

youder," she said, pointing to a house in the distance, "were twenty or thirty more wounded men of both sides." I told her of my adventures, and she seemed to be interested in my recital. She said she was older than I, and advised me to go back to Washington and stay there until the war was over. Meanwhile a surgeon of one of General Shields's regiments had arrived, and with medicines and bandages and sticks, attended to the wants of the wounded. Here I took my first dose of quinine. The doctor told me I looked sick, and declared that I "would surely get an attack of the ague," after my exposure. This was almost too good a place to leave, but in the afternoon I did so, and after a great march, sometimes riding and sometimes walking, I reached Washington again. Up to this time it will be seen that I was not yet a soldier, and I have thought that what I have written is somewhat out of place here, but, as it is done, I cannot forbear giving it a place, if for nothing else but by way of introduction.

CHAPTER II.

FROM ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF JUNE, 1862, WHEN I LEFT WASHINGTON FOR THE WEST, UNTIL THE LATTER PART OF OCTOBER IN THE SAME YEAR, WHEN I WAS AT CRAB ORCHARD, KENTUCKY, AS A PRIVATE SOLDIER OF COMPANY "B," OF THE EIGHTY-EIGHTH REGIMENT, ILLINOIS INFANTRY VOLUNTEERS.

1. DURING one of my many journeys to and from Washington in the spring of 1862, I chanced to be upon the railroad train from that city to Baltimore. In the cars were many convalescent soldiers; some had been wounded, and were discharged and being sent home, to recruit that great army of cripples already appearing in the various States of the North; others, not so badly off, were on furlough and leave of absence, and going to their homes for a season, in the full uniform of the army, and this without being under any of the restraints or inconveniences of army discipline. Among others on the train I met and became acquainted with Mr. Henry Weaver, whose home was at Loda, in Iroquois county, in the State of

Illinois. He had been a private in Colonel Farnsworth's celebrated Eighth Regiment of Illinois Cavalry, and had just received his discharge from the service at one of the general hospitals situated in or near to Alexandria, Virginia, where he had been for a long time previously, suffering from typhoid fever. By him I was told of the beautiful country he lived in, and how easy it was to get along there, especially for a young man, such as I then was. By the time we reached Baltimore we were well acquainted, and on leaving him at the depot of the Northern Central railroad, I received and promised to accept from him a cordial invitation to visit him in his prairie home, so far away to the west. For some time after this I continued to be engaged in going from camp to camp, as I have before related. My relatives and friends persisted in their refusal to sanction my going into the army, and at last I concluded myself that after all it would perhaps be better for me to abandon the idea. For a little while I tried to settle down to hard study, but, with fifty thousand or more of armed men around me, and the continual hurly-burly of almost a state of siege, I made but little progress and realized less satisfaction. After making up and tearing to pieces many different plans, I suddenly recalled to my mind the heartiness of the invitation I had received from Mr. Henry Weaver, and I thought I would very much like to see his beautiful home and country. Eager at the thought, I determined to immediately banish myself from the stirring and demoralizing scenes by which I was so completely surrounded; go to Illinois, pursue my interrupted course of studies, and finally settle

down to live there. All those of my friends to whom I mentioned my project applauded my resolution. My uncle jokingly warned me not to return to the East again unless with my credentials as a member of Congress in my pocket. Even my elderly great-aunt thought I was on the right tack at last, and soon after my last sad experience in the Shenandoah valley, with God-speed and good wishes from all of my friends, I started auspiciously for the great West. But alas for the strength or weakness of human resolution! The next time my friends heard of me I was a soldier indeed; but of that hereafter. My objective point was Loda, of course, but I went direct to Chicago, so as to make of it a sort of base, as military men would say. I travelled on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, through a rough country and over great mountains, to the Ohio river at Bel-air. On our way we passed through several military stations, and I suffered from as many different attacks of depression of spirits. At Cumberland, in Maryland, I even went so far as to want to desert the train and go with the "boys" again. From Bel-air, where I saw and crossed the Ohio river for the first time in my life, we went on to Columbus, the capital of the State of Ohio, and from thence on to Chicago. It had taken us nearly forty-eight hours to get there. I arrived in the wonderful city of Chicago late in the evening, and in a very tired, dusty, and hungry condition; but after a good bath and a tolerable supper, which I obtained at a hotel nearly opposite to the Union depot, I set out to view the city. I had travelled a long distance—two hundred miles longer than the whole of Great Britain; I had crossed

