FEMALE HEROISM

Many a heart was thrilled in reading the story of the heroism of Signora Paquita Alvarez, who died in an effort to save her husband from being cut to pieces by the Spaniards. He and two or three men that were with him had ventured too close to the Spanish line during an engagement, and were cut off and surrounded by the enemy. The peril of Senor Alvarez was witnessed by his wife, who, with two Cubans determined he should not die alone, ran to his rescue. For a few moments they struggled against overwhelming odds, when Alvarez, seeing a chance to escape called to his wife to follow, and make a bold dash through the Spanish line, Under the impression that she was just behind him, he hewed his way through the living wall that stood before him and escaped, but she was too weak to cope with the Spanish soldiers who closed in behind him. The Spaniards recognizing the fact that she was a woman, called to her to surrender, and thus save her life, but, with a cry of Viva Cuba Libre, she and the two men with her hewed right and left with their machetes, and were finally cut to pieces by the Spanish soldiers in sight of the Cuban forces, that, with a shout and a charge, answered the death cry of the heroine. In the confusion of the hand-to-hand struggle and the flight that followed Alvarez did not know that his wife had been left behind until he had reached the rebel lines; when, in despair, he placed his pistol to his breast, fired and joined the heroic woman in death.

By a singular coincidence a tale of equal heroism comes about the same time from the other side of the globe. The incident it narrates occurred a year ago, but only within the last few days has it been told in the press of civilized countries. When Zeitoun was occupied by the desperate Armenians, the Turkish garrison of over 200 men was besieged in the citadel. There was no prospect of relief, and the Turks surrendered, on condition that their lives be spared. The prisoners were confined in various houses in the town, and almost immediately afterwards a Turkish force arrived and made an attack on the fortifications. Every Armenian man and boy was needed in the front, and while the struggle for the walls was raging the prisoners broke loose and began to set fire to the houses. In this desperate strait the Armenian women seized whatever weapons were most convenient, axes, hatchets, pokers, clubs, pitchforks, and fell upon the Turks with all the ferocity of tigresses. The Turkish prisoners had the advantage of superior strength and skill, but the greater numbers of the women, together with the possession of the rude weapons they had been able to find, gave them the mastery; they killed every man, and threw their bodies over the cliff on which the town was built. It was a deed of heroic daring, but they were fighting for life and what was dearer their honor, for, had the enemy taken the town, a fate worse than death awaited every woman in it, and none knew the fact better than themselves. No contest would seem more hopeless than that of a crowd of women against 200 men, even without arms, fighting for their lives, but the women of Zeitoun took the risk against fearful odds and showed that they possessed the qualities, that in every age and country, have been considered such as make the heroine.

We are accustomed to think and say that we live in a dull prosaic age, an age of money-getting, an age in which the greed of gold has burned out the nobler feelings and impulses of humanity. We have accustomed ourselves to the thought that the age of heroism, the heroic age, concerning which historians write and poets rave, is very far away, so far as to be lost in the misty remoteness of antiquity. But this is a mistake. In every age that has need of heroes and heroines they spring in the front. Heroic people do not always play their part on a stage in sight of a nation, for often in humble life and among people of inconspicuous station deeds of daring are performed, which, on a mere exalted arena, would attract the attention of the world. The locomotive engineer who, last month remained at his post to save his passengers during a collision, and after it was over was found dead with his hands on the throttle, and none the less a hero though his noble deed received only a scant mention in the columns of the press. The woman who, last week ran in front of a rapidly moving street car to save the life of a child she had never seen before was none the less a heroine though she kept her name to herself, refusing to divulge it, even at the request of the by-standers. In truth, the world is as full of the heroic as ever it was, but we have, somehow, become accustomed to overlooking the deeds of daring done in every-day life, and look for heroism only at times when public excitement runs high and when unusual emergencies call for unwonted efforts. In the case of the engineers, we say that three engineers out of five would have done the same; in the case of the woman, we think that any other woman would have acted as she did. In both instances we may be in the right, but if we are, this only proves that heroes and heroines are so numerous that their deeds are no longer considered extraordinary—are, indeed, not regarded as worthy of more than the scant attention they receive.

