

IN UNDRRESS UNIFORM.

BY H. H. BENNETT.

Sergeant Bob leaned his rifle against the stack and sat down on an upturned empty soap box in the shadow of the tent, with a sigh of relief. He unbuckled his belt and mopped his hot face with a red cotton handkerchief.

"There," he said, "that's done for one while! I shall not have any more guard duty for at least twenty-four hours, thank goodness, though we've got none too many men and extra guard duty is becoming the rule."

"Thought you liked it?" grinned the other sergeant, looking up from his occupation of poking a little sharpened stick into the recesses of his rifle-breech in search of dust.

"Like it!" Sergeant Bob ejaculated ironically, with a disdainful wave of a grimy hand at all the surrounding. From the scrubby hills to the east a dusty country road ran across the narrow valley, and disappeared in the hills to the west. The sides of the hills were covered with underbrush and second-growth timber, with here and there a little whitewashed house set down box-like in a clearing. The valley was a marsh, with coarse grass and weeds; here and there a pool of stagnant water or a ditch-like stream; here the hummocks of drier ground rose from it, covered with brambles and wild roses.

Through the centre of this valley ran the long black line of a railway embankment, crossed midway by a wagon road. In one of the angles formed by the crossing stood a country store, a one-story box of gray boards. In another angle was a great coal-tipple, its skeleton frame black against the sky. From this a little railway straddled across the marshy ground on the high legs of a truss, running back to where the dark mouth of a coal shaft yawned in the hillside.

Around the tipple were great piles of slack, waste coal dust, screened from the dump. The store was built on slack; the railway embankment was made of slack; grimy hills of slack, cut through by the railway and the wagon road filled all the neighborhood of the tipple.

Some of the murky hills were on fire, smoldering at the base. They had been burning for years, and from them rose noxious gases. The stream that ran at their base was polluted by the drainage of the slack, and on the surface of the water floated an iridescent, metallic scum.

Along the wagon road, on either side, stretched rows of tents; another row was placed on a little strip of level ground at the foot of the railway fill; more tents stood in the shadow of the coal tipple. In front of the store a tent held a telegraph instrument, placed on a barrel; and here a blue-clad operator listened to the busy tickle of the receiver. The brazen sun of a hot June day shone in a sky of warning blue. The thermometer, hung by the telegraph tent, registered 94 degrees.

Now and then a long coal train rushed by, raising black dust in swirls, which settled again on tents and tipple and store. A wagon, dragging its slow course along the road, was half hidden in a gray cloud of dust. In the shade of the tipple or in the hot shadow of the tents lounged blue-clad men, with blouses unbuttoned or cast aside, each one trying to get a breath of fresh air in that valley furnace.

Four infantry companies and a battery of the National Guard were encamped here; four miles down the railway were two other companies, and four miles in the other direction were two companies more. Sixteen miles of railway were held and guarded by these two battalions. Beyond them were troops of other regiments, scattered here and there along 60 miles of road, until the railway reached the waters of the broad Ohio.

Night and day sentinels paced the track and squads of guards watched the bridges, the coal tipples and the mine buildings. Night and day watchful pickets along the hills waited with loaded rifles.

When the troops had reached the narrow valley, three days before, bridges and tipples were burning; loaded cars had been overturned and wrecked, and not a train was running on this section of one of the great railways of the country. All this was the work of rioters who found opportunities for mischief in a strike of coal miners. The majority of the rioters were alleged, by the coal miners, to be ignorant foreigners, deluded and misled by mistaken men.

But the great danger of this strike, which has now been a matter of history for some years, were at an end. Now the bridges and buildings were safe; long trains thundered over the rails, and the men who had brought about order panted in the sweltering heat by day and shivered in the misty chill air by night. By night, too, the rioters from the foreign settlement came across the hill and fired into the camp and at the sentries.

The first night this was done the bugle blew "To arms!" and the whole camp roused itself to repel the attack; now, even the pickets did not notice the firing unless the men came too near, or tried to cross the lines.

Then it was: "Halt! Who goes there?" "Halt! Halt! Who goes there?" "Halt, or I'll fire!" followed by the report of a rifle, and then the crashing of bushes as the intruder fled.

"I wish we had been detailed for the upper post!" growled Sergeant Bob, who had got rid of his blouse and his leggings, and was now meditatively regarding his dusty shoes.

peaceful children—Are you hurt?" asked Sergeant Bob, from behind a tree.

"No, I'm not, but I'm very uncomfortable."

"What's the matter?"

