

THE GENIUS OF NAPOLEON.

Earl Stanhope, in his report of conversations with the Duke of Wellington, says: "I asked him whether he thought Napoleon wholly indebted to his genius for his pre-eminence, and whether all his marshals were really so very inferior to him?" "Oh, yes; there was nothing like him. He suited a French army so exactly! Depend upon it, at the head of a French army, there was never anything like him. In short, I used to say of him that his presence on the field made the difference of 40,000 men. The French soldiers are more under control than ours. It was quite shocking what excesses ours committed when once let loose. I remember once at Badajos, when we stormed the town, entering a cellar and seeing some soldiers lying on the floor so dead drunk that the wine was actually flowing from their mouths! Yet others were coming in, not at all disgusted at seeing them, and going to do the same. Our soldiers could not resist wine. The French, too, could shift better for themselves, and always live on the country."

"Lady Salisbury asked which was the greatest military genius, Marlborough or Napoleon?—'Why, I don't know; it was very difficult to tell. I can hardly conceive anything greater than Napoleon at the head of an army—especially a French army. Then he had one prodigious advantage—he had no responsibility—he could do whatever he pleased; and no man has ever lost more armies than he did. Now with me the loss of every man told. I could not risk so much. I knew that if I ever lost 500 men without the clearest necessity, I should be brought upon my knees to the bar of the House of Commons.'

An account of the preparations made by Napoleon for the campaign of 1812, against Russia, is given by Major Liebert, of the German general staff, in the supplement to the *Militär Wochenblatt*. "The impression has more or less always existed that Napoleon entered upon this campaign without sufficient preparation, and that this in the first instance led to his defeat, and, secondly, also the want of discipline in his heterogeneous army caused by this insufficient preparation. This theory is, however, being dispelled the more the actual facts are brought to light. As regards Napoleon himself, the author says that one of the chief factors in his victorious wars was the thorough, systematic preparations that he gave to them, and his organizing talent, which enabled him to secure for himself a superiority of numbers. The principal share of the gigantic work of organization activity fell entirely to the Emperor, and his wonderful memory, his never-tiring power of working, and his investigation of all branches of administration, must astonish all who look closer into his undertakings.

It appears that Napoleon had actually brought into the field against Russia 608,000 men, 18,700 horses and 1,372 guns. That was the result of the grand preparations which Napoleon had imposed on his own country and on his allies. During the whole of his military career he had not prepared any campaign in such a thorough manner as the Russian; neither before nor after had he been able to dispose of anything like those numbers. But even in the course of the present century we only see them surpassed in the year 1870-71. Napoleon seems to have greatly over-rated his adversary, however, in expecting to meet him on an equal footing with himself and force him to a decisive battle; he could not arrive at this, and the wide field over which the enemy had to be pursued eventually caused his own breakdown.

GREAT BRITISH GENERALS.

"Melton Prior," of the *Illustrated London News*, replying to the *World*, speaks thus of our present great Generals: In case of a war into which England would be drawn, Adjutant-General Lord Wolseley would undoubtedly be in command of field operations. After him, Sir Frederick Roberts is the best worthy of consideration. General Sir Frederick Roberts proved himself a hero in Afghanistan. He led that famous quick march from Cabul to Candahar. In Burmah he

won more laurels, quelling decisively and thoroughly those brave and bigoted outlaws, the Dacoits. General Roberts is a small man, with heavy dark moustache and grizzled hair. He is about fifty-five years old, keen-eyed and impressive. General Roberts is very fond of ladies' society.

Of General Roberts it is to be said that he, as well as nearly every one of the British generals hereinafter mentioned, is at that ripe age of discreet activity which a commander reaches between fifty and sixty years of age.

Major-General Brackenbury was Lord Wolseley's military secretary. He served gallantly in the Ashantee war and wherever Lord Wolseley commanded. When General Earle was killed up the Nile, General Brackenbury brought Earle's column safely back through the perils of the cataracts. He is a big, stout man, stern, very solemn and reserved. General Brackenbury looks every inch a soldier, and has black beard and moustache.

General Sir Evelyn Wood is a little man who won his Victoria Cross in the Crimea. He has the misfortune to be very deaf, and has several times come near losing his life from that infirmity. At Slobane, just before Ulundi, in South Africa, General Wood didn't hear the Zulus behind him, and would have been massacred but for his aide-de-camp. He has, however, a very observant eye, and a merry disposition, and is a very keen soldier. He has light moustache and beard, gray hair, and is what might be called stumpy in figure.

General Sir Archibald Alison has only one arm left. Mr. Prior has seen him in battle in Amoafu and Ramleh, with his good arm wounded and riding like a demon, his bridle reins between his teeth. General Alison is red-headed, tall and thin, and wears red whiskers and moustache.

General Sam Brown is another one-armed commander. He distinguished himself in the Afghan war. He is quite gray, and wears long beard and moustache.

General Willis is a tall thin blonde, of cheery disposition and great gallantry. He was conspicuous at Tel-el-Kebir, and, like most commanders, wears moustache and whiskers in the field.