high mountains and a great river, and I thought, as I went over the Allegheny mountains and the Ohio river, that I had at last seen some things of sufficient importance to entitle them to places on the map of the world. I esteemed myself as very nearly equal to him who had climbed Mont Blanc, or to the other one who had passed over the Andes. Now I was in Chicago, eight hundred miles from tidewater, and I acknowledge to have felt some surprise on finding that the people were very much like the inhabitants of other cities I had visited, and although I had travelled so far, I was not after all in a foreign country. Having made my arrangements so that I could afford to stay but one day, I had to devise some means of seeing as much as possible of the city in that time. The street cars seemed to be the best suited to my purpose, and upon one of them, that passed the hotel, I got, and as I stood on the front platform, I engaged in conversation with the driver of it. Talking with him (and he was a very enthusiastic talker, even for a Chicagoan), and viewing the city, I went to the end of the route. We passed by many hundreds of houses that had not yet been raised to the new grade of the streets, and that part of the city presented a curious aspect. Some years before it had been discovered that the grade of the city was in many places below the level of Lake Michigan, and the work of raising the streets and the buildings to the new level had been going on. But once past the business centre, and when we got to where the residences of the poorer people were, the houses had not been raised, but the streets had. Many blocks had stores built on the corners, but between

these corners the dwelling-houses seemed to be in a hole. Entrance from the street by means of the roofs appeared to be the easiest mode, but in places where the distance was too great to be jumped, long stairs had been built from the street down to the front doors below. After arriving at the end of the railroad line, I found myself on a large tract of land as flat as a mill-pond. I took another route on my return to the city, but the scenes were very much the same.

2. Next day I took the train on the Chicago branch of the Illinois Central railroad, and ran south on that for ninety-nine miles to Loda. It was during this journey that I first realized the nature and extent of the grand Prairies. For miles upon each side of the road, and extending as far as the eye could reach, to the east, and to the west, there was nothing but flat, or very little rolling, prairie. Sometimes the horizon would seem to be broken by small, dark green objects of irregular shapes. These were groves of trees, oases in the blank prairie. The land itself was clothed in verdure, already thick and high, and all over were in bloom many kinds of plants and flowers growing in wild profusion that take great care and attention to be cultivated at all in other countries I had visited. While stopping at a small station on the open prairie I witnessed a phenomenon which I believe is peculiar to that country. It was an optical illusion. Although we were in the midst of a blank space, yet there appeared in the distance houses, churches, trees, and other objects, all of a grossly exaggerated size and turned upside down. There were many veritable castles in the air. It was quite a study while it lasted,

which was not long, and we watched the beautiful picture as it gradually faded, fainter and fainter, until the prospect became as it was before, one plain blank sea of green. In all that distance of ninety-nine miles I do not remember that our train crossed a single river worthy of the name, and none at all with a name; that I heard of, except that at Kankakee, and comparatively speaking, the dimensions of this one were insignificant. On my arrival at Loda I soon found my acquaintance of the trip to Baltimore, and before night we were all together, he and his three brothers, Volney, Abram, and William. We were telling stories of the war. Of course, by politeness I took my place as a simple corroborator of what was said and related by the brother. He was near to them, and besides so recently from the seat of war, Henry Weaver must have been about the first veteran to return to that neighborhood; at least I thought so, from the way he was gazed at and listened to. I soon ascertained that Loda was not a place likely to prove suitable for me. It would have been just the place if I could have taken a hand at farming. If I could have arisen at five o'clock in the morning, and milked two or three cows, cleaned the horses and the stable, besides doing a great many other "chores" before breakfast, then plough or plant all day, and repeat the "chores" at night—I might have been suited if I had been able to do all these, but I could not. Even the ten and twelve-year-old girls did more than I could. The town itself was a small flimsy affair of about fifty houses. The people who inhabited it were chiefly those who bought grain from the farmers at twelve

