

[From the London Times.]

## A French Officer's Opinion of the British Army.

A French officer of high rank, who has seen a great deal of service, has, in a letter to an English officer, given his opinion as to the state of the British army before Sevastopol. After praising our engineers and artillery in the highest possible terms, the writer proceeds:

"You may think me, perhaps, too severe in the opinion I give of the English cavalry, but were you out here you would yourself be still more severe. The cavalry of an army on field service should be the eyes and ears of the force. In the English army that arm is neither the one nor the other, and this with perhaps the very best material in the world to form an excellent cavalry."

The superior officers (les officiers supérieurs) of the English dragoons know nothing whatever of their duty, beyond how to turn a regiment out of the stables and the barrack yard in good order. But I must do them the justice to say, that the general officers commanding their divisions and armies (leur corps d'armées) really don't know how to use the cavalry put under their command. After the battle of Alma, an effective cavalry would never have lost sight of the enemy, and every movement of the latter would have been communicated forthwith to Lord Raglan. But it was not so. An hour before the first shot was fired at Inkermann the English general was perfectly ignorant of a single Russian being near him. In point of fact, the Russian army at Inkermann fell upon the English force just as much as if the latter had no outposts, no guards, and no cavalry.

Even at Alma the English cavalry might very well have followed the Russians, cut them up to a considerable extent, or, at any rate, have prevented their retiring as they did. But what did the English cavalry effect on that occasion? Nothing whatever. The Russians went away in as good order as if they were returning from a parade; the only molestation they suffered was from the guns of the English artillery. The cavalry of Lord Raglan's army did not annoy them in the least. This, combined with their uselessness at Inkermann, caused the English cavalry to be much laughed at (d'être bien méprisé) by the infantry of that army. Their leader's name was made the subject of a pun. The writer here alludes, I imagine, to Lord Lucan being called Lord 'Lookon,' after Alma and Inkermann.

This leads me to the desperate folly of the charge at Balaklava. Much has been said of that charge, but in our own army there is but one opinion as to the extreme bravery of those who obeyed the order and rode to certain death, and of the utter madness and culpable throwing away of life on the part of those who gave the order. The order was caused by a sort of desperation on the part of the cavalry leaders, who preferred death to being sneered at by their comrades in the infantry.

"And now I come to the consideration of the English infantry. Of this arm of their service I will say that for the battle-field, in hand-to-hand encounters, they are certainly the bravest men in the world; but for guarding themselves, whether on picket or in the trenches, from the surprise of the enemy, they are by no means good soldiers—very far from it. The English infantry, as at present constituted, should be kept for fighting, and for that alone. The work of guarding them in the trenches should be performed by other troops."

The defect is not the fault of the officers, who seem to urge as much as possible upon the men how necessary it is to keep a good and vigilant watch at all times; but with the soldiers themselves there is a want of thought, an utter recklessness as to consequences, provided the present hour can be enjoyed, which is to us Frenchmen most marvellous.

But this is a fault throughout the English army. From Lord Raglan down to the private sentinel, no one seems for a moment to give a thought as to what the morrow may bring forth; and precedent seems to them sufficient excuse for any amount of blunders.

Then again, the infantry of the English army are dressed and accoutred in a manner the most absurd. They still wear the stiff leather stock, which we discarded long ago. The white leather belts, which in our army gave way to black bel's five years since, still find favor in their eyes. In place of a single belt, with movable pouch upon it, the English foot soldier still has his chest confined by the abominable belt across it, which must in a great measure confine his lungs.

Although very fine and very muscular men, they are not trained in any way to walk, run, fence, or make the best use of their limbs, as is the case in our infantry. They are merely taught to hold themselves erect, march with precision, and handle their arms together and as ordered. Individual intelligence or personal perfection in their profession is never thought of.

To sum up, the men are as fine, or perhaps finer, than any infantry in the world, but the system is the worst it is possible to conceive. Their own officers, or at any rate such amongst them as are the lovers of their profession, see the truth of all this, and lament greatly the defects of their army. But what can they do to bring about a better state of affairs? Nothing. The seniors are so wedded to all that is old-fashioned as to look upon every change as a sort of military revolution.

[From the Syracuse Journal.]

[Extract from a letter dated at St. Petersburg, June 5, to friends in this city.]

