The Legion of Strangers

Hugh Clifford in Temple Bar.

I AM not personally responsible for the above rendering into English of the name of a famous French corps—La Legion Etrangere—which is the only really efficient piece of machinery at the disposal of that ubiquitous administration whose feverish desire to "govern" makes existence almost impossible to the unofficial population of Indo-China.

The phrase belongs to my friend Gunner Stevenson, of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, and as I cannot attempt to reproduce the rest of his story in his own words, I think that it is only fair to give it a title in which I can quote him literally. He told me the story of his experiences as I lay sick on my cot in the hospital in an Eastern city, while he clawed my cigarette-papers to tatters in his large, unaccustomed fingers. He was a nice-looking young fellow, smart, alert and upstanding in his khaki uniform, and since he had eyes that could see, and a mind capable of assimilating his impressions, he had much to say that was worth listening to.

In the beginning, he explained, he had been a fool. The life of the British soldier in a garrison town of the tropics is dull to a degree that cannot adequately be expressed in set terms. Reveille at 5, parade while the short hours of coolness last, breakfast, orderly-room later for the unfortunate, and then the long, empty, panting day during which men can only lie on their cots, kicking their heels and cursing their luck, or bickering aimlessly; and in which meals and a few uninteresting inspections and fatigues supply the only breaks in the interminable monopoly. The white man's enemy, the sun, holds the men close prisoners until the afternoon brings coolness, for soldiers are expensive, and their officers cannot risk allowing them to take their chance of heat-apoplexy with Europeans of the common run.

But even the two hours before the sun goes out with the suddenness of an extinguished candle bring but poor relief from the appalling boredom of the soldier's life. He may put on his forage-cap and walk down to the bazaar, or he may play cricket or football, but the time for recreation is all too short, and at 9:20 p.m. the bugle sounds "Lights out," and the dreary day ends, to be followed by another which is its exact image. Try in imagination to spend a year or two composed wholly of days such as this, and you will begin to understand why it is that the more intelligent and active-minded of our soldiers in the East are occasionally possessed by a devil of madness, which drives them to perpetrate apparently inexplicable follies.

Gunner Stevenson endured barrack life for some two years; then, as he himself described it, he acted like a fool. He had late leave one night, at a period when his simmering mental irritation had nearly reached the boiling point, and in a bar in the town he forgathered with three Scotch engineers from steam-tramps then lying in the docks. These men, who spent most of their lives in the stoke-hold of Chinese-owned craft about as seaworthy as an eight-day clock and as evil-smelling as a sago-factory, sweating at every pore 'twixt grilling climate and blazing furnaces, saw fit to pity and deride the soldier on account of the misery of his lot. In unendurable fashion they contrasted his servitude with their freedom—save the mark! They chaffed him about the "leave" he was forced to ask ere he could even spend an evening in a tavern of the town. They affected to whistle to him, that he might come to heel, declaring roundly that dogs had more liberty from their masters than a private is allowed by his officers. Ordinarily Gunner Stevenson would have contented himself with trying to break their necks, but in his then state of mind the taunts rang true, and the bitterness of things ate into his spirit. He fell to reciting the "Devil's Catechism," cursing the British army, from the commander-in-chief to the last and least of the drummer-boys, and wound up by vaingloriously announcing his utter willingness to fly in the face of Providence and the King's regulations. The slow Scotsmen laughed in their grimy beards, and dared him to prove that he was really "game," whereupon Gunner Stevenson, after "spoiling the faces" of two of them, and borrowing a soiled suit of clothes from the third, tramped down to the docks and stowed himself away on board a ship bound for the French colonies.

He awoke next morning with a sore head, a sinking sensation in the pit of his stomach, and an unmistakable conviction that he was a fool such as is seldom seen. Also he counted ruefully the few dollars that he possessed, and thereafter gave himself up to despair and the agonies of seasickness.

The ship reached Saigon, and Stevenson, gaunt and miserable, with a rudimentary beard sprouting on his chin, sneaked ashore unobserved. In twenty-four hours from the time of his landing, necessity, combined with a lack of imagination, had driven him to the nearest French recruiting office, where he was promptly enrolled in the corps which he ever afterwards spoke of as "The Legion of Strangers." He had quitted the British army, leaving behind him a spotless defaulter-sheet, and prospects of early promotion to non-commissioned rank, because the life of a soldier had proved too irksome in its grinding monotony, and because for a moment or two Discipline had appeared to him as a Spectre of Tyranny; yet in less than a week he had of his own motion entered himself as a recruit to a regiment which offered scant promise of a career, and is ruled by its officers with an iron hand.

