting, which often deprives the needy of a dollar more of the claim.