

WAR, THEN AND NOW.



LOSSES GROW LESS.

SOME LESSONS TAUGHT BY THE ANGLO-BOER WAR.

As Effectiveness of Weapons Increases, Fatalities in Battle Apparently Decrease—Comparison of Casualties in Some of the World's Greatest Conflicts.

The South African war has demonstrated some things about up-to-date fighting machines. One important fact brought out is that, for creating extensive cemeteries and making bloody history, the old-fashioned fighters, with their old-fashioned short-range weapons, still hold the championship. Dynamite bombs and lyddite shells, bullet-sifting machines and long-range smokeless powder guns have not feazed the world's record for carnage on a lota. The civilized nations stand aghast at the fall of a few score of officers in a single fight as though it were an unheard of thing and that science had rendered warfare too frightfully gory for it to be tolerated among human beings. Probably the almost bloodless victories of our navy at Manila Bay and Santiago have led people to look for enormous gains on a minimum of investment. These were marvelous exceptions. War means fighting, and fighting in a war worthy of the name means killing on both sides.

The effectiveness of the long range weapons used in the South African war and the mortality which is looked upon by the laymen as something excessive attract the notice of military men who have had actual experience in war. Under the regime of magazine rifles the battle usually begins at 1,500 or 1,600 yards, and may close down to 1,100 or 1,000 yards. At the latter range the fire is supposed to be very effective. Artillery is, of course, effective to break up solid lines of infantry, but it is impossible to make artillery fire effective against troops who are covered behind a height, for instance, or by the lay of the land or by rock and trees.

Gen. Sickles said recently that he never had much faith in the effectiveness of long-range weapons, for once you teach troops that they can send a bullet a mile, it takes away their intrepidity. Napoleon III. demoralized his army by causing the soldiers to think that the long-range breechloading chassepot and the mitrailleuse would defeat the enemy. It took all the elan out of them and made them mere machines. The Germans, who, by the way, also had their breechloading, long-range rifle, the needle gun, rushed to close quarters, and the result was disastrous to the French.

Civil War Fatalities.

Gen. Nelson A. Miles said, apropos of the subject of modern improved weapons and projectiles in relation to battlefield casualties, "Losses diminish in proportion as man-killing devices progress." This is a fact, as shown by figures, and is well known to close students of warfare. Take, for instance, the Federal attack upon the Confederate stone wall at Fredericksburg in 1862. The experience of the Seventh New York (Steuben) regiment in that

charge is typical. The Seventh went in after other brigades had been repulsed in front of the stone wall so that it did not receive the fierce outburst of Confederate fire, but in twenty minutes, or at the outside thirty minutes, out of twenty-five officers in the regiment ten were killed and eight wounded, and out of 450 men 240 were killed and wounded. All of these casualties came from bullets fired from the stone wall. This loss in officers killed was never exceeded out once in the whole civil war, and that was in the case of the Seventh New Hampshire at the storming of Fort Wagner. In that affair eleven officers of this regiment were killed outright.

In the attack upon the stone wall the Seventh Regiment fought with Hancock's division. This division was brought in as a supporting column to the initial attack. It consisted of eighteen regiments, and there were nineteen regimental commanders shot down and disabled in one hour. Others were hit, but kept the field. In the brigade of Col. Caldwell, to which the Seventh Regiment belonged, there were 116 officers present, sixty-two of whom were killed or wounded. Gen. Hancock's division lost 2,029 killed and wounded out of 4,834 paper strength; that equals 42 per cent. Caldwell's brigade numbered 1,987 on paper, and lost 952 killed and wounded—that is to say, 50 per cent.

In a forlorn hope attack upon log breastworks at Petersburg in 1864 the First Maine heavy artillery carried 832 men in line and lost 632 killed and wounded in a rush that kept them under fire not to exceed seven minutes. At Gettysburg, during a crisis, the First Minnesota was called upon to charge a moving line of Confederates and capture its colors, in order to stagger the assailants, who were marching upon Federal batteries. The Confederates held their fire until the daring Yankees were close up, and 215 of the Minnesotans out of 262 were struck down upon a few square yards of earth, just at the point of contact. In the second battle of Bull Run, 1862, Duryee's zouaves stood up in front of a battery which was being mobbed by Confederate troops and left 119 dead companions stretched in regular rows around wheel ruts and trail prints on the spot where the guns had stood. The regiment numbered 470 at the beginning of the fight. The heaviest losers at the battle of Gettysburg were two opposing regiments—the Twenty-fourth Michigan and the Twenty-sixth North Carolina. They fought in the first day's battle almost man for man in the dueling contest which took place in McPherson's woods. At the end of the day nothing remained of either regiment except their flags and two pitiful squads of battle-grimed soldiers. The Michigans lost 397 out of 496, and the North Carolinas 688 out of 820.