and a half cents a bushel, and made high wines of it, and a few others who sold to the same farmers calico for their wives' dresses at a quarter of a dollar a yard. Everybody retired to bed on ordinary occasions at eight o'clock in the evening and arose again at five o'clock in the morning, or even earlier. For awhile I had a magnificent time of it. I had almost forgotten that the war was going on, in my enjoyment of the task of helping to plough and to plant and in attending the little social gatherings in the neighborhood. Sometimes parties were held in the "Grove," some ten miles away to the east. When we went to the "Grove" the large farm wagons were put into shape, and pell-mell we were crammed into them, boys and girls together. Once out on the broad prairie, the horses were made to go at a round gait, and as we rushed along we inhaled the bracing, invigorating air of the fresh country, and by the time we reached the pic-nic grounds we held each within ourselves more fun and devilment than may perhaps be found in a dozen of city boys, lively as *they* are sometimes. On the "glorious Fourth of July" we had a grand time at Ash Grove. There were reading, praying, eating, dancing, flirting, but not a bit of drinking. There was neither whiskey nor beer. A full description of that day's frolic would be out of place here; besides that I have written it in another book. Although I had almost forgotten the war, I had not ceased to wear my semi-military dress on all proper occasions. I liked to wear my blouse, and sometimes added a belt around my waist and a jaunty McClellan cap on my head, and so, when about the 4th of July, 1863, the

President's call for "300,000 more" reached us, and the country got ablaze with patriotism, I was ready. I had already thought of going away in search of some place more suitable for my projects of settlement, but had arrived at no determination. When the proclamation came to Loda I first learned what patriotism was really like. Young and old became intensely excited. None but patriotic hymns were sung. The village lawyer was threatened with "lynching" because he was suspected of being a "Copperhead." The end was that I went to Chicago to spy out the land, as it were. The Board of Trade of that city had undertaken to organize three regiments and a battery to be patronized by the members, and I soon returned with my pockets full of transportation tickets and authority to recruit. Finally, about the end of July, Abram Weaver, Volney, his brother, and several others, with myself, went to Chicago, and on the 1st of August we were enrolled and became part of the "Nelson Guards," a company to be in the second regiment of the Board of Trade brigade. Then the boys each got sixty dollars as a bounty, supplied, I believe, by Cook county.

3. Before our regiment was fully organized I went on recruiting tours out on several of the railroads leading from Chicago, and on my return I found we had been christened Company "B," Eighty-eighth Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry. William A. Whiting had been elected our Captain in place of A. S. Chadbourne, who was raised to be Lieutenant-Colonel of the regiment. Henry H. Cushing was our first Lieutenant, and ——— Lane had become the

Second Lieutenant. I was somewhat chagrined to find, on my return from recruiting, that my absence had placed me out of the field as a candidate for Second Lieutenant, which position I had been too sure of obtaining. We were now in camp at Cottage Grove, on the south side of the city, and just beyond Camp Douglas, which latter at that time was filled with Confederate soldiers, prisoners of war. Near by, and on the edge of the lake, was the tomb of Stephen A. Douglas. The plain stone marking the grave was surrounded by a shabbier iron railing, but the whole is so situated that if in the future it becomes desirable to pay a greater respect to the memory of the "Little Giant," no better location could be selected for a monument worthy of his talents and services by the admirers of the dead statesman. On the 27th of August, 1862, we were regularly mustered into the service of the United States by Captain Christopher, U. S. A. We also received our Colonel, Frank T. Sherman, of Chicago, at the same time. We were not organized and equipped any too soon, for just at that time General Buell, of our army, was on his famous retreat from northern Mississippi, and the enemy, under the command of General Bragg, were after him, and even ahead of him sometimes. The real object of Bragg appeared not to be known—whether he intended to strike Louisville, Kentucky, or Cincinnati, Ohio, was the question. We were, therefore, not allowed to enjoy our pleasant camp for any great length of time, so near to the great city, with the opportunities for getting delicacies afforded by it. But we had not been idle by any means. Our regiment was well drilled

