

ceedings and orders bound in order to preserve them.

I have received from the department of Illinois and Wisconsin for the use of this department the Adjutant Generals reports of the regiments of those states. If the department of Kansas would provide for exchanging reports of Kansas Regiments, for those of other states, it would form a valuable reference library for the department, as our comrades are from every state in the union that furnished loyal soldiers.

The early history of this department down to the time at least when we have the records complete, should be compiled, published and bound for preservation and a historian should be employed to write and compile this work.

#### NATIONAL ENCAMPMENT.

The 21st National Encampment held in St. Louis was an assemblage of men distinguished for their ability. Presided over by our Commander in Chief General Lucius Fairchild guided in its deliberation by such patriots as Hanibal Hamlin, General W. T. Sherman and a host of other heroes in war and statesmen in times of peace, their legislation signally represented the great principles on which our order is founded, fraternity, charity and loyalty.

The citizens of St. Louis gave us a royal welcome and provided for the Department of Kansas second to no state. I know I reflect the sentiments of every comrade who went from this Department, when I say their generous hospitality in providing for our comfort and entertainment will always be remembered by us with sincere gratitude.

The badge worn by the comrades of Kansas (a grasshopper with a sunflower pendant) attracted a great deal of attention and was very much admired. I desire to suggest that it be adopted as a department badge and that we have it copyrighted.

#### PENSIONS.

The subject of pensions is one in which every comrade feels a deep interest, and while it is perfectly natural for us to have opinions of our own and freely express them; it is to be regretted that we are not a unit on the advisability of pressing some of the proposed legislation on this subject at this time.

We are agreed, that the pension laws of this country, as now recorded in our statutes fall far short in that liberality which should characterize the laws of a nation so great and prosperous, that our President thinks the greatest danger is the surplus in the treasury.

We are agreed, that the arrears of pension act should be re-enacted; passing and pleading a statute of limitation on a wounded or disabled soldier is a disgrace to our Nation.

We are agreed, on the equitable equalization of bounty.

We are agreed, that to demand proof that a soldier who faithfully served his country, and was discharged on account of disability; did not contract the disability before he entered the service, is a law as shameful as the statute of limitation against us.

We are agreed, on the increase of pensions for certain disabilities. We are agreed that the soldiers who were starved in rebel prisons should be pensioned. We are agreed on the pensioning of our comrades' widows and

#### DEPARTMENT COMMANDER SOWARD.



THOMAS H. SOWARD was born Sept. 25th, 1832, in Mason county, Kentucky. He entered the Augusta college at the age of 16 years, and after graduating, studied law with Judge Doniphan at Augusta, and had just been admitted to the bar when the war broke out.

He enlisted in July, 1861, and was soon commissioned Second Lieutenant of Company L. Second Kentucky Cavalry. After the battle of Stone river, upon recommendation of Gen. Phil Sheridan, he was made First Lieutenant of Company B., of that regiment. He was with his regiment at Shiloh, Perryville, Stone river, Chickamauga, Mission Ridge, the campaign to Atlanta, Rousseau's raid, McCook's and Kilpatrick's raids around Atlanta. After the fall of Atlanta he was severely injured by his horse, and was transferred to the command of barracks No. 1, Louisville, where he remained until the spring of 1865, and was discharged in June of that year.

Mr. Soward returned to his profession at Augusta, where he remained until he removed to Kansas, in 1866, when he settled in Winfield, where he has remained since. He was for four years register of deeds for Cowley county. He was a charter member of Winfield Post No. 85, and its first commander, and has always been a zealous, earnest worker in the Grand Army. He was Chief Mustering officer on the staff of Department Commander T. J. Anderson, was elected senior vice-Commander at the encampment of 1886, and Department Commander at the meeting held at Abilene, in 1887.