The Swiss war with Austria developed heroines by the regiment. Every canton, almost every neighborhood cherishes the memory of some woman, often of more than one, who shed her blood in the cause of the insurrection. Here and there all over Switzerland, modest monuments by the wayside, tombs and monumental slabs in the parish churches, tell where gallant deeds were done or mark the resting places of the heroines who performed them when Switzerland was struggling as Cuba is now struggling to be free. The Swiss women were not organized in separate bodies, but fought side by side with their husbands, brothers, sons and fathers, and did good service. At the great victory of Sempach, in 1386, won by Arnold von Winkelried over Duke leaders fell, the Swiss women especialeaders fell, the Swiss women especially distinguished themselves by their valor, handling lance and ax as stoutly as the men, and numbers of them perished during the action. At St. Jacobs, on the Birs, where, in 1444, 1500 Swiss resisted 30,000 French and were all killed, the victors losing 10,000 men, there were numbers of women in the Swiss ranks, nor, according to the testimony of a contemporary, were they in bravery or effectiveness to be distinguished from the men. In several cases, when their sex was perceived, they were offered quarter if they would surrender, but invariably refused, preferring to die with their friends rather than to live as the prisoners of a hated enemy. The tales of these old days abound with accounts of how invading forces were overwhelmed by artificial avalanches, prepared on the cliff above some narrow defile through which the enemy must pass, and in most such cases the duty of cutting loose the masses of stones, earth and snow, was intrusted to the women, while the men, armed and ready for battle, stood ready at some favorable position to fall upon the foe and complete the defeat with spear and ax. They were worthy of their mountaineer husbands and deserve the honors that have been heaped upon their memories.

The women of Carthage were the prototypes of the Cuban women of to-day, and even the brutal Romans could not help admiring the bravery of those whom they were sworn to destroy. The history of the Roman State is smeared with the blood of the innocent on every page, but not one is worse splotched with the red and black of slaughter and treachery than that which tells the story of the downfall of Carthage. The City of Dido was completely prostrated by the second Punic war, and willingly accepted peace on any terms. The Romans, however, were bent on the total destruction of the city, so encouraged their allies to insult and attack the humiliated State, until finally it took up arms against them, despite the agreement with Rome. When Scipio appeared before the city, however, it submitted, and at his demand surrendered all the arms and armor it contained, giving up a quantity so large, as even at this day to excite wonder at the amount. Then came the demand that the inhabitants should remove to another place, and that the city should be leveled, and in desperation the inhabitants determined to perish with their city. Then came hurried preparations for resistance to the death. The smiths worked night and day forging swords and spears, to take the place of those treacherously obtained by the Roman General. The women worked as hard as the smiths, making arrow-proof coats of bull's hide; they cut off their hair for bowstrings; they cut up their clothing and bedding to make quilted helmets and tunics; they surrendered their tables to be made into shields, and when the last desperate struggle took place, lasting for seventeen days, in the streets and among the houses of the doomed city, then threw stones from the housetops on the head of the enemy, and with such means of defense as came to hand, fought like tigresses. Thousands of them perished in the storming of the city, but these were fortunate compared with those who were taken, for in those days, slavery for life was the lot of every prisoner of war.

