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EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

From the Fourth North Carolina.
Camp near Farmington, N.C.,
April 28th, 1863.

Storm and squalls—Visions from the South.
A stray butterfly and its message—All quiet on the Rappahannock—Fish eating and the youth—Don't be alarmed—Advice wanted—Alarm in camp—A demoralized tent—The alarm accounted for—Scenery around camp—Yankee outrages—Sunset—More conscripts—Universal good health.

After two days and nights of storm and rain yesterday dawned on us clear and pleasant enough, except a blustering gale from the South West. But during last night even that shifted, and calmed down to a pleasant breeze directly from the sunny South, which to-day brings us the sweet odors of the lilacs and violets;—of the orange tree and hawthorn bush. Accompanied too by visions of green meadows, blooming orchards, verdant landscapes, and impenetrable forests clad in their luxuriant summer foliage. We can hear the glad songs of the ploughboy at his work, and the merry tinkling of the cow bells on the green hills; and can imagine that we see swarms of butterflies one of which has certainly strayed beyond its latitude and paid a visit to these battle-famed plains around Fredericksburg. Ah, my pretty little yellow fellow you have come to cheer us in our troubles, and speak words of encouragement to our hardy soldiers. Faith, and you are a fit emblem to represent the fair daughters of our dear country; and I wish if you could speak your sentiments would be about the same as theirs, would they not? You love flowers and sunshine,—so do they, and your fitting poise-way of getting from place to place reminds me of the sweet human butterflies at home! You say, "courage brave boys; our souls are with you though our fragile bodies are not,"—so they say, and we are proud of our company and feel honored by it. But go; beautiful insect, go to your flowery home; the obscene wings of camp, the thunder of artillery and clank of steel is not fit music for you, neither is it for the fair creatures whom you represent. Go, but carry this message for us and deliver it safely to your gentle keepers when they chase you from the morning flowers to pluck them for their own bosoms.

Thine eyes will see these flow'rets fade,
Thy soul, its idols melt away;
But oh, when flowers and friends lie dead,
Love can embalm them in decay;
And when thy spirit sighs along
The shadowy scenes of hoarded thought,
Oh, listen to its pleading song—
Forget me not, forget me not!

But the all absorbing question with everybody is "What news?"—none of importance. The old 4th is now on picket five miles below, and near the banks of Rappahannock. They will return to-morrow, and re-occupy the same old quarters I presume. We have indeed a fine line of it, got much to do, and abundance to eat, the two most important items with a soldier. Each morning every seventh man in the regiment is allowed to go fishing, and when they return at sunset, the same number are allowed to go for the night if they choose. A few are caught with hook and line, but the great mass are caught with dip nets, which are bought from the citizens around. The result is fish in superabundance, mostly shad and herring, the former weighing on an average four pounds, the latter about one. We draw from the commissary enough fat bacon to fry them, which being "done up brown" with light bread, rice, coffee made from the same grain parched, and sugar, make a capital meal. We do not fool away time trying to pick the meat from the bones, but swallow all together; if they lodge, an old moldy biscuit (a lot of which are always kept on hand for the purpose) forced down with a ramrod removes all obstructions, besides checking a digestion too vigorous, and thereby produces a wonderful sense of relief. Numerous minute fish-bones are protruding all over the surface of our bodies, so much that we look like huge cylinders for music boxes. There is no danger whatever of being "scrubbed" at night, (it will be better before we come home on furlough again) but what in the world are we to do about changing our linen? This is a mystery that we cannot solve, and would like to have the advice of sympathizing friends on the momentous subject.

