

WAR AND MILITARY DESPOTISM.

The special correspondent of The Times refers as follows to the plundering the natives in India have to endure:—

"As to the plundering I know not what to say. It is a frightful evil; it seems to be really inevitable. The poor people who remain in their villages see their property carried away, their stacks of grain and fodder disappear as if by magic, at the hands of the followers of the army, which, they are told, will protect their lives and property if they remain in their homes. If they apply, indeed, to the Commissariat officers, they will receive compensation on proving their loss and identifying the plunderers—both matters of difficulty.

The Commissariat, it is true, pays for damage done to crops by camels, elephants, &c.; but, in many cases, the natives are ignorant of this practice—a most righteous one—or are actually afraid of complaining. How are they to pay their rents or their revenue to our collectors after the passage of an army across the country? No one who has not beheld Mars making war upon Ceres in India can imagine the dreadful damage inflicted by his legions.

Sugar plantations are crunched up by the acre by the elephants, who also strip away the leaves of trees, and devour shrubs, plants, and walking-sticks or the shavings of them with provoking appetite and indifference.

Camels growl and gobble up everything edible in the reach of their long necks and flexible lips, goats revel in the gardens; the bullocks, and ponies crash through fields of dall and pulse, and various grain, beating them down into a fragrant carpet, representing the produce of half the country. Then comes the heavy beat of squadrons of cavalry, the continuous, monotonous tramp of infantry; the guns, each wheel tearing a deep furrow in the fields; the mortars; thousands, literally thousands, of carts, laden with food and ammunition, shot and shell,—all in one line, about 150 yards broad and as long as our march, right over the crops and harvest. Yesterday we marched thirteen and a-half miles. I should like very much to go over the ground and see what it looks like now.

I know that, as we advanced, there were, indeed, patches of sandy soil studded with stumpy bushes which lay fallow or uncultivated, but the greater part of our route lay through corn-fields, in which the young wheat was just springing and looking timidly a few inches above the surface, or cates of unknown crops, some as high as a horseman's waist.

May Heaven keep war away from our own doors! I could not help thinking, as I looked around me, of such a march across the odorous culture of Mr. Mechi, if the caprice of invaders and the greatness of misfortune ever led an enemy, in default of roads, to pass by Tiptree-hall. But the evil does not cease at the end of our march. The head of the column halts in the plain; the tapering line, which is lost in the dust in the far distance, seems to grow thicker and thicker as it approaches, to spread out and expand and swallow up the line, which grows to lose itself in the mass. But as the canvas of the camp rises and the pickets are posted, out fly the camp followers like locusts hatched at one batch, and in myriads wonderful burst from the bowels of the army. It would seem, indeed, as if our troops were merely the protectors of these destroying swarms. Everything that grows and is fit for food of man or beast is cut, carried off, sucked or chewed, or boiled or roasted or eaten raw. Far out on the plains, on all sides, may be seen moving heaps of fodder, with little black feet just visible below the overhanging luxuriance of green.

Ants are not so laborious or so strong. Yesterday, as we were breakfasting on the ground, under some trees, the instinct of our eyes told them—for they could not see it—that there was a stack of fodder inside the wooded enclosure, where we lay like serpents on our bellies, devouring our meal. In a very few minutes the stack was resolved into peripatetic bundles or trusses sufficiently large to conceal the bearers to the calf of the leg, which were being duly carried off for the horses, when Major Barrow interfered and ordered them to put down their loads. He was at once obeyed, and I was pondering on the wonder of the farmer, when he came back, at finding his huge stack scattered all over the ground in separate heaps, when the Major's departing left the ground free to the syces, who, at once reappearing from among the trees through which they had vanished, gathered up their trusses and walked off with them uninterrupted. Flogging does no good. If the whole army were turned in to provost-marshal's assistants, flagellators under the orders of the civil magistrate, they could not flog all the offenders. Sowars charge over the plains in vain.

Captain Thomson was told by the Commander-in-Chief that he might have any number of cavalry he required to prevent or arrest depredators, for Lord Clyde has all an old soldier's detestation of plundering; but still the work goes bravely on. Last night a village was set on fire, and the flames lighted up the heavens in front of the camp.—The villagers are apprehensive of being punished if they defend their property, for they are told that, if they fire a shot against us, they are doomed to destruction; but they are now informed they may protect their goods, chattels, and crops against camp followers, though they must not use force to check any depredations on the part of soldiers, as the latter will be punished by the military authorities.

At present, however, the soldiers are not guilty of any such offences. One or more of our camp followers lay dead in the field near the camp this morning, but it is impossible to say whether the enemy's Sowars, some of whom were capering about near our posts, or the villagers resisting

plunder perpetrated the deed. Certainly, the Oude farmer has been placed in a most anxious position during the last twelve months. Left at the mercy of the rebel chiefs, he was compelled, no matter what his inclinations, to pay taxes and revenue to the rebels.

