

so that they might rally behind us. And here a grotesque but most disheartening scene met our eyes—men from New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Maine, all mixed up together, lost-sore and ragged, in no order, and apparently under no officers. All parts of the North were represented in the rout—Zouaves, with their gay uniforms torn, dirty and blood-soiled, soldiers without shoes, some without guns or knapsacks; others, more determined, carrying away three or four of each; some without eyes, some without ears and others with various flesh wounds, riding, limping or running—such was the picturesque procession which went along the road all yesterday forenoon. As they met us, they told us of the deadly fire of the batteries, told us to turn around immediately, and of the manner in which the rebels bayoneted all our wounded on the field, and such not very encouraging details. Others cheered us, and hoped "we'd give 'em Jessie," &c. We finally went to Fort Edsworth and entered it, where we thought the cannon, the abatis, the ditch and the ramparts looked very welcome after the accounts given us. Well, as the Dutchman said, we did not stop there, but went over beyond and bivouacked in a grove, where in a cold rain, without tents, we made sort of a cold breakfast. We expected an attack all day yesterday, and it was all we could do to keep the muskets dry. About noon the companies began to go off in search of better quarters. Aliquis and his company got into a deserted dwelling-house, where with good fire-places and fences we managed to get comfortably dry. We put out extra pickets in the night, as it was reported that an immense force was approaching, and there is some danger of being pushed off into the Potomac. I really think the rebel General is very foolish if he do not attack us to-day. Most of our regiments are completely demoralized, and are crossing the river in crowds. The New York Twenty-sixth, Seventeenth and some others I think are entitled to great credit for their present stand, as the majority are completely panic stricken. A Pennsylvania regiment near us is to-day hurriedly packing up to return home, their time having expired, which is not extremely encouraging either. The storm has now ceased, and the morning is beautiful. Our ideas of the enemy are all conjectural, and we know not what to day will bring forth. I hope, however, when I write again to give you better news.

Among the consoling features of our soldiering is the good feeling among our troops. The Captain of Company D was lately presented with an elegant sword, a portable camp bed, a camp stool, and other articles, by the members of his company. ALIQUIS.

**The Twenty-Sixth Regiment.**

CAMP MAXWELL, July 30, 1861.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:—

One of the best jokes of the season with us is a little paragraph in a late *Tribune*, headed "A Gallant Feat: Tuesday, in Virginia, Colonel McLeod Murphy captured three rebels in uniform, while out scouting on his own hook. He saw three of them getting water, while their arms were leaning against a tree but a few feet off. Col. Murphy rode up, and without firing his revolver, collared the crowd and brought them into camp." We are encamped near Col. Murphy, and the only feat of the kind we know of his performing was the following: The picket of the Twenty-Sixth Regiment took three secession dragoons, with a flag of truce, and held them at the post of their picket. Col. Murphy was the officer into whose hands the captain of the picket delivered them.

friends, who were in the picket at the time, knows that taking men with a flag of truce was a feat so "gallant," we would all have "got in" the *Tribune*; why, if we'd known that, we'd all of us been Murphys!

We have again moved our camp, in order to get out of the way of the guns of the Dahlgren Battery which was put up near our old location. Our situation, is, if possible, still more beautiful than Shuter's Hill. Where we are now encamped is called Federal Hill, and our camp, Maxwell, in honor of a kind lady friend to the Regiment in Elmira. Our gratitude to our female friends, regimentally speaking, indicates itself in the feminine sound of our camp names. We are still in sight of the beautiful Potomac—above us Washington, and below us Alexandria, Mount Vernon, and the most beautiful hills and valleys this country can exhibit. On the very spot where we now are, the U. S. army was encamped when they saw Washington burned, in the last war with England.

We have now got over anticipating attacks, and settle down to the routine of camp life again—drilling, getting rations, rambling, trapping, etc. To-day we expect our new uniforms, and indeed we sadly need them, for as it is we continually remind each other of Jack Falstaff's celebrated corps—"and more too!"