The casualties sustained by these troops were almost entirely from musketry fire. Instances might be cited to show that, under certain circumstances, artillery fire was still more deadly during the civil war. It must be taken for granted that such was the case whenever solid bodies of troops marched up to the cannon's mouth. In Pickett's charge, when the assaulting column closed in on the Federal works, the

Federal batteries stationed there in some instances used double charges of canister at ten paces; that means that the assailants who had the courage to march up to the muzzles were swept from the ground by iron hail. At the battle of Franklin, Tenn., the slaughter of the Confederate columns upon the ground where the heaviest fighting took place was frightful in the extreme. Much of the execution at that fight was due to cannon fire. The Confederate army was about 40,000 strong and began the attack on the Federal fortified position at the close of a November day, probably as late as 4:30 p. m., so that there was not two hours of daylight for fighting. Only one corps of the Confederates actually closed in on the Federal works, and its strength was probably not over 15,000 men. In the battle there were 6,000 Confederates killed and wounded, among them thirteen general officers. The officers who fell were found close to the Federal breastworks, in some cases in the ditch, where they had been shot from their horses while attempting to ride over the works at the heads of their columns. The scenes witnessed at the battle of Franklin have seldom been equaled during the century.

Since the Franco-Prussian war there has not been a conflict between armies equally equipped until the present. In the battles between Russia and Turkey the Turks had inferior weapons. Being fanatical fighters, like the dervishes in the Sudan, they were slaughtered by the breechloaders and dynamite shells of the foe.

To go back still farther for examples of the execution of weapons in warfare, it is interesting to look at the records of battles in the seventeenth century. In seven great battles of that era, when the masses carried muskets and pikes, the average of casualties was 26 per cent., so that each man stood but about three chances in four of escape. The casualties in the bloodiest battles run as high as 35 per cent. In this class belongs the battle of Lutzen, which proved a victory for the Swedes, but their leader, Gustavus Adolphus, was killed, and one of his regiments lay upon the ground in the order in which the men had stood while fighting. In the middle of the eighteenth century the bayonet attached to the musket superseded the pike. There were twenty-three great battles fought with smooth-bore muskets and bayonets from Fontenoy in 1745 to Waterloo in 1815. The average of casualties for this period of smooth-bore musket and bayonet fighting was about 20 per cent.

Losses Decrease.

The following fifteen battles of the muzzle-loading, bayonet period represent the martial nations of the world:

1. Eylau, 1807. Loss, 26 per cent.
2. Bunker Hill, 1775. Loss, 24 per cent.
3. Stone River (Murfreesboro), 1862. Loss, 23½ per cent.
4. Marengo, 1800. Loss, 23 per cent.
5. Chickamauga, 1863. Loss, 21 per cent.
6. Antietam, 1862. Loss, 21 per cent.
7. Leipsic, 1813. Loss, 21 per cent.
8. Gettysburg, 1863. Loss, 20 per cent.
9. Shiloh, 1862. Loss, 20 per cent.
10. Lundy's Lane, 1814. Loss, 19 per cent.
11. Mars-la-Tour, 1870. Loss, 16 per cent.

12. Waterloo, 1815. Loss, 14 per cent.
13. Woerth, 1870. Loss, 14 per cent.
14. Solferino, 1859. Loss, 12 per cent.
15. Sadowa, 1866. Loss, 12 per cent.

The loss in killed and wounded at the battle of Eylau is placed at 40,000 by conservative estimates. In the figures of Gettysburg given in the table, which are official, the total is little short of 30,000. The first battle belongs to the smoothbore and the second to the rifle barrel era, and the figures show that as weapons improve casualties grow less in percentages. The average was 26 per cent. in the days of the musket and pike, 20 per cent. with the smoothbore and bayonet, about a similar loss with the rifle barrel and bayonet, and in the Franco-Prussian war, fought with the breechloading rifle, the casualties fell below 16 per cent.

German Emperor at Work.

The correspondence addressed to the emperor is enormous, but the bulk of it, chiefly petitions, is opened and dealt with in the civil cabinet, only the letters of princely personages and others of which the handwriting is recognized being opened by him personally, says Good Words. These have to be replied to either by himself or by secretaries, according to marginal notes made by him, and then the cuttings from various newspapers, pasted in folios, are laid before him.

Each of the chief ministers of state and heads of departments of the army and navy has one or two fixed days of the week on which he is received by the emperor and at these interviews all business connected with the department is transacted and his orders taken on all matters requiring such. Various interviews are also accorded in the forenoon to officers and others who have reports to make and thus the day is filled up till luncheon, a meal the emperor always takes with the empress and his elder children, the younger ones joining the circle afterward. Usually there are one or two guests and quite a small suite in attendance at the midday meal, which is light and very simple.

The afternoon is taken up with more work and then the emperor, frequently accompanied by the empress, rides, drives or plays tennis for a couple of hours, returning in time for more work before dinner, which is at 7 in summer and 8 in winter. Work again follows dinner and precedes an early retirement to bed. Such is the normal program of the emperor's day; but, as may be imagined, it is frequently broken in upon by military duties and inspections, by representations, especially in winter, when numerous receptions, balls, festivals, concerts and state dinners take place, and by political business.

He Engaged the Boy.

