

"POOR CONRAD" TELLS OF GETTYSBURG TRIP.

INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF THE MEETING OF BLUE AND GREY ON FAMOUS BATTLE-FIELD.

Editor County Record:—

My many friends who are readers of The County Record, have asked me to write something on the reunion and the meeting of the Blue and the Gray on the famous battle-field at Gettysburg, Pa. It is a task worthy of a better pen than mine. It is impossible for me to do justice to this great occasion, which some call the turning point for the down-fall of the Confederacy, our beloved land. We had good reasons to expect the many great trials and humiliations that were in store for us; but that is all of the past, so let us try to forget the bitterness that followed the end of the war. It could have been a thousand times worse, if those who were once our enemies had tried to oppress us more; but there are some people in all countries who are willing to treat friend or foe right, and we fared much better under the circumstances than most conquered countries. As President Wilson said in his speech at Gettysburg on the fourth of this month, both sides fought for what they thought was right. All countries have their wars, families have their wars also, we all hope our struggle may be for the best after all, but we have enjoyed a peace among ourselves for fifty years and we all hope it will last for many more periods of fifty years. I am still proud to say I was a soldier in that great war where brother was against brother and father against son. I am proud to say that I am a veteran of four years, and like many others, did not lay down my arms until a fair and honest surrender could be made. I followed Lee and Jackson through the campaigns in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and glory in the name of one of the survivors of General Lee's ragged few and not the boys for running.

Dear Mr Editor, I wish you could have been at this great reunion. You are a son of the Southland and one who stands for all of our rights. Well do I remember your dear father, who helped to raise the company with which I marched away to the battle-field with the drum loudly beating. He made us a splendid speech on the Evans old field when we elected our officers: John Whitworth, the gentleman soldier captain; for lieutenants—Knight, Wm Brand and Theodore Nelson; for orderly sergeant, H L McIntosh, father of Mr Wilson McIntosh, of the Workman section.

I will now tell something about the great camp at Gettysburg. It was a masterly arrangement and I have no doubt it cost the United States and the State of Pennsylvania one million dollars. I will mention the great array of tents and the camp equipments—5,000 tents, each capable of accommodating 10 men. Each tent was supplied with from six to eight nice cots, all new, one army blanket to each cot, two tin wash pans and one water bucket to each tent. Each veteran was supplied with plate, knife, fork and two spoons, also a quart coffee cup. Just think for a moment what expense and trouble the Government and the State of Pennsylvania had undertaken: 5,000 tents, 5,000 water buckets, 10,000 wash basins, 30,000 stakes driven in the ground, six for each tent, three at each side of the tent, high enough to support a wash basin and a good size box to set the water bucket on. The camp was laid off in regular blocks and streets the same as a city and more regular than many cities, each street with number and each tent also. No trouble to find any one in the camp. This was all arranged before the veterans began to arrive. They had nothing to do but rest, eat, drink and sleep when ever they felt like it. No duty but to God. The kitchens were supplied with the best kind of victuals, about six waiters to help your plate as it was passed down the long table, each waiter armed with a large spoon or fork; as your plate was passed down the spoon would drop the food from each pot into your plate and it would be pushed to the next waiter

with the spoon already uplifted and before the plate would hardly stop dab would go into the plate Irish potatoes, cabbage, beans or whatever was in that particular pot. The next waiter would be holding aloft on a large two-pronged fork, a piece of roast-beef, or perhaps a large spoon of hash and dab into your plate that would go, and so on down the line. Then another would hand you bread and butter, and at last with a large dipper of hot coffee would pour it into your quart cup as you passed it along. It was interesting to see how like clock work everything was done, no questions to ask, all was done for us that was necessary. The food was well cooked and wholesome, and not the same all the time. For breakfast regularly each morning, two nice soft boiled eggs were added. A long table with seats was placed just across the street from the kitchen, where fifty or more could sit, eat, laugh and talk, which made everything so very easy and all seemed like one big family. It was surprising to see how soon all this was done, no one had to wait long enough to get tired. A large pit was made in the ground at the kitchen in the middle of the street, but not in the way at all and all scraps of food left on the plates were thrown into this ever-burning pit of fire, also all waste paper and everything that was calculated to cause filth or breed disease. The dishes were returned to the table, where the dish washer took care of them at once and all were stacked at the end of the table in regular rotation, cups put in great stacks next to the plates, next knives and forks, and then spoons. No trouble, everything handy and not any confusion as with some of our people here in Williamsburg, where generally all is confusion, like some old woman hunting for the dishcloth, inquired excitedly of one of the children:

"Where is the dishcloth?"
"Why, pap has put it on the horse's sore back."
"Go get it for me and give it a cold water rinse. I 'spise nassiness." And so it is with many of our Southern people.

