

SOMETHING ABOUT THE WRETCHED ARMY OF SPAIN.

English Military Critic Says Neither Officers Nor Privates Understand the Rudiments of War—Even Physically Bad.

Commenting upon a Spanish writer's reflections on the war in Cuba, in which he had attempted to show that want of cavalry, together with the superior knowledge of the country possessed by the rebels, was the cause of the failure of the Spanish troops, an English military critic, in the United Service Magazine, taking exception to the statements and the conclusions, declares that the real reason is simply that the Spanish army, cavalry, infantry, artillery, engineers—all branches of the service alike—have had no schooling in their trade. From brigade general to private, not a man has grasped the rudiments or requirements of war. For the troops, there is no drill, no practice in gunnery, or swordsmanship, or gymnastics or any branch of military routine. Even physically they are the wretchedest of beings, wiry enough but undeveloped, since nothing is done to diet.

STRENGTHEN OR IMPROVE THEM.

The people, so fatally conservative to the colour of tradition do not appreciate that since the devil-may-care campaigns of the Netherlands, war has been reduced to rule. If there be occasion when sheer dash, unbacked by calculation comes in, they may be magnificent. A Spaniard is romantic to the core, a gift not altogether admirable in these days. The very tap of the drum sets all his martial blood afire, and in picturing an ancestor storming a breach with the Spanish flag in one hand and a sword in the other, he forgets how dimly modern and prosaic is the hum of that unseen enemy, a rifle bullet, sighted, aimed and fired five hundred yards away.

The writer adds that he has talked with Spaniards of all grades and provinces, and two qualities alone have they advanced in favor of the Spanish soldier—his ability to go without food for a long time, and his bravery. A gentleman, speaking to me at table lifts a scrap of salad on his fork and says "This is why our army is better, in one respect at least, than yours or the German. Your men require to be fed solidly, and often ours will last and fight."

FOR DAYS ON THIS.

"But if our troops require more food than the Spanish, our commissariat is proportionately equipped to meet the additional demand, our premisses are proportionately better. Our regiment is more liberal, costlier, and we can afford to pay more, otherwise I should admit a value in the argument."

It makes one sad, continues the English writer, to see the quality of the expeditions packed off in heartless shoals to Cuba—boys, to look at, who have never seen or heard a rifle till this moment and now are almost ignorant at which end it fires. And if the troops are inefficient the officers are worse. In the first place, the military profession does not stand high which is in itself, a bar to efficiency. By something more than a coincidence the best officers are those who are socially thought most of by their countrymen, as in England, Germany and Austria. In Spain the army approaches being held in social contempt, which is in no way counterbalanced by the reiteration, before every officer's name, of "Bizarro," and other fatuous epithets of the press. The army and the church in fact, are the two professions no man chooses if he has the money or the brains to choose anything else, and a girl who threatens to become an old maid, is told in jest that she will have to marry an officer, which illustrates the national bias. The Spanish officers cheapen themselves. They are never out of uniform with a sword tinkling at their side. They carry a sword and spurs about with them everywhere, to church included. Their assumption transcends belief, yet it is admitted throughout the Peninsula that their preparations and qualifications

ARE PRACTICALLY NIL.

A proposal has even been approved that the bachelors in arts shall be admitted, without further examination, as second lieutenants. To this latter rank are promoted hosts of sergeants a practice ultimately subversive of discipline if carried, as here, to excess. But sheer want of instruction, bookwork, backed up by ranging tactics, military surveying, map drawing, sham fights and so forth, is the glaring and primary defect, and during the Cuban rebellion three generals have fallen into trouble, not from lack of courage, but from lack of knowledge. Precisely the same incompetence prevails in the navy. Thus, in a word, neither officers nor men possess the elements of technical warfare, and all is left to courage.

"Spaniards or Italians are given to imagine that the fine frenzy of a desperate exploit is limited to their warm-blooded selves. They underrate our dormant capabilities of passion. They have not heard of the Scotchman at Maljuba, who, with half his face blown away, groped for a rifle to have one more shot at the victorious Boers. They could never bring themselves to associate our reputedly frigid temper with the flaming heroism of Chard, and the old Etonians who fell at Lang's Nek. Yet, if ardor is bravery, not only Italy, or Spain or Greece, but

son's feverish delight at Copenhagen?—the love of fighting at close quarters to the inspiring music of a hundred-gun battery. With what noble ecstasy did Charles of Sweden burrow into Russia's vitals with a few calm squadrons of unyielding horsemen?

