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Bull Run Incidents

A Zouaves in the Enemy's Camp

When the Fire Zouaves stormed the masked battery at Bull Run, and were forced to fall back by the grapeshot and cavalry charge, one of them was stunned by a blow from a saber, and fell almost under one of the enemy's guns. The Secessionists swarmed around him like bees, but feigning death, in the excitement he was unnoticed, and when a rally was made, managed to crawl back into the thicket inside the Confederate lines. Here he waited some time for an opportunity to escape, but finding none, concluded he would make the best of a bad bargain, and if he was lost would have a little revenge beforehand. Hastily stripping the body of a Confederate nearby, he donned his uniform, and seizing his rifle made his way to the entrenchments, where he joined the Secessionists, and watching his opportunities, succeeded in picking off several of their most prominent officers whenever they advanced out upon the troops. Here he remained for some time, until, until thinking it best to leave before his disguise should be discovered, he joined a party who were about to charge upon our forces, and was to his gratification, again captured, but this time by his own men. Our fire proved very destructive to the enemy, and cut down their men by hundreds. In the battery where the Zouaves fell, he afterward counted thirty-five dead bodies lying close together, and the bushes were full of the wounded who had crawled off to get out of the way.

A Desperate Hand to Hand Contest

On Saturday night, before the battle, two of the Minnesota boys took it into their heads to forage a little, for amusement as well as eatables. Striking out from their encampment into the forest, they followed a narrow road some distance, until, turning a bend; five Secession pickets appeared not fifty yards distant. The parties discovered each other simultaneously and at once leveled their rifles and fired. Two of the Confederates fell dead, and one of the Minnesotans, the other also falling, however, but with the design of trapping the other three, who at once came up, as they said, to "examine the d__d Yankees" Drawing his revolver the Minnesotan found he had but two barrels loaded, and with these he shot two of the pickets. Springing to his feet, and snatching his saber bayonet from his rifle, he lunged at the survivor, who proved to be a stalwart lieutenant, armed only with a heavy sword. The superior skill of the Southerner was taxed to the utmost in paring the vigorous thrust and lunges of the brawny lumberman; and for several minutes the contest waged in silence, broken only by the rustle of the long grass by the roadside and clash of their weapons. Feigning fatigue, the Minnesotan fell back a few steps, and as his adversary closed upon him with a cat-like spring, he let his saber come down upon the head of the Secesh, and the game was up. Collecting the arms of the Secessionists returned to the camp, where he obtained assistance, and buried the bodies of his companion and their foes in one grave.

One of the Alabama Fourth

Since the smoke of the great battle has cleared away and the extent of the losses have become pretty accurately known, the incidents connected with the conflict, as told by the engaged soldiers, have absorbed general attention and interest. Hundreds of these incidents have been written, and read, and wept and laughed over. Our gallant soldiers who have gone home are recapitulating them till now they are widely known. Prisoners who have escaped from the custody of the rebels are at present claiming the greatest attention. The telegraph has informed you of the escape of Capt. Allen, Massachusetts Eleventh; John P. Doherty, Sixty-Ninth, New York, and Orlando Bardorf, Wisconsin Second, who were taken prisoners at Manassas. Their escape possesses a marvellousness of romance and peril of adventure seldom paralleled. To the inventive genius, cunning and daring of Doherty must be credited the escape. An Irish man of the shrewder sort, quick, sagacious, self possessed, bold and rollicking, he was sharp and speedy in devising means of escape. "I had no fear of their keeping me," he said, in telling me the story, "but I was bound not to come away alone." His intelligence and good nature obtained him the place of hospital steward at Sudley Church. He was not long in giving a drink with a narcotic sprinkling in it to the sentinel. The incautiously imbibing guard fell asleep, and Doherty and his comrades leaped from a rear window and pushed to the woods. They lay quiet days and journeyed by night. Several times they were pursued by cavalry, and showers of shot sent after them. At one time they were pursued into a small wood and surrounded. Hiding themselves in a thick tuft of bushes, they lay concealed sixteen hours. A horse of one of the searching troopers stepped on Doherty's leg. He felt like wincing under the superincumbent weight of horse flesh, but did not. The strong necessities of appetite compelled them to stop occasionally at farm houses for something to eat. Happily they only found women at home, whom they wheedled into the belief that they belonged to the "Alabama Fourth" One woman was suspicious, but they forbore waiting long enough to allow her distrust opportunity to reach a culminating point unfavorable to themselves. They all agreed in saying that the Potomac never looked pleasanter to Washington than it did to them. Pursued by cavalry and balls flying after them as they plunged into its cool embrace, they did not have that time to note the majestic beauty of the river and landscape that otherwise would have been gratifying to them.