## Peterhoff, Cronstadt, &c.

A few days since I went, in company with some three hundred excursionists, to Peterhoff and Cronstadt. We had the best steamer on the Neva, a band of music from the Imperial Guards, and the best of all, half a dozen Americans. Passing down the river we had a fine chance to see the vast preparations made for de-

fending the city itself since the declaration of the state of siege. Batteries have been thrown up on all the islands and coasts. Every person who has visited this capital must yet grasp firmly remembrances of the gardens and groves of Vorskla Ostroff. That venerable island, which has been smiling and slumbering ever since the days of Peter, is now girt in full armor, and numberless satellites, in the shape of snappish little gun boats, are in continual attendance.

An hour's voyage brought us in full sight of the forts of Cronstadt, and shortly after the fleet of the allies was looming up five or six miles beyond. To every one of us whose mind had been at all pent toward a calculation of the character of the war, every foot of the way became interesting. Stretching away to the right from the town of Cronstadt across the gulf shore of Finland, was the submarine wall of stones and piling, at which an army has been occupied during the past winter. Its object is to shut the north channel, which, though generally too shallow for frigates, would admit gun-boats. You must not picture to yourself this wall as a grand piece of regular masonry in finish granite like Peter's quays. On the contrary, its presence is only denoted by specks and spots here and there, and by a long rank of dismantled frigates, anchored so as to command every part of it. Coming nearer we passed two fleets of Russian gun-boats. These are perhaps sixty feet long, some propelled by steam, some by oars—the former carrying three great guns, the latter two. The Russians claim to have as great a number of these as the allies. It is also said that the Russian boats are much better adapted to these waters. While on board of one some weeks since at a trial of her machinery, there were shown me several parts for which this superiority is claimed.

Soon we came into a goodly company of steam frigates, and among them most trim of all was the Kamschatka, built some years since at New York. Then we made our way through all the Russian fleet, the bands on every side playing the national anthem, chorused by hurrahs loud and long.

Then we ran close under the forts and batteries of celebrated narrow passage—the western gate of the Empire. It would greatly tax the boldest imagination, not spurred on by the view itself, to fancy even so immense a combination of defences. At our right towered Fort Menchikoff, of horse shoe shape, four tiers high, and of granite. On the left was Kron Kron Castle, a fortress of still greater size. Stretching out from these were long ranges of batteries covered with enormous guns. Farther west was Rieband—the greatest fort of all.

Like Kron Castle, it is circular in plan, and built of granite hewn in great square blocks. Still further in front was Fort Alexander, and a number of other forts, from which branches long lines of heavy cannon in battery. The channel itself is so narrow that not more than two or three vessels could be arranged abreast in it, and it could be swept at any moment by the concentrated fire of nearly all these forts and batteries—by a fire coming from five different directions. Add, then, to this that two first class ships of the line stand protected by the forts but sweeping with their whole broadsides the whole channel lengthwise—that no place could be better fitted for defence by submarine batteries—that according to all accounts Jacobi, the master spirit in all such devices, has been constantly at work—think of all these, and you will then be in a way to estimate the probable emancipation of any foe who proclaims his intention of passing that way to his dinner in St. Petersburg.

A long way out was the hostile fleet, then numbering twenty-six, and all steamers except one. They were arranged in long lines across the gulf, and their magnificent appearance no doubt gladdened the hearts of the Englishmen of our party. It was a splendid sight. By the aid of a glass every part of their hulls were seen distinctly. They have already shown much boldness. A few days since a steamer, the "Bulldog," came so closely in that the faces of the crew were clearly seen. Though within easy range not a shot was fired on either side. There is a Russian story that the Emperor has given orders to let his enemies fire the first shot.

The allies seem to have employed the time since their last visit to some profit, for now, thanks to improved charts, they run freely about in waters which last year they dared not approach. A perfect chart of the Gulf of Finland and the Neva is not a thing easily to be obtained, as you may well imagine, when you know that taking soundings in time of peace is punished as a crime. There are evidently other dangers to the fleet besides these, arising from sands or stones. The mystification here often laugh in a quiet way over one of Jacobi's percussion batteries, which broke from its anchor and was struck by a Finnish fishing smack. The story runs that, at last accounts, vessel and crew were voyaging at a most uncomfortable distance cloud-ward, and in a very loose condition generally.

Immense additions have been made to the defences of Cronstadt during the past winter. Hardly a day has passed when we have not seen long trains of heavily loaded sledges on their way over the ice seaward. The trundling of cannon and ammunition through the streets is the most common occurrence. I met to-day several wrought iron gun carriages, of a size perfectly gigantic, going toward these defences.