Exactly 216 years after the merciless butchery of the heroic women of Carthage there was another destruction of another famous city, during the siege and storming of which the heroism of the women equaled that of the men. The details of the Jewish war that resulted in the destruction of the city by Titus have been told, with great particularity by Josephus, but save in a casual allusion here and there he does not do justice to the heroism of the women. The details of the Jewish war that resulted in the destruction of the city by Titus have been told, with great particularity, by Josephus, but save in a casual allusion here and there he does not do justice to the heroism of the women. The traditions of the most remarkable nation on the earth, however, have preserved many stories of one of the most tremendous events of history, and have showed that in the time of supreme peril, when the city was completely environed by the Roman wall and starvation was playing havoc with the defenders of the unhappy city, the courage of the women never failed. With an implicit faith, sublime in its confidence, they refused to believe that Jehovah had forsaken his people and temple, and even after the morning and evening sacrifices had been discontinued for lack of animals to serve as offerings the women daily crowded the women's court of the temple to pray. But they did not confine their efforts to prayers for success. When the siege grew stringent and every man was needed on the walls the women brought water to the soldiers; they ground the swords and spearheads, one turning the grindstone, while another held the weapon; they worked hard, fashioning as well as their skill permitted, the arrowshafts to which the smiths afterwards added the heads; with hammers they broke up the stones of their dwellings for the catapults and ballistas; they tore up their garments and took the oil out of the family cruse in order to furnish the blazing arrows that more than once put the Roman works in jeopardy, and when, at last, all their efforts proved fruitless, and the Roman troops actually effected a lodgment within the city, they fought from house to house as stubbornly as the men, and met a fate as cruel as that which had befallen the women of Carthage, with a heroism which fully matched that displayed by the descendants of Dido's maids of honor.

It is not often the good fortune of a woman to be able to save a kingdom which is almost at the last grasp; in fact, the case of Joan of Arc stands unique in history, which probably accounts for the interest it has always excited. Just now, when the revival of public and literary interest in the enthusiast of Domremy is causing more to be written and published about her than ever before, and while the propriety of her canonization is under consideration at Rome, it is interesting to note that even the men of history and science are changing their opinion about her, and, instead of regarding her as a lunatic or victim of nervous disease, are coming to consider her a genuine heroine, full of an idea and sturdily intent on its realization. While it is probable there will always be two opinions concerning her and her exploits, there can be no doubts that, at the time when she entered on what she believed to be a divinely appointed mission, the Kingdom of France was at a lower point in its fortunes than ever before or since. The territory that was actually under the control of the Dauphin was insignificant in comparison with that which had been ruled by his fathers; the English had most of the rest. The wildest romancer could never have dreamed that France would be delivered by a shepherd girl nor would he have imagined that after the victories gained, partly at least, through her influence and the superstitious fear she inspired, the King she had aided to ascend the throne would desert her, and, without even a protest, allow her to be put to a death of excruciating torture. Yet both events occurred; to the eternal infamy of all concerned, Joan was burned. She may have been a saint, she may have been a crazed enthusiast, but, whatever she was, her name will go down into history as one of the most remarkable female characters who ever appeared on the earth, and the dastard King of France, the infamous Bishop of Beauvais will all be remembered mainly as associated with her history.

A WOMAN SOLDIER.

A woman 73 years of age is an active and useful member of the French army. She has been wounded many times, seriously in several cases, but appears to have many years of activity still before her.

Mother Ibrahim, as this remarkable old person is called, is the cantiniere of the Second Zouaves. She has followed her regiment all over the world, sharing all its perils and hardships. She exposed herself to fire as cheerfully as the bravest soldier in the regiment.

The cantinieres of the French army are famous in song and story, and their services are often very valuable. They carry water and other kinds of drink and refreshments, and many a wounded soldier has owed his life to their aid.

It is peculiarly interesting to call attention to this old woman just now, because many people are under the impression that women have only begun to do extraordinary things within the past few years. The venerable cantiniere was hard at work, tramping round the world and taking her part in battles, years and years before the present craze about women's achievements was heard of. It will be found on examination that in all ages some women have been in the habit of doing strange things.

Mother Ibrahim was born in Egypt, the daughter of a soldier of the great Napoloeon. She married a non-commissioned officer of Turcos, who is now dead.

In appearance she is small, upright and wrinkled. Her eyes are black and lively, her hair is white, but thick. Her whole bearing is military and alert.

Her usual uniform includes a zouave turban and very loose zouave trousers. She was therefore a pioneer of the bloomer movement, although no one thought of her as a great dress reformer.

