

THE MILITARY LESSONS OF THE WAR.

BY W. T. SHERMAN, GENERAL OF THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES.

(Concluding Chapter of an Unpublished Memoir of Events of the War.)

(Continued from page 531)

The health of an army is a matter of the most vital importance, and demands the earliest attention of the general entrusted with a campaign. To be strong, healthy and capable of the largest amount of physical effort the soldier needs abundant food...

When a general first estimates the quantity of food and forage needed for an army of fifty or a thousand men, he is apt to be dismayed, and here a good staff is indispensable; though the general cannot throw off on them the responsibility of giving the subject...

Where an army is near one of our many large navigable rivers, or has the safe use of a railway, it can usually be supplied with the full army ration, which is by far the best furnished to any army in America or Europe; but when it is compelled to operate away from such a base, and is dependent on its own train of wagons, the commanding officer must exercise a wise discretion in the selection of his stores.

In my opinion there is no better food for man than beef cattle driven on the hoof, issued liberally, with salt, lard, and bread. Coffee has also become almost indispensable, though many substitutes were found for it such as Indian corn, roasted, ground, and boiled as coffee, the sweet potato, and the seed of the okra plant, prepared in the same way.

All these were used by the people of the South, who for years could procure no coffee, but I noticed the Indian women always bagged of us some of our coffee, which seems to satisfy a natural desire for a more powerful stimulant.

I would always advise that the coffee, sugar, and lard be carried along, instead of the staples of bread, for which there are many substitutes. Of these Indian corn is the best and most abundant. It is a rich and excellent food, and when properly prepared, is a most nutritious meal.

The potato, boiled, and apples, pears, and peaches, are all good substitutes for bread and meat. I have found the potato to be the best for men, and it is the only one which is clean and safe to eat in a camp. It should be cleaned of its skin, and sliced with a coarse knife, but the slices should be put in the water during the boiling, and the water should be changed several times.

During the war I saw many instances of men who had been in the hospital for weeks, and who were discharged, only to be sent back to the hospital in a few days. This was due to the fact that they had not been properly cared for when they were discharged. The medical officers should be careful to see that the men are properly cared for when they are discharged, and that they are not sent back to the hospital in a few days.

them in bad places. To this end there is nothing like actual experience, only unless the officers in command gave the subject their personal attention, they will find their wagon trains loaded down with tents, personal baggage, and even the arms and knapsacks of the escort. Each soldier should, if not actually "sick or wounded," carry his musket and equipments containing from forty to sixty rounds of ammunition, his shelter tent, a blanket or overcoat, and an extra pair of pants, socks, and drawers in the form of a scarf, worn from the left shoulder to the right side in lieu of knapsack, and in his haversack he should carry some bread, cooked meat, salt, and coffee. I do not believe a soldier should be loaded down to much, but, including his clothing, arms and equipment, he can carry about fifty pounds without impairing his health or activity. A simple calculation will show that by such a distribution a corps will thus carry the equivalent of five hundred wagon loads—an immense relief to the trains.

Where an army is near one of our many large navigable rivers, or has the safe use of a railway, it can usually be supplied with the full army ration, which is by far the best furnished to any army in America or Europe; but when it is compelled to operate away from such a base, and is dependent on its own train of wagons, the commanding officer must exercise a wise discretion in the selection of his stores.

In my opinion there is no better food for man than beef cattle driven on the hoof, issued liberally, with salt, lard, and bread. Coffee has also become almost indispensable, though many substitutes were found for it such as Indian corn, roasted, ground, and boiled as coffee, the sweet potato, and the seed of the okra plant, prepared in the same way.

All these were used by the people of the South, who for years could procure no coffee, but I noticed the Indian women always bagged of us some of our coffee, which seems to satisfy a natural desire for a more powerful stimulant.

I would always advise that the coffee, sugar, and lard be carried along, instead of the staples of bread, for which there are many substitutes. Of these Indian corn is the best and most abundant. It is a rich and excellent food, and when properly prepared, is a most nutritious meal.

The potato, boiled, and apples, pears, and peaches, are all good substitutes for bread and meat. I have found the potato to be the best for men, and it is the only one which is clean and safe to eat in a camp. It should be cleaned of its skin, and sliced with a coarse knife, but the slices should be put in the water during the boiling, and the water should be changed several times.

During the war I saw many instances of men who had been in the hospital for weeks, and who were discharged, only to be sent back to the hospital in a few days. This was due to the fact that they had not been properly cared for when they were discharged. The medical officers should be careful to see that the men are properly cared for when they are discharged, and that they are not sent back to the hospital in a few days.

admirable antidote, and I have known the skirmish line without orders, to fight a respectable battle for the possession of some old fields that were full of blackberries. Soon, thereafter, the green corn are roasting ear come into season, and I heard no more of the scurvy. Our country abounds with plants that can be utilized for a prevention to the scurvy. Besides the above, the persimmon, the assafras root and bud, the wild mustard, turnip tops and the dandelion cooked as greens, and a decoction of the ordinary pine leaf.

For the more delicate and costly articles of food for the sick we relied mostly on the agents of the sanitary commissions. I do not wish to doubt the value of the organizations that gained so much applause during our Civil War, for no one can question the motives of these charitable and generous people; but to be honest I must record an opinion that the sanitary commission should limit its operations to the hospitals at the rear, and should never appear at the front. They were generally local in feeling and aimed to furnish their personal friends and neighbours with a better class of food than the Government supplied, and the consequence was that one regiment of a brigade would receive potatoes and fruit which would be denied another regiment close by. Jealousy would be the inevitable result, and in an army all parts should be equal; there should be no "partiality, favor or affection."

The Government should supply all essential wants, and in the hospitals to the rear will be found abundant opportunities for the exercise of all possible charity and generosity. During the war I several times gained the ill will of the agents of the sanitary commission, because I forbade their coming to the front unless they would consent to distribute their stores equally among all, regardless of the parties who had contributed them.

The sick, wounded and dead of an army are the subjects of the greatest possible anxiety, and add an immense amount of labor to the well men. Each regiment in an active campaign should have a surgeon and two assistants always close at hand, and each brigade and division should have an experienced surgeon as a medical director. The great majority of wounds and of sickness should be treated by the regimental surgeon on the ground under the eye of the colonel, as a few should be sent to the brigade or division hospital as possible, for the men always receive better care with their own regiment than with strangers, and as a rule the cure is more certain; but when men receive disabling wounds, or have sickness which becomes permanent, the sooner they get to the rear the better for all. The tent by the side of a tree is a better hospital than a house. The walls absorb fetid and poisonous emanations, and then give them back to the atmosphere. To men exposed to the open air, and who live on the poorest food, wounds seem to cure more rapidly, and are attended with less danger to life than in ordinary soldiers.

It would have been a great deal better to have sent a man to the hospital for a month, than to have regarded him as a mere scratch, rather than the subject of a joke, than of a song. To men who are sick, the sight of a soldier who is well, and who is able to do his duty, is a great encouragement. It is a great deal better to have a man who is sick, and who is able to do his duty, than to have a man who is well, and who is unable to do his duty. The medical officers should be careful to see that the men are properly cared for when they are discharged, and that they are not sent back to the hospital in a few days.