## The Opinion of the Reformers on the Law of Marriage.

The whole Protestant community admit that

the Church apostatized, but contend that it was restored to its pristine beauty and order by the Fathers of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. Deeming it important that the pretended lovers of the fathers of the Reformation should know what their (the fathers') opinions on the law of marriage were;—that if it is at all possible to bring them to a consistent line of conduct, they may be prevented from fighting against and condemning those fathers as they do fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the ancient worthies;—we therefore present our readers with the following fact in reference to this important matter:—

Phillip, Landgrave of Hesse, one of the principal lords and princes of Germany, wrote to the great Reformer, Martin Luther, and to the principal heads of the Protestant Reformation, desiring the privilege of a second wife. Many arguments were used by Phillip, showing that the practice was in accordance with the Bible, and not prohibited under Christian dispensation. Luther met in council with the principal divines to consult upon the propriety of granting the request of the Landgrave. After thorough investigation of the subject, they granted his request in a lengthy letter, from which I will here give you an extract. The letter commences as follows:

"To the most serene Prince and Lord Phillip, Landgrave of Hesse, Zennelbagon, of Diets of Ziegenhain and Neddä, our gracious Lord, we wish, above all things, the grace of God through Christ Jesus."

"1st. We have been informed by Bucer, and in the instruction your Highness gave him, have read the trouble of mind and uneasiness of conscience your Highness is under at this present; and although it seemed to us very difficult so speedily to answer the doubts proposed; nevertheless we should not permit the said Bucer, who was urgent for his return to your Highness, to go away without an answer in writing."

"2d. If your Highness is resolved to marry a second wife, we judge it ought to be done secretly, that is, that none but the person you shall wed, and a few trusty persons, know the matter, and they, too, under the seal of confession. Hence no contradiction nor scandal of moment need be apprehended; for it is no extraordinary thing for princes to keep concubines; and though the vulgar should be scandalized thereat, the more intelligent would doubt of the truth, and prudent persons would approve of this moderate kind of life, preferable to adultery and other brutal actions. There is no need of being concerned for what men say, provided all goes right with conscience. So far do we approve of it, and in these circumstances only by us specified, for the gospel hath neither recalled nor forbid what was permitted in the law of Moses with respect to marriage."

"Your Highness hath, therefore, in this writing not only the approbation of us all, in case of necessity, concerning what you desire, but also the reflections we have made thereupon. We beseech you to weigh them as becometh a wise, virtuous, and Christian Prince. We also beg of God to direct all for his glory and your Highness' salvation. May God preserve your Highness. We are most ready to serve your Highness."

"Given at Wittenberg, the Wednesday after the fast of Saint Nicholas."

Your Highness' most humble and most obedient subjects and servants,

Martin Luther,	Adam,
Phillip Melancthon,	John Levengue,
Martin Bucer,	Justus Warfute,
Anthony Corvin,	Denis Melanther.

This letter was in Melancthon's own handwriting, attested to by George Nuspicher, Notary Imperial, and has been taken from the 1st vol. of a work entitled "History of the Variations of the Protestant Churches," by James Benign Bossuet. The marriage contract of Phillip with Margaret de Saal, his second wife, was attested to by Balthasar Rand, of Feeld, Notary Public Imperial.—[The Zion's Watchman.]

## Degrading Superstition.

The following scene is described in a recent letter from Rome, by one of the correspondents of the N. Y. Observer:—

"One evening during the latter part of Lent, I witnessed (though in the darkness I did not see) one of the most curious exhibitions of popery that I have ever heard of. I could scarcely have believed that such a scene would occur, had I not been present. Hearing that in one of the churches near the centre of the city a self-flagellation took place every evening, I went one afternoon just before dark, but found the church filled with females, and was told by the sacristan that the flagellation of the men would take place the next night. Accordingly I went at the appointed time."

The church was nearly dark, only four or five small candles being lighted at the high altar. It was difficult even to see the forms of those who entered and took their stations in different parts of the building. Presently two priests came out from the sacristy and commenced a mournful service, in which the congregation joined, and which had the most dolorous effect. While this was in progress a priest passed around the church distributing the lashes to be used by the penitents. At length three loud raps were given on the door leading to the vestibule, when it was suddenly closed and fastened.

The lights were removed and the most perfect darkness ensued, painful to the eye. It was a darkness that could be felt. Presently some one near the high altar commenced in a musical voice, the tones of which were modulated to give it effect, a discourse upon the sufferings of Christ. His manner was at first perfectly unimpassioned, and his words were measured with the precision and uttered with the beauty of poetry. It was altogether the most musical Italian to which I have ever listened. He became more animated until, at a certain point, the whole congregation commenced whipping themselves.