She also wears the red ribbon of the cross of the Legion of Honor, the military medal and the medals of the Crimea, Italy and Tunis, all of which have been conferred upon her.

She has so many wounds that she can hardly count them. Nine she thinks they number. Bullets, sabers and bayonets have inflicted them. She has lost three ribs.

She was present at the assault of the Malakoff in the Crimea, at the battle of Solferino, and took part in the Mexican campaign.

After the battle of Sedan a German soldier smashed her left shoulder while she was attempting to rejoin some men of her regiment, who were being taken prisoners to Berlin. In Tonquin she was picked up, with her arm terribly mangled by three knife cuts. The surgeons wanted to amputate it, but she refused, and to-day she can guide a bicycle with it.

After an accident at Tonquin, where she lives, she had to go to Paris to undergo an operation. The evening she left the hospital she was received by President Faure, to whom she presented the barrel of the zouave regiment, for which he had asked.

A CHEERFUL FUNERAL.

For years Madame Miette, a young widow of Paris, had struggled against the inconveniences of poverty. At last, some four months ago, fortune favored her, by the death of a relative, who left her a snug sum of money. Then the widow became gay and extravagant, and resolved to have a good time while her money lasted, and, when her cash was exhausted, close her career by suicide.

With this end in view, she purchased a gorgeous funeral robe, and a highly ornamented and padded coffin, which she placed in her bedroom. She next sent for the leader of the local town band, and handed him over a fair sum of money on condition that he should head her funeral procession, and she furthermore drew up a programme of popular and joyous tunes to be played by his orchestra on that occasion.

A few days back, when only a franc or two of her little fortune remained, the widow determined on ending all earthly troubles, bought some charcoal, shut herself up in her room, and was found dead next morning.

Punctually obedient to orders, the band appeared at the hour of the funeral and saluted the corpse with a gay hunting chorus. The funeral procession then moved off at a quick pace to the accompaniment of a lively march. Four times was the cortege pulled up en route for the cemetery, and at the last halt the band broke forth with the sprightliest dance music, like strains accompanying the lowering of the coffin into the grave.

SAFER

It is sometimes embarrassing to presume too far on one's own nobility of countenance. There is a story of an Edinburgh sheriff who lost a twopenny railway ticket, and was accordingly asked for his fare.

I have already paid it, said he.

Then where's your ticket?

I have lost it.

Then you must pay again.

Come now, friend, said the sheriff, just glance at my face, and tell me if I look like a man who would tell a lie for tuppence!

The cash-taker obediently inspected the countenance offered and then said, dryly:

I'll just thank you for that tuppence! sen' him ter Parliament!

INDIA'S ARMY FOR EUROPE

WHAT NATIVE FIGHTERS COULD DO AGAINST CONTINENTALS.

The Opinions of Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Roberts as Opposed to the Recent Declaration of Lord Wolseley—Bravery and Fidelity of the Troops in Many Wars.

When Lord Beaconsfield sent some six or seven India native regiments to the island of Malta he intended to demonstrate the fact that in the event of a war between England and any European power it would be possible to raise an army a million strong from the vast recruiting grounds of India, writes Thomas P. Hughes in the New York Sun. It was a statesmanlike action, and very few military officers of standing have ever ventured to call in question the wisdom and expediency of the measure. It has been reserved for the present Commander-in-Chief, Viscount Wolseley, to publish to the world his conviction that the native troops of India could not be trusted in a European war. The opinion has been put forth in opposition to that of Lord Roberts, and not without some slight suspicion of rivalry and jealousy. Those who have lived in India any length of time are fully aware of the low estimate formed of the native troops by officers of English regiments, and as Lord Wolesley has had only very short experience of India, when he served with the Eightieth Foot in the Burmese war of 1852-53, it is but reasonable to suppose that he has imbibed these prejudices. On the other hand, the whole of the military life of Gen. Roberts has been passed in India, from the time when he served with distinguished bravery throughout the Indian mutiny campaign, and received a Victoria Cross for personal valor in the field, to his historic march from Cabul to Candahar, when with a picked force of 9,000 he emerged from the trackless regions of Afghanistan, and inflicted a crushing defeat upon Ayoob Khan, the protege of Russia.

