

Paradise Cal
Jan'y 1. 1896

Lincoln Story
third contribution

Two Enclosures

A. D. Jones
Paradise
Cal

No 3.

Late in October 1864, the Army of the James, commanded by Genl B. F. Butler, was lying entrenched below Richmond, with its right resting on the James River, and extending in a semi circle to the Appomattox River, the formidable earth works of the Army were closely invested by the Enemy, and daily skirmishing with Artillery was engaged in, between the two Armies. To protect our Soldiers from the hurrying shell, "Bum & Proofs" had been erected in which the men lived when off duty. Under the cover of these works the Army was encamped in regular order, as regarded Brigade and Division formation, and to expose ones head above the works was to incur a measure of danger from flying shell, not at all comforting to nervous people.

At this time, President Lincoln came to visit Genl Butler, and again see the Veteran Army of the James, he had reviewed the march before at Washington, as heretofore related. Notwithstanding the protests of Genl Butler

and other officers, made for prudential reasons, the President could not be dissuaded from his purpose of riding along the works, and having a "chaffing" time with the "old veterans" as he called them.

Accordingly the troops were turned out in front of their Quarters, in full Arm and uniform, and awaited the arrival of their Idolized Chieftain. Slowly the progress was made, with frequent pauses, to indulge in a boyish tilt of witicism and a measure of familiarity unheard of in Military Discipline before. When reaching the 62nd Ohio Regt, the President halted and shaking hands with the Colonel, he raised his hat to the Regt, in response to their vociferous greeting. Looking up to the State Banner he read the Emblem and motto of the Regt, and said:—"Boys you are a long way from your home and in great danger; don't you imagine your Mothers are anxious about you? Don't you afraid 'old Jeff,' will take you up to Richmond?" To all of which quick responses were made of course, and the President started on his way, when a Soldier called out:—"We are quite used to 'old Jeff,' and do not fear him, but say, Mr

4 Chap. 3
President: You had better look out;
that lot of yours ticks above the
works and you may get a hole through
it." Turning his head the President
replied, "Not the least danger of it, I am
edgewise to you, and Jeff" hasn't a
quartermaster over there able to touch
me." The attenuated condition of the
President gave great significance to
this rejoinder.

The next night was the 39th Illinois, from
the President's State. I will not attempt to
describe the greetings they gave him, or
all the jolly things that were said; but
as he started on, a Haggish fellow
call after him nearly as I can recoll-
ect as follows: "Say Abe, give our
love to Mother Lincoln when you see
her, will you?" "Yes I certainly shall."
Tell her not to grieve for us, we are
all right and will get home to her
in the Spring." "All right." "Say Abe"
yelled another, "Tell Mother Lincoln when
you get home, that we will have to stay
down here all winter and it will be
very cold, Tell her that the shirts she
sends us are all right for summer,
but they have no tails. Tell her to
send us some long tailed ones for winter."
Will you? This closed the visit and the
President hurried away having enjoyed the fun.

Soldiers Every where fully appreciate the truth underlying the suggestion above. The truth is that Soldiers were clothed by contract through Government agents not always mindful of the comfort of the Soldier, but exceedingly mindful of the profit that might be made out of a system of small stealing, most systematically entered into and almost universally participated in by contractors. This resulted in an exceedingly short-shirt to start with, and when ~~washed~~ laundered after the improper fashion common in Camp, there was little remaining of it other than Collar & very short sleeves.