in all the small movements in arms and bodies, and on our last dress parade the line looked like a veteran battalion. Next day after the order was received, with three days' rations and our knapsacks slung, we marched lightly through the city and to the depot on Madison street. Our company's patron, Mr. Murry Nelson, of Chicago, had formally, and with some ceremony and a speech, presented us with a costly silken banner, but it was after some time given over to storage and safety.* We had a most disagreeable entry into active service. We were crowded into empty, open, shallow cars, used otherwise for transporting coal or other heavy merchandise, and crowded, too, to such an extent as to render our condition dangerous. Besides this we were entirely exposed to the glare of a hot sun during the day, and as it wore on toward night the weather became chilly. Although it would be wrong to say that we were being baptized with fire, yet it is true that we were nearly blinded by the black, sulphurous cinders and smoke that came upon us from the engine in front. As we got along upon our route the people, who had heard of our coming, assembled on the platforms of the railway stations and pitched whole basketfuls of cooked provisions among us, and fruits of all kinds in great quantities. These were very acceptable because few of the soldiers had as yet gained any experience with the hard biscuits, and, although we were, as a general thing, pretty hungry, not

* A gentleman with a better memory than I appear to have had informs me that our flag was with us in the field and used there as a battle flag. Mr. Nelson holds the flag now as a valued memento of the war.

many had yet ventured to attack their rations. We learned from the people that they were fearful that General Bragg might capture Louisville or Cincinnati, or both, and afterward invade and devastate the Middle States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. In due time we reached Jeffersonville, Indiana. Here we encamped not far from the Ohio river, and received our proper arms and accoutrements. Our arms were of the meanest kind even for that period; they were old smooth-bore flint-lock muskets changed to the more modern style for percussion caps. They were very heavy, and dreadful kickers.

‡ We remained in Jeffersonville but a very short time. Then we were ordered to Cincinnati, and, very late at night, and thoroughly soaked with the rain that had fallen, we arrived at that place, and were further ordered to cross over the river to Covington, Kentucky—"Out of the way," some one said. At Cincinnati all was confusion. The enemy had been expected. General Kirby Smith and his Southern soldiers were supposed to be not far off to the south and advancing rapidly. All able-bodied male citizens had been for some time engaged in erecting earthwork defences. Having had some little experience in the army, I felt that it would not be quite the thing for me to go to camp in the condition in which I then was, especially as it was plainly impossible and out of the question to think of pitching our tents at that late hour and in such stormy weather. Our orderly sergeant, Kent, and myself somehow or another became separated from the company and regiment, and, as we were both really sick, we went with some others to the

West End General Hospital. There we were well received and treated to good fare. The prescription of Dr. Daniel Judkins, the surgeon in charge, for my ailment was, as I afterward learned, a dose of good whiskey (the first, I believe, I had ever tasted), and Kent got the same or a larger dose. This was on the night of the 11th of September, 1862. The sergeant and I both slept well that night on nice clean hospital cot beds, and before we went to sleep we unanimously agreed to believe that our quarters were immeasurably superior to those of our comrades. On the morning of the 12th we set out to find our regimental camp, and after a long and wearisome tramp over muddy roads and clayey hills, we found the men of the regiment huddled together in a bare gully not far from the Ohio river. Fortunately we were shortly afterward ordered to a more commanding and favorable position and farther to the south. Our new location was near Licking river, or Blue Lick river; I have forgotten the correct name of it. Here we received our handsome Sibley tents, and our severe morning, noon, and evening drills were resumed. We were here organized into brigades and divisions of the Army of the Ohio. I am not certain of the designation of our brigade, but I do know that we were commanded by the present Lieutenant General Phil Sheridan. It was thought that General Kirby Smith, commanding the Confederate forces in our front, would make an attack on the city of Cincinnati, or pretend to do so, as an aid to General Braxton Bragg in his endeavor to capture Louisville. But the scare was soon gotten over; General Smith did not venture