The fighting qualities of the troops which form Britain's native Indian army of 250,000 natives is not a matter of opinion. It is a fact of history. Take, for example,

THE SIKH REGIMENTS.

At the battle of Chillianwalla Lord Gough was under the impression that he had been thoroughly defeated by the Sikhs, and no one who has ever seen a Sikh regiment march behind one of the finest British regiments has doubted for a moment their fighting qualities. These men stand six feet; they are men of war from their youth; they have no fear of death; to them fighting is a recreation. This cannot be said of the raw material of which the regiments of the line in the British army are composed.

The Goorkha is probably the best soldier in the world. He is sturdily built, of an average height of 5 feet 3 inches, with a physiognomy of a Chinese Tartar character. During my twenty years' residence in a large military station in India I never heard the fighting qualities of the Goorkhas called in question. The British soldier likes the sturdy little Goorkha. In the Afghan war, when encamped before Cabul, it was found that the baggage of the Goorkha regiment had not arrived, and the Highlanders volunteered to lend the Goorkha boys their military coats for the night when on duty. The singular fighting powers of the Goorkhas were first discovered in the Nepaulese war of 1814-16, when the British troops met them as enemies for the only time in their history. England had a force of 30,000 in the field, and the Goorkhas only 10,000, and it took two years of tough fighting to bring them to terms. The British glory in the charge of Balaklava, but it finds a parallel in the siege of Kalungla in 1815, when the Goorkhas lost 530 out of their noble little band of 600, and inflicted upon the British the heavy loss of 750.

In the event of England's having to fight any European power single-handed there can be no question as to the advisability of bringing these Sikh and Goorkha regiments into the field, and the very fact that an experienced officer like

LORD ROBERTS,

endorses such action will convince any one who has seen these native soldiers day after day during a long life in India that the native troops can be trusted.

In judging of the Indian native army it must be remembered that its general organization is not on the lines of class regiments. The native regiments are for the most part made up of different races and religions; one company of Punjabia Moslems, another of Sikhs, another of Doogras, another of Goorkhas, another Pathans, and so on. Regiments so constituted may be difficult to handle on foreign soil, but they could be easily reorganized for a European war. The Sikhs and Goorkhas have no caste prejudice, and if they were landed on the shores of Europe they would eat the Britisher's food and drink the Britisher's toddy even with a greater relish than that of Tommy Atkins himself.

I have never met with an officer of experience who has not been ready to confess that for difficult service he would rather lead a company of native soldiers than one of the British army. In these native soldiers you have m[illegible] great powers of endurance. They [illegible] without stimulants for weeks, [illegible] carry five days' rations on their back. They can sleep on the ground with very little covering either on the sunny plains of India or on the snow-capped mountains of Afghanistan. They never complain, and their one conception of duty is faithfulness to those who pay them.

But besides the Goorkhas and Sikhs there is an immense recruiting ground on the frontiers of India. The numerous Pathan tribes, inhabiting the long line of frontier between India and Afghanistan, number as many as 200,000 fighting men, and from these tribes the Pathan soldier is enlisted. They are historic fighters. Their ancestors swelled the armies of Mamud of Ghuzni, and of Baber, and they are fighters still. I remember during the Afghan war spending an evening in the midst of the Khyber Pass in the camp of a distinguished English General, who, like Lord Wolseley, had never served with native troops, and he expressed to me his surprise at

THE SOLDIERLIKE QUALITIES

of these tribesmen. Every one of them, he said, "is a born skirmisher. In single combat Tommy Atkins has no chance with him." The Pathan soldier is brave but impulsive, but when enlisted under British officers and treated kindly he manifests the highest qualities. The editor of one of the London newspapers, who was formerly a Captain in the Indian army, owes his life to the bravery and devotion of a Pathan soldier, Sirdar Afzul Khan, who has now attained to the highest and most honorable position in the Indian army open to a native.