We no longer keep a picket out at Cloud's Mills, for the arrival of some New Jersey regiments near that place has obviated the necessity of it. There is the utmost strictness displayed now in passing persons in and out of the Federal lines, and a pass from the Provost Marshal is usually necessary. The Long Bridge is also strongly guarded, and not an officer or man in the regiment can get over to Washington, without a pass from the Colonel.

We are now discharging those who are sick and incapable of military duty. It is a wonderful drawback to a moving regiment—this having the halt, the lame and the blind to carry along, and recruiting officers should remember it. Every sickly man enlisted is a loss of two to the regiment, for it requires another to take care of him. ALIQUIS.

From the Twenty-Sixth Regiment.  
CAMP MAXWELL, VIRGINIA, }  
August 4, 1861. }

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

My letters, you will observe, like everything else pertaining to camp, are very irregular. Food in camp is irregular with a moving regiment, both as regards quantity and quality. Sometimes when shifting our position, we have long fasts, which are not particularly conducive to a prayerful mood; at other times, potatoes, peaches, chickens, onions, beets, &c., mysteriously appear and disappear around the camp fires—"A moment seen, then gone forever." We do not, as a regiment, generally make a practice of foraging; but then, if we did not do it a little, Kerrigan's regiment, which is near us, would get more than their "rations." Cattle are very rarely disturbed, though, it is true, horses are occasionally impressed into the service of their country, while a misanthropic mule may sometimes be seen sedately carrying two or three volunteers around on his back. Sleeping is also irregular, and in all sorts of places, from the finest of bed rooms down to the open air, in a rain, with the boots of a neighbor for a pillow. Tents are fine apartments, though, except during a heavy rain, when the ground floor is apt to be quite damp, especially if on a low, marshy spot.

Since I wrote last we have been newly uniformed, and have laid aside the old colorless

ciotacs which the men have so long worn under protest. Of course this gave an entirely new appearance to the regiment, which looked as though it had just been "shedding." One fellow, much fatigued after a long march, awoke from a long sleep that afternoon and saw what seemed a lot of strangers about. *Loggiter*, rubbing his eyes, "Wh-what regiment's this? where's the Twenty-sixth? Did you see which way they went?"— We were inspected by a regular officer last Friday, who is going through all the regiments along the river.

The greatest confidence is felt in all quarters in the ability and tact of Gen. McClellan, and his untiring activity imparts a vigor to every department of the army. The forests are still being leveled, entrenchments thrown up and batteries erected. The Northern "mud sills" are making havoc in the "sacred soil" generally enough, at least, to embitter the feelings of even that part of "the chivalry" who were the best inclined towards the North. I think the ideas of the Northern Press with reference to Southern sentiment, are very erroneous. Around here the inhabitants seem to be all secessionists, but of course they are not forward in ventilating the politics, especially when they are certain that will tell upon their hen roosts and orchards. A young farmer boy can scarcely be found any where around here; all, as I suppose, being off with the army. The rebel army is made of good material. The Black Horse Cavalry, especially, were made up almost wholly of men of culture and fortune, and I've heard the greatest mortification expressed by Virginians that they should have been cut to pieces by the New York Firemen—the aristocracy by the *sans culottes*. The Zouaves, by the way, are the "hoos" among the troops about here. Their officers are all either dead or good for nothing, and they warm all over recounting their adventures and showing their trophies from the Bull's Run battle. The Zouaves, Kerrigan's, the Mozart, McCann's, McLeod Murphy's, and Lansing's, are the regiments whose camps are nearest our own.

Mr. Owen J. Lewis, of your city, was visiting through our camp yesterday, surrounded, as you may well imagine, by crowds of old acquaintances asking for news from Utica. A man in civilian's dress is quite a curiosity now, and we stare at him with as much interest as we used to have in a military company, when we delighted to follow them barefooted through the streets for miles, to the great disgust of all school teachers. Mr. Lewis started this morning on a trip to Fortress Monroe.

Col. Kerrigan was heard to pay Col. Christian and our regiment quite a compliment the other day. He remarked that it was the best-drilled volunteer regiment he had yet seen.