La Legion Etrangere, as everybody knows, is composed of men of all races of white folk, and of every degree of ruffianism and villainy. Speaking generally, the soldiers in its ranks are the sweepings of the Continental races, the "cesters" and loafers whom Fate has left stranded in the inhospitable ports of Eastern Asia or of Western Africa. The Legion serves only abroad; it acts as the police, judge, jury and executioner in the lawless hinterlands of the French colonies; its members never earn or obtain leave of absence, or are transferred to other corps; nominally discharge can be won at the end of ten years' continuous duty, but few live to enjoy their freedom; vile climates and the native folk, whom the French designate collectively as "pirates," using up the legionaries with a startling rapidity. Cosmopolitan in character, composed of desperate and "broken" men, engaged constantly in unrecorded struggles with the enemies of France which her colonial administration has such an unhappy knack of creating, La Legion Etrangere bears a sinister reputation, but this is altogether eclipsed by that boasted by the officers who lead it. They are popularly supposed to be a pack of unlicked devils, the outcasts of society, gentlemen who "have gone under," men whom ill-fortune has embittered, whom vice has ruined and made savage—Frenchmen who desire no longer to see France or to tread the boulevards of Paris.

Yet Gunner Stevenson, who is a broad-minded person, had a good word to say for his comrades of the Legion. His charity was not large enough to include the Italians or the Levantines, but he pronounced the Swedes, Danes, Germans, Belgians and Frenchmen to be good fellows, who left a man in peace when once he had given proof of his ability to stand up for himself. The officers, although they came down upon defaulters "like a cartload of bricks," struck him as fine soldiers, dashing leaders, and very just in their dealings with the men. The promptness of their drumhead courtsmartial, and with which they ordered captured "pirates" out for instant execution in big batches, appealed forcibly to his sense of the eternal fitness of things, and of other matters, of which he was perhaps a sounder judge, his criticisms reflected badly on the British army. For instance, he was much struck by the marching powers of the corps, which he attributed in a great measure to the superior method of packing and disposing of the soldier's kit, for he told me that the boots served out were very poor things compared with the regulation "ammunition-boot" used in our service. He had much more to say that was worth noting, but this is not the place in which to enlarge upon his opinion concerning things technical. Instead I must pass on to the description of the one big sensation experienced by him during the space that he served with "The Legion of Strangers."

This did not arise from the battles in which he took his share, for the "pirates" of the Tongking hinterland, he said, used their rifles with little skill. These rifles, it should be mentioned, were mostly of Birmingham manufacture, being supplied by that trade which manages to sneak into every corner where the flag is not. Most fights resolved themselves into a scattering squabble of musketry spluttering over ten square miles of boulder-strewn hills, and it was only when a small detachment of the Legionaries lost their way and fell into the hands of the enemy that much harm came to them. On such occasions unspeakable things were done to the prisoners, but Gunner Stevenson, fortunately for himself, never met with such a disaster as this. Therefore the affair which chiefly impressed itself upon his memory was a private quarrel, which took a course altogether unlike anything to which his previous experience as a British soldier had accustomed him.

He had joined the Legion a few weeks prior to the outbreak of the war in South Africa, and some months elapsed before news of that event trickled through from the coast to the wilderness in which he was serving. It came accompanied by the rumor of appalling British disasters, jubilantly magnified and distorted by the press of Indo-China, which does not love the English, and it created a tremendous excitement among Stevenson's comrades.

From the first the new recruit had found that he was doomed to a life of great loneliness. He was the only Englishman in the ranks; he knew no French, though he contrived to pick up enough to carry him along; and the men were divided into a number of cliques. The Italians and the Levantine "scum"—I quote Gunner Stevenson once more—herded together and were despised by their fellows because they were believed to be folk of little courage. The Swedes and Danes associated almost exclusively with the Germans; the Frenchmen, who counted themselves as the elite of the nondescript mob, messed together and gave most foreigners the cold shoulder. Stevenson, who, true to his birth, had been brought up to believe himself worth a dozen foreigners, naturally claimed a place among the crack section of the corps, and attached himself to the Frenchmen, by whom, he said, he was treated with much kindness. When the word telling of war with the Boers reached the camp, however, his position became very difficult. All his comrades, he discovered, were fierce partisans of the Dutchmen, and cherished an instinctive hatred of England.

At that time, all the world over, men thought and talked of little save the war, wherefore Gunner Stevenson found his hand against all men, and all men's hands against him, and was forced to listen to a great deal that was calculated to make an Englishman wince. He could not fight the whole regiment; the foreign tongue fettered him and rendered him wholly inarticulate in argument; he could only curse and blaspheme in a language whose oaths brought no real consolation to his conservative British soul, and heartily wish himself back again in the great hot barrack-room whose monotony had driven him to madness.