"It is cowardice or coldness that are exceptions in the army, and the fire and savagery of onset, what they mistake for coldness in us northerners is the fine restraint of previous military education, the leash that holds the bloodhounds, slipped at will, and

OFTEN SLIPPED TOO SOON.

"So as I should be the last to deny the bravery of the Spanish army as a whole, I at once assent. Yes, it is brave—as ninety-nine per cent. of unformed armies are brave—what then? Bravery and a small appetite are not stakes high enough to win with on the board of military action, much less, let that calm supplant the soldier's schooling. Courage we all have, if we are put to fight, courage under aspects slightly different but still courage; and it is for want of our seeming base minutiae of war, the marksmanship that hits, the steps that charge, and march, and advance and retire; the arts that help to win a battle, as seamanship helps to propel a vessel, that one of all brave nations is falling swiftly from a high estate. "The lesson of three centuries ago is not the lesson of to-day. It is no use to pose upon a crumbling pedestal and scoff at Time, who takes us by the forelock, rather than we him; with him we must go, his word we must obey, or by his certain vengeance we shall cease to learn and prematurely to live."

INDIAN MAGIC.

It Is Often Beyond the Power of the Wisest to Explain It.

One need not go to the realms of space, or time, or figures, to meet with the incomprehensible. Despite modern science and ingenuity, this word still remains the only applicable epithet for some of the achievements of Indian conjurers. We can smile at the luminous appearance of the beautiful face before which the revelation of Osiris, the old Egyptians prostrated themselves in awe—for the marvels of the magic lantern are familiar to us; the early existence of gunpowder gives an easy explanation of the oracle's lightning and thunder; the weird harmony of Memnon was merely the result of an ingenious mechanical contrivance.

But shrewd travelers of later date, whose veracity is beyond dispute tell of much more inexplicable things than these. One of the best known writers on occultism Jaccoliot, has left an account of certain things he saw during his official sojourn in India, which, as they seem to defy explanation, may fairly be classed among things incomprehensible. The performer whom he accidentally met, and who required some persuasion before he would exhibit feats which he continually affirmed, were the work of other intelligences.

On some sticks fixed upright in flower-pots were placed some leaves from a tree, with holes in each sufficiently large to make them fall to the level of the mold. Standing at a considerable distance the fakir made a gesture with his hands. A slight breeze seemed to pervade the room, then the leaves quivered and gradually worked upward on the sticks. Jaccoliot placed himself between the flower pots and the operator, placed the sticks in the floor, and adopted every means he could imagine to frustrate any trickery, but nothing he did made any difference to the movement of the leaves.

The more familiar feat of the seemingly supernatural growth of flowers was utterly eclipsed by another instance vouchered for by the same narrator. His own servant brought him a score or so of seeds, from which he selected and marked one. The fakir planted it in a pot of earth, muttered some words over it, and fell into a sort of trance, which lasted about thirty minutes. He then awoke, uncovered the pot and discovered a seedling two or three inches high. Jaccoliot, examined it and found it had sprung from the seed which he had marked. With a touch of a peacock's feather the fakir depressed a balance of a common weighing machine in daily use in the household, though in the other was a weight of twelve stone, and with a distant motion of his hand he made shavings of wood to sink or move in water. Still more marvelous is the description of the manner in which this veritable eastern wizard was able to set at defiance the law of gravity. On this occasion when leaving the room, he paused on the threshold, folded his arms, and by a simple act of volition, raised himself from the floor and remained poised in air for some minutes.

DIGGING FOR FISH.

The natives of Kottiar are in the habit of digging every year in the summer dry banks of the Vergei River for fish, which they dig out by hundreds, just as they would potatoes. The mud lumps are broken open and the fish, perhaps eight or ten inches long, will always be found alive and often frisky as if just removed from its supposedly native element—the water.

FOOTBALL DUELISTS.

A duel has recently taken place at Paris between two football men, the Captains of rival teams who had quarreled on the field during the progress of a game. Unlike most French duels which are innocuous, both combatants received severe sword wounds in the arms and shoulders.



DINNER GOWN.

