

WAR WARM WORK

The Phrase "Heat of Battle" Not a Mere Figure of Speech.

FIGHTING FIRES THE BLOOD.

An Old Veteran's Story of an Early Morning Attack in Zero Weather and the Change the Skirmish Wrought in His Half Frozen Body.

"The expression 'heat of battle' is more than a mere poetic figure of speech descriptive of the fierce glow of emotion the soldier feels when in the midst of conflict," said a southern soldier who was an officer under Colonel Mosby. "It describes exactly the sensible, physical condition the soldier feels, no matter what the temperature may be.

"That this is true was evidenced by my own experience during the war between the states. It was in February, 1864, and Colonel Mosby, with some hundred of us, was camped near Upperville, a village in Virginia about thirty miles south of Harpers Ferry. Late one afternoon our leader received a dispatch from General Lee to make a forced march that night and attack a body of Federal troops that was stationed on Loudon heights, which overlooked Harpers Ferry. The weather was bitter cold, the coldest that had been known in that section for many years. The mercury was coquetting around zero, a six inch fall of snow, half melted and frozen again, made the roads almost impassable, and a stiff north wind, added to these other evils, made the outlook for a pleasant dash of thirty miles a most dimly improbable one.

"It was about sunset when, muffled to the eyes against the biting frost and bitter wind, our column left camp at Upperville. For the first ten miles our squadron, made up of veterans inured to all manner of hardships, did not suffer much, and occasionally some one would even essay a joke. But in the second ten miles the cold, that had slowly eaten its way through overcoat and jacket and shirt, began to bite into our bodies. To restore life to our numb legs we would take our feet from the stirrups and let them hang until the circulation was restored—an old trick with those compelled to ride much in the cold—and we would keep our hands and arms in some measure warm by beating them against our bodies or clapping them severely together.

"The second ten was bad enough, I say, but the last was—well, a polar nightmare. The vitality seemed to be frozen out of man and beast. For hours the horses stumbled through the snow bearing a troop as silent as the dead save for an occasional thumping of some poor devil's half frozen arms against his side as he sought to restore life to the deadened limbs. When I took my feet out of the stirrups to help the circulation I would have to take my hands and lift my legs up to get the feet back in place, so lost to all sensation were they.

"At length about 3 o'clock in the morning we saw the lights of the enemy's picket fires and could distinguish the muffled forms of the sentries as they paced their beats. There was a small strip of woods that ran to within a hundred or less yards of the Federal camp, and in this we formed for the attack. My hands were so cold that I was unable to cock the hammers of my revolvers with my thumb, but was compelled to effect it with my teeth, holding the pistol between my numbed fists and drawing back the hammer by gripping it in my teeth and pulling it back until it caught.

"At length all was in readiness. As sat there, barely able to grasp my revolvers, the 'Charge' rang out, and the next moment we were in the midst of the enemy, who were too astounded at an attack on such a bitter night to offer much resistance and for the most part fled down to Harpers Ferry to the main body. Some of them, however, put up a stout fight for men awakened from warm sleep to fight to the death in the bitter night air, and for a couple of minutes we had all we could do, but it was soon over, and we were in possession of the camp.

"When I came to myself I found I was sitting with one leg thrown over the pommel of my saddle, my overcoat and jacket flung wide open, while my shirt, opened to the last button, showed a grateful zero zephyr to play upon my bare sweating breast. In my hand, from which I had pulled the love, moist with sweat, I was holding my hat, with which I was vigorously fanning myself.

"And less than five minutes before I had been so chilled that had I been in comfortable house with a physician I had he would have filled me full of hot drinks, wrapped me in blankets and kept me in bed a couple of days.

"No," concluded the veteran, "the 'heat of battle' is something more than a mere figure of speech."—New York Times.

Pills to Prevent Earthquakes.
"I remember," says Addison in the 70th and 80th Tattler, when our whole island was shaken with an earthquake some years ago there was an impudent mountebank who sold pills which, as he told the untry people, were very good against an earthquake."—Letter in London Saturday Review.

"We made it a practice to put all our worries down in the bottom of my hat, then set on the lid and smile."—Wiggin.

MILITARY PUNISHMENTS.

