

LETTER FROM GRANT'S ARMY.

FIRST CONNECTICUT ARTILLERY.

November 23rd, 1864.

Thanksgiving dawned upon the army here, with a hazy April day. The evening previous several barrels of apples had come to the company, as a donation from some source or other, and a rumor was in circulation that *fifteen hundred turkeys*, from the same source, were to be distributed through the regiment on the morrow. A tendency to be thankful already began to be manifested by some, but the more conservative suggested that it might be as well to wait, at least, until the fowls were killed. Enquiries were made of neighboring companies, some of whom had not so much as heard of the thing. Breakfast the following morning consisted of the usual "bread and coffee," and the impression began to prevail, and was strengthened by a dinner of fresh beef that the turkeys would not come. Some, however, who read the papers, remained hopeful, and the satisfaction of all was immense when, just before the hour for supper, Gilmore, with the ration teams, came riding into camp, and lo! the fowls, ready dressed and cooked, and ready for the table with the exception of cutting up.

The carving was performed without regard to Chesterfield's advice, when the supper horn, in the hands of nautical Capt. Tucker of the cook-house, sounded a real thanksgiving blast, which, taken up by beating on cups and platters, was repeated around each soldier's board, and by some prolonged far into the night.

Stuffed as the birds were to repletency with the good will of generous donors, if now and then a tough mouthful was found, a small piece of the dressing made it go easily down.

Some of our neighbors were not so fortunate as to obtain their portion on the 24th; but all, we believe, have since shared in these very tangible tokens of remembrance from friends at home. Who ever heard of a whole army dining on turkey before? Of all classes, we believe the soldiers were most sincerely thankful and reasonably so. Really, if we shock pseudo-humanity by occasional acts of severity, does not this present state of things teach many humane lessons? Is not the humanity of the nation to its soldiery a correct exponent of a high civilization, and severity a most intelligent method of dealing with brutish treason? During the day the rebels were quite respectful, like sinners about church steps during a revival, occasionally looking in at the door, half repentent in their hearts, but desirous of continuing rebels a little longer.

Since my last, the fall rains have prevailed to an extent calculated to check any extensive movement of the army, and tending to a very quiet disposition along the lines. A few pickets have been taken before Petersburg, and a short strip of our front line, at Bermuda Hundred, captured. As no effort has been made to retake the latter, we judge its re-possession is not deemed important at present. A very brisk artillery engagement took place near the city this P. M., lasting about an hour. It started, we believe, from some useless picket firing and resulted in extensive waste of ammunition and perhaps the loss of a life or two. There is one benefit derived from this kind of firing, however, we have noticed that almost every body appeared to feel better after it.

Pickets on the *other side* have, for a day or two past, made themselves jubilant over what they term "Sherman's defeat," declaring that his whole army has been captured.—Yankee "*guesses they are like the boy who whistled to keep his courage up in the darkest part of the woods, but sat down and yelled when completely lost.*"

The canal is progressing towards completion and, like other plans of Butler, which were at first ignored, are beginning to be appreciated by the enemy as the hard logic of its results are being forced upon them.

The First Connecticut still does siege service from the right, across the James, to the left of Petersburg. Not an important engagement has occurred since its arrival at the front in which some of its batteries have not participated. Though seldom called to encounter such peril as attends a charge, such as Infantry often makes, it is doubtful if these lines could be held a single day without the protection afforded by its heavy guns. The regiment is commanded by Col. H. L. Abbott of the Regular Army who, meeting at first, to some extent, the same prejudice so common towards new commanders, and so successfully surmounted by his predecessor, Col. Robert O. Tyler, has, we have no hesitation in saying, by his able management of the regiment in the field, and gentlemanly and honorable bearing towards all classes, firmly established himself in the confidence of every company in his command. Among the monuments for the grave of treason, and which will long mark its resting place in this State, are the fine earthworks occupied by these and other batteries. Of these, ascending oftenest under our observation, we may mention that occupied by Capt. J. H. Burton's battery—No. 4—on "Jordan's Farm." From this point the observer has a good view of Petersburg. By the aid of a "glass," such as are used by the "Signal Corps" we have looked through broken windows, seen people distinctly on the street, and easily read the *hour* from the "steeple-clock" of the city. It was formerly a rebel fort of sixteen guns, and was taken rather by strategy than force. A tree is still standing within the enclosure under which, we have been informed by one of the captors, rebel officers were about setting down to breakfast on the morning of its capture. The fort had to be re-modelled and faced the other way. Under the skillful supervision of its present commander, the magazine has been converted into one of the best on the line, a fine epaulement made about the whole, the terreplein graded, and sewers constructed, in fact, everything done necessary to render the structure complete. Here originated the term "Petersburg express," as applied to a "thirty-pounder Parrott gun" which was first trained on the city. The name has since been transferred to a large "thirteen inch pounder" afterwards placed in position near by, under command of Lieut. Jackson of the same company (I). Major Brooker has his headquarters here, as has also Doct. J. S. Delaware, First Assistant Surgeon of the regiment, the Dispensary, a very responsible charge, being in care of Frank Frost, Co. D, of Killingly, who, by a correct deportment and unremitting attention to his work, appears to have won the esteem of his superiors, and by many little kindnesses which his position allows, the good will of many in the ranks. We may also state that he is assisted by Asa L. Putnam—Co. L—of Brooklyn, a lineal descendant of valiant Israel, as we are informed; and who—if we may judge from his expressed sentiments—was Virginia a wolf den and treason a wolf, would not hesitate entering at once, and taking the monster by the ears: A regimental sutler's store is also kept here, which, judged by the *ticket system*, must be a great convenience, especially when pay days are so "far between."

AMIDOWN.