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KIMBALL PIANOS AND ORGANS

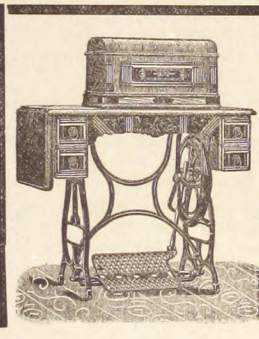
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SOLDIER'S CELEBRATE.

A Grand and Enthusiastic Campfire held Under the Auspices of Dwight Post No. 626, G. A. R. at the Opera House.

From Dwight Star and Herald.

Every society in every community where there are fraternal organizations has its day—a "red letter" one, as it were. Last Tuesday was G. A. R. day in Dwight without a doubt. A celebration, or prominent meeting of the 'boys' of the Grand Army of the Republic, or a campfire as it is called, is closer to the hearts of the people than any other, on account of valuable service to the country, the advanced age of the veterans, and the positive fact that in a few short years there will be "no one left to tell the tale." The organization stands for pure, unselfish, patriotism, and the lessons taught the youth of this land by their acts can only be of the most valuable service to the country in the future. Love of country and the grand old flag, pure and simple, are the solid foundations upon which the Grand Army and indeed our whole country rests.

Dwight Post, No. 626, G. A. R. has been organized for several years and has worked quietly along the lines of the order, and had some grand and creditable entertainments and has accomplished much good in this community, but not until last Tuesday did the dreams of the old soldier materialize in full. Their cups were filled to overflowing with happiness and patriotism, Commander Ayling, the patriotic parson, made up his mind some time since that a campfire was the thing, and when he makes up his mind, success always follows. So with the united assistance of the Post, Woman's Relief Corps and Sons of Veterans, and indeed all our citizens, the affair was a grand success in every way.

Early in the preparations Commander Ayling decided to invite National Commander Thos. G. Lawler and his staff to be present, little expecting at first that so important an officer could spare time to visit so small a place. But the answer came back "yes," and the date was set.

As the time the arrangements were commenced was in the heat of the battle of the late election and it was impossible to get anyone to do anything, and the committee labored under great disadvantage, but persevered and after election all joined in. The cheering news of the coming of the commander and staff put the boys "on their metal."

Tuesday, at 4:40 p. m., the Post and Sons of Veterans assembled at the Chicago & Alton depot to receive the visitors. Commander Ayling, Colonel Parsons, J. C. Lewis and W. G. Dustin were appointed a reception committee and received the visitors, who were escorted to the Livingston. At the kind invitation of Dr. Leslie E. Keeley the party were shown all through the company's laboratory, accompanied by the Doctor and Major Judd. After this they were accompanied by J. R. Oughton to the five o'clock treatment, and from there to the bean banquet at the old club house. Here the guests were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Duckett, of Forrest, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Jenkins, of Springfield, and Capt. O. F. Avery, of Pontiac, who were introduced to many comrades, ladies of the corps, sons of veterans and citizens. They then

repaired to the Livingston and met several gentlemen stopping there. The entertainment at the opera house commenced at eight o'clock and the opera house was well filled, the attendance being very large considering the weather. The program was about as follows:

Music by the band, followed by an address of welcome and introduction of Commander Lawler by Commander Ayling.

The former responded in an excellent solid address of about fifteen minutes. He thanked the Post and all the Dwight people for the splendid reception given him. He reviewed the organization of the Grand Army, and said it was not, nor never was, organized for political or selfish purposes, but to look after the interests of old soldiers who were not able to care for themselves, and the widows and orphans. This they had done as far as possible. He spoke very highly of the Relief Corps and the grand, charitable work they are accomplishing, also of the Sons of Veterans, who would soon assume the responsibilities of the Grand Army. He paid a fine tribute to the flag and country, and said that in all cases of insurrection or trouble by un-American emigrants the Grand Army would be found shoulder to shoulder in defence of the country and flag, and he was pleased to state that recent incidents had gone to show that loyal men in the whole country, north and south and east and west, were as a unit on that subject. Commander Lawler's pleasing address was received with hearty applause and left a splendid impression. He is a large hearted, broad minded, patriotic, splendid man, and nothing is too good for him.

The address was followed by a patriotic song by Misses Minnie Lower, Minnie and Emma Barr and Mabel Huey. The young ladies never sang better and received great applause and were complimented very highly by the guests present.