Times When Rebellious Soldiers Gambled For Their Lives.

In times past the military code in England was no less stern and uncompromising than the civil. Sentence of death was readily decreed and as promptly executed. Where offenses multiplied and wholesale executions would have weakened the army numerically decimation—the slaughter of every tenth man—was the rule, or the troops gambled for their lives by casting dice upon a drumhead or drawing lots under the gallows tree.

Lesser penalties—not capital, but physical, and causing pain with permanent degradation—were maiming, branding the cheek or forehead, boring the tongue or cutting the nose and ears. These last named were retained upon the military statute book until the reign of Queen Anne. The "trap-pado" was a fiendish device by which a delinquent was hoisted on high by a rope fastened to his arms and then dropped down by a sudden jerk that often dislocated his shoulders. Hanging by the thumbs, sometimes called "picketing," was also practiced, while the body was raised to such a height that its whole weight rested on one toe, and that again on a sharp pointed spike.

To "ride the wooden horse" was to be mounted on a razor edge, with weights fastened to the extremities.

Running the gantlet, or "gant-lope," was as old as the Cromwellian army, and it is thus described in an army order about 1649: The culprits (who had been guilty of blasphemy as well as deer stealing) were to be "stripped naked from the waist upward and a lane made by half the lord general's regiment of foot and half Colonel Pride's, with every man a cudgel in his hand. They were to be run through in this posture so that every soldier might have a stroke at their naked backs, breasts or arms wherever it might alight."—Pearson's.

GETTING TIRED.

Fatigue That Follows Monotony of Work or Exercise.

It is said that for horses the hardest road out of London is the most level one. There are no hills to climb and descend, and the tired horse has no chance to rest one set of muscles while another works. Monotony produces fatigue, and because this particular road is one dead, monotonous level more horses die on it than on any other leading out of London.

We can even take a charitable view of the time taken daily by the typewriter man for the arrangement of her hair. Her fingers are congested by the work of writing and tired by contact with the hard keys of her machine, and the different feeling of her hair and the little plays and movements of her fingers in adjusting it are a distinct stimulation and relief.

Fatigue following long continued exercise is really a mild form of illness which arises from overexerting some one part of the body. In writing, for instance, the fingers move up and down hardly more than a quarter of an inch as they travel across the page. Yet this is hard work for their little muscles and burns up tissue in the fingers very fast. If rest intervals are too short and infrequent, there is not time for the removal of the waste products of this destruction through the normal channels of the body and congestion results. The feeling of fatigue or pain that follows long continued use of any of the muscles is due to the influence of such poisonous material, as well as to the stretching of the tissues caused by the pressure of the blood which settles there.—Paul W. Goldsbury in Atlantic.

Puzzled the Englishman.

A Philadelphian who had been entertaining a friend from London for several days noticed that his guest appeared to be in deep thought at dinner the other evening. "What's the matter?" he asked, fearing that the Englishman was ill or worried or homesick. "I'm rath'er puzzled, old chap," replied the Londoner. "I really can't make out what the blawsted bouncer meant. I was lost in your city the other day, and I dropped into an apartment house to ask my way. A fellow was loading freight on a bally lift. I asked him, 'Me good man, can you tell me how far down is Spurtus street?' And that fellow said, 'I don't know old top; my elevator only runs to the basement.' Now, what the dickens did that bloke mean?"—Philadelphia Record.

Largest Ice River.

The great antarctic river discovered by Lieutenant Shackleton is the largest ice river known and represents the only visible outflow from the vast ice sheet of the southern continent. This the Beardmore glacier descends 6,000 feet between sandstone hills and is 100 miles long by 50 wide. The Malaspina glacier in Alaska covers nearly 600 square miles. Himalayan glaciers reach a length of twenty miles, and the longest Alpine glacier is sixteen miles.

Marking Book.

"You were telling Miss Gausp this morning that you were going to be married again, weren't you?" said the shrewd man.

"Why, yes," the widower gasped in surprise. "How did you know?"

"After you left her she began to count on her fingers."—Philadelphia Press.

Diplomatic.

Kaicker—Did they name the baby for a wealthy relative so he would leave something? Bocker—No. They named it for the cook so she wouldn't leave.—Judge.