It is now Sunday night; warm, oh how warm, but beautiful. Grim looking war ships are lying silently in the river between here and Washington. The Chaplain is holding religious services at one end of the camp, with the Band putting in "Old Hundred" and "Coronation" occasionally. From another part may be heard soldiers chanting "Dixie," celebrating the virtues of the "Female Smuggler," or bewailing the untimely death of "Gentle Annie." It is half past nine, and time that these noises stopped—also it's time my light was put out.

A. L. M.

From the Twenty-Sixth Regime.

CAMP MAXWELL, VIRGINIA,  
August 7, 1861.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

We were aroused again last night by two couriers from Gen. McClellan, who ordered us to

assemble, with the rest of the brigade, immediately along the Leesburg road. This was a little after midnight, and we lay out until morning, but got into no engagement. We could hear the rumbling of their artillery wagons, however, and it is known that some part of the rebel army is not far distant. These infantry regiments in an alarm in the night turn out very quietly, and, as they have no lights, a person might be not more than fifty yards from the camp and not know that a man was astir. If we are attacked here a battery will be sent across to Washington, in apprehension, I suppose, of feigned attacks. This lying out in case of alarms is what the boys call "going out to pasture," and it is n't very pleasing when they are obliged to sleep in the wet grass all night, and then return to camp in the morning without any engagement.

The following order was read on parade, last evening, by the Colonel:

His Excellency, the President of the United States, desiring the further service of the 26th Regiment N. Y. S. V., and having made requisition upon the Governor of this State therefor, Col. Christian is hereby directed, on the expiration of the term for which such regiment was mustered into the service of the United States, (August 21st, 1861.) to report with his command to the Adjutant-General of the United States Army, for duty under the order of the United States Government for the remainder of the term of enlistment of the regiment into the service of the State of New York.

By order of the Commander-in-Chief,  
D. CAMPBELL,  
Assistant Adjutant-General.

This occasions a great deal of disappointment among the men, many of whom had made arrangements to go to their homes after the 21st of August. The Colonel, however, says that as recruiting progresses those very anxious to go home may gradually all get a discharge, as he will use his exertions for that object at the War Department. He believes that the war at most will not last a year, and is determined himself at all events to see its close in the service.

The following changes have occurred in the officer roll of the Twenty-sixth Regiment, and we much regret that those resigned now are leaving us. The appointments, which have been made from among the most trustworthy and reliable men in the regiment, have been confirmed by Gov. Morgan, and the new officers will enter upon the discharge of their duties immediately. The resignations were assented to by Gen. McDowell, and the officers resigning discharged from the service of the United States:

- William K. Bacon, Adjutant, vice David Smith, Jr., resigned.
- Ensign Gilbert A. Hay, Lieutenant of Company A, vice William A. Mercer, resigned.
- Sergeant-Major John T. Kingsbury, Ensign of Company A, vice Hay, promoted.
- Lieutenant Norman W. Palmer, Captain of Company E, vice Antoine Brendle, resigned.
- Ensign H. D. Barnett, Lieutenant of Company B, vice Norman W. Palmer, promoted.
- Sergeant William J. Harlow, Ensign of Company B, vice Barnett, promoted.
- Sergeant William O. Gardner, Lieutenant of Company D, vice William P. West, promoted.
- Sergeant Hugh Leonard, Ensign of Company D, vice Richard Hall, resigned.
- Lieutenant E. R. P. Shurly, of Company G, Captain of Company C, vice John H. Fairbanks, resigned.
- Sergeant Charles B. Coventry, Lieutenant of Company E, vice Oliver W. Sheldon, resigned.
- Corporal Charles Smith, Ensign of Company E, vice James Van Vleck, resigned.

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Corporal William Conic, Lieutenant of Company F, vice Rufus D. Patten, resigned.

Private John Williams, Ensign of Company F, vice John Beviue, resigned.

Ensign Frank L. Binder, Lieutenant of Company G, vice E. R. P. Shurly, promoted.

Frank Lee, Ensign of Company G, vice Binder, promoted.

Lieutenant William P. West, Captain of Company I, vice John H. Palmer, resigned.

Corporal Alonzo Thompson, Lieutenant of Company I, vice Henry J. Phot, resigned.

Charles S. Johnson, Ensign of Company I, vice John W. Kinney, resigned.

