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Wanted—An Idea ...

THE PHILIPPINES ISLANDS.

An Interesting Letter Written by a Second Oregon Private.

Through the kindness of E. C. Warren, the accommodating traveling representative of the Portland Cracker Co., THE TIMES-HERALD is able to give its readers the following letter, written by one of our Second Oregon boys:

S. S. Ohio enroute to 'Frisco.
June 27, '99.

MR. E. C. WARREN,
Portland, Ore.

DEAR FRIEND:—I have been intending to write to you for a long time but kept putting it off.

I wouldn't have missed my experience in the Philippines for anything, nor would I go through the same trials and hardships again for all the gold in the U. S. With hardly an exception there is none of us who has not added five years to his life. In the first place on the way out the food was rotten for a white man to eat—the sleeping quarters a sweatbox. I lost 12 lbs. on the trip.

We remained 30 days in barracks at Cavite that had been abandoned by the Spaniards. The walls were covered with dampness all the time. Everything moulded, shoes, clothing, etc.

Ours was the first regiment to enter Manila—the walled city—Aug 13. It was a sight never to be forgotten. We lined up before the Governor General's palace and received about 5000 stands of arms from the Spanish soldiers. Our boys didn't say a word while the soldiers filed by. The city was crowded with women and children and refugees from the surrounding country.

The women were crying and many of the Spanish officers. In all my dealings with the Spaniards in Manila I must say I found them a very courteous, kindly people, altogether different from what they were represented to be. We slept on the pavement the first night. It rained all night. We took up our quarters in the Quartelde Espana, the best barracks in Manila and the most unhealthy.

Manila has a system of waterworks supplied from a reservoir about 10 miles out in the country. The insurgents had captured this about a month previous to our entering the city, so that the Spaniards were dependent upon the rains for their supply of water.

Our barracks was a mass of human filth and refuse. We have changed all that so today Manila is a fairly clean city. Our regiment while in barracks suffered a great deal from sickness, malarial fever, typhoid, rheumatism and smallpox. It wasn't safe to sit on the ground at any time. All our drinking water had to be boiled.

From July 1 to March 12 we were part of the Provost Guard, a sort of police force in the city to keep order and prevent out breaks. The boys felt pretty sore that they didn't have a hand in the fighting of Feb 4 and 5. One of our battalions was sent out to guard the water works and had a good deal of light fighting. Two of our Co's., E and M, with two Minn. Co's. were sent out Feb 23 to drive out a band of 500 insurgents that had tried to burn the town the night before. They had succeeded in destroying several million dollars worth of property. The out-kirts of Manila are built up of bamboo huts in thick groves of banana and bamboo trees. We formed a skirmish line in the shelter of a large Spanish church, then started in for business. It was our first fight. We couldn't see a nigger, yet the bullets were whistling all around us. Our company had to climb a stone wall about 5 feet high right in the beginning. I never hated to do anything so much in my life—I wanted to go around it. The bullets were clipping the stone off the top of the wall; I believe I was almost the last one over. We would advance a short distance, kneel down, fire a few volleys and again advance. The niggers were in houses, in trees, behind stone walls, everywhere. Whenever we struck a clearing we had great sport taking pot shots at the nigs running. We burned everything as we went along and drove the insurgents 6 miles killing 113, wounding 100 and taking about 100 prisoners.

After the first half hour it was like a rabbit hunt. You ought to have seen the boys dodging bullets; I ducked my head until the muscles of my neck were sore; a bullet 20 feet over my head would seem by the noise to have missed me by about 6 inches. Everybody goes through that experience in the army. After a few engagements you get used to it and pay very little attention to the bullets. The easiest of all is a charge because the excitement keeps you up.

The battle of Malabon was our biggest fight. We had 61 killed and wounded.

If the Cuban campaign was a fight by the regulars the Philippine war has been a volunteer fight. The 14th infantry have been the only regular regiment that has made a good showing. Those that came after the 1st and 2nd expeditions were, in my opinion dismal failures.