Some one writing a few years ago said the Southern people were a shiftless set, and a good deal of what the writer said was true. Of course, we have many who keep things in proper order, but I am old enough to see where this carelessness and shiftlessness came from. When this was a slave country and nearly all who lived out of the cities were used to being waited on, harnessing or saddling a horse, handing a drink of water, untying the shoes, washing the feet, etc, were all done by servants, and I almost forgave the failure to throw water out or the basin after washing face and hands. So we see a good deal of this carelessness is inherited. It is in the blood but is coming out gradually.

While passing through the country and looking from the car window, I could not fail to notice how much neater and cleaner the farms are after entering Virginia, and in Pennsylvania the change is very great. On the Western Maryland railroad for a hundred miles or more I did not see a single plow, rake, mower or any other kind of farm implement lying about the fields or fence corners; everything was stored away in the barns and protected from the weather; no bushes along the fences or ditches and no stumps. All on the ground was the golden grain, wheat as high as one's shoulder and ready for the mower. Some was already cut and shocked, and if it had not been Sunday the mowers and binders would have been at work, but not a farm tool could be seen and I suppose all had been stored away Saturday. Much corn is also planted, but the most of it was not more than knee high, looking fine, however, fields clear of grass and weeds.

I will now tell about the feeling of the people that seemed to exist, and I do not think I was deceived. It was one of genuine friendliness. Many from the distant Northern States visited the old Confederate veterans and approached us with us outstretched hand and pleasing face. They came not one at a time and only now and then, but it was dozens at a time. They were always

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first to speak, enquiring how we were making out, hoping that we were enjoying ourselves, to which we replied, "Finely," and thanked them, the Governor and the great State of Pennsylvania for the pleasant welcome they had given us. The weather was quite hot, but that did not stop them. They were going from street to street and from tent to tent the whole day and long after dark. In the afternoon as it began to grow cooler the ladies would be run through the camp in automobiles, many from the town and for miles distant in the surrounding country. The ladies and young girls were just as sociable as the men. They came as ministering angels trying to heal the wounds and bind the broken hearts, and while holding their gentle hands for the good-bye with tearful eyes we often said, "God bless you and the good people of Pennsylvania," while I am sure the parting wish was returned.

Mr Editor, I have written a good deal that many have already heard. The newspapers have published some very interesting articles and some things that should not have been mentioned. I allude to the fracas that happened at Gettysburg, the cutting affray in a hotel in the town. If there had been no reunion of the Blue and the Gray such a small fight in that town would scarcely have been mentioned, probably only by the Gettysburg papers; but as it was a chance to say something that would mar the brotherly assemblage of the North and the South, almost every newspaper jumped at the news as something to tell and in a way to lead the people at home and all over the South to think that the old veterans got drunk generally and were fighting the Yankees again. The first words of many whom I met after my return were: "Well, you had some fights among the fellows up there." Nothing of the kind happened in camp and I venture to say that I do not believe such a peaceable time was ever spent between 50,000 men from fifty different sections of country during the six days' gathering. I went through different parts of the camp every day and did not see any row nor hear an oath or a heated dispute nor see anyone drunk. It is wonderful. How can the like ever happen again? As I have said, the newspapers have told the people a great deal of the great reunion but have not told them one-half. I am telling only a small part. Many of my friends and the readers of The Record perhaps have not been able to see the daily papers and some perchance have not had much of the news. These are the ones I wish to reach most particularly, and the poorer that my friends are I believe my letters do them the most good. I met my friend, Mr Buffkin of Cades. His parting was: "Give us a long letter." I have more to say but will not tire the printers too much and will tell more in my next.

Yours truly,
P. C.

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