One night last week our camp was thrown into a blaze of excitement about the rumored advance of the enemy below us; it was said that they were crossing the river in heavy force. Orders were issued to be ready to march at a moments notice, (that is the general way of expressing it) upon which the usual consternation was visible. A frightful storm was howling around us which made

it almost certain that we would march,—such is invariably our luck. We lay down and slept, well knowing that the long roll would make us, provided they would want us to march to-day. The wind shifted our old demoralized tent about until it was as high as a blackberry vine when a "blackberry" chased us in the strawberry patch, but now the consequences were of a more serious nature. The rain dashed on our faces, the little ditch around our tent was overflowed, and if we had not set our feet against small stumps we would have been washed to the foot of the hill; but we pulled the blankets over our heads, tucked over for another snooze, and when we awoke it was daylight, or as high as could be beneath such black clouds. The rain had not touched a particle, but our misfortune was a measure relieved by orders for the brigade to go on picket, which it did at 6 o'clock, leaving the band to camp a favor for which we are under obligations to Col. G. The preceding alarm was not altogether false, but greatly exaggerated. A small force of the enemy had crossed the river and fallen upon our fishing parties, scattering them out of their wits, (some I guess hadn't far to go) capturing four wagons, two of which they burned, took their nets also, and scattered the frightened fellows to the four winds, but took no provisions. After the musk had done all this mischief, which upon the whole, was rather ludicrous, they beat a hasty retreat to the other-side of the river. Since then all is profound quiet; no warlike demonstrations, nor anything indicating a move. Far in the distance beyond the Rappahannock may be seen whole plantations full of yankee tents, and every day that everlasting talloon is up. Our camp is located on a piece of high-lying land, I can hardly term it a hill, but from my tent door I can see over a very large scope of country. Partly because I am somewhat elevated, but more because the timber is swept clean from the surrounding neighborhood. Due North six miles lies Fredericksburg, the spires of which may be seen rising above the timber, remaining pines. In flourishing times the town looks like it might have contained seven or eight thousand inhabitants, now not more than two or three hundred of the original denizens can be seen. The lower part was burnt a few days before the late battle, nothing is left but some blackened walls and solitary chimneys. The remainder of the burg is riddled with shot and shells, the upper part especially looks like a ruin, in short, a few words will convey the whole idea, a graveyard and but root. The citizens are refugees scattered throughout the Confederacy.

On the right of the town for a distance of six or eight miles we can see the opposite bank of the river from our camp, extending like a wall in an easterly direction. Immediately beyond the river and rising abruptly from it are the barren hills recently vacated by the enemy. On this side is the low-land; it extends down the river as far as it is possible for vision to reach, and up to a point just above the village where the hills close in. This plain, or rather the upper end of it is the battle field, and lies about four miles from the spot where I am now standing. Westward is an extensive tract of flat country, now grown up in weeds and grass, but in times of peace it groined beneath its weight of grain. There is at this time a large field of wheat about the center, and green as a meadow, but not a vestige of a fence around it; however, that matters not, there is scarce an animal in this section save such as belong to the army. Just beyond this plain rises a chain of undulating hills barren now from necessity, but evidently covered with a rich soil. This range extends from Fredericksburg to Guinea's Station, near twelve miles; and at intervals of half a mile or such matter are fine farms, (or have been, they are deserted now) on most of which are dwellings that once well deserved the title costly; the out houses, fence, pallings, &c., are in almost every instance demolished. Along the base of this range, and in full view, rises the Richmond and Fredericksburg Railroad, at the nearest point about a mile distant. Beyond these low hills and further to the right rises another set, higher, but destitute of the fine groves of oak which crowned them a year ago; they are now covered with rebel tents which at this great distance look like an immense flock of sheep. South of us dense thickets of dwarf pines and cedars obstruct the view beyond a quarter of a mile; but eastward the scene is unbroken, and for miles we are greeted with the sight of gently rolling hills and fertile valleys, sprinkled over with neat farm cottages. The citizens were as a general thing, quite wealthy, and cultivated their farms in a skillful and scientific manner. Their homes and the pleasure grounds around them were decorated with climbing vines and the most beautiful shrubbery which nature produces; the waving wheat and rye nature produced; the air of thrift and comfort to the whole land, and the people were happy. But alas! all has been swept away by the scorching breath of the god of war, and now this looks more like a desert than a habitable portion of the globe. A few nights ago I spent two hours with Mr. Dickerson, a wealthy citizen living a mile from this place. He says that near a year ago the enemy took from him twenty young negro men and eight women, leaving some thirty old decrepit men and women and useless little children. They took also every horse, mule, ox, wagon and cart that could be found on his plantations, besides killing his poultry, hogs, cattle and sheep. This they did out of revenge, because the old gentleman's son piloted Stewart's cavalry on their famous raid on the Pamunky last spring.