Ensign Emmet Harder, Lieutenant of Company K, vice Charles F. Baragar, resigned.

Albert D. Lynch, Ensign of Company K, vice Emmet Harder, promoted.

ALIQUIS.

[The officers as above appointed have been duly commissioned by Gov. MORGAN.]

#### FROM THE TWENTY-SIXTH REGIMENT.

CAMP MARY, Sept. 12, 1861.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

Again we have moved, and this time to a beautiful piece of ground, to which Col. CHRISTIAN has given the name that heads this letter. It is "over Hunting Run," where we have moved, which carries us still more to the left of the Grand Army of the Potomac—the left regiment in the left Brigade. We are now under the command of Gen. SLOCUM, an officer of whom we all have the highest ideas. Letters to the regiment, however, still occasionally come directed to Col. McCann or Gen. Heintzelman's Brigade, an error which correspondents should take care to correct. Our Brigade is to be posted behind a line of intrenchments, and nearly our whole force is working on them every day; we already have a fine rifle pit in our front. Our regiment came up yesterday afternoon, and last night was the only one on this side of the river. In the evening, some picket firing off in front of us kept us on the alert for a while; nothing serious, however, occurred, though it is reported to-day that some of the Maine boys were captured. To-day the rest of the Brigades have been moving up, together with a company of dragoons, and Capt. Thompson's battery, so that affairs now look a little more sociable. We now really are finely situated, and we have taken great care to make the camp comfortable. An unoccupied house near by was taken down, to make floors to the tents, the fences in the neighborhood being rather defective. Capt. Palmer has charge of a squad of men daily employed in making a log building for the conveniences of the guard, facetiously called "Fort Palmer." Yesterday afternoon, we heard the skirmish up at the other end of the line, of which you have of course heard, but reported fighting is now so common a topic that it creates but little interest.

Picketing is a favorite duty with the men and officers of the regiment. There is a most solemn stillness along the roads that lead from Alexandria down into the country, and you may travel miles and see scarcely a living being, and hear only the chirping of insects or the singing of birds. I lay out all night not long since, on a hill at the outposts of the Federal lines. I never saw a more beautiful landscape. As the moon rose up slowly and made the still Potomac appear as a flare of light, the stillness had a drowsy effect upon us all. I lay, thinking of the prospect

of a fight, when five horsemen, armed to the teeth, suddenly rode up to my comrade and myself, and ordered us to surrender. Knowing the danger of grasping my musket, I did not make the attempt, but rising suddenly, I seized the leader by the throat—"Look here, you thunder in' fool, if you do n't sleep a little more quiet you'll get punched in the eye!" I'll never forgive Jim for spoiling that heroic dream.

Mortimer Thompson, "Doesticks," has been "rusticating" in our regiment for two or three weeks, and is an "honorary member" of the Colonel's staff. He is continually scouring over the country, going out with the pickets, &c., and seems to be in love with soldiering.

The three months question has now "gone glimmering in the dream of things that were," and the regiment is running like clockwork. I am obliged to inform you that no men were shot for insubordination, at the risk, however, of spoiling the effect of some fine newspaper paragraphs. Our Adjutant proves himself a very active and able officer, and has become very popular in the regiment. The Colonel and the company officers are continually in receipt of letters from mothers, wives and fathers of soldiers soliciting discharges and furloughs for them. They seem to have a sort of vague idea that the officers can just summarily send the men home in a "Depart, go in peace" style. At most, all the Colonel can do is to make application for the discharges, which he knows very well would never be granted, unless in cases of marked physical debility.— To give every letter received due attention, would require the individual efforts of every officer in the regiment, for a discharge has to be "lobbied" through like a bill in the Legislature.— Besides these applications, there are innumerable applications for officers' positions.— Young John Smith or some one, has just got his education; his father Mr. Smith or some one, a man of high respectability, wishes him to fight for the honor of his country's flag, but at the same time does not wholly undervalue the "loaves and fishes." Young John is described as not being altogether inexperienced in military, having been fourth corporal in the 10th Wide Awakes, and has witnessed several encampments of the Smithville Blues, therefore an application is made that Smith may have an office, that eventually he may become Gen. McSmith perhaps. Our Regiment has in its non-commissioned officers and privates, ample material for good officers, and it is really unjust to them, that stranger's claims should be preferred to the claims of those whose previous stations and course of duty render them eligible to the positions. This is the principle which the Colonel evidently aims to observe in the selection of his officers.