His own mess-mates, the Frenchmen, seem to have shown something like courtesy to the stranger, and though they could not entirely repress their triumph in British mishaps, they did their best to refrain from being brutally offensive to the individual Britisher. We islanders are prone to believe that love of fair play is a virtue peculiarly our own, but the innate courtesy of the French—a quality in which many of us are woefully lacking—may often perhaps bring about the same results as the Englishman's cult of abstract justice. Anyhow, Gunner Stevenson, after living cheek by jowl during a particularly trying time with some of the worst blackguards of France, was reduced to a condition of gasping wonder at the forbearance which they showed him, and the tact displayed by the roughest of them even when men's passions were stirred to an unusual degree.

That trouble must come sooner or later, since the war had given so adverse a turn to his circumstances, Stevenson saw clearly, and the fact oppressed him, for he recognized his utter ignorance of foreign manners and customs, and knew not at all what form the trouble might assume.

One day, however, the long-expected storm burst. A huge, hulking German, the recognized bully and cock of his mess, sauntered into the hut occupied by Stevenson and the Frenchmen. He put out a vast red hand and knocked the dominoes which the Englishman had standing before him on to the ground, accompanying the action by some luridly unprintable remarks concerning the origin, morals and appearance of the British nation as a whole, and of Stevenson, its solitary representative in "The Legion of Strangers."

The assault was so unprovoked and so direct that the Englishman lost his temper in a moment, and before he had time to think or calculate the consequences, had flown at the German, yelling to him to "put his hands up," and was knocking him endways with a pair of honest English fists striking out straight from the shoulders.

The German was fleshy, and the blows raised gratifying bruises and lumps all over his face, and Stevenson, the joy of battle dancing within him, found to his delight that he could pummel the giant where and how he chose, since the fellow had not a notion of the use to which fists can be put. His enjoyment was complete, but it was of short duration. A great hubbub arose, and half the occupants of the hut threw themselves on the combatants, and yelled shrill reproof at Stevenson for his murderous conduct. His best friends among the Frenchmen were seemingly the most shocked. They loudly deplored the savage brutality of his conduct, while the German, looking dazed and surprised as though he had knocked up against a hidden volcano, was led off to his own mess by a band of sympathizers.

The attitude manifested by public opinion was a sore puzzle to Stevenson. The man had offended him of set purpose and had been badly thrashed for his pains. Surely that was logical cause and effect. Then wherefore was all this pother raised even by the most friendly of the Frenchmen? The thing was inexplicable. He had not originated the quarrel, but when it had been thrust upon him he had stood up for himself, and had speedily settled it once for all by licking the offensive German. The incident was closed, satisfactorily, creditably to himself, and, as he believed, finally.

This, however, was not the view taken by his comrades. Stevenson's British code of honor was completely satisfied, but not so that cherished by the Legion Etrangere. According to the legionaries the German had been within his rights in wantonly inflicting an insult upon the Englishman, and the latter had been justified in answering it with a blow. His misdemeanor lay in the fact that he had not contented himself with the singular number. To beat a man heartily and repeatedly with the naked fists was the act of a savage, a piece of barbarism which was utterly inexcusable. Such things were not permitted to happen among gentlemen. This and more also was explained to Stevenson, who scratched his head and strained his understanding, trying vainly to catch a stray ray of intelligence through all the murky unreason.

"Mais j'ai ecrase le coquin," he said again and again in his bewilderment. "Alors c'est fini, n'est ce pas?" But the suggestion was received with horrified denials. The incident was very far indeed from being finished; it was barely begun. It had obviously been the desire of the German to provoke a challenge. The preliminaries, albeit Stevenson had sadly overplayed his part in them, were now complete, and it only remained to arrange a duel decently and in order.

But this view of the situation did not at all commend itself to Gunner Stevenson. He was ready enough to stand up to an enemy with the weapons God had given him, to administer or take a thrashing, and to shake hands heartily when all was over; but to fight a duel to the death was quite another business, and one moreover for which he was not in the least prepared. Having vanquished the flabby German with ridiculous ease, Stevenson felt that he now bore him no malice, and could afford to regard him with a friendly and half-contemptuous disdain. He had not the slightest desire to kill him. He was even less anxious to be killed by him. The whole affair was being lifted on to a plane of tragedy that was appalling. Also the moral aspect of the matter troubled him. If he were killed in the very act of trying to murder a man against whom he had now no spite, what would be his ultimate destination? The name of hell had often been on the lips of himself and his fellows in the British barrack-room, but the thing itself had never before appealed to him as a place into which he might unexpectedly step in the course of a few hours' time.

He seized his helmet and hurriedly left his tent. He must think the difficult problem out, before he gave a final answer to his comrades, wherefore he took his way alone to a neighboring hillock and sat himself down to smoke and ponder. He was very far from happy. All manner of things which had not recurred to his memory for years came crowding now into his mind. He thought of the sheltered village far away in the West Country, that quaintest of little pieces of grassy hills, wooded combes, and deep, red lanes full of fragrant coolness, where he had lived as a child; of the little church standing in the infinitely quiet God's acre; of the mother at whose knee he had learned the religion that had been so long neglected and forgotten, but was now, obtruding itself upon him so unexpectedly. He was more than half ashamed of himself for dwelling on these things, was inclined to blush for them as weaknesses, but they rose up, one by one, to haunt him, and to influence his decision.