If he fled, all his property was taken and his land confiscated. Where, indeed, could he fly? If he remained he was called upon for military service.

At the same time he knew that, when our power was restored, he was liable to be hanged, and that he would have to pay the revenue over again. Surely he must have thought his Dieties unkind and his lot miserable."

The special correspondent of The Times describes an East Indian camp:

"Those Indian marches, picturesque enough at the close, and interesting when the sun rises, are immensely disagreeable in their preliminaries and their commencement. Only an iron will and long experience can enable one to overcome the tumult which reigns all the night before, and to snatch a few hours of sleep. The klassies, or tent-pitchers, are a most peculiar class of men.—The moment the tent is pitched their cares for the day are over, and all the day they sleep under the eaves of the tent accordingly, but as darkness falls, they get up and wander about stealthily, tapping tent-pegs and preparing for the great business of their existence.

It is in vain that order after order has been issued to the klassies not to touch a tent-peg till the first bugle sounds. It is their caste to tap tent-pegs; they are born to it, bred to it, and die to it. The whole race of men belonging to this order would endure martyrdom in the faith that tent-pegs, when in the ground, are to be knocked out of it, and when out of the ground are to be knocked into it.

When awake they can no more resist their impulses on this head than a London pickpocket can refuse the appeal of an easy pocket-handkerchief.

Soon after dusk the noise begins—tap! tap! tap! far and near, like a fire of musketry, for many a weary acre of canvass-covered ground. This is called tonking—striking the long deep Indian tent-pegs on the sides so as to loosen them in the earth, and to prepare them for easy extrication when the tent is to be struck. The ground shakes with those myriad knockings—one gets feverish, restless, rushes out on the persecuting klassie, and, as he falls in the dark over the tentropes, beholds a white, ghost-like form glide away into obscurity.

The shouts, cries, and noises of the bazaars swell into a tempest as the sutlers prepare to pack up their goods and move off in the early night. Then, long before the first of the small hours, the camels, which are to move your house and furniture, are brought close to the head of your bed.

The 'ships of the desert' are anchored beside you, and the canvas offers no resistance either to the dreadful vapors which come from the holds of those ships, or the sounds which rage on board. Those ships are always in a state of mutiny. A camel's life is a long and loud protest against the load that is put on his back, and he wisely enters his protest before the period of his suffering begins. I know of no sound more sleep-destroying. Then there is the trumpeting of elephants, the barking of dogs, the yelling of jackalls, and, above all these, the hideous dissonance of the many-voiced camp. The camp bells and gongs, too, vary in time. They are generally a quarter of an hour or more before they finish striking one o'clock.

The smoke of the camp fires steals into the tent and half chokes one. Look out and you will see something like a Fuseli's dream of Pandemonium—blazing fires, surrounded by black men in white clothing, moving to and fro, with strange quaint heads of camels, elephants, and other animals peering through and above them. A reddened smoke hangs in the air like a pall over the scene. Towards morning the horses begin to neigh, and those animals are mostly sound-lunged, and are picketed close behind the tents, so that—but what is the use of my endeavouring to describe the sights or sounds of an Indian camp?"

ONE of the most dangerous leaders of the revolted Sepoys, in India, is TANTIA TOPEE. He has not yet been captured, or his forces dispersed; and the Bombay correspondent of the London Daily News thus speaks of him:

It cannot, however, be denied that he is a leader of no mean ability; and anything short of his death or capture will render all the battles, marches, and countermarches of the last four months, perfectly valueless. Tantia Topee is a Mahatman, and a soldier by profession. He is of mean origin. He can neither read nor write, but he possesses courage, and his followers have confidence in him. Containing in himself all the energy and perseverance of a robust and vigorous frame, he infuses zeal and strength into others more by his physical than moral example. He is perfectly acquainted with our system of warfare, and prefers fatiguing us by long and rapid marches to encountering us in battle.

He knows that his men and matchlocks are incapable of standing before our soldiers and their Enfield rifles; and he consequently trusts the destruction of our troops to exposure to the sun by day, and the noxious exhalations of the jungle by night.

Tantia Topee is in the vigor of manhood, being about forty years of age. He is rather above the middle height, and is in person vigorous and robust.

His countenance is good, and his bearing bold and martial. His eyes are piercing, fierce and restless; the eyebrows black and oval shaped; the forehead high and expansive; the nose aquiline; the mouth small, and the lips compressed, covering, while in repose, the teeth, which are, as is us-

ual among natives, of ivory whiteness. His whiskers are black, and his complexion olive.—He dresses very plainly, seeking comfort rather than ostentation, and wears generally the loose white robes of the Hindoo, with a Cashmere shawl thrown over his shoulders.