A simple dinner gown, made with low waist and short sleeves, is somewhat severe in design, but none the less pretty and effective. The skirt is made with the attached flounce, but is fashioned with rather an unusually short apron. The body of the waist is full,

and has a pointed belt. It is finished around the shoulders with a soft ruche of chiffon, and at the left side is a chiffon lace bow. The sleeves are small puffs with tied-in loops of ribbon. The material of the gown is peau de soie of a delicate shade of yellow.

THE JOLLY AMEER.

Abdurrahman, of Afghanistan, Is One of the Most Original of Living Rulers.

The most interesting ruler in the world at present is probably, Abdurrahman of Afghanistan.

A fine old-cruised autocrat in Abdurrahman, capable of waking up his doctor to ask if it would hurt him to eat a peppermint lozenge, and also shutting up a thief in an iron cage to starve to death.

Once a beggar in Kabul asked alms of the Khan.

"Did you ever work for a living?" asked the ruler.

"Never, O Khan," the man replied; "I am a beggar."

"Then," said Abdurrahman, "we can do without you," and forthwith directed that the beggar should be hanged. He is, however, susceptible to flattery, and can sometimes be cajoled.

A man whom he had sentenced to have his ears cut off for some indiscretion happened to be a friend of his chief secretary, who averted the mutilation by offering to perform the task himself, provided it might be done in the Ameer's presence.

To this he assented, whereupon the secretary explained that he had never executed this form of punishment before, and would His Highness show him how much was to be removed.

The Ameer passed his hands over both ears of the trembling wretch, whereupon the secretary reminded him of a passage in the Koran saying that anything touched by the representative of the Almighty became sacred. So the ears were saved.

Afghanistan is anything but backward, as Asiatic countries go. There is a modern factory in Kabul run by steam and employing 3,500 workmen, which turns out daily 10,000 Martini-Henry cartridges and 10,000 Snider cartridges, finished and complete; twenty Martini-Henry and twenty Snider rifles; 50,000 coins; two field guns, varying from 3-pounders to 12-pounders; twelve Maxims, eighteen Gardner's, with carriages and full equipment per annum, as well as a large number of swords and mechanical contrivances.

The Ameer takes great pride in the factory and makes his khans and all his visitors go and see it. One day Umra Khan who came from a distance, called on Sir Salters Pyne and said:

"How do you make guns?"

"It is quite easy," replied Pyne. "You make a hole first, and then wrap some iron around it."

"Ah," he said, sorrowfully, "there is lots of air for the hole in my country; only no one there knows how to wrap the iron around it."

TELEPHONE SUBSCRIBERS.

According to recent statistics there are 1,450,000 subscribers to the telephone service in the world. The United States leads the list with 900,000, then comes Germany with 140,000 and Great Britain with 75,000; Switzerland, 50,000; France, 35,000; Austria, 20,000; Russia, 18,000; Sweden and Norway, 16,000; Bavaria, 15,000; Denmark, 15,000; Italy, 14,000; Holland, 12,000; Spain, 12,000; Belgium, 11,000; Hungary, 10,000; Wurtemberg, 7,000; Finland, 6,000; Japan, 3,500; Cuba, 2,500; Luxemburg, 2,000; Portugal, 2,000; Australia, 2,000. The balance is divided among the smaller or newly settled countries, from Roumania with 400 down to Senegambia with 100.

DIPHTHERIA SPREAD

By Lead Pencils Moistened In the Mouth.

The apparently harmless act of borrowing a lead pencil is recognized by the medical faculty as a prolific means of propagating disease. Many people still cling to the time-honored practice of moistening the writing end of the pencil in the mouth before they proceed to write.

The practice of borrowing pencils is now believed to be responsible for many cases of diphtheria and tonsillitis which could not be otherwise accounted for. Physicians have, therefore, begun to warn their patients against putting the points of lead pencils in their mouths before they write.

