

THE ITALIAN ARMY.

A Fine Body of Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand Well-Drilled Men.

Appropos of the army, it may be worth while observing that it is on a remarkably good footing indeed. I believe I am revealing no very confidential secret by stating that it owes much of its proficiency to certain eminent German officers, whose services were some time ago privately taken advantage of and handsomely remunerated by the Italian authorities. As a result of such valuable assistance, I might point to the fact that the most rigid discipline is now exacted in every military barracks in the land. A young Lieutenant of my acquaintance was only the other day put under arrest and kept in close confinement for a week for having been ten seconds too late for the morning parade. Privates are often severely punished for forgetting to salute officers on the streets; and some of the unfortunate wights who happen to pass without seeing any of their hierarchical chiefs are pitilessly sent to vegetate on bread and water for several days in order that they may be taught to keep their eyes open in taking their daily promenades. I have often seen little beardless prouppious, as the French call them, twisting and turning their heads in all directions, like so many Punch and Judies, in the large Piazza del Dumas of this city, in search of some officer whom they might salute, and trembling with fear and apprehension lest at times they may be caught napping. Hence the sly and astute private who wants to enjoy his stroll saunters into the by-lanes and alleys, where he can smoke his cigar in peace without straining his unfortunate eyes for a glimpse of a Captain or a Colonel. The regular Italian army numbers some 450,000 men. The favorite colors in the battalions are orange and blue, relieved with gray.

On the whole, the soldiers here are far better dressed than either the Belgians or French. The latter, for instance, look far from picturesque in their blue tunics and red baggy pantaloons; and as for the Belgians, I consider them very slovenly and quite lost to any prompting of self-respect in the way of personal appearance and apparel. The Italian troops, however, are rigidly clean and tasy in their exterior, and in rank and file produce a very pleasing effect on the eye. During the hot summer months they are compelled to put on white stuffs to protect them against the sun's rays, and to wear caps of the same color. A private's pay is one soldo or cent per day; that of a corporal is two. Sub-Lieutenants, Lieutenants and Captains are very poorly remunerated, and consequently can not "amuse" themselves to the same extent as officers of the same grade in other countries. Italian officers are even more ticklish than officers usually are on the point of honor. The exchange of equivocal or suspicious glances leads to a sword or pistol affray, and it is only quite lately that two Generals belonging to the garrison in this city fought a duel over some trifling question that they happened to be debating. I found in the men, as well as in the officers, an almost chivalrous regard for King Humbert. No monarch—not even excepting Wilhelm of Germany—is so popular with his troops as the present representative of the House of Savoy. The reason for this predilection is obvious to everybody who has followed the fate and fortunes of Italy for the last thirty or forty years. Victor Emmanuel, Humbert's father, was never more at home than when he was at the head of his troops. He had a passionate liking for the army. He rejoiced in its joys and sorrowed in its sorrows. Besides, he was physically brave and daring, and never shrank from the brunt and danger of battle. Where his troops were there he was himself, encouraging them by precept and example to be true to their colors. —Cor. San Francisco Chronicle.

The Famous Moscow Bell.

The far-famed bell exceeded my school-day expectation as to size, and not to mislead in speaking of it I tried my measuring-tape around it. It at first hung—if ever it was hung—on a low wooden frame within the Kremlin walls. The frame was accidentally burned, and when the bell fell to the ground a piece seven feet high was broken from its disk. I was not there when the event occurred, but I venture the assertion that that bell, with a downward orifice of twenty-six feet diameter, was not buried in the ground, as historians record was the case. The bell measures 78 feet in circumference and is, I think, about 20 feet high. I am aware that cyclopedists give the measurement as 60 feet in diameter and 19 feet 3 inches as the height. Against this I simply set my own measurement. The iron clapper is about 9 feet long, and is said to weigh 40 pounds, or 1,600 pounds. I did not lift it. The statement is, I think, quite correct. —Cor. Brooklyn Eagle.

—Men's lives should be like the days, more beautiful in the evening; or like the seasons, aglow with promise, and the autumn, rich with golden sheaves, where good deeds and words have ripened on the field.

