

serious difficulties on the frontier.

CANBY, Edward Richard Sprigg, soldier, b. in Kentucky in 1819; killed in Siskiyou co., Cal., 11 April, 1873. His parents removed to Indiana, where he went to school, and whence he was appointed cadet at the U. S. military academy in 1835. He was graduated in 1839 in the same class with Gens. Halleck, Isaac Stevens, Ord, Paine, of Illinois, and other distinguished officers. After graduation he was at once commissioned second lieutenant, assigned to the 2d infantry, and served in the Florida war as quartermaster and commissary of subsistence from October, 1839 till 1842, and after the close of that war was engaged in the removal of the Cherokees, Creeks, and Choctaws to the present Indian territory. He was on garrison duty from 1842 till 1845, and on recruiting service during 1845 and a part of 1846. In March, 1846, he was



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appointed adjutant of his regiment, and three months later was promoted to a first lieutenancy. The outbreak of the Mexican war called his regiment into active service. Serving under Gen. Riley, he was present at the siege of Vera Cruz, at Cerro Gordo, Contreras, and Churubusco, as well as at the attack upon the Belen gate, city of Mexico. He received the brevets of major and lieutenant-colonel for his services in this campaign, and was promoted to the full rank of captain in June, 1851; but, having been transferred to the adjutant-general's department as assistant adjutant-general, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel, he relinquished his rank in the line. In March, 1855, he was appointed major of the 10th U. S. infantry, a new regiment, with which he was engaged on frontier duty in western Wisconsin and Minnesota for the next three years, and in 1858 was ordered to Fort Bridger, Utah, where his command included portions of the 2d dragoons and 7th and 10th U. S. infantry. He held this post until 1860, when he was appointed commander of the expedition against the Navajo Indians, and was in command of Fort Defiance, New Mexico, at the beginning of the civil war. At that critical period, when officers from the border states were daily sending in their resignations, Maj. Canby did not leave his loyalty in doubt for a moment, and throughout the war was one of the most active and conspicuous defenders of the union. In May, 1861, he was made colonel of the 19th regiment, U. S. infantry, and was acting brigadier-general of the forces in New Mexico. In 1862 he repelled the Confederate Gen. Sibley in his daring attempt to

acquire possession of that territory, and had the satisfaction of seeing the invader retreat, "leaving behind him," as he observed in his report, "in dead and wounded, and in sick and prisoners, one half of his original force." He was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general of volunteers, 31 March, 1862, and, after transferring the command of the forces in New Mexico, he went to Washington, where he rendered valuable assistance to Sec. Stanton in the war department. He took command of the U. S. troops in New York city and harbor during the draft riots of July, 1863, and, by his energetic measures and resolute bearing, assisted materially in the suppression of the rioters. He remained there until November, 1863, when he resumed his place at the war department. At the opening of the campaign of 1864, Gen. Canby received the rank of major-general of volunteers, and was placed in command of the military division of west Mississippi, a place that he held until some months after the close of the war. His first act in this field of duty was to take charge of Gen. Banks's retreating forces at the Atchafalaya and conduct them safely to New Orleans, where for want of troops he remained inactive throughout the summer and autumn of 1864. While on a tour of inspection on White river, Ark., 4 Nov., 1864, he was severely wounded by confederate guerillas; but, as soon as he was sufficiently re-enforced, he proceeded, with an army of from 25,000 to 30,000 men, against Mobile, which, with the assistance of the fleet, was captured, 12 April, 1865. On learning of the surrender of the confederate forces in Virginia, Gen. Richard Taylor, who commanded west of the Mississippi, surrendered to Gen. Canby, and hostilities ceased. On 13 March, 1865, Gen. Canby received the brevets of brigadier- and major-general of the regular army. He remained in command of southern military departments until 1866, when he was transferred to Washington, and received, 28 July, 1866, the full rank of brigadier-general in the regular army. After the surrender he was placed in command of the different districts having Richmond as its centre, and assumed the responsibility of permitting the paroled cavalry of Lee's army to reorganize for the suppression of "bushwhacking," which was rife in the neighborhood. The measure was entirely successful, and no bad results followed. Subsequently he was appointed a member of the special commission for deciding claims on the war department, and of the board to prepare plans for a new building for the same department. Afterward he was placed in command of the department of Columbia, and was during the winter of 1872-'3 actively engaged in bringing the Modocs to accept the terms offered them by the government. He was specially adapted for this duty. He had never shared in the bitter hatred of the Indians, so common on the border, but had always leaned to the side of humanity in his dealings with them. Only four days before his death he sent a despatch to Washington, which, read in the tragic light of after-events, shows both his generosity to his slayers and his sagacious doubts of them: "I do not question the right or the power of the general government to make any arrangement that may be thought proper; but I think they should make such as to secure a permanent peace, together with liberal and just treatment of the Indians. In my judgment, permanent peace cannot be secured if they are allowed to remain in this immediate neighborhood. The Modocs are now sensible that they cannot live in peace on Lost river, and have abandoned their claim to it, but wish to be left in the lava-beds. This means

license to plunder and a stronghold to retreat to, and was refused. Their last proposition is to come in and have the opportunity of looking for a new home not far away, and if they are sincere in this the trouble will soon be ended. But there has been so much vacillation and duplicity in their talks that I have hesitated about reporting until some definite result was attained." On 11 April, in company with two other officers, he met "Capt. Jack," the leader of the Modocs, on neutral ground to confer regarding a treaty of peace. At a pre-concerted signal the Indians killed all the commissioners before the escort could come to the rescue, and escaped to their stronghold in the lava-beds. Subsequently they were captured, and "Capt. Jack," with two of his subordinates, was tried and executed. Gen. Canby was a remarkable instance of an officer of high rank and universal popularity without enemies in his profession. He was so upright that he was very rarely criticised by his brother officers, save by those who gave him reason for official displeasure. He had little ambition beyond his duty, was always satisfied, or appeared to be, with any position to which he was assigned, and never engaged in any of those squabbles or intrigues for preferment which deface the record of many able soldiers. He had a singular power of inspiring implicit confidence among those who served under his command. His assignment to any department where, through incompetence or lack of zeal on the part of the commander, affairs had drifted into confusion, was the signal for the inauguration of order and discipline. The time-honored but often misapplied phrase, "an officer and a gentleman," admirably describes this soldier of the republic. He was tall and athletic, in manner courteous, but rather reserved and silent, the ideal of a thoughtful, studious soldier.