"Why, look at me!" said the other sergeant. "Here I am, lying in a puddle of ice-water."

"Why don't you get out of it, then?"

"Get out of it? These old well-boards won't stop a ball, and I have to stay flat on the ground behind this curb. I don't want to get shot. This is where you tipped over that bucket of water. I wish I had that villain!"

A shot from the thicket answered him as he took his first beyond the corner of the well. Sergeant Bob leaned against the tree and laughed; then he stopped laughing and wondered how long the unseen marksman would keep them there, and if their absence from camp would be noticed at noon mess.

Every movement, it seemed, brought a shot from the bushes. Once in a while the man in the thicket turned his attention to the clothes on the fence and shot holes in them, while the owners howled at him from their cover.

"Well, I guess I can stand it as long as he can," commented Bob.

"Yes; you're not exposed to the wintry blasts as I am!" complained the other sergeant.

"Wintry blasts! Why, man, the sun's burning patches on me till I look like a tiled floor!"

"Well, you aren't lying in a small lake of well-water that is 'way below zero. Part of me is frozen; when I turn over the other part freezes, and a crash towel is small slothing, and I'm dirtier than when I came up here. Wouldn't I like to get a crack at that fellow!"

"Say," began Sergeant Bob after another half-hour, "can't you get one of the rifles? The little snap of his gun can't be heard at camp, but if you could fire one of ours, the bang would bring the guard up in a hurry."

"I can't reach them from here. Every time I stick my hand out that reprobate shoots at me. Wait a minute! Is your rifle loaded?"

"No; but the box is hanging on it with the belt, and there's 20 rounds in it."

The other sergeant looked round and found a stick. Then he reached over and poked the stick through a crack in the boards, sawing it back and forth until he got it against one of the rifles. The gun came rattling to the ground, and he pulled it behind the curb. This brought out more shots from the man in the bushes.

"Is that my rifle?" asked Bob.

"Mine, and the best one in the company, too!"

"Well, you'll get your shoulder kicked off. You've got no clothes for padding."

"This rifle don't kick. No rifle does if you hold it right, and I'll make a pad of this towel. Of course you fellows who shut both eyes when you fire and hold the butt two inches from your shoulder get kicked, and no wonder."

"Shut both eyes? Who got the sharpshooter's bar, I'd like to know? But go ahead! Blaze away into the hill! Noise is all we want."

"Bang!" went the rifle, and a crack from the bushes answered it. Half a dozen times the sergeant shot, as fast as he could load and fire.

"That will do, I reckon," he said, rubbing his shoulder. "They'll think there is a battle," and the two chuckled as they waited for reinforcements and relief.

"Hi, there, you men! What are you doing here?" It was the fat lieutenant, coming from behind the old log house.

"Get back, lieutenant!" both boys cried. "You'll get shot!"

"There's a villain six feet tall up in the bushes there, with a Winchester! He's kept us here an hour," explained Sergeant Bob.

"Hey!" and the lieutenant dodged behind the log hut. From back of him the grinning faces of half dozen of the guard looked out.

"We'll get your man for you. We reconnoitered, saw from where the shots came, and I sent a squad up over the hill. They'll come down on his rear. But what I want to know is what you two are doing outside of the lines?"

"Taking a bath, sir."

"Taking a bath, eh? Well, I might overlook you coming out for such a commendable purpose, especially since you've been penned up already; but you've made me run up this hill in the sun, and you ought to be court-martialed. Hello! The other squad has your man."

There was a commotion in the bushes; then the corporal and the rest of the squad appeared. The corporal held in his hand a dinky little Flobert rifle. Two of the men led a small, shock-headed, dirty-faced boy.

The lieutenant shouted with laughter. There's your six-footer and his Winchester! Kept you here an hour! Oh, my! and the rest of the guard snickered audibly. Sergeant Bob and the other sergeant looked at each other and said nothing.

"What does he say, corporal?"

"Says he did it for fun, sir, and that he did not shoot to hit."

"He did it for fun, eh? Well, just bring along his rifle and keep it; box his ears and send him home. As for you two, get into your clothes and come to camp at once. When you get there report at guard headquarters—that is, if you don't forget it," and the lieutenant smiled as he departed.

"Guess we'll forget it, won't we, Bob?" asked the other sergeant. And they did.—Youth's Companion.

The man with a clear conscience sleeps well, likewise the fellow who hasn't any conscience at all.

TALKS ABOUT WOMANKIND

Big Banquet Managed by a Woman.