Our company guarded the railroad for about a month. We had about two miles of it to look after. That was the most tiresome, as well as dangerous, work we had to do. We would put out outposts of three men all the way from 150 to 400 yards from the camp to prevent surprise, one man slept while the other two kept guard. The country was all cut up with rice paddies from 2 to 2½ feet high, so it was easy for a nigger to creep along within 25 yards of you before you stood any show to see him. The mosquitos were something frightful. If you scratched a bite it always left a sore hard to heal. Then we had to patrol the railroad. Two men and sometimes only one would have a beat at times a mile long. One night the niggers made a bold attack on us and got away with our bull and cart. I had 4000 cigars on it.

Nearly all our boys are run down in weight. I haven't been sick a day, yet I fell away to 135 lbs. with my clothes on. I got so I couldn't go 50 yards without resting. They finally made me go to Manila and after a two weeks rest I rejoined the company. Ten days ago to Nagasaki, Japan, I weighed 143 pounds. Think of that for me.

The Filipino women go bareheaded and nearly all barefooted, though some of them dress very well. It is seldom you see a pair of stockings.

July 9, '99.—We expect to be in 'Frisco Wednesday morning. The trip so far has been very pleasant. If we get out of the service by Aug. 1 we will do well. Give my regards to your family and remember me to my friends.

As ever your friend,
T. F. CANNING.

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A recognized authority—The Weekly Oregonian.

Irrigation Investigations.

Prof. Elwood Mead, the energetic State Engineer of Wyoming, has resigned that position to accept an appointment as irrigation expert for the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Mr. Mead has been, during the past year, doing some special investigating for the Department, and the work has been of such value as to induce Secretary Wilson to tender him his present position.

Prof. Mead, as indicatad, has already entered upon his duties as irrigation expert for Secretaty Wilson's department, which is making special irrigation investagation and has established a series of observing points all over the country where irrigation is practiced, for the purpose of determining how much water is used by farmers per acre. Next year he will undertake to find out the exact amount of water is required to produce a crop, so as to demonstrate the least possible water needed. The value of such experiments is apparent, showing the most that can be done with water in sections where there is more land available for irrigation than water to irrigate with.

Mr. Mead has been doing extensive travelnig throughout the West in the course of his investigations, and though formely an advocate of State cession, he has found a strong and growing opinion that this policy would be highly detrimental to the development of the arid section generally.

The Agricultural Department is to be congratulaed upon securing the services of so able, safe and experienced a man as Elwood Mead to assist it in solving the question now more deeply interesting the West than any other.

Throughout the entire West the plan of constructing resivors to be under national control in which to store flood water for irrigation, is universally approved, says the Los Angeles Times. No more necessitous nor beneficial work can employ the attention of the California delegation in Congress than a comprehensive plan of irrigation for the state and for that matter, the entire western area. The annual appropriations by Congress for the improvement of rivers and harbors in the East and the Pacific Coast are not more strictly witin the scope and province of Congress nor more far-reaching and certain in their benificial results than would be appropriations for national storage reservoirs for the impounding of torrential and flood waters in the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains.

Many of the most conscientious and far-sighted men in the West are now advocating a government system of leasing the public arid lands at a nominal rental for pasturage and farm purposes, and employing the revenues for State irrigation works and other improvements.

From the Canyon News

Dr. Ashford has been on the sick list for several days this week, but was on the streets again yesterday.

J. W. Biggs and wife and child returned from the springs Sunday and left for their home in Burns Tuesday.

Miss Hazel Cozad is confined to her room at the Warm Springs on account of sickness.

Charlie Parrish and Miss Linnie Chambers have returned from the Springs after a pleasant week's sojourn.

Circuit Judge M. D. Clifford and family have returned from their outing at the Thompson's hot spring. The Judge reports the weather as having been simply abominable most of the time during their stay and says that the only way he knows to change the temperature and stop the incessant downfall is to induce Weather Bureau Pague to predict "Continued rain in Eastern Oregon."

Strangely enough the price of horses is steadily raaing notwithstanding the bicycle, automobile and other rivals. When this advance began a year ago it was accounted for by the outbreak of the war, but certainly the war has nothing to do with the continuance of the raise. There must be some other explanation, and the best one available is that the horse is too good a friend to man to be thrust aside in favor of the new-fangled machines. It is the horse's turn to laugh.—Ex.

—THE TIMES HERALD and Oregonian for $2 in advance.

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