This is not an exception by any means. Mr. D. told me of a particular case in Stafford county (just across the river)—a gentleman whose wealth was considered almost unlimited had every thing he had in the world stolen from him, and now residing in the old man has to make his way in the world.

But these outrages do not spoil the beauty of the landscape, or mar the sublimity of those charming sunsets. The last rays of the King of day as they linger on these romantic hills have a soothing, a sweet influence on every lover of the beauties of nature which is absolutely indescribable. "O, I love these scenes, I dearly love them! In spite of my hardships and disagreeable mode of life I love them still." Yesterday was our thirty-sixth conscript in our regiment, and I have the best installment from the Old North State, the last for a season at least. Like the fellow who got drunk on punch—"I don't remember anything is enough any time." These men all from the western part of the State, though but two or three from Iredell, and perhaps the same number from Rowan. I am not personally acquainted with a single one of them all. They do not look so hearty and fresh as our soldiers, and from all appearances I fear but few will prove to be of much service. The officer in charge said he started with forty-two, but six escaped from him by jumping from the cars while they were running.

I hear of but few cases of sickness, and the alarm about the small-pox has entirely subsided. I never saw men in better health, and notwithstanding the gloomy prospects of an early peace the troops are cheerful and full of spirit. The flattering indications of an abundant crop, and the assurance that their families will be provided for, tends greatly to produce this effect.

Camp 1st N. C. Cavalry, Halifax Co., Va.,
April 30th, 1863.

Dear Watchman.—With nothing but this jaded goose quill, wherewith to wing my flight to regions of idealty, we trust your kind readers will be content to peruse this communication of simple prose. Army correspondences are without interest only to those whose friends and relatives are connected therewith, therefore, we write you from the gallant "First," knowing that many of your subscribers have kindred ties within its ranks. We write you of the "First" in particular. I will not go back and detail picket scenes through street and raffish, nor gaudy charges of a veteran band against a hiring foe. They are mere records of the past, and will only incoite memories of by-gone times. Since the beginning of March, we have been recruiting ourselves and horses, yet, recruiting. After two years of almost incessant duty, we needed it. After being relieved by Gen. Fitzhugh Lee's Brigade on the Rappahannock, we visited Gordonsville; then across to the great valley of Virginia through snow near two feet deep. After a stay of a few weeks in Buckingham and Page counties, we wended our way across the cloud-capped peaks of the Blue Ridge to Nelson and Amherst counties. Here we remained a few weeks rubbing up our "old ribs," but forage being scarce, it was necessary to visit Campbell, Lynchburg, "the city of the hills," is an ugly place. Everything up to its highest pitch in price. We are now on the banks of the muddy Staunton. Spring is clothing the earth in a garb of verdant foliage and bedecking it with flowers. All are glad to see it; but it brings its pests as well as its pleasures. The plagued ticks are a perfect nuisance, and every now and then a solitary "gallinipper" sings a beggars song in your ear. But of all detestable borer these frogs are the worst. Night and day discordant sounds greet your ear from some neighborhood pond. Oh, that it would cease. The Regiment is enjoying excellent health. The "Cabarrus Rangers" (Co. F.) are on detached service at Hanover Junction. Notwithstanding these long marches our horses improve. With this as an introduction, I subscribe myself your correspondent. Auz revoir.

TROOPER 1st N. C. C.

For the Watchman.
In Camp, April 27, 1863.