SCIENTIFIC MYSTERIES.

The Problems of Mind, Life, Gravitation and Electricity.

A most remarkable state, condition or point in nature, the absolute zero of temperature, has been reached to within three degrees. This is considered to be a great scientific achievement. Hydrogen gas was solidified into pure white ice, and this was employed in the process of cooling helium, and all works of the hand of man were surpassed. The temperature sank lower and lower until a point only three degrees from absolute was reached, but the obdurate helium did not even liquefy.

The imagination, however vivid, cannot encompass what this intense cold implies. It may be the death of the activity of matter—that is, a state of rest so far as chemical reaction is concerned. Thus if the true zero of nature can be reached it may obtain that matter will put on new aspects and hitherto unknown properties, or it may expire, become chemically inert, totally devoid of heat and lifeless.

Still even then the standing mystery ever confronting man, always awaiting explanation, gravitation, will not. Nothing known can affect the universal attraction, forever directly as to mass, whether hot or cold.

However, the three degrees may never be overcome, or, indeed, they may, for it is now thought that science has no limits, the scientific mind being capable of solving all problems—so saith some mentalogists.

The capital problem is first to discover what mind is, then life, next gravitation, next electricity, and reach a climax in finding how it is that gaseous masses glow and issue light when existing in frigid voids at zero absolute.

There is no solution in sight for any of these perplexing problems and harassing. No progress whatever has been made in finding what mind is, the reason being doubtless that mind is unable to think of itself. On trial it will be soon discovered that one is unable to set up a train of reasoning regarding his own or another's mind. "His own" implies an owner, but no fact as to who this owner is has ever been discovered. Humans are not perfect.—Edgar Lucien Larkin in New York American.

Belled the Boundary.

"Artificial boundaries" are generally invisible. But a highly artificial one forces itself upon the notice of the traveler by rail between the Lake of Lugano and Lake Maggiore. The frontier between Italy and Switzerland is followed for a considerable portion of the journey, and it is marked by a lofty barrier of wire netting hung with bells for the purpose of preventing smugglers from getting into Italy without attracting the attention of armed defenders of Italian revenue. In extreme contrast with this is the natural boundary between Italy and France provided by Mont Blanc, which in spite of its naturalness is so vague that it is still undetermined, though scarcely worth disputing, whether the summit of the mountain is Franco-Italian or all French.—London Chronicle.

Mortification Well Earned.

An Englishman, alone with Richardson, the novelist, said to him, "I am happy to pay my respects to the author of 'Sir Charles Grandison,' for at Paris, and at The Hague, and, in fact, at every place I have visited, it is much admired."

Richardson appeared not to notice the compliment, but when all the company were assembled addressed the gentleman with, "Sir, I think you were saying something about 'Sir Charles Grandison.'"

"No, sir," he replied. "I do not remember ever to have heard it mentioned."—From Orvigne's "Cyclopedia of Anecdotes."

Remarkable.

"One of the astronomers claims that he has charted 60,000 new worlds."
"By George, it's remarkable!"
"Not so very when you consider the fact that he has the use of the largest telescope in the world."

"I wasn't thinking of that. What I consider strange is that with so many other worlds in existence the lady who is acting as stepmother for my children had to fight on this one."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Memory Resents Distrust.

I remember telling the bishop of Ripon that I envied him his splendid memory. "I seem to remember a thing quite well," I told him, "then I get frightened."
The bishop said: "That's the worst thing you can do. Memory is a very delicate organ and resents distrust."—Ellen Terry in McClure's Magazine.

A Matter of Luck.

"Bad luck is sometimes good luck."
"Ridiculous!"

"Not at all. Did you ever get a club to fill a heart flush and afterward discover that some one else had a full house?"—Detroit Free Press.

A Legal Compliment.

"Yes, young Coke handled the case magnificently. He proved beyond the possibility of a doubt that the accused man wasn't guilty."
"But he was guilty, of course."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Keen Sense of Smell.

The aborigines of Peru can in the darkest night and in the thickest woods distinguish respectively a white man, a negro and one of their own race by the sense of smell.

When our horses break let our patience hold.—Thomas Fuller.

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