Prendergast, the great Indian general, is very tall and brown. He wears dark long beard and moustache, and was highly commended for his famously rapid march up the Irrawaddy to Mandalay. He so confused the Burmese by his quickness that he got to the capital before they had time to kill their European prisoners.

Major-General Sir Redvers Buller is a big, tall, surly fellow, very stern and reticent. He wears dark beard and moustache, and was in charge of the volunteer cavalry as colonel during the Zulu war. General Buller went up the Nile and brought back General Stewart's column in safety, through severe fighting, after that gallant officer met his death.

These are all gallant and tried commanders who have won their spurs, and are sure to come to the front of the British armies in their next war.

PERSONAL.

Sims Reeves is about to retire into private life, after being before the public for nearly fifty years.

Mr. W. D. Harrington, a prominent Conservative and retired merchant of Halifax, is appointed Collector of Customs at Halifax, in place of Hon. Wm. Ross, who may be superannuated.

Sir William Buell Richards, ex-Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, died recently of diabetes. He was buried at Brockville, where he was born 74 years ago. Sir William retired from the Bench several years ago. He has been confined to his bed for several months past.

Richard Holmes, of Farmersville, age 102 years, died recently after a brief illness. He was born at Chatham, New York. He was the oldest man in Eastern Ontario, and was considered the oldest Mason in Canada, and possibly in America, having been initiated into its secrets in 1813.

During her visit to Ottawa, Mme. Albani was a guest of Sir John Macdonald, to whom she is a veritable object of worship. He met her several times in London, and on one occasion the host, a high personage, asked her to sing. She replied that it was her invariable rule not to do so at parties, but that for the sake of the old chieftain she would make an exception, after which she sang, in a manner that electrified even this audience, composed of members of the English elite, "O Canada, mon pays, mes amours."

HERE AND THERE.

"PICKWICK."—There is little doubt, says a correspondent in "Notes and Queries," that Dickens took the name of Pickwick from "Moses Pickwick" on many of the stage coaches that plied between Bristol and London sixty or seventy years ago. This coach proprietor was a foundling, left one night in a basket in Pickwick street, and brought up in Corsham Workhouse till he was old enough to be employed in the stables, where the mail and stage coaches changed horses. By his good conduct and intelligence he got to be head hostler, and from that to horse coacher, and eventually to be a coach proprietor. His Christian name was given him as being a foundling, and his surname from the village where he was left as an infant.

DISCOVERIES AT ATHENS.—The excavations on the Acropolis at Athens have once more brought to light certain valuable works of ancient art. The principal are parts of a number of statues of heroic size, which when put together have been found to make two wonderful groups. One of these represents Hercules killing the marine deity, Triton. The other group consists of three mythical monsters, of which the upper portion represents the body of a man, while the lower part is a serpent. These discoveries are some of the most interesting ever made on the Acropolis. They resemble to a large extent the figures found not long ago among the ruins of the ancient Temple of Assos, near Troy. Their workmanship as well as vivid colouring have excited the admiration of archæologists, who attribute the sculptures to the seventh century before Christ.

ILLITERACY.—A census of the illiterates in the various countries of the world, recently published in the *Statistische Monatschrift*, places the three Slavic states of Roumania, Servia and Russia at the head of the list, with about 80 per cent. of the population unable to read and write. Of the Latin-speaking races Spain heads the list with 63 per cent., followed by Italy with 48 per cent., France and Belgium having about 15 per cent. The illiterates in Hungary number 43 per cent., in Austria 39 and in Ireland 21. In England they are 13 per cent., in Holland 10 per cent., in the United States (white population) 8 per cent. and in Scotland 6 per cent. Among the purely Teutonic States there is a marked reduction in the percentage of illiterates. The highest is in Switzerland, 2.5; in the whole German Empire it is but 1 per cent., while in Sweden, Denmark, Bavaria, Baden and Wurtemberg there is practically no one who cannot read and write.

JOHNSON AND THE BUTCHER.—An eminent carcass butcher, as meagre in his person as he was in his understanding, being one day in a bookseller's shop, took up a volume of Churchill's poems, and by way of showing his taste repeated the following line:

"Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free."

Then turning to Dr. Johnson, "What think you of that, sir?" said he. "Rank nonsense," replied the other. "It is an assertion without a proof, and you might, with as much propriety, say:

"Who slays fat oxen should himself be fat."

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.—London *Pall Mall Gazette*: Poor Prince Bismarck! He has been taking strenuous steps to protect the German language against the invasion of French. And now here is Professor Von Döllinger actually threatening its extinction by English! Here is what the professor told the Munich Academy lately: He held that the intellectual primacy of the world is certain one day to fall to the Anglo-Saxon race, as in ancient times it fell to the Greeks and Romans. The Germans will certainly have no small share in that intellectual world of the future, but that will be only indirectly, through the medium of the English language.

Dr. Döllinger must not count on either his gray hairs or his venerable reputation to protect him. We shall certainly expect to hear that he has been cast into prison, like Dr. Geffcken, for indiscreet and unpatriotic revelations.