"Fall in for roll-call," cries the lusty Sergeant, just in front of our tent, the dreaming soldier turns slowly under his blanket, rubs his eyes, straightens out his stiffened limbs, stretches and gapes a round or two and awakens to hear the drum rattling the morning call. Up at the first peep of day, a hand and face bath in cold water, a rub with a clean towel if handy, if not a dirty handkerchief will do, a few moments spent at gun-cleaning and the soldier's breakfast is ready. No boiled eggs, no fried chicken, no light rolls or cream in coffee, but hard baked bread and rank bacon, handled with the fingers, cut with a pocket knife and washed down with cold water. Preliminaries are few, formalities are fewer, and of course breakfast is dispatched in a hurry. Soon the "Surgeon's call" is sounded. The sick and afflicted repair to the Doctor. He examines the pulse, looks at the tongue, enquires after the former habits of the patient, scrutinizes him thoroughly, and prescribes for him. He is a "good institution," our Doctor is better than many institutions of the same name. Nine o'clock, and it is time for Guard-mounting (for we have prisoners to look af-

ter, confined in the Guard-house for desertion). Here our Sergeant-Major flourishes. A youth, tolerably good-looking, quiet in his appearance, with mustache much younger than himself, fully established in the good graces of his superior, he does his duty promptly, and if necessary I will recommend him. At ten o'clock comes drill, the hour most dreaded of the whole forenoon. I can not tell why it is so, but it is a fact. Eleven o'clock brings recreation—twelve brings roll-call again and dinner—three brings drill, five brings roll-call and supper, eight, roll-call again, and one day's work is done, the hours having been interspersed with various minor duties. The next day may rain, and the third be too wet to drill, but it never rains too hard or gets too wet to go on picket, a duty which we like very well in these intervening between battles when pickets don't shoot. Here the rifle is the only breastwork between the two lines, and that not so broad but that a man could make a splendid target beyond it. The camp are full of rumors of different shades and aspects. No wonder, we begin to think it time to move, roads are good, weather fine, and what is Hooker doing? Don't understand me to intimate that I am "anxious for a fight"—by no means do I feel so warlike, but we have been here for a long time and have supposed that we were waiting for spring to open. Perhaps we were. We may find out all we want to know soon enough. I will not attempt to give you any news at present, what I have is meagre, other sources will supply you—what we need most is health and the blessing of the Almighty. Peace will come at length and be brighter for the clouds of sorrow where it has so long been hid, and a blessed peace will be to those who may witness it, embalmied by a thousand struggles, a million sufferings, the tortures of loss of home and sorrows for the dead—sweeter for having been lost—more dearly appreciated for the price paid. Ever the same. 57y.

From the Raleigh Standard.
AN IMPERIAL DESPOTISM.

We publish to-day some extracts from the Richmond Enquirer and Charleston Mercury, showing the views of those papers in relation to the suspension of habeas corpus and the powers of government. We need not say to our readers that we cordially approve the views of the Mercury, for they are the same we have uniformly held and uttered.

The Enquirer, it will be seen, takes the ground that if necessary to the successful prosecution of the war it would "willingly vest in President Davis not the power of suspending the habeas corpus only, but the powers of life and death also, with summary drum head justice." And in its issue of the 27th April—a very recent date—the Enquirer has an article of some length under the head of "A Confederate Nobility," in which it takes the ground that a noble nobility, or aristocracy, or oligarchy is not desirable in the Southern States, but that the model of the present imperial despotism of France is the best that exists for our imitation. It says:

"The French empire was, and is now as thoroughly Democratic as the republic was—that is to say, all-Frenchmen, belong to only one class, and those is perfect equality before the law; and the Emperor founds his title upon, not the grace of God only like the English sovereign, but the grace of God and the will of the people. A military monarchy may be Democratic, but a State with patrician and plebeian orders cannot be. Where there has been a long war, and all the people are compelled to be soldiers and live under military discipline, there is undoubtedly a tendency towards imperial rule, but no tendency at all towards creation of a nobility. The government of the Confederacy, for example, if the war lasts several years longer, may compel the country to invest its Executive, as commander-in-chief, with dictatorial power, in order to a strong government, and perfect unity of action for the common defence; but it is not possible so much as to conceive its ending in the creation of a privileged class."

The Enquirer, it must be borne in mind, is referring to the views of those "Confederate citizens" who it says are "expressing distrust of the permanency of Democratic institutions in this country—sighing for gradations of rank—hinting that 'the mob' ought not to rule—theorizing about the necessity of higher classes, and wishing for a strong government; and its object is to give the ear to these citizens to come to advocate a "Confederate nobility," and to take ground for an imperial military despotism like that of France.