The largest banquet on record in history, it is claimed, was that given to the mayors of France in the Garden of the Tuileries during the Paris exposition. This banquet was entirely managed by a woman 26 years old, Mlle. Potel. The number of guests was 23,408 and the total number of employees was 24,089. This included wagon drivers, detectives, caretakers of silver, ice cream men, dishwashers, waiters and cooks. On the day of the banquet Mlle. Potel was on the ground in a magnificent costume, surrounded by a small army of subordinates and boys on bicycles to carry her orders.—Chicago Chronicle.

Help for the Women of India.

An English woman, who has gone to India to practice medicine, states in a letter to a friend that it has been proven that only through the enlightenment of the high class women of India can help come to the Indian woman of lesser rank, and the medical work of English women is evidently to be the greatest and most powerful lever for raising the iron door that shuts the eastern women from western freedom and culture. Further that it is an unfortunate fact that there are no more strenuous opponents of any change in the position of Indian women than most of the women themselves. It is known to be no uncommon thing for the mother of the family to refuse to eat and make herself and everybody else wretched if one of her daughters is merely allowed to go to school.

The Sleeve of Summer.

The sleeve should receive special consideration in making summer gowns, and certainly the variety is great enough to allow every one to secure a particular type suited to her requirements. The long sleeve is a sort of mutton-leg shape reversed so that the fulness is all at the wrist, where it is gathered into a cuff, is a favorite style, and elbow sleeves, varied in finish, will be a feature of this season, while the modified bishop sleeve, finished with a turn-back cuff, will be chosen for the late spring tail or gown. An association of fabrics is essential to the beauty and good style of these dressy sleeves. Fine sheer tulle in white or a deep cream tint is finely tucked, shirred or run with lace insertion to make the under-sleeves that are worn with the foulard or veiling dress which has sleeves in elbow or three-quarter length; and a vest front and deep sailor collar of the same fabric, ornamented with rich lace, are frequently added to accentuate that idea. Chiffon, mousseline de sole and all-over lace are also utilized in this fashion, when a very dressy effect is desired.

Beating Heads for Pin Money.

It is considered quite smart to make money nowadays—provided, of course, one can make it in ornamental ways. The threading of beads and gems on chains and necklaces is one way to keep busy the fingers and fill the purse of the ornamental worker. It is said that four fashionable women make these barbaric baubles for private clients and the shops—one with the laudable desire of purchasing for herself the proceeds a diamond tiara! The great difficulty seems to be to hit upon something really new. One makes a special point of very fine and narrow gold beads, threaded at intervals through queer Japanese beads and little toys, such as whistles and peep-shows, and also of big lumps of turquoise treated in the same way; and another started her career with \$50 worth of beads and pearls, both regular and irregular in size, and relies upon the changes her ready wit can ring upon rubies, emeralds, gold beads, amber, crystals, orientals, Venetian and the rest, to produce pretty designs. Hundreds of dollars can be spent on the gold-mesh bag, studded with real jewels and dependent from a jeweled frame; but less expensive models are lovely if lost.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Woman and the Bootblack.

"This chair reserved for ladies." Is the sign that a west side bootblack has stuck over one of his seven chairs. The sign attracts attention but not nearly so much as the member of the gentler sex who has the courage to climb to the elevated perch to have her boots cleaned and dressed.

The matinee girl seems to be the greatest patron of the reserved chair, and she is seemingly unabashed as men and boys half a dozen deep look up the sidewalk and stare. This gaping crowd is the arch enemy of the boss bootblack, who realizes that his fair customers invariably fail to come back after being stared at in this way.

"The sign is all right, but I'm afraid the chair is a little ahead of the times," said the bootblack. "The new woman is a great and glorious institution that has come to stay seemingly. She'll fight for her club, her theatre tickets, her political rights, and even her right to pick her husband's typewriter; but when it comes to sitting down at a corner shoestand to have her books looked after she balks worse than the mare that David Harum sold the deacon. The new woman can't stand being placed upon an elevated chair and stared at as a museum freak. Her courage is not screwed up to that point. At least not yet."—New York Sun.

FOR WOMAN'S BENEFIT

Panne frizze is a new material that is supple but has a rough surface.

Hairpins with jeweled heads are one of the novelties for hair decoration.

The latest French coiffure shows the hair coiled low on the nape of the neck.

French silver buckles are very stylish and compete in popularity with the large turquoise buckles.

White pique gowns are strapped with bands of white suede cloth by way of novelty rather than for practical use.

The new veiling displays gold spots, which is a pretty fashion, but not one that is likely to be approved of by the oculist.