He must fight; that was certain, for if he refused, his life would not be worth living. He would fight, but he would not kill. If he were to go before the Judgment Seat, it should be with hands of clean blood. This resolution shaped itself unbidden, and smote him with surprise as being altogether out of keeping with his preconceived notion of himself. He had fancied that he was hardened, reckless, that his nerve was equal to most things, and that he was eminently capable of taking care of himself, and that he was one not likely to endanger his safety for the sake of a mere scruple. Yet now that he was brought face to face with something wholly unfamiliar and repellant to his instincts, he found himself calmly accepting what he believed to be a death-sentence rather than take the life of a man who was in no way bound to him. He longed to sneak out of the duel, but pride of race made this impossible; he would very willingly have stifled the voice of his so suddenly awakened conscience, but to do this was powerless; therefore, sorely against the grain, and feeling particularly sorry for himself, Gunner Stevenson knocked the ashes out of his pipe and walked back to the camp.

A duel between men of the Legion Etrangere is a solemn rite the due performance of which is hedged about by great state and ancientry. There is no need for concealment, for it has the full approval of the authorities and is said to have the effect of making fighting among the legionaries very unusual. The non-commissioned officer responsible for the section of the challenger goes to his company's officer and makes elaborate report. He next begs for an order to draw two rounds of ball cartridge out of store, and asks leave for his men to be excused parade on the following morning, together with their seconds and a few others officially connected with the business in hand. All this was done on behalf of the burly German, for a court of honor (an anomalous thing, by the way, to find itself established in "The Legion of Strangers") had decided that the mauling to which that worthy had been subjected at the hands of the Englishman gave him the rights of the aggrieved party in the dispute.

In the chill of the early morning, therefore, Gunner Stevenson found himself standing, rifle in hand, thirty paces distant from his adversary, with half a dozen men of the Legion looking on from a little distance well out of the line of fire. There was a dank white mist swirling in slow eddies out of the hollows, but the light was fairly good, and Stevenson could plainly see every feature of the big German's face. It was horribly swollen and discolored, and one eye, which was well-nigh obliterated, glinted wickedly behind folds of purple flesh. Stevenson, who had spent a miserable night in anticipation of the coming ordeal, was quite horribly afraid, but the dankness of the morning falling on his already oppressed spirit, froze him into a kind of cold despair. The matter, now that it had come to the point, seemed curiously prosaic and trivial; he had great difficulty in realizing that he was himself intimately connected with it; somehow he felt something of the aloofness of a mere spectator, unthrilled by excitement, though all the while he was conscious of the fact that he was in the grip of a mortal fear.

His perceptions were sharpened wonderfully. Every object within view was seen with a distinctness of detail which was abnormal, and each one of them seemed to possess a peculiar and insistent interest for him. He noted every stain on the canvas fatigue-kit of his enemy, and caught himself wondering how and by what each one of them had been caused; he spied a mole with coarse hairs sprouting from it on the man's left cheek, and marvelled that the man did not pluck them out instead of leaving such unsightly things to offend the eye; and then he noticed, this time with a shock of astonishment, that the fellow's hands were shaking. Till then Stevenson, inconsequently enough, had felt convinced that he alone was afraid; now it occurred to him suddenly that the German was in no better case. The discovery elated him in an extraordinary fashion. At once he cocked his head, threw back his shoulders, and tried to smile. Regarded as a smile it was a deplorable failure, for the muscles of his face were very stiff in the sockets, but in the circumstances it was not discreditable, and it obviously discomposed the German.

"Etes-vous prets?" rasped out the voice of the non-commissioned officer. Stevenson, made aware suddenly of the intense pre-occupation in which he had been sunk, started violently, nearly dropping his rifle, as he mumbled an unintelligible assent. The German jerked a sound out of himself, half pant, half grunt.

"Un!" cried the voice again. The men raised their rifles to their shoulders, and Stevenson found himself instinctively cuddling his chin into the stock in search of an easy position.

"Deux!" He glanced along the dully glinting barrel, and saw at an enormous distance, so it seemed, a shining silver ring suspended in mid-air, encircling a spot of inky blackness. The ring danced this way and that, up and down and from side to side, in a manner which made Stevenson dizzy to watch. The big bruised face of the German, contorted by spasms, leered above it with wide open jaw, as though he were trying to catch that circle of metal in his teeth.

"Trois!"

