



BANKS' ARMY CROSSING VERMILION BAYOU, OCTOBER 10, 1863.—FROM A SKETCH BY C. E. F. BONWILL.

If war was only all fighting, it would be more satisfactory to the warriors. But the fighting was really the exceptional and occasional thing; while marching, slowly crawling across immense stretches of country with sluggish army trains, and the countless tedious details of camp life, constituted much the largest portion of the career of even a fighting army. Banks' crossing of the Bayou Vermilion, in Louisiana, in October, 1863, was one of the movements preliminary to his famous Red River expedition in that year. This expedition was not a military success, nor was it even a military necessity. It was rather a political necessity, undertaken at a time when the state of the public mind required that "something be done" to satisfy it—a state of mind that always tyrannically interferes with wiser military plans in every protracted war, especially in a country having a free and unbridled press. So it became necessary to make an effort to plant the American flag in Texas, although from a military point of view there was little for it to do after it was planted there, except just to wave. This much, indeed, Banks succeeded in doing; but it would have been better for the Federal military cause if he had been permitted to carry out his own plans.



A CHARACTERISTIC ARMY SCENE.—WEIGHING RATIONS PREPARATORY TO A CONTEMPLATED MOVEMENT.—FROM A SKETCH BY EDWIN FORBES.