His usual guard is composed of twenty or thirty men; but he dispenses with this pomp on the field of battle. He is frequently seen on horse back, and only resorts to a palanquin when wounded or over-fatigued. He styles himself the Viceroy of the Peishwa Nana Sahib.

THE DEEPEST COAL PIT IN GREAT BRITAIN.—The difficulties which are met and overcome by mining engineers, in shaft sinking, stand out in alto-relievo in the subjoining description of a deep English coal pit, which we copy from the London Journal of Gas Lighting, of August 3:—

The deepest coal pit in Great Britain, and probably in the world, after twelve years labor, during which some important mining problems have been solved, has just been completed and opened at Dukinfield, Cheshire. The shaft of this extraordinary pit is 686½ yards deep, and the sinking of it has cost nearly £100,000. The undertaking was commenced in 1847, by Mr. Francis Dukinfield, Palmer Astley, of Tilefoot, Cumberland, who is lord of the manor of Dukinfield, a township of 1,263 acres in extent, and containing valuable beds of coal.

By September, 1848, the shaft of the pit had been sunk 220 yards, when the works were stopped by the tapping of a copious spring of water, which rendered it necessary to put in pumps and drive a tunnel 80 yards long. In about fourteen months this work was completed, and 54 yards added to the depth of the pit. Shortly afterwards another spring was encountered, which stopped the works three months. At the end of five years from the commencement a depth of 475 yards had been attained, the last 133 yards having occupied twenty-nine months, in consequence of the difficulties which had to be overcome, the rock pierced through being very hard, and another tunnel 400 yards long having had to be made.

At this point the sinking of the shaft was suspended for a time, and the mine was worked for coal; but in 1857 it was determined to sink the shaft. Operations proceeded steadily in the face of many difficulties and discouraging predictions; but the enterprise was successfully completed last week by the workmen winning the Black Mine, a fine coal 4 feet 8½ inches thick, and calculated to last thirty years at 500 tons per day. In sinking the shaft twenty-two workable seams of coal were passed through, as well as 8 other seams, varying from 1 to 6 feet thick, and in the aggregate 105 feet in thickness.

The shaft is generally 12 feet 6 inches in diameter, but near the bottom it expands to a diameter of 19 feet 2 inches. It is lined with bricks 9 inches thick, with rings of stone at intervals of 8 yards. At the bottom of the shaft there is an incline nearly half a mile long. The pit is fitted with very powerful machinery. Another shaft, of the same depth as this just described, is now being sunk as an air draft. Three lives have been lost during the progress of the work, but no other casualties have occurred."

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE HOUSE OF CONGRESS AND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—If the rules of the British Parliament, in regard to speech-making, could be introduced into the American Congress, the country would be relieved from the flood of aimless and useless talk with which it is every year inundated. There is only one speech on record, delivered in either House of Parliament at any time, which ever approached the longitudinal character of heavy Congress oratory, and that was delivered in the Commons, in 1823, by Henry Brougham, on the administration of the law, in which he exposed its abuses, and suggested all the principal reforms which have since been made. That speech occupied over six hours in delivery.

O'Connell, Peel, Lord John Russell, Palmerston, Roebuck, Cobden, Bright, and a few others, have made long speeches; but these long ones are the exceptions. As a general rule, half an hour's speech is considered a very liberal allowance, and that only to a first-rate man. Whoever of inferior standing, should attempt to waste the public time by diffusiveness, would be coughed down or silenced by ridiculing cries of 'Hear, hear.'

As for any man's reading what he may call a speech, that is utterly out of the question. In the first place, it is unparliamentary, and the man who attempted it would be put down, with the cries of 'Order,' on which the Speaker would have to tell the honorable member, in the gentlest manner, to 'shut up.' An extract from a book may be read in a speech, or a statement of figures, but to read a speech itself is impossible. Of course, then it is equally out of the question for a member of either house to have an undelivered speech, admitted as spoken, and so introduced into the reported debates. First, written speeches are wholly excluded, and next, neither house of Parliament has any publication of its proceedings. Newspaper rivalry, in the first instance, and the private enterprise of Mr. Hansard in the next, provides and prints adequate reports of all worthy of notice on record, that is done in the British Legislature.—[Philadelphia Press.]