Dr. McTavish of Edinburgh was something of a ventriloquist, and it befell that he wanted a lad to assist in the surgery who must necessarily be of strong nerves.

He received several applications, and when telling a lad what the duties were, in order to test his nerves, he would say, while pointing to a grinning skeleton standing upright in a corner:

"Part of your work would be to feed the skeleton there, and while you are here you may as well have a try to do so."

A few lads would consent to a trial, and received a basin of hot gruel and a spoon.

While they were pouring a hot mass into the skull the doctor would throw his voice so as to make it appear to proceed from the jaws of the bony customer, and gurgle out:

"Gr-r-r-gr-huh! That's hot!"

This was too much, and without exception the lads dropped the basin and bolted.

The doctor began to despair of ever getting a suitable helpmate until a small boy came and was given the basin and spoon.

After the first spoonful the skeleton appeared to say:

"Gr-r-r-gr-huh! That's hot!"

Shoveling in the scalding gruel as fast as ever, the boy rapped the skull and impatiently retorted:

"Well, jist blow on't, ye auld bony!"

The doctor sat down on his chair and fairly roared, but when the laugh was over he engaged the lad on the spot.—London Tit-Bits.

A Very Trifling Incident.

A clergyman was called upon to perform a marriage ceremony for a couple in middle life.

"Have you ever been married before?" asked the clergyman of the bridegroom.

"No, sir."

"Have you?"—to the bride.

"Well, yes, I have," replied the bride laconically; "but it was twenty years ago, and he was killed in an accident when we'd been married only a week, so it really ain't worth mentioning."—San Francisco Wave.

Potash in Orchard.

Potash is of great value in an orchard. It is the backbone of all fertilizers used by fruit growers. The trees where it is used are vigorous and the fruit large in size, with a high color and good flavor. No manure which does not contain a high percentage of potash should be used in an orchard.

AGED MAN'S STRENGTH

Although 66 Years Old, He Can Lift a Weight of 1,070 Pounds.

When one is young and strong," is a natural expression. Youth and strength are supposed to go together. But what do you think of an old man, whose years are represented by two sixes placed side by side, lifting a weight of 1,070 pounds? Think of it; over half a ton. His name is George Collins and you can wager he comes from the West. His home is in Detroit. All life long he has taken care of his health. It has not entirely been a hobby with him, but he had a desire to live long and that was the surest method he knew of arriving at his object.

He moved to the city, where his reputation for strength was not known. Not long ago he went to an amusement



LIFTING A 1,070-POUND WEIGHT.

park and stood watching the young men rivaling each other at a lifting machine. They were doing a great deal of loud talking and laughing, but not much lifting. One of their number, however, made a fairly good record which the others could not equal. He was declared champion. A small crowd attracted by the noise had collected and the alleged champion addressed them challenging any of their number to step forward if they thought they had a chance.

George Collins, remembering the days of his youth, accepted the challenge and stepped forward into the circle. Naturally there were shouts of derision at the gray hairs and the bent form, but the two men went to work with a will. At first the old man made a lift or what he thought was one—and the machine registered 600 pounds. The youth tried his hand and had difficulty in reaching 700 pounds. Collins tried again and made it 800 pounds, which the young man increased to 850 pounds. By that time all was excitement. The third and last trial was at hand. The old man gave a frightful tug, every muscle and vein in his neck stood out, and all the force of his back went into the work. So the machine when read registered 1,070 pounds. The alleged strong youth looked at it with a sickly smile. He tried to better it, but failed dismally. The old man was declared the champion of the park.

SOME OF REYNARD'S TRICKS.

He Sometimes Outwits the Hounds When Pursued by Them.

Not long ago the Washington hunt of Valley Forge started a young fox in the North valley hills, and the hounds were running it across the open fields when the hunters were surprised to see a much larger fox come from the woods and run diagonally across the track of the young fox ahead of the hounds, and when they struck the stronger track of the bigger fox they took it up, young Reynard thereby being saved from being run down and killed by the hounds.

Old hunters say they have frequently witnessed this trick when young foxes were being closely pressed and in danger of being run down and killed by the hounds. Another and an even sharper trick was played by an old fox some weeks ago while being hotly chased by hounds. The fox had run some twenty miles, and while crossing an open stretch of country was in danger of being run down and killed. In a field through which the fox was running with the hounds close to its heels was the cellar of an old house, with a portion of the walls still standing. The fox made straight for the old cellar, leaped into it and made its escape through a narrow opening in the walls. The hounds, supposing the fox was trapped, dashed into the cellar pell mell, only to find Reynard gone and themselves in a trap, as the hole in the wall through which the fox had escaped was too small to permit them to get through.

When the hunters rode up they found the pack in a trap, with one of the hounds wedged fast in the hole through which the fox had made its escape. By the time the hounds were gotten out of the cellar the fox was safe in its hole.—Philadelphia Times.

The individual who climbs to fame and fortune over the shoulders of others must look down on their hatred.

As soon as a man gets so old he has no more trouble with heart affairs, his liver begins to make him grief.

True charity begins before your own wants are supplied.