to advance upon our lines, and in a few days more we were ordered to vacate our camp and works, and proceed thence on a steamer to Louisville. This we did; but something was out of the way, if not decidedly wrong. Either the water in the Ohio river was too shallow, or we had an enemy at the wheel. Whether or no, we often ran aground, and on two different occasions the men were compelled to disembark on to the Kentucky shore, along which we marched in an irregular manner, to enable the steamer, thus lightened, to go ahead. While upon the shore we had no dread of meeting the enemy, and, as we frolicked along, employed ourselves in gathering and eating paw-paws and other wild fruits growing on the heavily wooded bank. We finally reached Louisville, and were in time to effectually check Bragg in his advance upon the city. Our brigade now consisted of the Thirty-sixth regiment of Illinois Volunteer Infantry on the right, supported by the Twenty-first Michigan Infantry. Our regiment, the Eighty-eighth, composed the left, supported by the Twenty-fourth Wisconsin Volunteers. In the brigade, usually on our right, were the Second and Fifteenth regiments of Missouri Volunteer Infantry. The two latter regiments were almost exclusively made up of Germans, and were splendid soldiers. The Thirty-sixth Illinois was commanded by a large, homely-looking, and rough-mannered old fellow named Grisel. He had been engaged before the war as a freight-train conductor on the present Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy railroad. His voice was as thunder among the hills. The Thirty-sixth was a

veteran regiment, and when it joined us the men of it presented a sorry spectacle. They had fought in several battles in northern Mississippi, and had participated in the retreat from that region. They were ragged, shoeless, hatless, and otherwise forlorn, to a man. Until the regiment procured fresh supplies of clothing, and camp and garrison equipage, the men of the Thirty-sixth stole what they could from other regiments which were better provided, and when complaint was made, they called us "sixty-dollar" men, and told us to spend our bounty money. This last was said and listened to as a general thing in pretty good humor. Nevertheless, there was considerable growling and grumbling, because, whereas, the soldiers who had enlisted early in the war received no bounty, and were even paid a lower rate of wages; many also had left behind them families to suffer; we, who had just entered the service so late, had received so much ready money in hand; besides, those of us who left any dependents behind, had left them under the care of organizations of the rich and powerful, which, in a measure, assured the welfare of those dependents.

5. At Louisville there was no time for anything but hard work. General Bragg was at Bardstown, only twenty-five or thirty miles to the south, and his army of veterans had rested and recruited its strength for ten or fifteen days or more. One day's rapid march, and those veterans might enter the precincts of the city, and we be driven into the Ohio river! Engineers upon our side worked day and night in surveying defence lines and works, and the whole army and thousands of citizens besides followed the engineers in car-

rying out their plans by erecting the works. We had a long line of trench and breastworks to make besides an indescribable kind of fortification to build on a slight rising of ground on the extreme left of our line. As luck for some and ill luck for others would have it, one of the lines that we were constructing ran directly through a noble vineyard. There must have been ten acres or more of vines, and the fruit was just ripe and of a most palatable kind. The owner protested, of course, against the destruction of his fortune, but his opposition was all in vain. The rising ground to the north of his vineyard had to be strengthened by works, and the space in front of it must be cleared so as to afford no protection to an advancing enemy; so vines, fruit, trellises, and all had to go. The men fed upon the fruit, and as a result many became sick from eating too much of it.

About this time General Jefferson C. Davis, of our army, shot and killed General Nelson in a hotel in Louisville. They had quarrelled over the arrangements that had been made for re-arming and re-clothing the veterans. Jeff C. Davis complained that the men of his division had not been treated fairly, and was called a "liar" by his superior, whom he thereupon shot. That is the story that we heard, but there was much more also said at the time about the relations of the two generals toward each other. General Nelson was half liked and half disliked. After General Pope, it was boasted of him by his admirers, that General Nelson was the "best, finest, and most elegant and original curser and swearer in the whole United States army." There was some sort of inquiry held. The

excitement among the common men reminded me of some of the passages of Tacitus. A few days more, and we had other matters to think about and to talk about. While at Louisville, we shifted our camp several times. The day was thick with rumors and reports of Bragg's advance, and timid citizens ran hither and thither, apparently aimless, and filled with fear and terror. As night came on the fears of the populace grew in intensity. The orders given to pickets and patrols were very strict, and communicated in whispers. Great care and caution was exercised in preconcerting signals and in ensuring secrecy. Sky-rockets of all hues and of all combinations of stars and durations of time were continually being set off and bursting in the heavens. We were often called out twice or thrice a night by the "long roll" or the shrill "assembly," and silently we were marched to the trenches or formed into line of battle at previously appointed places. But after all, General Bragg did not come, and it is doubtful whether he ever intended to attack us, and perhaps he laughed in his sleeve as his outposts and spies reported to him the events taking place in the city.