Silk stockings, of course, with yellow eagles in a line running up over the instep, and on either side of them violets.

Gay little low shoes have red heels, the front part of the shoe, in which the eyellet holes for the lacings are set, being red and the lacings light drab silk.

Mourning purses or pocketbooks—unfortunate misnomer—come in black leather finished with gun metal, the design simple and having only a fine beading at the edge.

Handsome flowered silks are made with a satin selvedge about half an inch wide in a contrasting shade. The stripe is really too pretty to lose and some modistes manage to utilize it in the costume some way.

The thin lace is so much more satisfactory, the women who consider a gown a real work of art. "I like the delicate texture," says one, "and it has the more effect of real lace."

The latest shiftwaists sets show studs with single stones set in gold with the tiniest of safety pins, also with the same stone to fasten the stock collar in the back and front.

FARM TOPICS

Sweet Corn For Silage.

An important advantage in favor of growing sweet corn for fodder and silage is the possibility of selling many of the ears for table use. It is no better for the silo than common field corn and unless pretty well ripened makes rather acid silage.

Rape as Calf Pasture.

Rape makes a very satisfactory calf pasture. Like clover and some other crops, there is danger of bloating, therefore the animals must be put on gradually and kept off whenever dew is on. This plant is not appreciated in many sections of the country. It is one of the very best for silage and for pasture purposes.

Horses Becoming Scarce.

Government buyers all over the West and Northwest report it increasingly difficult to secure horses for army service. Cavalry horses are especially in demand and heavier horses for artillery and transport service are no scarce that it is almost impossible to get good ones at a fair price. Buyers are of the opinion that Western ranges are getting short of good horse stock, which makes it all the more necessary for farmers to raise their own work horses and some to sell if possible.

A Serviceable Sawhorse.

When sawing wood it is a matter of considerable work to get out the pieces, mortise and fit them together to make an ordinary sawhorse. The one shown in the cut can be built in twenty minutes if one has some strips of hard wood at hand of the proper width. The cross pieces are firmly nailed together and six strips of the same board put on to strengthen and hold the ends in place. Such a horse will prove very rigid and serviceable.—American Agriculturist.

Small Ice Houses.

Much unnecessary mystery is thrown about the subject of ice storage, but it is all very simple, says American Gardening. The chief points are to keep the ice out of water at the top by tight roof, well chinked in packing, surrounded by a foot of sawdust top, bottom and sides, to exclude air and heat, and to have enough ice to preserve itself.

For an ordinary family, including cooling milk for butter, and the supply of a large family refrigerator, there should be a solid cube of ice about 10x10x10 feet. This gives 1000 cubic feet, and as it weighs about fifty pounds per cubic foot includes joints and chinking, there will be twenty-five tons. If we allow ten tons for melting at top, bottom and sides, during the entire season, it will leave 200 pounds per day for 150 days. For family use alone, without milk cooling, a cube 8x8x8 feet will do, giving 512 feet or thirteen tons.

It is well to have an air space outside of the sawdust which surrounds the ice though this is not absolutely necessary.

A Novel Method of Keeping Poultry.

A neighbor of mine, an enthusiastic practical farmer, with a good city business, says he can get better results out of chickens than any one else he has any knowledge of and he is willing to stand as a champion in this specialty. His methods are certainly remarkable in some respects. A winter house, with about twelve hens to a section, makes it possible to handle the flock easily. The outside runways are small. The summer management is very distinct from the winter plan. The winter house is given up as soon as it is warm enough for hens to range about and they are turned out into the orchard, a field of five or six acres.

The shelter is known as the annex and is not elaborate. Here are placed 150 hens to run at will. They are fed twice a day, the first feed being soft and generally a mixture of soft corn meal and bran, with a liberal amount of ground bone. The second feed is corn, wheat or buckwheat and sometimes two or all three at a time. The same feed is given in winter except that the soft feed is given hot.

No special strains of fowls are kept, but the flock is changed every year by buying in April 200 eggs from various neighbors. An incubator does the work, and a second sitting of the same amount is made later. As the fall approaches the cockerels and all of the old flock are disposed of. Not a single fowl is wintered a second time.

While a two-year-old hen will lay fairly well it takes much more feed to get an old hen through her molting season and return to laying than it does to fit a young pullet. So as soon as the hens stop laying preparatory to the molting season they are sold. The claim for this plan is that it turns a young blood into layers in the shortest possible time and therefore at lowest cost, and it is also found that the laying season is such that the most money can be got out of the eggs, cost being counted.—John Chamberlain, in New England Homestead.

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