



SHERMAN'S "BUMMERS" FORAGING IN SOUTH CAROLINA.—FROM A SKETCH BY J. E. TAYLOR.

Responsibility for the "Bummers," who made Sherman's march a nuisance to the people of Georgia and the Carolinas, has been shifted from one corps commander to another, each one humiliated at finding the accusation laid against his command, yet readily passing it on to that of one of his colleagues. The truth is that the "Bummers" were an organized band of foragers who gathered rations for the troops. It must be remembered that the plan of a long march through hostile territory made it necessary for the army to "live off the country," as the term is; mounted on captured horses the "Bummers" formed an advance guard of the army and often detected the stealthy approach of the enemy's cavalry. The cunning, as well as the patience, of the inhabitants was exhausted in coping with these Yankee Bedouins. Hidden provisions were unearthed by their practiced eyes, dismantled vehicles rigged out with improvised gear, and scattered harness brought together to aid in transporting the "contraband goods of war" to the Union camps. On one occasion the "Bummers" captured a town from the enemy's cavalry, and held it until the reserve troops marched up. A broken-down grist mill was repaired by machinists in the party, and during the occupancy of the place turned out a good supply of flour for the soldiers.