6. Now began our first actual movement in the face of the enemy. Our troops were in excellent trim, the veterans well recruited, and the erstwhile raw troops already well acquainted with military discipline. It was said that our army had thirty-five or forty thousand fighting men on its rolls, and all three arms in good proportion for the work in hand. Our brigade was now definitely placed in General McCook's Corps de Armée, which was the right wing of the grand

army, and on or about the 1st of October, 1862, we advanced in splendid order and elevated spirits. Our brigade was near the centre of the army corps. Our route led us through the most horrible of countries. Immediately upon leaving the city, upon the south-west side of it, we plunged into a wildly broken section, through dark and dreary defiles, over high hills, and across the North Rolling fork of Salt river and other equally muddy, nasty streams, which latter we were compelled, in almost every instance, to ford by wading through the water. After the first day or two our men began to show signs of fatigue. Many fell out of the ranks, and became stragglers; surplus baggage strewed the roads, and whenever a halt was made the men took the opportunity thus offered of relieving themselves of needless articles which they had loaded themselves with under the erroneous impression that they were necessary for a soldier's comfort. Whole knapsacks, filled with kits—from shaving appliances and shoe brushes to portable writing desks—were thrown away. Many of the soldiers had foolishly invested in ill-fitting boots, and it was not until they had adopted the sensible regulation army shoe that comfort and ease in foot marching was attained. The heat by day was excessive, and pure drinking water was scarce; many suffered on that account, and kept the doctors busy in prescribing for the peculiar complaints thus engendered. However, it was not long before our raw troops learned to imitate the veterans, and by assuming the lightest marching order, straggling, sore

feet, and fainting at the same time almost entirely disappeared from the ranks.

It was said that we had been directed to proceed on that route in order to the better concealment of our formation and numbers—as if General Bragg had had no spies in the city! We were very thankful after two or three days to find that our advance was now within a few miles of the Bardstown turnpike road, and that we were but ten miles from the enemy did not make any difference to us. The way was dark, and the weather was rainy and disagreeable, and, as we trudged along the winding roads and climbed up one side and rolled down the other of hills, the veterans started to sing a song:

John Brown's body is mouldering in the grave,

But his soul is marching on.

And very soon our whole regiment, then another, and in a short time the whole division caught up the strain, and then—the occasion defies description. The conformation of the country was peculiarly well adapted for producing an effect. Before the echoes from one range of hills had been spent they were overwhelmed by others, until the great conglomeration of sounds made the place seem unearthly. Late at night we filed into the great road, and pitched our bivouac not far away.

It appeared that we had made good time; for we had reached this point somewhat in advance of the time expected, and considerably in advance of the

centre of the main army. Our expedition, however, was ill rewarded because it became our duty to sustain pickets and outposts besides remaining under arms all night. In the morning the remainder of the army came up, and in order to allow us to subside into our proper position, we were permitted to rest awhile until the others had advanced. In the field in which we had bivouacked there was stubble, and growing in amongst that we discovered a species of wild fruit called "ground cherries." These the men ate with great relish. The advance on Bardstown was made with great caution, although, as it afterward proved, without much reason for it. We formed into line of battle, and so went through the woods, fields, and depressions, but Bragg had gone. Still, we kept up our array until we were well on to the Springfield road after the flying Confederates. We were then told that Bragg never intended to pursue an offensive policy in getting so far to the North; that he only desired to hold the country long enough to enable him to secure the crops, just ripening; in fact, that he had fifteen hundred wagons laden with the supplies he had gathered; that to obtain these had been his only object; and finally, that we were to pursue him with such diligence as to compel him to disgorge the most if not all of it. On the 7th of October we had pressed the enemy all day, and our advance was necessarily slow, but late in the evening we passed through the long single street of straggling houses that altogether formed the town of Springfield, and soon after went into bivouac on the heels of the enemy. We were somewhat in front, but all night the army