To those who are but slightly acquainted with the condition of things in India the fact that 70,000 British troops keep in check a native force of nearly 300,000,000 is taken as an evidence that the native is not good for much as far as fighting goes. But it must be remembered that ever since the Indian mutiny of 1857-58 the artillery and the guns of the forts are entirely in the hands of Englishmen, and that no native receives a military education calculated to fit him to lead an army in modern warfare. It was demonstrated in the mutiny that it was the absence of native Generals which made the mutineers so helpless, and the same may be said now. In the whole native army there is not a single man to be found to assume the command of a force in the field.

If it had been asserted twenty years ago that the Japanese were a race of soldiers the statement would have been called in question, but this has been demonstrated in the recent war. Those who, like myself, have been interested in the native regiments of India, have lived among them, spoken their language, and imbibed their thoughts, know very well that there are latent energies in the great empire of India which have not yet been called forth. These energies, however, would be called forth in the event of Great Britain's having to maintain her integrity in the face of Europe. If these fighting races are estranged from British rule it will be probably by such utterances as those put forth by Lord Wolseley, for there is nothing which the native of India abominates and detests more than the conscious superiority of the British conqueror.

In 1860, as I sat in the veranda of my house at Pesharsar with the late Ameer Shere Ali Khan of Cabul, we were discussing this very question, whether the tribes of Central Asia would stand by England in the event of a Russian invasion. "Padri," he said, "if ever such a time does come it will be seen that we are a nation of men."

VICTORIA'S BENEVOLENCE.

The Queen has just given a practical demonstration of her solicitude for the poor and oppressed which is likely to lift one poor couple at least into comparative affluence. In a quiet village near Leeds an old couple, 71 years of age, have for over half a century gained their livelihood by making cloth on an old hand-power loom, but the advent of modern machinery has caused their struggle for existence to be a very hard one. The old couple, whose name is Barnes, were introduced to the Bishop of Ripon by the Vicar of their parish, and the Bishop not only bought a length of the flannel which they had made, but promised to lay it before the Queen and put her into possession of the facts concerning its manufacture. The Queen immediately ordered 30 yards of the hand-made flannel, and this week it was forwarded to Balmoral. Numerous applications have already been made for various lengths of the same piece as that from which the Queen's was cut, and it is needless to say that at 20 shillings a yard the old couple find themselves doing a highly profitable business.

SOME HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

Bother—A word in great use when a stupid visitor has called, or a dress has not come home, or the hair will not curl.

Fiddlesticks—A word strongly expressive of contempt. It crushes all argument. When a lady says "Fiddlesticks!" he must be a bold man who ventures to say another word.

Fiddle-dee-dee.—The same as "Fiddlestick!" only one degree milder.

Indeed.—An ejaculation, "strongly recommended for family use." It implies doubt, a contemptuous denial, a gentle refusal, and saves an infinity of useless explanation. Much may be said about the word "Indeed"—it all depends upon the way in which it is pronounced.

Delicious.—A word that conveys, coming from a young lady's lips, the highest amount of praise.

Spoony.—A young man who cannot dance or talk, or talks no better than he dances, and vice versa. A young man who sings sentimental songs with a lisp, and has a turned-down collar, and a portrait which he always carries in his waistcoat pocket, on the side nearest to his heart.

BLUNDERS.

Few attributes of character are more charming than the faculty of gracefully acknowledging one's errors. The man who makes a blunder and sticks to it is a person with whom argument or controversy becomes impossible. The trouble and time spent in attempting to convince him of the truth are completely wasted; for he will still believe that what he has advanced must be right, even in the face of actual demonstration that it is wrong. On the other hand, of the action of one who will admit with frank and ready courtesy that he has been mistaken, it may be said that it "blesseth him that gives and him that takes,"—it covers his own retreat with gracefulness, and gives his adversary a pleasant memory of an encounter with a generous foe

AND LEFT HIM.

When do I get the next train? asked the agitated passenger.

The next train's just gone, sir, answered the porter.