

The French army, like the English, being recruited mainly from the poorer and less educated classes, it is more difficult to get this selection of marksmen. In the British service it has not yet been attempted, and thousands of pounds sterling are fired away by men who may be short-sighted or too illiterate to read the figures on a tangent scale or time-piece. In the French service there was an effort to remedy this by selecting *pointeurs*; but the character of the French seems to place them at a disadvantage in the use of arms of precision, and the old *Fureur Francaise* of historic chivalry has a tendency to waste ammunition.

If I may venture to form an opinion, and be permitted to express it, it appears to me that the French *habitan*, whether it be that he is more directly descended from the old Norman type, or that two centuries of residence under the rigours of a climate as severe as that of Scandinavia, the original cradle of his race, have cooled down the excitability and given him the character as well as something of the *physique* of the Teuton,—whatever be the cause, I believe he makes an excellent gunner; and I cannot but have confidence in the military future of a force in which are happily blended the descendants of those who fought under Wolfe and Montcalm. Past fields of victory, gained by combined French and English Canadians on this continent, point to the same conclusion.

TACTICAL.

The first artillery tactical consideration is mobility, without which there can be no application of tactics in the field.

The French had no practical mobility, for they had no means of carrying the gunners (except for the few horse artillery of the guard). Their light guns well horsed could move with facility; but the men were carried on ammunition waggons which had to be left far in the rear out of fire. A gun without a gunner, is the same as a body without a soul.

Until the present year, the English and French were the only two powers who retained this antiquated system. The Prussians carry sufficient gunners to work the gun on axle-tree seats and limber boxes. Even if it were agreeable to a mixed audience, time will not permit me to go into details of artillery tactical lessons; suffice it to say generally, that the last is the only war in which both sides have been completely armed with breech loading small arms and rifled cannon. Previous struggles show us chiefly what to avoid; and though general principles remain unaltered, their application must not be fettered by the old stereotyped idea that artillery must conform to its infantry—for, as a rule, the limit of infantry fire is the commencement of modern artillery efficacy.

Its double action, as divisional or supporting, and reserve or striking, in obedience to a master mind, must never be lost sight of. Artillery action, therefore, more than ever requires an artillery head. The dictum of the first Napoleon, that "the general engagement once begun, he who has the address to bring suddenly and unknown to the enemy, an unexpected amount of artillery to bear upon the most important points, is sure to carry them," remains unchanged, but it is to be acted upon, not in a spirit of servile imitation, by an agglomeration of guns at close range, but when practicable, by a dispersion of batteries and a concentration of fire.

Everything points to the fact that field artillery is not a force to be extemporized on in emergency; and Prussian experience of ar-

tillery failure in 1866 (for there has been Prussian failure) shows, in the words of Captain Hozier, "that a large infusion of raw elements into Field-Artillery, to strengthen it suddenly, defeated its object by crippling the efficiency of batteries." This paper may appear meagre; the subject has already been overwritten; but I have sifted my facts on the very ground of the theatre of war, among the very actors themselves; and I have not neglected to avail myself of pamphlets and books—amongst others that of Captain Hozier, formerly of the Royal Artillery, and a work full of interest that lately came into my hands in this city—"The Franco-German War," by Elihu Rich. The subject of modern sieges is too large to be included in this paper, which must already have taxed your patience. I think the last and most important lesson we have to lay to heart as citizens and soldiers, is that neither science, strategy, technical or tactical skill, can avail anything to the armies of a people who subordinate these things to the necessities of a political faction.

We copy the following humorous description of a "base ball club" at Dundas, from an exchange. It is fully equal to anything of Mark Twains and very much in his style.