Our Regiment now numbers 830 men, and some recruits we learn are now on their way here. We have had comparatively little sickness amongst us, and no deaths by disease that I am aware of. Our band from Rochester has been discharged, and that seems to leave a vacant place in the Regiment. But really, a brass band, like an elephant, is a cumbersome sort of luxury to keep. They are not expected to fight, and yet a bass drum for instance is not a handy thing to move with when Cavalry are in pursuit. We have occasionally to suffer some loss from disability and a committee sits every Monday in Alexandria to receive applications for discharges.

ALBANS.

# Utica Morning Herald

AND DAILY GAZETTE.

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FROM THE TWENTI-SIXTH REGIMENT.

CAMP MARY, Oct. 5th, 1861.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

Excuse my not writing oftener, but I am getting tired constantly repeating as the New York papers do, "all quiet over the Potomac to-day."

One morning we were all professionally exhilarated at the prospect of an action, and we all had our glasses out viewing from our commanding elevation the movement of troops, both among the rebels and the Federals, but it turned out to be merely the peaceful occupation of Munson's Hill by our forces, and the robbing of farms and dwelling houses in that direction. A beautiful view, by the way, is presented from Fort Lyon, Washington, Alexandria, the Potomac, Fort Ellsworth, Fort Taylor, Munson's Hill, Eadsall's Hill and a broad expanse of country where Flying Artillery companies are drilling, and squads of Cavalry are leaping fences. Occasionally a shot will be thrown from Fort Ellsworth, and then all eyes are turned to see it strike far down in the Potomac, where it skips along on the water for a while, and then settles heavily in the opposite bank.

Last Thursday night Col. Christian, with 300 Infantry and 50 Cavalry, was sent out to Pohick Church, to capture if possible, a body of rebel Cavalry, which was reported to be stationed there. A portion went out on the Richmond, and a portion on the Mount Vernon road, and after a march of 14 miles, arrived at the Church about daybreak. The "body of Cavalry," however, proved to be a mere outpost of fifteen or twenty of the Hampton Legion, who, after exchanging a few shots, which resulted in wounding one of the rebel horsemen, made good their escape before they could be surrounded. The detachment, after sacking the officers' quarters, and appropriating everything from whiskey "and other household furniture," down to their drums and morning rations, returned, having marched about thirty miles in fifteen hours, over a very rough country. Pohick Church is a very large, old-fashioned brick church, with a sort of marble floor, and a pulpit of the old English style, which is ascended with about as much difficulty as a light-house, by a spiral stairway. The soldiers who mounted this pulpit to try the effect of their features in a clerical point of view, could scarcely be seen below the eyes, in this quaint old structure. Near the altar is a wide aisle which was occupied by Gen. Washington, but this like the rest, was now filled with forage for the rebel Cavalry. A scout who came in camp this evening, reported that we "beat up their quarters" quite hurriedly, for a large body of Infantry and Cavalry came to the Church soon after we left. Our force was probably very near their main body, as they heard the long roll in their camp before they left.

There has been a great change in the situation of regiments off to the right of us, but we yet have no intimations of a general advance of the army. Our Brigade seems to have settled down for a long stay in our present position, though rumor says we are soon to move. An Agricultural Society never selected finer ground for a Fair than we now have for a camp, and we shall regret to leave it, unless for something more lively.

We were lately much pleased to receive a good visit from Justice Jones, of your city, and regretted his departure. He was continually riding around among the pickets and outposts, and must have acquired a pretty good idea of the Army of the Potomac, and its excitement!

HEAD QUARTERS 26TH REGIMENT  
October 1861

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald.