The noise of the lashing nearly drowned every other sound, but a dolorous chant was commenced and responded to by those who were engaged in the flagellation, making the scene one of the most singular character. After some time elapsed, a bell was rung for this sort of penance to cease, but it was some minutes before the summons was obeyed by all. The candles were brought back, the door was opened, and the ceremony was over. One after another, those who had taken part in it, and who were not priests but ordinary citizens, retired, probably supposing that they had atoned for many sins or added greatly to their virtue by this act of will-worship, as if God could be appeased or pleased with such a service.

There was no attempt at concealment, and any one that chose could enter the church before the signal was given for fastening the door. I was careful to secure a place on a platform at a convenient distance from the lashes of the multitude and from this point, in the midst of the most abject darkness that I remember ever to have felt, I contemplated the scene with the same feelings with which I should regard the self-laceration of the devotees of the forms of heathenism which prevail at the present day, or of those in the time of Elijah, who "cried aloud and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them."

## What Constitutes Riches?

The Knickerbocker for July gives the following anecdote of William L. Marcy, our present Secretary of State at Washington, as contributed by a correspondent:

"To be rich," said Mr. Marcy, "requires only a satisfactory condition of the mind. One man may be rich with a hundred dollars, while another, in the possession of millions, may think himself poor; and as the necessities of life are enjoyed by each, it is evident the man who is the best satisfied with his possessions is the richer."

To illustrate this idea, Mr. Marcy related the following anecdote: "While I was Governor of the State of New York," said he, "I was called upon one morning at my office by a rough specimen of a backwoodsman, who stalked in, and commenced conversation by inquiring if this was Mr. Marcy?"

"I replied that that was my name."

"Bill Marcy?" said he. I nodded assent.

"Used to live in Southport, didn't ye?"

"I answered in the affirmative, and began to feel a little curious to know who my visitor was, and what he was driving at."

"That's what I told 'em," cried the backwoodsman, bringing his hand down on his thigh with tremendous force; "I told 'em you was the same old Bill Marcy who used to live in Southport, but they wouldn't believe it, and I promised the next time I came to Albany to come and see you, and find out for sartin. Why, you know me, don't you, Bill?"

"I didn't exactly like to ignore his acquaintance altogether, but for the life of me I couldn't recollect ever having seen him before; and so I replied that he had a familiar countenance, but that I was not able to call him by name."

"My name is Jack Smith," answered the backwoodsman, "and we used to go to school together thirty years ago, in the little red school-house in old Southport. Well, time has changed since then, and you have become a great man, and got rich, I suppose?"

"I shook my head, and was going to contradict that impression, when he broke in:

"Oh! yes you are; I know you are rich! no use denying it. You was Comptroller for—for a long time; and the next we heard of you, you were Governor. You must have made a heap of money, and I am glad of it, glad to see you getting along so smart. You was always a smart lad at school, and I knew you would come to something."

"I thanked him for his good wishes and opinion, but told him that political life did not pay so well as he imagined. 'I suppose,' said I, 'fortune has smiled upon you since you left Southport?'"

"Oh! yes," said he; "I hain't got nothing to complain of. I must say I've got along right smart. You see, shortly after you left Southport our whole family moved up into Vermont and put right into the woods, and I reckon our family cut down more trees and cleared more land than any other in the whole State."

"And so you have made a good thing of it. How much do you consider yourself worth? I asked, feeling a little curious to know what he considered a fortune, as he seemed to be so well satisfied with his."

"Well," he replied, "I don't know exactly how much I am worth; but I think, (straightening himself up) if all my debts were paid I should be worth three hundred dollars clean cash! And he was rich: for he was satisfied."

**PUDDLING IRON.**—In the Journal of May 5 we gave the particulars of a patent granted to Mr. James Nasmyth, of Patricroft, for an improvement in the process of puddling iron; and a paper on the subject was forwarded by the inventor to the West Riding of Yorkshire Geological and Polytechnic Society, which (Mr. Nasmyth being unavoidably absent) was read to the meeting by Dr. Durden, F.C.S., of Leeds, who showed the steam process by means of a large drawing illustrating it.

Having first clearly explained the ordinary method of puddling iron, and the conversion by this means of cast into malleable iron, Mr. Nasmyth proceeded to describe wherein his new process was an improvement. This invention consists simply in employing the combined mechanical and chemical action of steam, to effect at one and the same time the objects for which such a vast amount of manual labor is required in the ordinary mode of agitating or puddling the iron by hand, so as to enable the air passing over the surface of the iron to remove or abstract the carbon.

In order to accomplish the desired object, Mr.