These views are not new with the Enquirer. In one of its issues of February last it said:

"If the government has not sufficient power, let it have more. Never mind centralization; six months after ratification, &c, it will be time enough to redress the balances, to adjust the checks, and to bring the delinquents to account. Till then, the army and the navy are our all in all. This people have elected a military President, partly because he was a tried statesman, but chiefly because he was a proved soldier; they have given him a

great and noble task to accomplish; he has a right to demand that they give him their confidence without stint, and place the powers of the people and of the State in a sword within his hand."

In the above extract you will see the people of the Confederate States have been invited. We were told, when the old government was broken up by the States south of us, that the contest was to be for liberty; that the civil power was to prevail over the military; that the common government was to be the agent of the States, and not their master; and that free institutions, not imperial despotism, were to constitute the great object of our toils and sufferings. But the official paper has declared otherwise. It has declared its ground to be nobility to be established by law, but it favors a military despotism like that of France. We are to have a great central, consolidated empire, the States bearing the same relation to it that the provinces of France bear to the throne of Napoleon. This is the programme laid down by the official paper. Does that journal speak for the heads of the government? If it does not, let them promptly withdraw from it the publication of the official orders. That they read it carefully we entertain no doubt. Thus far, they have allowed the public to infer that it speaks their sentiments by publishing all their documents, army orders, and the like first in its columns, to the exclusion of other Richmond papers. It is no excuse for them to say that they are not willing to appear to interfere with the freedom of the press, for it is notorious that they bestow no patronage of any kind on Conservative papers, or on papers that do not defend them or reflect their views.

We know that military despotism is making rapid strides in these States. We know that no people ever lost their liberties at once, but step by step, as some deadly disease steals upon the system and gradually but surely saps the fountains of life. We know that tyrants and their minions always prepare the popular mind in advance for their usurpations are always based upon the plea of the "general good." The argument now is, we hate Lincoln so bitterly that in order to resist him, we must make slaves of ourselves.

The answer of our people is, we will be slaves neither to Lincoln, nor Davis, nor France, nor England. North Carolina is a State, not a province, and she has eighty thousand of as brave troops as ever trod the earth. When she calls them, they will come. If the worst should happen that can happen, she will be able to take care of herself as an independent power. She will not submit, in any event, to a law of Congress passed in deliberate violation of the Constitution, investing Mr. Davis with dictatorial powers; but she will resist such a law by withdrawing, if necessary, from the Confederation, and she will fight her way out against all comers with a courage and an ardor which will eclipse even any former achievements of her sons during the existing war. For one, we are determined not to exchange one despotism for another. With the Richmond Examiner we hold that—

"The strength of the Confederacy will depart from it, the moment it becomes a pale reflex of the Northern empire. The North possesses greater numbers, and all the physical advantages in a greater degree than the South. Yet the South resists with success, and why? Because of its superior moral force. This is still a free republic. Our armies fight with courage for their property and liberty. Our people endure the ills of war with fortitude; that their laws and privileges may be secured. The North is governed by a despotism. Its soldiers and its people are slaves. But if we do as the North has done, and surrender all the powers of the State into the hands of one man, the South will be governed also by arbitrary power, and its people too will be slaves. Then the struggle will resolve itself into a struggle between two despotisms, each possessing a certain amount of brute force. As the South has far less of this than the North, the conclusion is inevitable that the South must succumb. The only hope of this country rests on a strict adherence to its republican principles. The restoration of the Union becomes a possible thing the moment it is presented in the form of this question: Shall we belong to a great country governed by arbitrary and despotic power, or belong to a little country also governed by arbitrary and despotic power?"

A correspondent writing from High Point inquires if government hands are liable to poll tax. We have no doubt they are. Soldiers only are exempt from poll tax. Government hands are detailed, but they are not soldiers. They work for the government and make money, and they ought to pay their taxes.—Raleigh Standard.