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MAJOR-GENERAL NELSON A. MILES.

BY GEORGE E. POND.



VISITOR to Governor's Island, toward the close of a fine afternoon last September, might have seen a tall, robust figure spinning rapidly on a bicycle over the well-kept roads of that beautiful locality. General Miles, at that time stationed there in command

of the Department of the East, was an early advocate of the wheel for army use, and it has long served him for the exercise that keeps him in vigorous health.

The visitor would have noted that the erect, strongly built man of fifty-six looked fit to rough it with the youngest subaltern in frontier campaigning, though his hair, once brown and curling over a broad forehead, had become, like his mustache, well sprinkled with gray; that his nose was the "conquering beak" of the soldier; that the steadfast blue-gray eyes consorted well with the firm lines of his mouth and chin to denote fixity of purpose and a resolute will.

Entering the hospitable house of the General, he would have seen there a profusion of relics of campaigns and the chase—stands of colors decorating the walls, and among them the flag of the Second Corps with its famous trefoil; here the head of a buffalo; there the pelt of a fox fashioned into a quiver, filled with arrows; yonder the gaily colored war-bonnet of Iron Star, trailing to the floor, the hole at the top showing where the bullet went through that killed him.

Half the States are included in the Department of the East; and as General Miles has also had charge at various times of the Divisions of the Pacific and of the Missouri, the Departments of the Columbia, of the Missouri, and of Arizona, and the District of the Yellowstone, his round of commands has been more comprehensive geographically than that of any other officer in the service. Of each of these, with the location of its garrisoned forts, and its strategic character and possibilities, he has a clear and exact knowledge, that must serve him well in that command of the whole army to which, at the recent retirement of General Schofield, he succeeded.

I.

THE central fact in the career of General Miles is that a young lieutenant of 1861, who had had none of the aids that a West Point training gives, has reached the top round of the military ladder in this country. Schofield, Sheridan, Sherman, Grant, were all graduates of the Military Academy; but now for the first time we find the place of senior on the active list attained by one who began his service in the ranks of the Union volunteers.

General Miles, however, comes of fighting stock. The Reverend John Myles, or Miles, who migrated to this country from Wales in 1662, was the minister of the first Baptist church in Massachusetts, and for a time carried on a school "for the teaching of grammar, rhetoric, and arithmetic, and the tongues of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, also how to read English and to write." But this soldier of the cross could be, at need, a valiant fighter; for it appears that "he commanded a company in King Philip's war, and his house was known as Miles's garrison." Thus the preacher-soldier of early frontier hostilities is linked with his descendant in the fifth generation, who commanded in what ought to prove our last great series of Indian wars.

Samuel, son of John Miles, after graduating at Harvard in 1684, went to England, where he took orders in the Church, and on returning to Boston became rector of King's Chapel, and there officiated twenty-nine years. Daniel, the great-grandfather of General Miles, and Daniel's three sons, of whom one was Joab, the General's grandfather, served in the Revolutionary army, and one of the sons died on his way home from the final battle at Yorktown. "My great-grandfather," said the General, "was a firm believer in the government; and when he sold his property, he had the payment made to him in Continental currency. So we have as an heirloom in the family," he added with a smile, "a stout package of worthless notes, which I well remember seeing as a boy."

The General's father, whose name also was Daniel, was living at Westminster in Massachusetts, about fifty miles from Boston, when Nelson Appleton Miles, the young-

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