What immense pauses occurred between each word! The ring was revolving madly now, whirling round and round and shooting forth long rays of light of all the colors of the prism, and in that whirling aureola the face of the German was seen, monstrous and grimacing, and suddenly grey beneath the purple patches of bruise. Stevenson, in a condition bordering on a hypnotic trance, kept his eyes fixed upon that wheel of blazing flames, the core of which was the tiny silver circle, and almost lost the sense of his own identity. He seemed to be floating in space, drawn irresistibly towards that point of dazzling light, while something throbbed and pulsed, like the engine of a motor-car, filling the world with a great din. It was the sound of his own heart-beats that deafened him.

"Feu!"

At last the long torture was ended; the supreme moment had come. Yet for an instant nothing happened. Then the heavens rocked to the roar of a mighty detonation. Stevenson heard something scream in his ear, and felt a cold breath upon his cheek. He had shut his eyes, and dropped his finger from the trigger. Now he opened them, and dropped his rifle to the ready. He looked for the German, and for a minute failed to find him. The silver ring with its circle of gyrating flames had vanished. A fat, ungainly figure was kneeling on the ground shouting for mercy, its useless rifle thrown aside.

Then at last Stevenson arrived at an understanding of what had happened. The German had fired and had missed his aim. He was now completely at the mercy of the Englishman. For the life of him Stevenson, his calm and self-confidence miraculously restored, could not forbear to raise his rifle and take deliberate aim at the squirming wretch before him. But the agony which he caused made him convict himself of brutality, and he presently dropped his rifle to the carry, opened the breech and jerked the loaded cartridge on to the grass at his feet.

"And that was the end of my duel with the German in the Legion of Strangers, sir," he said to me. "And though we were neither of us hurt, I had had more than I wanted. I deserted soon after, and gave myself up to my old battery, and my major treated me real well, so I'm like to get my stripes before long. You take it from me, sir, there are worse places than a barrack-room of the British army. I don't hold with having too much truck with foreigners: a man don't know where to have 'em, not after what I have gone through in 'The Legion of Strangers'!"

"CHANUKAH"

The Maccabaean War of Independence.

Rabbi Montague N. A. Cohen.

THE blood of the martyrs was not to be shed in vain. And the story of the men who, by the will of the world's Spirit and Ruler, preserved the religion of the Prophets and Psalmists, has now to be told. I come now to the history of the Maccabees, to which allusion has so often been made, and to which I have been leading up.

Deliverance came from the small and unimportant town of Modin. The account is described in the first book of the Maccabees. There dwelt a priest named Mattathias. He had five stalwart and brave sons—John Gaddis, Simon Thassi, Judas Maccabeus, Eleazar Avaran and Jonathan Apphus. It so happened that one of the Syrian overseers came to Modin to summon the inhabitants to become idolators and to abandon the law. The family of the Asmoneans refused, and when Mattathias perceived a Jew about to offer sacrifice to Jupiter, he felled the apostate at the foot of the altar. With long knives they fell upon the Syrians and annihilated them. Mattathias then raised the standard of revolt, and calling upon all who were zealous for the Lord, fled to the mountains. This was the turning point in the Syrian persecution. The number of resolute defenders of their country now daily increased. They were aware of the fact that they had hard battles to fight, but they were of such stuff as feared not death. In such a manner did the movement and the revolt begin. It was no season for half measures. Violence was answered by violence, and the Maccabaean warriors of religion showed no pity for the lax and the apostate. They are, in truth, the prototypes of the Puritan in his fierceness and in his strength.

The formation of Mattathias' band must have taken place towards the close of the year 167 B.C. He himself was their leader for a short time only. Before his death he appointed Simon as the wise counsellor and Judas as the leader. Judas was a remarkable man. A feeling of strength seemed to emanate from his heroism, filling all those who surrounded him with the same dauntless courage. He was endowed with the instincts of a general, and this enabled him to fight at the right moment, to take advantage of the weakness of the enemy, and to deceive the Syrians by false attacks. In the hour of battle he was like an enraged lion, and at other times like a dove in gentleness and simplicity. He was as resigned to the will of God as the holiest men of old in Israel, and relied not on his sword but on God's help, praying to him before each decisive action. He was a true hero, who only resorted to bloodshed when compelled by necessity in order to recover lost freedom, or to raise a humbled people. He thus gave his name to the whole epoch. At first it was only guerilla warfare; but as time wore on and his followers increased, he felt confident that he could engage in a pitched battle. He fought against Appolonius and his army in Samaria, and totally discomfited the Syrians. Appolonius himself being among the slain.

Judas was pursued by the Syrian commander, Seron, or Heron, and fled to the mountains. Seron hoped to utterly crush Judas, since Judas' army was small in comparison with the overwhelming numbers of the Syrians. It was at Beth-horon that the two armies were again face to face. The Jews feared the vast multitude, but Judas knew how to calm their fears. He reminded them of the precious treasures they were called upon to defend—their lives, their children and the law. The Syrians were vigorously attacked and defeated. This occurred in 166, and was the first decisive victory of Judas. It inspired the Jews with confidence and filled their enemies with terror. The Syrians were amazed at the strategical power of the Maccabees and at the endurance of the people.

