

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## THE SHILOH CONTROVERSY.

My DEAR SIR:—In compliance with your request to be furnished with a brief statement of the facts with reference to the controversy over the inscriptions to be placed upon the monuments of the 15th and 16th Iowa regiments upon the battlefield of Shiloh I submit the following as showing all the essential facts in the case:

Each member of the Iowa Commission was required to prepare an inscription reciting the service performed by his regiment during the battle, the number of men engaged, the losses sustained, the name of the officer, or officers, who commanded the regiment, and the time and place where they fought the longest and suffered the greatest loss. These inscriptions were to be submitted to the National Commission which reserved the right to revise and correct them, so that they should conform to the official reports on file with the War Department at Washington. I think there were some slight, but unimportant changes made in most, if not all, of the inscriptions originally submitted, and in the case of the 15th and 16th regiments a most radical change was made as to the time those two regiments occupied the positions at and near where their monuments are located. The Commissioners for those two regiments refused to accept the change ordered by the National Commission as not being in accordance with the official reports of Colonels Reid and Chambers on file with the War Department and which had stood unquestioned for over forty years as the history of the service rendered by their regiments in the battle of Shiloh. The inscriptions as changed by the National Commission were submitted to the Secretary of War and by him referred to an officer of the War Department for investigation. The report of this officer sustained the contention of the National Commission, and the inscription they had submitted was approved by the Secretary of War. The Iowa Commission, at this stage in the proceedings, decided to submit the case to Governor Cummins, and through him secure, if possible, a rehearing of the case. The Governor was successful in securing the rehearing, and on the 20th of May, 1904, he presented the case to the National Commission in an exhaustive argument. That Commission after mature deliberation, has again rejected the contention of the 15th and 16th regiments as to the time in which they were engaged. Governor Cummins has again asked for the opportunity to present the matter to the Secretary of War on appeal from the decision of the National Commission, and his request has been granted. Pending the final determination of this controversy the splendid monuments which have been erected by the State of Iowa upon the battlefield of Shiloh cannot be dedicated. They are all fully completed, except those of the 15th and 16th regiments, and they lack only the attaching of the bronze tablets reciting the history of their service in that great battle.

Yours very truly,

HON. CHARLES ALDRICH,  
Des Moines, Iowa.

G. W. CROSLY,  
*Commissioner for 3d Iowa Infantry and  
Secretary of Committee on Dedication  
of Monuments.*

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