—“Mind training by hand practice” is justly celebrated by Ruskin in the following remark: “Let the youth learn to take a straight shaving off a plank or draw a fine curve without faltering, or lay a brick level in its mortar; he has learned a multitude of other matters which no lips of man could ever teach him.” —N. Y. Tribune.

DISINTERESTED ADVICE WHICH IS GIVEN CHEERFULLY AND ENTHUSIASTICALLY.

Aminadab writes: “How shall I go to work to write for the papers?” Write only on one side of the paper unless, of course, you are writing on both sides of the question. Don't write on the edges of the paper, because paper is too thin. Rolled manuscript rolls too easily off the editor's table, and he can't afford to chase around the room; fold it flat so that the editor can readily see that it is the flattest thing that ever came into the office. Always inclose stamps, and plenty of them, not for the purpose of publishing the stamps, but as an evidence of good faith and friendship—they will always be acceptable and come handy. Always have a margin around your pages—often if you leave them all margin it will be better. Write legibly, if you do not write sensibly. Begin every sentence with a capital, although there is nothing else capital in it. Be very particular about your “head” lines, though none of the other lines contain any thing like “head.”

When you think of it and can do so put a period or some other solid impediment at the end of a sentence to keep it from sliding upon the next one and knocking it clean off the other end of the paper. Be sure you have plenty of punctuation points in your article, even if it contains no other points of any kind. Give it plenty of dash—though the editor will supply a good deal of the dash if it gets into his hands.

After it is finished the proper way would be to go through it and here and there and everywhere scratch out, and continue scratching, until there is nothing left to scratch out any more. The blots in your MS. to be effective, should be of some artistic shape, so you can easily take up your pen and touch up their outlines. An artistic editor hates unsightly blots. Occasionally it might do to use a little grammar, or change your spelling from your old way.

Never sit down to write an article for a paper without a subject, unless you happen to have none handy. Never allow personal feeling to bias you, unless you think the man deserves it, then go in. Never write any thing that you would not be willing to ask for pay and plenty of it. Do not make your articles too long, unless you are where you can get your writing paper cheap. A large pile of manuscript, while it makes the editor's eye glow with the prospect of how much it will fetch him at a cent a pound at the paper mill and help out his weekly paper bill, is apt to create mistakes. A melancholy case of the kind occurred in these editorial rooms last week. A young man, with intellectual hair and elbows intelligently threaded, entered and approached the earthquake editor, bowed formally and asked, confidently: “Are you the proprietor, sir?”

The editor had just got to where the houses began to dance and waltz around the squares and the earth yawned as it was being so rudely awakened from its sleep, when with his right eye following his flying pencil, his left slowly wove around and, becoming stationary, fixed itself on the young man.

“We have already let the contract out for papering this room,” he said, as he let his left eye drift back to keep company with the other one at work.

“Paper this room!” said the young man, with surprise and greasy spots all over him.

“Yes, we want no paper-hangers.”

“But, sir, I am no paper-hanger.”

“Judging from those rolls of wall-paper under your arm I supposed that you were. Excuse me for a moment.”

“Wall paper! I beg your pardon, this is a story I have just completed in seven chapters: ‘The Incandescent Muskalonge, or, From French Flats to the St. Clair Flats, by I. M. Flatt.’”

Then he turned white—except his shirt—and backing towards the door, fairly hissed through his nose: “Wall paper! Sir, I would not let you have this story now for double its price. I'll take it to some other office, I shall, sir.” Here he tripped and disappeared down stairs, MS. and all.

Yes, Aminadab, the field for young writers is very large, and even though you should find that yours turns out to be the cornfield, you can sit down on a pumpkin and remember that these little nibbuns of advice were offered as freely as the air that blows or the sweat that flows from your nose. If you are badly in need of any other information do not fail to write, and don't forget the stamp. —A. W. Bellaw, in Detroit Free Press.

A Dangerous Man.

“I understand, Softley, that you are going to board at Mrs. McCarty's this season,” observed Nilson.