In looking over your paper of October 3d, I saw an extract from an article written by the correspondent of the *Syracuse Standard*, and should judge by the tone of his letters that he thinks us a sight seeing people. He says "the pickets of the 26th were badly scared at some distant firing, caused by the shooting of a dog," &c. Now part of this is true, and the rest is not true. Here are the facts of the case:

On the night specified, it was our turn to furnish the picket. At about twelve o'clock we could distinctly hear firing in the direction of our outposts, but took no notice of it, and went to bed as usual. At about one o'clock General Slocum came to our camp and ordered two companies to be sent to the outposts and ascertain the cause of the firing, and to render what aid was needed. Capt. Arrowsmith and myself were detailed for the purpose—Capt. Arrowsmith taking the Mount Vernon road, and I the Fairfax road. When I arrived at the outpost I found the men all together, and not half so badly scared as the correspondent says they were.

As for our seeing more sights than the correspondent, I cannot account for, unless it be that he is always left with the reserve, about one mile inside of the outposts, or is attending to his duties in the camp.

NORMAN W. PALMER,  
Capt. Co. E. 26th Regiment.

FROM THE TWENTY-SIXTH REGIMENT

CAMP FRANKLIN, Va., Oct. 15, 1861.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

The organization of divisions has again compelled us to move, so that I now almost regard myself a second Wandering Jew. We now seem to be situated right in the center of the army, near the Fairfax Seminary—have but little picketing to do, and no picking on intrenchments, and the latter, I assure you, is regarded as no privation. Another brigade is now at work finishing Fort Lyon, and ours has again resumed drilling.

The nights are now getting very cold, and every stitch of clothing available is put into use. You may realize what I mean by taking a single blanket and sleeping out on the piazza some night—any one who wishes to try it. Yet a great many soldiers in the army now are unable to get that single blanket even, though the department at Washington is evidently making great efforts to supply them. Overcoats are also very scarce in some of the regiments; but I understand there is soon to be an abundant supply of them.—Comfortable camp fires are now made in the evening, and the bracing air seems to put the men around them in the best of spirits. In one direction I hear there is a lively quadrille, and a fiddler, with a vivid imagination, calling out, "Ladies, change!" and "Ladies to the right!" with the utmost gravity. A great many in the regiment have fixed fire places in their tents, in the following manner: A trench is dug, four or five feet long, one end within and the other outside the tent. This is covered with stones or bricks, and a piece of pipe or a barrel connects with the opening outside, to carry off the smoke. At the inner opening a fire is made, which heats up a tent very well, and very rarely turns any smoke on the inside—unless, of course, an old hat or a board is found to be placed over the pipe *outside*. This is fine weather now for a great movement of some kind, and we suppose one is soon to be



made. Last Saturday, everyone expected a battle; the rebels had made a sudden advance, but they made as sudden a withdrawal immediately afterward.

Most of the officers of this Regiment on last fast day, made a resolution to abstain from the use of all intoxicating liquors, which is at least one "forward movement" made. While at work on the Fort, a gill of whisky was dealt out to each man every day, which sometimes proved ruinous to all discipline and order. However that is now all stopped. As a general thing there is but very little drunkenness to be seen through the army, considering the circumstances.

In obedience to orders recently issued, man, horses and other valuable property which has been taken from the "Secesh" by our officers and men have been given up to headquarters, and some have thereby returned to their owners. Much of this sort of property, however, has been sold to the Government in Washington, or shipped north. It seems to me to be the very worst feature of war—the deleterious influence it must have on the morals of a people, for the distinction between military pillaging and stealing is often very fine and subtle. Those families just between the two armies have really a dangerous and harrassed life. They endeavor, of course, to take a neutral course, which only subjects them to occasional marauds from both parties, and sometimes skirmishes around their dwellings. Many wealthy families have been driven to very coarse living, owing to the stoppage of communication with the towns, and begin to realize the folly of Virginia in making her soil the battle ground. There is many an aristocratic family here who are secessionists, I believe just for the sake of keeping their reputation as F. F. V's. Many of these, by the way, own dilapidated, worn out old farms, and manage to keep up a sort of Turveydrop gentility only by selling negroes. However scarce the cash or shabby the servants, there must be a fine dwelling house with a spacious door-yard and very showy entrance. Here these hospitable Virginians sit and muse on the antiquity and respectability of their families, and show their visitors their household relics. I have seen at least a dozen pianos, each of which was the first ever brought into Virginia, and numerous clocks which had once belonged to George Washington. I think the old General must have had a way of giving furniture to all of his acquaintances, instead of locks of hair, when he was getting old, by the *souvenirs* I find. The Virginia gentleman is very hospitable, and if you'll only praise his horses, and not tamper with his negroes, he'll treat you finely, without asking your politics. At present his situation makes him very politic, and he treats officers of both armies out of the same bottle, and often the same day. So much for our "Secesh" acquaintances in Virginia.