Antiochus, in the meanwhile, was under the impression that his commands had been sufficient, and that they had been carried out. When he heard about the defeats inflicted upon his armies he discovered that he had greatly underrated the power of resistance of the Jews. He was filled with anxiety. But instead of coming against Judas in person with a whole force which he had gathered together, the King happily marched eastward to a campaign against the Parthians, leaving Tysias as his viceroy in Syria. Meanwhile the band of Judas had increased to an army, and his next victory was to be more brilliant.

Antiochus perforce altered his determination as regards the Jews. He no longer wished to Hellenize; they had proved themselves unworthy of becoming Greeks. He commissioned Tysias to march against these Jews and destroy every trace and vestige of them, and then sack Jerusalem. All were to be destroyed—both the Jewish Hellenists and the Jewish zealots. This caused great distress to fall upon the people, and they again doubted as to whether they would be strong enough to fight against such numbers provided with war elephants. In the common danger, all sections of the Jews united for a combined effort. At this period a book was compiled and circulated, in order to inspire enthusiasm. This was the Book of Daniel, written partly in Hebrew and partly in Aramaic. This apocalypse was to give an example of firmness in adhering to religious convictions, to put them vividly before the reader and to make him feel that this bloody persecution of the people would not endure for long.

The danger became imminent. Antiochus marched east (166) with part of the army. Tysias chose a general named Ptolemy, and two generals under him, Nicanor and Georgias. Georgias was to commence the campaign, and he led his division into the very heart of Judaea. He was joined by many Samaritans and Philistines, and was so certain of victory that he provided himself for his triumph. Judas assembled his 6,000 warriors and delivered a spirited address at Mizpeh. He divided his army into four parts, and placed his three elder brothers in command of divisions. In accordance with the law, he issued a proclamation to the effect that all those who were newly married, who had built a house or planted a new vineyard, or who lacked sufficient courage, were to withdraw from the ranks. Having done this, he marched towards Emmaus to meet the enemy. Georgias was encamped with 5,000 infantry and 1,000 cavalry. He intended to surprise Judas, but the latter outwitted him. At night Judas, by a forward march, came to the enemy's rear. When Georgias found the Jewish camp deserted, he thought that in fear they had fled to the mountains, and started in pursuit. Judas followed their rear, set their camp on fire, and followed up the pursuit. At dawn Georgias discovered the stratagem, halted his army and confronted the Jews.

Judas marshalled his troops and delivered another exhortation. They fought bravely and routed Georgias (166). In the meantime another division of Georgias' army arrived, but, seeing their camp on fire, fled south. This defeat paralyzed the enemy and inspired the Jews with greater confidence. They returned to Modin and rejoiced.

Tysias, however, prepared to repair the disaster, and in 165 attacked Judas, who now had 10,000 men. The battle of Bethoron ended in another defeat for the Syrians.

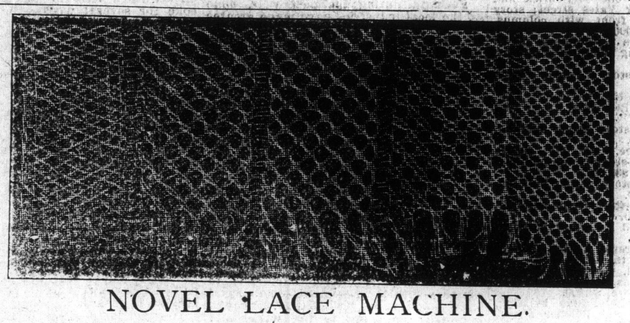
Judas now went to Jerusalem. Everything was deserted, the sanctuary desolate, idolatrous altars erected everywhere. They destroyed all the statues and cleansed the Temple (165). The Temple was reconsecrated.

Such was the origin of the institution of Chanukah, which is still observed by all Jews. And well may it continue to be celebrated, for no less to the valiant fighting of Judas and his soldiers than to the brave endurance of the martyrs was due the preservation of Judaism. The mere national aspect of the matter is very small and trivial; whether a petty tribe of Jews preserved their national existence and constitution, or became assimilated with the Syrian subjects of Antiochus, was unimportant then, and would be so now, looked at from a merely political or national point of view. But it so happened that this small race possessed at that time the purest and truest conception of God and of the manner of serving Him among all the nations of the earth; and if, therefore, this race had then been destroyed or absorbed in the mass of Greeks and Syrians, their religion would also have perished. The work of the prophets would have been in vain. Thus Chanukah is a religious festival, and as such is worthy of high regard to Jews. We are not specially concerned with the defeats of the Syrians. The details of the fighting subsequent to the dedication of the Temple are of smaller interest to us. The Maccabaean family itself suffers from the results of conquest and victory. But the preservation of Judaism at a time of imminent and critical danger remains a permanent fact of supreme importance. If Judaea had become overcome and absorbed, the Jewish congregations outside it would very probably have been unable to outlive the shock. Therefore we Jews owe our gratitude to the martyrs and the soldiers whose festival we celebrate at this season. Let it also be a festival of courage, a fourth part of all virtue, as the Greeks of old believed. The courage which Judaism demands of Jews now is not the courage of soldiers upon the battlefield, but it is often courage, none the less. Let the deeds of the martyrs and soldiers in the age of Antiochus inspire all—both Jew and Christian—from year to year anew.