“That is the arrangement.”

“You had better look out for her husband.”

“What is the matter with him? He seems to be a quiet and unobtrusive sort of a chap.”

“He is a terrible man. He carries a carving-knife, and will do you a great deal of damage if you don't keep on the right side of him.”

“Mercy on us! Is he a murderer?”

“No; but he does the carving for the house, and he will be sure to give you the toughest parts of the steaks and the roasts.” —Drake's Traveler's Magazine.

—Every thing in the Czar's kitchen is kept strictly under lock and key. This must be rough on the Czar when he comes home at 2 o'clock in the morning with his stomach feeling like space, and goes foraging around for a piece of pickled pig's feet or a few inches of cold tripe.

RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL.

—Life appears to me to be too short to be spent in nursing animosity or registering wrong. —Charlotte Brontë.

—If I can put one touch of a rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman, I shall feel that I have worked with God. —Aminadab.

—The only way to shine, even in this false world, is to be modest and unassuming. Falsehood may be a thick crust; but in the course of time, truth will find a passage to break through. —Bryant.

—The first great maxim of human conduct—that which it is all important to impress on the understandings of young men, and recommend to their hearty adoption—is, above all things, in all circumstances, and under every emergency, to preserve a clean heart and an honest purpose.

—Divine grace, even in the heart of weak and sinful man, is invincible. Drown it in the waters of adversity, it rises more beautiful, as not being drownded indeed, but only washed; throw it into the furnace of fiery trials, it comes out purer and loses nothing but the dross. —Archbishop Leighton.

—Prejudice is the conjuror of imaginary wrongs, strangling truth, overpowering reason, making strong men weak and weak men weaker. God give us the large-hearted charity which beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things, endureth all things, which—“thinketh no evil.” —J. R. Macduff, D. D.

—Good work, the best work, is next to impossible when a teacher is nervously anxious lest the opportunity of earning an honest professional living be taken away at any election. There ought to be almost absolute security in the teacher's position in order to get the results to which the school is entitled. What are we doing to make it secure? —Journal of Education.

—This fact often causes other men to be careless about the truth, and sometimes, indeed, to look upon all study of fundamental Biblical doctrine as tending to bitterness. This, of course, is a perversion, though a half excusable one, since there is nothing so unlovely as the spectacle of one making a bludgeon of the truth of the gospel. —United Presbyterian.

—To stand “all the day idle” is to spend one's time in meeting the demands of selfish, in living to and for one's self, and for the present life exclusively. An activity which has not the love of Christ for its motive, and the fulfilment of one's obligations to God and man for its aim or end, is spiritual idleness. Hence Christ is ever saying, even to busy men who exclude him from their activities, “Why stand ye here all the day idle?” —Zion's Herald.

WIT AND WISDOM.

—A contented spirit is the sweetness of existence. —Dickens.

—Much fashionable extravagance is maintained at the expense of unpaid bills.

—Doubt is the vestibule, which all must pass before they can enter the temple of wisdom.

—Some temperance men are so punctilious that they will never permit themselves to appear in good spirits. —Boston Post.

—If the regrets which too often lie at the end of life could be put into firm resolutions at the beginning, they would alter the affairs of life.

—All the possible charities of life ought to be cultivated, and where we can neither be brethren nor friends, let us be kind neighbors and pleasant acquaintances. —Burke.

—Each man sees a truth for himself; no two see it in precisely the same way. The people who require absolute uniformity can not get it without a change of human organization. —United Presbyterian.

—The good-mannered person does not tell us our failings, does not lecture us; he does not merely wear his manners, because they are becoming or polite, but because he can no more exist without them than without air.

—Exaggeration, which often springs from vanity and a love of importance, soon breeds worse mischief, and should be gravely checked. Integrity in the very smallest thing should be strictly inculcated. It is the touchstone of manhood.

—A great deal of sorrow and suffering might be averted if the confidence of children continued through life to run to their parents; if the time never came when there were words and deeds that they would not like mother or father to know.