A broken-winded bugler is now making night hideous, by way of informing us that it is time the lights were out—so here goes!

ALICIA.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH REGIMENT.

CAMP FRANKLIN, Va., Oct. 25, 1861.

To the Editor of the Utica Morning Herald:

Our life here is a dull routine of drilling, carrying water to drink, cooking victuals to eat, and bringing wood to keep warm. Any one who wishes to do something for the volunteers in Virginia, is hereby recommended to take the extra blanket which the family never uses, but is kept for imaginary "company," which never comes, and ship it to some volunteer friend, at the same time exhorting his friends to go and do likewise.

Any one, for instance, who would play the above joke on Aliquis or any of his friends, would be entitled to an honored old age, and will surely receive a benediction from the aforesaid in the silent watches of the night. Government seems to be unable to furnish blankets and overcoats sufficient to meet the demands of this immense army.

Last night we had a heavy frost, and almost every other day we have a cold rain, with a whole month's rations of mud, all at once. The South does n't seem to me to be so "sunny" to the soldiers as it is to the poets. I have tried various ways to keep warm in the nights. I have sometimes become "gay and festive," and have had the play of the Umanche Indian all alone at midnight, to the great alarm of the sentries. I had a patent fire-place in my tent which was excellent, until the wind changed, and then as the smoke insisted on occupying the inside, I was obliged to content myself on the outside, poking up the fire with a long stick. I have to-night the fell design of robbing the Government horses of their covering after the lapse of a short hour or two. Wherefore we want some extra blankets!

This army, if it is to move on towards Richmond, must certainly start in less than a month, as after that time the roads will be almost impassable. Roads are not so carefully kept in the Old Dominion as in New York, and the ground is either a stiff clay or very stony. The fact that the troops are now drilled daily with their knapsacks on, seems to indicate a movement. When the men first began to exercise in "double quick" with these incumbrances, they appeared not unlike some sportive dry-goods pedlers playing "tag," but they now carry them with the greatest facility. The knapsacks are always worn on the brigade drills, which occur almost daily, under the direction of Gen. Slocum.

I suppose the rumor which has prevailed here has also reached you, viz: that Gen. McClellan is to be superseded. I assure you the idea meets with no sympathy in this section of the army at least, where he is generally admired and beloved as a commander and as a man.

Our regiment is still comparatively very healthy notwithstanding the fickle weather of late. A regiment from Maine, which has encamped near us, I believe has dwindled, on account of desertions, death, disease and discharges, (four unlucky Ds for a regiment,) from 1,000 to about 300 or 400 effective men. By the way, there is a census of the *effective* men now being taken throughout the whole army.

You have no idea of the number of non-combatants, waiters, teamsters, hostlers, clerks, orderlies, hospital attendants, &c., that are included in speaking of an army as consisting of so many thousand men. And then there are the sick, the light duty men, those addicted to music, &c., which must also be deducted. We still have the old muskets yet, with a promise of the Springfield rifle, which is perhaps the best arm in the service.

Our chaplain, Rev. Dr. Bristol, arrived in camp to-day. He was already known to a great many of the men, and he will doubtless prove very popular among them.

Balloon ascensions are quite frequent now about the Fairfax Seminary. A few nights ago one came through our camp, the *Saratoga*, towed by a buggy and appearing like a great cloud all bottled up and labeled. It stopped awhile on being challenged by a startled sentry, and then went on its journey again.

The first of next month we are to be mustered for payment again, and as the rolls are all ready we hope that our turn will come in good season. After that, then may there be a speedy movement.

Aliquis.