The practice of "swapping" and borrowing lead pencils is more common among children than adults. The spirit of camaraderie which makes pupils grow "clummy" and social in the public schools sometimes causes lead-pencils to become common property among groups of school children. A child who is recovering from any throat disease might therefore be the innocent means of communicating the malady to its companions. A well-known throat specialist says:—

"Physicians are now beginning to give their attention to the cause and prevention of diseases more than ever they did before. The rules of common sense are being instilled into the parents of the young patients, and a doctor of to-day, when called to attend a child puts its parents through a very rigid cross-examination as to the habits of his little patient. It is often found that the disease has been communicated by some harmless act which most people would not notice. Children are very democratic. A pupil at a school will moisten a lead pencil in his mouth and begin to write. A companion will borrow the pencil, and the first thing he will do in nine cases out of ten will be to put the borrowed pencil in his mouth. I have traced several cases of tonsillitis and diphtheria to this cause, which at first sight appeared inexplicable. Even the seeds of consumption may be sown by this means."

Regarding the habit of moistening the lead pencil before writing, the superintendent of a large pencil factory said yesterday:

"It is a mistake to suppose that moistening the lead of a pencil makes it write better. It spoils the pencil, as it hardens the lead, yet people will persist in the uncleanly habit of thrusting borrowed pencils in their mouths."

BISMARCK'S SINS.

Of the neuralgic pains in his face, which were so severe that he sometimes had to press the points of his fingers on his cheek bones for several minutes to secure a little relief, Bismarck was reported as saying:

"This is quite natural. I have sinned in my life the most with my mouth, in eating, drinking and talking."

WOMEN OF SUMATRA.

If the native women of Sumatra have their knees properly covered the rest does not matter. The natives of some islands off the coast of Guinea wear clothes only when they are going on a journey. Some Indians of Venezuela are ashamed to wear clothes before strangers as it seems indecent to them to appear unpainted.

The Difference Between Now and Then

A correspondent in Dawson writes on February fifth of conditions there. From his account the following extracts are given:—July, in the States, I attended a son. Between the dances a beau came to me and asked for a minutes' talk in regard to a trip. He left the ball at 3 o'clock, was en route at 9. In October, going up Bonanza, I saw a long-haired man in weather-beaten grease-covered suit, shuffling along with a pickaxe on his shoulder, was the gentleman from the ball. A little later I saw a man at a window in a costume that is indescribable. Only a few months previously I had seen him sitting, a dignified, sugar-judge, in next to the highest office of our State. He was now working a few feet of some man's claim on shares. I have seen a party candidate for county auditor in a prominent deal of stud poker in Dawson. On trail we met a very agreeable gentleman from New York.

A REAL ESTATE BROKER.

He has not been doing anything since his arrival. Last night I was surprised to find he had become a pusher in one of the saloons; that is, he played stud poker for the house to keep the game going. Last night when I came home I found a stranger sitting on a bunk. He was dressed in overalls, black with grease, a muskrat shirt, moccasins, and his face was covered with a stiff beard. It took me a long time to recognize him. The last time I had seen him was at Lake Umbagog, as fresh and fair and well-groomed as if he were out for a promenade on Fifth avenue. What a change in life and roughing it had produced! He had just come down from Steam River to record a claim. I noticed the morning that he did not wash, so he had become a tramp in appearance. He had had his breakfast, we gave him some hot cakes and coffee which he ate with a rush and delight to be more enjoyable than meals he had eaten at the Grand Hotel in Paris. Here were three university men who could have judged it from their appearance? It is a short step from man civilized to man barbaric.

My friend W—, a prominent architect from one of the leading cities of the States is

WASHING DISHES

on the table where I write. This is an inconceivably rich country. It stirs one's blood to take one handful of dirt, put it in a pan, wash away the earth and gravel and find a little bunch of bright gold, perhaps worth, possibly \$50, \$75 or \$125 worth. The transformation wrought in a year by this strike recalls the "Amalgam Night" tales. I left Forty Mile in July, '96. Just before leaving, I went over to Cudahy with George Carmack. He was getting supplies to come to the Klondike to fish and prospect. Two weeks later the strike was made by him—but I was on the ocean. A man who was working for us on a claim helped me pack down to Forty Mile to take the boat. He had earned about \$100 at that time. One year later he walked into my office. He had just come from the Klondike. In four months he had dug a fortune and was the sole owner of a claim that would yield him more than a million. A year and a half ago it was not worth a thousand. This year he can clean it of two millions. Our cabin is a palace beside his. Two bunks a stove and a table, but he may yet decide to live on Fifth avenue. Since my arrival here, I must have met more than forty score men who were neighbors in the old diggings, or who worked for us who have made their stake, and are worth anywhere from twenty-five thousand to a half-million. Nearly all I knew who remained here have done well.