The next scene was all the organizations massed upon the stage. Mrs. D. B. Stevens sang "Columbia the Gem of the Ocean," and all joined in the chorus.

This was followed by a street enlistment scene, fife and drum. News from Fort Sumpter, speech from a dry goods box, taking in volunteers, drilling the awkward squad. At the close of the scene D. B. Stevens sang "Soldiers Farewell" and the "boys" marched off to the war, leaving mothers, sisters and sweethearts crying, etc. The awkward squad drill was very laughable.

The Ladies' Aid Society scene brought old memories. Letters were read from the boys at the front, a box packed, etc.

Commander Ayling then introduced Quartermaster General J. W. Burst, or "Jack" as he is familiarly called all over the United States. He paid a glowing tribute to the Relief Corps, citing their noble deeds of charity and love during the war and now. He also spoke of the Sons of Veterans and advised every son to join that order right away. He spoke very feelingly of his late regimental commander (of whom the writer is a son.) Major Burst lost a leg at the battle of Burnt Hickory on the Atlanta campaign. He was a splendid, brave soldier. Since the war he has always been prominent in Grand Army circles. He is one of the past commanders of the department of Illinois, and a kind, genial, patriotic man, and we wish him all the good things of life.

The camp scenes were good ones and the singing of "Tenting on the old Camp Ground," and "Taps" excellent. Comrade Kelsey, of Elgin sang "Do They Miss Me at Home" very nicely. The night alarm, firing on picket, etc., "Just Before the Battle, Mother," by Commander Ayling was good.

The scene in the hospital caused lots of fun. Two legs were saved off with a meat saw. D. B. Stevens sang "Just After the Battle."

The prison scene was realistic. L. A. Naffziger sang "In the Prison Cell I sit," and Comrade Kelsey sang "On, On, the Boys are Marching," and then the rescue.

The surrender of Lee and capture of Jeff Davis was good.

A beautiful tableaux, goddess of liberty and Sons of Veterans was excellent. Miss Cora Baker was the Goddess, and made a handsome one.

Everyone present seemed to be well satisfied and pleased with the entertainment.

NOTES.

It was a great campfire.

The band did very well.

There were two comrades present from Streator, whose names we did not learn.

Col. Lonergan and Herschel Hagerty furnished good martial music on fife and drum.

Col. Nate A. Reed, Jr., of the Banner of Gold, helped make merry among the boys.

Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Jenkins, of Springfield, were guests at the campfire. They left for home on the early morning train.

The lady quartette, Mr. and Mrs. D. B. Stevens, Miss Addie Fenn L. A. Naffziger, and Mr. Kelsey did excellent service in furnishing the music.

It was the grandest banquet ever given in Dwight and speaks volumes for Manager Schaeffer of the Livingston. Everything was very nice.

J. L. Graff, traveling correspondent of the Chicago Mail, occupied a seat at the campfire. He sent a very nice report of the affair to the Mail.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Duckett, of Forrest, came up to attend the campfire. They were guests of Col. and Mrs. Parsons. Mr. Duckett is the new county clerk elect.

MANY THANKS.

On behalf of Dwight Post, No. 626, G. A. of the R., I wish to return most sincere thanks to all who in any way contributed to the success of the entertainment at the opera house Tuesday evening. To the citizens who honored themselves, and Dwight as well, by giving, as they did, at the Livingston, a "Business Men's Banquet" in honor of our guests, Commander-in-Chief T. G. Lawler, Quartermaster General Burst, Capt. O. F. Avery, Comrade and Mrs. Duckett, Comrade and Mrs. W. H. Jenkins and others.

C. W. AYLING, Post Commander.

Soldiers Attention!

Regular meeting of Dwight Post No. 626, G. A. R., at the usual place, Tuesday evening, Nov. 19, open promptly at 7:30. All comrades are earnestly requested to be present. Refreshments will be served by the Sons of Veterans at the close of the meeting in their hall. C. W. AYLING, Com.

F. W. FORD, Adj.

Triplet-Kamin.

Rev. C. W. Ayling officiated at a quiet, pleasant wedding last Saturday at the M. E. parsonage. The contracting parties were Miss Mary Triplett, of Build, Ill., and Mr. Emil Kamin, of Nevada, Ill. Their many friends wish them success.

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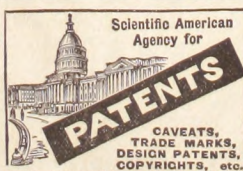
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