VAUDOIS PEASANTS.—The dress of the people is plain to severity, writes Mr. Wylie, in his "Wanderings in the Valleys of the Wilderness." The garments of the men are of coarse woolen; and those of the women of equally coarse cotton, made up in the most primitive style. Nor is there any variety of color to atone for the homely materials which compose their attire; the color of all is a deep blue, and the sombre aspect presented by a mass of several hundred may easily

be imagined. The monotonous and dreary expanse is unrelieved, save by the white caps of the women and the high shirt necks of the men.

Crinolines have not yet found their way into the valleys. In fact, the commonest ornaments with us are unknown to them, and would be accounted a most extravagant finery. And the whole aspect of the people is in keeping with their dress. Their appearance bespeaks continual similarity with privation and toil. They are of low stature, their frames are, as it were, pressed down, their faces furrowed, many of them wrinkled, with premature age. There is, with them, an entire absence of that unthinking, clownish gaiety, that childish misanthropy, which mark the faces of the peasantry of the surrounding country.

The Vaudois face is earnest, deep, grave—grave in sadness. It betokens, nevertheless, a most extraordinary power of passive endurance. Through the air of sorrowful seclusion that hangs upon that face, there can be traced a quiet, resolute courage, which could enable its owner to face death a thousand times rather than yield—a settled purpose of soul not to be shaken or overborne at any power that may be brought against it. We must bear in mind that the Vaudois face was moulded under persecution—a persecution which far exceeded in severity, as it did in duration, any persecution that ever befel any other race.

THE SERFS OF RUSSIA.—"If I cannot announce to you yet," says a letter from St. Petersburg, "the definitive application of the great measure concerning the emancipation of the serfs of the nobles, I am, at least, happy to be able to inform you that, in what refers to the serfs of the Crown, the matter progresses rapidly, and in the best manner possible. Thus, I hold in my hands a new ukase, decreeing that all the serfs attached to the mines within the jurisdiction of the Minister of Finance, should be declared free at the end of six months. With this view, the Emperor has appointed three commissions—one for the mines and serfs of the Government of Moscow; a second for those in the neighborhood of Orenburg; and the third for the Uralian districts."

In order to understand this, it must be known that all the persons connected with the mines were originally free; but Peter the Great, wishing to introduce and stimulate metallurgic industry in Russia, conceded to all who would devote themselves to it, merchants and nobles, villages with a great extent of wood to serve for the working of the mines. The rights of these new proprietors over the persons of the peasants were at first limited; but by degrees they extended them arbitrarily, and the peasants became at last real serfs—whose situation, however, it must be confessed, is more supportable than that of the serfs of the nobles. However, come what may, the hour of liberty is going to sound for thousands of men, who will henceforth have the right of property over their persons, will be citizens, and will be able to go wherever they please.

GULF STREAM.—The deep sea soundings of Lieut. Berryman have done much to confirm a previous theory as to the cause—or one of the causes—of the Gulf Stream. It is ascertained that, at a depth of two thousand feet, in the straits of Florida, the temperature of the ocean is only three degrees above freezing, while in the deep soundings on the telegraph route it is found that the temperature is ten to fifteen degrees below the freezing point. Hence, according to well known laws, the comparatively warm and light waters of the gulf, made lighter by the masses of fresh water from the Mississippi and other rivers, rise and flow off towards the colder regions of the north. At the same time, the denser waters of the northern Atlantic make their way southward to restore the equilibrium. Thus, there are two currents, an upper and an under, flowing in contrary directions. The upper is apparent and well known as the Gulf Stream; the under is frequently demonstrated by the fact of immense icebergs, reaching down thousands of feet below the surface of the ocean, being seen floating southward against the surface current.—[Boston Statesman.]

INGENUITY OF THE LEAF-ROLLING MOTHS.—The process pursued by the Leaf-rollers is very curious, and was first observed in all its complications by the indefatigable naturalist, Bonnet. I have not space for his interesting description, but the summary of it is as follows:—

The larva first attaches a series of threads, at regular distances, to the part of the leaf which is to be rolled over. Having completed this part of its work, it begins to pull them one by one, till by degrees, drawn by these gossamer cables, the leaf begins to turn over in the direction required. If the leaf be of too stiff a texture, refusing to yield to all the tension its means can exert, the little larva gnaws through portions of the veins, or eats away part of the surface of the leaf, till the causes of resistance are thus weakened, and the green bed-curtain which is to shelter its long slumber is drawn closely round in the direction required.—[The Butterfly Vivarium, or Insect Home. By H. Noel Humphreys.]

HOW TRUE!—It is not work that kills men, it is worry. Work is healthy, but you can put more on a man than he can bear. It is not the revolution that destroys the machinery, but the friction.

☞ If you get your mouth open to throw out a spike or a dagger, shut it till you can, like the juggler, transform the weapon into a flower.

☞ A year of pleasure passes like a floating breeze, but a moment of misfortune seems an age of pain.