For had Judaism been totally extinguished, Christianity would never have seen the light of day and Jesus would probably never have been born. The teachings of Judaism would have been superseded by Greek culture, which would have given quite a different turn to subsequent history. It is rather curious, though, that at one time the Maccabeean festival did actually possess a place in the church calendar. The ancient church, both East and West, celebrated a festival in honor of the Maccabees, and I believe that to this very day they have a place in the Saints' calendar of the Roman Catholic church. In it the 1st of August is given as the day of their martyrdom. Such is the effect of a noble example; all posterity claims a part in the inheritance; all can unite in harmony against oppression:

Together stand
An inseparable band:
All who felt the sacred flame
Rising at oppression's name,
All who toil for equal laws,
All who loved the righteous cause,
All whose world-embracing span
Bound them each to brother-man.

The Anglo-Saxon race are in this way the true spiritual heirs of the Maccabees, fighting against every oppression and wrong. And thus will the universal brotherhood be effected, and from out of the portals of a Temple not built by human hands will resound the echo of greeting to all who come; it will be called the Temple of Brotherhood, the House of God, the Prayer House for all peoples.



NOVEL LACE MACHINE.

Herr A. Matitsch, of Vienna, has invented a machine by which, it is claimed, can be produced real lace, or lace so closely resembling hand-made products of the same patterns as to be scarcely distinguishable by experts.

Moreover, several different patterns can be produced simultaneously on this machine. Some of the patterns which have thus been produced are shown. They contain in their construction different lace grounds—mechlin, brabant, idria and chantilly—and the fact that they can be fashioned at one time on one machine is naturally regarded as most notable by all who are interested in the manufacture of this delicate fabric.

Herr Matitsch has been at work on the invention for several years, and has spent $97,000 in perfecting it.

A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY WRITER

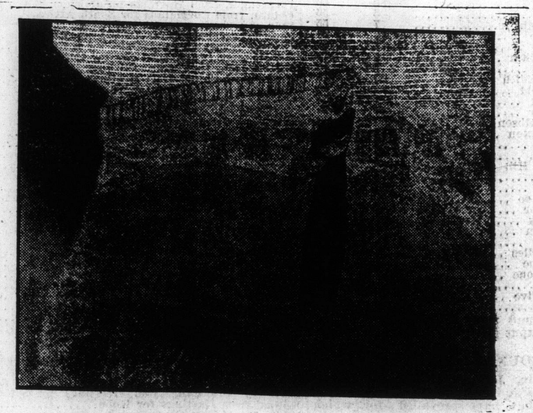
Dr. Mariano Desideri, an Italian scholar, has lately published a manuscript formerly belonging to the noble family of Roccabianca di Ripatransone, giving an account of the coronation of Charles II., written by an Italian eye-witness. This was Giuseppe Castelli, some time governor of the Abruzzi, a man of great valor, who was in the suite of Prince Alessandro Farnese, one of the guests of the coronation. The description given is the more interesting from an historical point of view, as the year 1661 saw the restoration of the monarchy in England. In view of the recent coronation, it may be of interest to give some account of the manuscript, which has been ably edited by Prof. Desideri, of the Liceo Regio, Tivoli, says a writer in the Antiquary. The public entry into London took place on Monday, April 22, 1661, the day preceding St. George's Day. The cortege extended over three miles. The author minutely describes four triumphal arches that had been erected, representing Abundance, Concord, Joy, and the Restoration of the Monarchy. All along the route the buildings were lavishly decorated with magnificent carpets and costly tapestry. At 7 on the morning of April 22 the King, accompanied by his suite, went to the Tower of London, where all who were to take part in the pageant had assembled. Castelli gives a minute description of the procession. First came a drum, followed by trumpets and the Duke of York's Guards on horseback; then came forty outriders, clad in red tunics, with silver lace. The esquires of the Knights of the Bath were followed by representatives of the Court of Chancery, the Master of the Ceremonies, cup-bearers, shield-bearers and others. The seventy Knights of the Bath, in their robes, were followed by the judges and the Earl Marshal. Then a drum, twelve trumpeters, the mace-bearer, sergeant and trumpeter, all superbly attired.