GRAINS OF GOLD.

Never despair; but if you do, work on in despair—Burke.

The shortest way to do many things is to do only one thing at a time.—Cecil.

A miser grows rich by seeming poor, an extravagant man grows poor by seeming rich.—Shenstone.

It is more difficult and calls for higher energies of soul to live a martyr than to die one.—Horace Mann.

The memory is a treasure to whom we must give funds, if we would draw the assistance we need.—Rowe.

Good sense, kindness of heart and a proper self-respect are the elements of the best manners.—Lyon Edwards.

Those who have few affairs to attend to are great speakers. The less one thinks the more they talk.—Montesquieu.

A man never sees all that his neighbor has been to him till it's too late to let her know that he sees it.—W. D. Howells.

The art of being able to make a good use of moderate abilities is an esteem, and often confers more re, utation than real merit.—Rochefoucauld.

It is often better to have a great deal of harm happen to one than a little; a great deal may rouse you to remove what a little will only accustom you to endure.—Greville.

The real difference between men is energy. A strong will, a settled purpose, an invincible determination, can accomplish almost anything; and in this lies the distinction between great and little men.—Fuller.

HINTS FOR THE FARMER

INSTRUCTIONS IN SP

The Ontario Department of Agriculture recommends the following:

Bordeaux Mixture—4 pounds; lime, fresh water, 40 gallons.

Extend the copper sulphate solution in a bag of material, and hanging it so that it will be wet by the water.

Stir about the same quantity of the two and mix the 40 gallons of water. This mixture will dissolve sulphate more readily than the 40 gallons of water.

If the lime is at all hard, it is likely to be an easy matter to know the amount is likely to be required by us.

Turned the ferrocyanide test. This substance is any druggist's, and very required. Take a small bottle filled with a saturated solution of this compound. If plenty of lime in your mixture of the test added to it, the test fails to color.

As the test fails to color in contact with your mixture there is sufficient to neutralize the effects of sulphate. Use wooden barrels for Bordeaux mixture.

2. Ammoniacal Copper Solution. "Cuprum."—Copper, 1 ounce; strong ammonia, 1 ounce; dissolve the copper in 10 gallons.

This solution is not recommended only if the fruit is so far advanced that it would be disfigured by a Bordeaux mixture.

3. Paris Green Mixture—1 pound; Water, 200 to 300 gallons; lime, 4 gallons.

Use 200 gallons water for apple trees, 250 for peach trees. When added to Bordeaux mixture, add four ounces of the Bordeaux mixture.

4. Hellebore.—White lead, 1 ounce; water, 3 gallons.

5. Pyrethrum.—Pyrethrum, 1 ounce; water, 12 pound, or soft soap, 1 gallon.

6. Kerosene Emulsion—12 pound, or soft soap, 1 gallon; water, soft, 1 gallon.

After dissolving the water, add the coal oil for 5 to 10 minutes. Mixed, it will adhere to the foliage. A syringe or brush is much in this work. If with from 9 to 15 parts of emulsion may be used, 1 gallon, and less, no soap being will not keep long.

NOTES.

1. When there is a danger of fruiting, use the ammonia solution.

2. Experience in spraying past three years indicates best to use the combined fungicide, commencing buds begin to swell, 3 leaves appear, and cover of 10 to 15 days have been sprayed 3 to 4 times.

In the case of a rainy season, necessary to spray at intervals of 10 to 15 days, while it rains, and then three or four times.

In no case spray when in bloom, but immediately after.

3. The combined insecticide, containing Bordeaux mixture, is best to use, and the kerosene emulsion insects that suck the sap, such as aphid, thrip, mite, oyster shell, etc.

4. A stock solution of Bordeaux mixture prepared as follows: Dissolve 100 pounds of copper sulphate in 100 gallons of water. Other barrel slake 25 pounds and add 12 1/2 gallons of lime. To make this solution, add two of the four gallons of the solution and two of the Bordeaux mixture to the stock solution.

5. Prepare the mixture thoroughly as possible in a fourth of the so-called, not spraying at all, but drenching. When drenched, the mixture of the plant. A great mixture will remain on the plant in this way, saving of material which falls to the ground.

6. No mixture should be pumped or barrel, and, water should be pumped out of the mixture act of metal of the pump.