—No one can hurry through early and middle life, filling his days with exciting business and much of his nights with exciting pleasures and hope to enjoy a vigorous and valuable old age. Moderation, temperance, a calm mind and an unburdened conscience are among the first essentials. The best possible care of the physical system is also requisite. —Montreal Star.

ABOUT DIPHTHERIA.

Several Well-Authenticated Instances of Its Communication.

Dr. Young, secretary of the State Board of Health, says there is a misapprehension in the public mind regarding the contagiousness of diphtheria. The direct communication of the disease is shown by a young lady who came home sick with diphtheria in a mild form, and on her arrival her brothers and sisters embraced her. They were all attacked with a malignant type of diphtheria, and one died. The same young lady visited an aunt in another family where there were four children who took the same disease, and one died.

Another instance. At the death of a child from diphtheria, two women helped in laying it out. One of them, who was fifty-three years of age, was attacked in a few days, and died in three more, and the other took the disease in a mild form and recovered. Another case is that of a boy who had diphtheria in Boston. He came to this State to visit relatives. In a few days after his arrival his aunt washed some of his clothing, and was taken with diphtheria the next week and it went through the family, four cases. Before the aunt was taken sick the boy went to another place and played with another boy, who took the diphtheria and gave it to two other persons in that family.

The doctor reports a sad case as follows: An only child was taken sick with diphtheria and died on the fourth day. The young mother in her grief kissed the child and took the disease. Within a week she was buried beside the child.

In a neighborhood where no diphtheria had existed for four years a school teacher visited a city—a notorious hot-bed of diphtheria. He contracted what he called a slight sore throat. He returned home with this still upon him and opened school; in less than a week six were lying sick with diphtheria and the school was closed. The result was five deaths, three of which were adults.

In one family three children died of this disease in the croupous form. The nurse believed it was not possible to carry the disease in clothing, and would not change her dress upon leaving the house, and was not afraid to take her children up in her lap upon going home. She was admonished against such a foolhardy course. Ten days after she left the infected house the physician was called and found her family ill with diphtheria of the most fatal form. One child died in thirty-six hours after it was attacked. Another case—a woman—died of diphtheria in Lynn, Mass. Her son brought her clothes and bedding home. His wife washed them and took the disease, and died in less than a week.

The doctor says that cases like these, which unmistakably show the contagious nature of diphtheria, are innumerable, and at the same time there are endless instances in which diphtheria has not been communicated to others exposed to it. This does not prove that the disease is not contagious. All persons are not susceptible to the infection. He says another thing which makes the infection of diphtheria doubly dangerous is its persistent vitality. Unless care in disinfecting be taken, the infection will survive to start mysteriously another epidemic at some future time, months, or perhaps years afterward, like the following: A boy visited a family in Eastport, where there was a case of diphtheria. Upon his return home his sister, aged sixteen, took the disease and died in three days. Six months afterward, another sister came from Massachusetts and occupied the room which had been the sick room. She took the diphtheria and died after five weeks' sickness. —Lewiston (Me.) Journal.

The Best Poultry Yard.

The best poultry yard is a plantation. The fowls love the shelter and scenery of a spreading spruce or pine, and wallow in the dry soil under the branches with evident enjoyment. A turkey is a forest bird, and although somewhat unmanageable by reason of her wild nature, will readily take to a fess made for her in a more suitable place than she herself may choose if the nest is made of dry leaves under the shelter of a brush pile in a grove. A grove of plum and cherry trees, with a few evergreens interspersed, will make the best poultry yard, for there will be full crops of fruit and the curculio will be banished. A row of cherry trees on one side of the writer's lawn, nestled among a double row of Norway spruces on the north side, have never yet been touched by a curculio, while the shelter of the spruces seem to give an idea of concealed enemies to the greedy sparrows and the cat birds, which strip the trees in open ground where an undisturbed view may be had of approaching foes. Fruit and eggs become complementary to each other; the fowls protect the fruit and the shade pleases and encourages the hens to make nests. —N. Y. Times.

ROMANTIC RETREAT.

