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Baking Powder

ELY PURE

AN OLD SOLDIERS' REUNION.

A Philadelphian's Trip to New York State. Enjoying the Festivities of Fellow Soldiers Who Were Commanded by an Honored Philadelphian—Graybeards on a Lark.

Correspondence Evening Star.

Prattsburg, N. Y., Sept. 20.—Your correspondent finds himself this bright, balmy morning in the well-favored town of Prattsburg, Steuben county, N. Y. We say "well favored," for to our eyes, weary of brick and mortar thirteen story houses, noisy and murderous trolley cars, it seems as "fair as a garden of the Lord," "to the invading veteran hordes," now spending a day of serene enjoyment among old comrades and with new friends. The occasion for all this pleasure is the reunion of the 161st New York Regiment survivors. This is our 29th anniversary, and never has it been passed more happily. The sun is shining brightly, the town is ablaze with bunting, and "Old Glory" floats everywhere. Hospitable mothers, sisters, daughters and little ones are vieing with each other to gladden the old vets of 1861 to 1865. It may interest your numerous readers to learn what an old soldiers' reunion is like, and it is now my privilege to pen these lines, portraying some of the proceedings of gray beards cutting up like school boys out for a "lark." These are the men who, as almost mere boys in 1861, volunteered their services to defend the old flag, and started for the front 876 strong, and it will be of especial interest to Philadelphians to learn they were, soon after reaching Baton Rouge, La., led by the gallant Col. William B. Kinsey, now of the Quaker City, lately holding one of the prominent Row political offices (Register of Wills), and now a well-known official in insurance circles. As a witty Hibernian said: "There's nothing small about the Colonel, except himself." He is of small stature, but his men describe him as having been like Prince Rupert, small and slender, but fighting like a fury when the carnage of battle began. Twice did Gen. Kinsey lead the forlorn hope, in the two unsuccessful assaults on Port Hudson, and had volunteered for the third one when the Confederates surrendered, and saved a further slaughter. The proudest moment in Gen. Kinsey's life, and that of his men of the 161st, was when they were publicly thanked by Brig. Gen. Emory. On one occasion, when the whole 13th army corps broke and ran pell-mell before a rebel attack a courier en route for the 19th corps dashed by the 161st, then encamped alongside the road, hunting for water. The courier shouted to run, as the victorious rebel army was near at hand. Not so with Kinsey's men—water was forgotten, blankets, every impediment thrown away, and a forced march through the disorganized, frantic mass of cavalymen and the crushed 13th corps began. The one regiment, the 161st, could not stem this rushing tide of terrorized men, but filtering through it, a few men here and there, they got through, reformed in line, Kinsey in the lead, and while getting their breath, for they had come almost nine miles on a double quick, met the terrific onslaught of a whole rebel brigade. Ninety-eight sons of New York fell dead at the first rebel rush, but by that time the 161st boys had their wind again, loaded their muskets, charged and swept back all before them. 800 men whipping 4,000. Those ten minutes enabled Gen. Emory to reform the 13th corps and bring up the 19th corps; and Kinsey's heroes' bravery and indefatigable work, in completing the Red river dam, after all others had given up, saved the Red river fleet and army, and restored Louisiana and Arkansas to the Union. Why should they not feel proud?

Starting at Elmira with four comrades the train gradually filled up with the boys in blue, and by the time we reached Kasonia the car was full of as jolly a lot of men as ever traveled over the Erie Railroad. At Corning a striking scene awaited us. Capt. Van Tuyl boarded the train, and the news ran through the cars like wild fire. When he entered our car he received a welcome that would have gladdened the heart of a Napoleon from his Imperial Guard. Capt. Van Tuyl came from Petrolia, Canada, especially to be present. The boys had not seen him since the regiment went to Florida in 1865. Thirty years had made many changes, but they all knew each other, and such handshaking was a treat to witness. Reaching Prattsburg, we were met at the

station by Dr. Bennett, the Major, also Commander of Gregory Post, G. A. R., and falling in behind the Prattsburg Cornet Band we marched up the main street to the park. Here the battery saluted us, causing the boys to sing out, "Lie down," "Pioneers to the front," etc., and after being officially welcomed by an address from the park pavilion we broke ranks and adjourned to the Park Hotel. The roll was called, 68 out of some 300 answering. One man of 70 years stepped up quite briskly and got his badge. Capt. Van Tuyl was elected President for 1891. J. W. Merwin secretary, Clark Evans, J. W. Caryell and W. G. Look, M. D., vice president, and we then went to our "rations." The menu would have done credit to Boldt's, and much merriment was caused by the old Surgeon of the 161st proving himself a matrimonial veteran as well, his third wife being present at the banquet. Comrade "Leavy" Sherwood kept all present laughing by his keen wit, two clergymen who were with us sharing in the general glee. Later in the afternoon the Ladies' Relief Corps tendered a reception at the Opera House, where youth, beauty and music made our pleasure complete. Speeches were made, the Philadelphia contingents' reference to Greble, Meade, Hancock, Quay and Wanamaker meeting applause. "Old Hicks," the colored cook of the 161st, came forward and sang "Steal Away," and "Mine Eyes Have Seen the Coming of the Lord," as only an old slave could sing those words.

N. C. Davis.