Next came the several orders of the nobility, followed by many heralds with cassocks of blue velvet and embroidered lace, bearing the royal arms. The lord chancellor and mace-bearers were followed by other judges. After the lord high treasurer came representatives of the dukedoms of Normandy and Aquitaine. These were immediately followed by the Duke of York with ten pages any twenty fourmen in splendid uniforms. Then came the Constable of England with twelve mace-bearers and the Lord High Chamberlain. Finally appeared His Majesty, clad in the royal robes embroidered with gold lace, riding a white horse sumptuously caparisoned. His Majesty was surrounded by a bodyguard of noblemen and gentlemen, all splendidly attired. Then came Gen. Monk, dressed in a superb uniform; then the Captain of Halberdiers, with halberd. The soldiers, Castelli notes, had a uniform like the Germans. A drum and four trumpeters came later, followed by the Royal Guards on horseback. These numbered 250, and carried carbines in their hands. A volunteer guard of gentlemen on horseback was headed by the lieutenant of the Tower of London. In this order the cavalcade, numbering 1,500, went to the royal palace. The following day, April 23, being the feast of St. George, His Majesty went by water to the neighboring Church of St. Peter, whither he was escorted by the noblemen and barons, who were present on the preceding day. The barons, earls, marquesses and dukes headed the procession. Then followed three carrying swords, symbolizing Justice, Fortitude and Mercy, the last blunted as a sign of mercy. Next came the chancellor, the constable, the chamberlain, the Duke of York; Gen. Monk, with the crown in his hand, and the Duke of Buckingham, with a silver globe, symbolizing the world. On entering the church the King sat on a chair near the throne, which was placed in the centre under the dome.

After many hymns had been sung, the King arose and took his seat near the altar, and listened to a long sermon preached by a bishop. This ended, the chancellor marched around the three sides of the church, asking in a loud voice all the dukes, marquesses, earls, knights and barons assembled if they wished to have Charles II. as their king. To which all answered, "Yes, yes! Long live the King!" This done, the King sat on the chair that had belonged to St. Edward, and was invested with his royal robes. The ceremony of anointing was performed by William Juxon, Archbishop of Canterbury, the same that had ministered to the King's father on the scaffold. Then two sceptres, one of which was said to be St. Edward's, were placed in the King's hands. He was then crowned with a magnificently jeweled crown. The King now for the first time assumed a position on the royal throne, in view of the people. The Duke of York and all the other noblemen advanced to swear allegiance to the new King. While the oath was being administered, the chancellor proclaimed on all sides the coronation of the King, exhorting all to show their fealty, and promising that on doing so they would find him a loving prince and father. While this proclamation was being made, gold and silver coins were thrown among those assembled.

The ceremony ended, His Majesty went to the great hall of parliament, where that morning he banqueted under a superb canopy with the Duke of York and, at other tables, all the nobility and members of parliament who were present.

Martell's Three Star Brandy is the favorite.



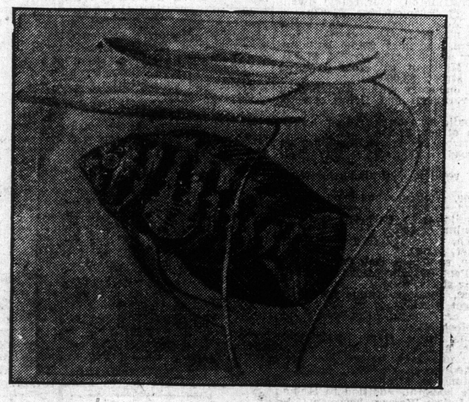
BATHING PICTURES.

Here is the alleged picture of a man who posed for his wife in a bathing suit on the beach at Ocean Grove, N. J. Though when not mixed up with the camera he is only about 5 feet 6 inches tall, here he is made to appear something like 15 or 16 feet high.

He wore no whiskers when the picture was taken, but the photograph says he did. In life he is short and fairly stout; here he is tall and thin, with a "lean and hungry look."

Moreover, the water of the Atlantic, never more calm and placid than on this particular day, appear as if they had suddenly found the "devil's hole" and are seen to plunge madly into an abyss of more than Niagaran dimensions. The staid and ancient fishing pier is trembling and tottering like one set apace by fiery waters, not unknown to New Jersey, but rarely found at the Grove.

Why is this? Figures, they say, "don't lie." Can photography do so?



LONG-TAILED FISH.

From the south of Brazil, where it is known as chanchito, which means "little pig," comes an odd-looking fish. A few specimens were introduced into Europe a few months ago, and careful study shows that they have a few marked peculiarities.

A thorough little pirate the chanchito is, for it wages incessant war against much larger fish.

When the time comes for spawning, it makes holes in the ground, but instead of laying its eggs in these, it lays them in a dark corner. Both parents guard the eggs until the large fish are about to come into the world, and then they carefully remove them to the holes which are already prepared and which serve the young ones as nests until they are ready to make their own way in the world.

In an aquarium a chanchito feels quite at home, and few more interesting fish have ever been placed in one.