"Yo nine" of Dundas, if the following sketch of their individual capabilities is to be received as reliable, must belong to the order of invincibles. The Champions, of Guelph, will require to look to their laurels:

"The pitcher for the summer of 1872 had been practising for several weeks outside of the town limits, and though not feeling well can throw a regulation ball with such swiftness that it cannot be seen unless covered with phosphorus, and often the friction occasioned by its passage through the air causes a heat so great as to burn the ball to ashes before it reaches the catcher, who only finds a mass of cinder in his hand. The assistant or reserve pitcher has been practising but a few weeks, but he can throw a ball through eighteen inches of oak plank now and if he keeps on, the man on deck will be compelled to encase his stomach with a monitor turret and other armor, or suffer the consequences.

"The catcher has been for three weeks just engaged in breaking up pig iron at the foundry, and to still further toughen his hands, he allows the big twenty-ton trip hammer to drop on them two hours each day; they are now about the size of a wind mill, and if a ball gets by him it will be by traversing the atmosphere of an adjoining county. The reader can gamble on this.

"The first baseman is trying the diet system to steady his nerves, and can let a mule kick him in the abdomen without winking. He will never move his foot from a sand bag unless it be in the line of his duty, and the runner for the first base may light upon him like a night hawk on a June bug without making him swerve a hair.

"The second baseman has developed himself more especially for miscellaneous and active service. He can stand on his head, catch a ball with his feet, reverse his position and knock a grass hopper off from a mullein stalk at eighty rods, nine times out of ten. There will be no use in a runner trying to dodge him, for he has globe sights on his nose, and can plumb a man in the hull or rigging, just as he chooses.

"The short stop is probably the best man for this position that can be found this side of the Suez canal. He is short himself, and has lived on pie-crust all winter, can turn

thirteen somersaults without spitting on his hands, and catch a ball with equal facility in either his hand or his teeth.

"The third baseman has been making sauerkraut and riding a velocipede all winter to develop the muscles of his lower limbs, which are immense, and give him the appearance of being troubled with elephantiasis. But don't fool yourself; he can run down a giraffe in three minutes, and can bat a ball so far that his opponents never think of chasing them the same day they are hit, but proceed with a new ball.

"The three fielders have been frisking about in the country all winter, and drinking angle-worm oil to give suppleness to their limbs. They go on all fours faster than many professionals can run, and are so limber that circus men died off like sheep after seeing them perform once.

In fact, we may well be proud of our club for the present year, and if there is any organization in the country that can compete with them, let them draw on us at six months' sight through the United States Treasury Department (or sooner if they get a sight of us,) stating how many dollars worth of confidence they feel in their favourite club.

We do not forget our club manager, who is all that a father could be to his boys, and who does much more than his name would indicate to make the season and its matches successful.

"The scorer for the present year has been selected as the champion whittler of the country. He has purchased a bran new knife and two thousand shingles, and will keep his notches on the double entry plan, that is one entry for the other side and two cuts for his own."

LARGE GOLD CAKES FROM VICTORIA.—Last month's Australian mail brought a statement that the largest cake of gold ever seen was exhibited in Sandhurst and Melbourne, the weight of which was 2,564 oz, with a value of over £10,000. That cake was the result of a fortnights work of the Great Extended Hustler's Quarz Mining Company, Sandhurst; but the same company in their next fortnight's work, altogether surpassed their previous success, and turned out a cake weighing no less than 3,764 oz. and worth more than £15,000. The yield from quartz mines now exceeds that from alluvial mines. It is stated that the Stockyard Creek diggings, situated near Port Albert, and close to the most southern part of the Australian continent may be now classed among the permanent gold fields of the colony. These diggings which were only discovered some few months ago, are situated in a part of the colony not previously found to be payable as a goldfield, and it is thought that very shortly the country between them and the next diggings some forty or fifty miles inland, will be all found to be more or less of a gold-bearing character. At present the country referred to is an almost impenetrable scrub, in which it is next to impossible for travellers to penetrate, but it is expected that tracks will soon be cut through it, after which prospecting in it will no doubt be energetically carried on. In December two nuggets, weighing respectively 21 oz. and 32 oz. were obtained in one claim at Stockyard Creek. Reports of large fields in other districts, are also reported.