M. Quad's Experience Among the Mountains Along the Atlantic Sea-Shore.

There is a great deal of excitement connected with the sea. There is also a great deal of lying connected with the seashore. At Asbury Park there were a great many omnibuses bearing the sign: “To Shark River.” Shark river should have been named after at least one shark. He ought to have been at least ten feet long. If he had after they named the river in his honor, some other shark, even if only three feet long, should have dropped around once in a while to see that the river was all right.

After those signs had stared me in the face for four days I paid the owner of one dollar to be taken after the river. I found it to be a rivulet, with just about enough water to raise the whisky out of a shark's throat.

“Who named this river?” I asked of the driver.

“Some college gals, I believe.”

“Was a shark ever seen here?”

“No.”

“Did you or any of the rest of you swindlers ever see a shark within fifty miles of the place?”

“No.”

“Do you ever expect to?”

“No, but you don't want to take it that way, stranger. You see, when they named the old saw-mill down there ‘The Castle,’ and that frog pulled up there ‘Lake Como,’ they couldn't consistently call this Mud creek any longer. They called it ‘Dolphin Sound’ at first, but finally changed it to ‘Shark river’ to catch greenhorns.”

I heard a good deal about “Silver Dale,” “Mount Grant,” and “Surf Retreat,” and a couple of us rode one day to hunt them up and see if it wouldn't be best to change hotels. Silver Dale was a farm-house about a mile from the worst piece of beach on the coast. There wasn't a dale on the dale, could have been constructed at a million dollars' expense.

“You take boarders, don't you?” I asked of a raw-boned youth who hung over the fence with his tongue out.

“Yaas.”

“How much per week?”

“We go by the season, and if they sticks up their nose and is too dumpey pertickler they doan't git it here ‘all.’”

“Who named the place?”

“Mam.”

“What did she call it ‘Silver Dale’ for?”

“So's to git seven dollars a week for board.” From there we drove to Mount Grant, a mile away. There was a farm-house and a mountain. The mountain was six feet above the level of the sea and as much as a rod long. The farm-house was warranted to have been built in 1778, and to have reduced the price of board to summer visitors every season since, until the price had now dropped to eight dollars a week. They didn't charge for board, but for the presence of Mount Grant, which was the only mountain of that name anywhere on the coast. The woman hadn't any boarders just then, but was expecting a preacher, a retired professor of music and a rich man's son with sore eyes.

Surf Retreat was half a mile below. The Retreat consisted of a double farm-house, occupied by a father and son, with their families. It was eighty rods to the surf, and there wasn't any surf when you got there. The old man took us aside and warned us not to think of securing board on his side of the house, owing to the fact that Jim and his wife were great hands to fight and jaw before company, and she didn't know enough to hold poles with the hides on. Then Jim took us aside. He didn't want to say any thing against his father, of course, but we must run the risk of being robbed and murdered. Both followed us down the road as we Surf Retreated, and the last thing the old man said was: “You'd better close with me at two dollars a week. The name alone is worth half of that, and we don't object to smoking or swearing.”

And Jim added:

“I'll give you a room looking out to the sea, and furnish you with novels and plug tobacco free of charge. If you can't come, please give the money away to some of your friends.” —Detroit Free Press.

Iced Water in Japan.

Although the Japanese never stored or used ice until the advent of foreigners, they have taken to the use of it since then with alacrity, and are as bad as Americans for drinking iced water. Men with portable stands over their shoulders perambulate the streets night and day crying: “Kori kori!” (ice! ice!) The chief patrons are the jinrickisha men, who have most ready money and spendthrifts by nature. The kori men when called, sits down his stand, produces a lump of ice, shaves it as fine as snow over a plane. It is then mixed with sugar and sold at two or three rings (an eighth of a cent) a glass. The panting jinrickisha men, the mixture, which they themselves apply, call shiro uki (white stuff or snow), not bad, and the newly arrived foreigners, when out of the sight of other foreigners, is not averse to indulging in it. —Christian at Work.

—Boston wants to erect a monument to Mother Goose. Why not? Detroit has so honored a Michigander. —Pittsburgh.