

THE FETES AT LIEGE

The persistent vitality of the British Volunteer institution, through good report and evil report, for a period so considerable as ten years, is continually producing collateral results more or less valuable, which have, however, little or no connexion with the primary objects with which the Force was organized. We have often pointed out the obvious advantages which the practice of rifle-shooting, with its hearty and untainted spirit of emulation, the healthy exercise of the drill-ground and the field-day, and, above all, the friendly intercourse between different classes of society, have given to the present over the former generation of young Englishmen. And now it seems as if it may be possible that the casual visit, a few years ago, of a handful of English Volunteers, to compete for prizes, at Brussels, may ultimately bear fruit in helping the great work of the cultivation of a peaceful spirit between the nations of Europe, in place of the antagonistic feeling which, without doubt, existed in former days. Just as the admixture of various social ranks in the Volunteers at home has caused men to know and to like one another better, whatever may be the difference between their clothes or their work, so it is quite certain that the increase of friendly intercourse and friendly rivalry between nations can result in nothing but good. And we think we are not over-sanguine in saying that there is fair reason to believe that the present gathering of Riflemen at Liège, comparatively small as it is, will conduce quite as much to this desirable result as those far greater international meetings, in which, in a material and industrial point of view, so much has been gained.

Beginning, as we have said, with a hospitable greeting on the part of the Belgians to the few English Riflemen who went to Brussels in the year 1864, the affair, as far as Belgians and English were solely concerned, culminated three years ago, when the whole Belgian nation threw itself into the task of devising splendid festivities for the behoof chiefly of our countrymen. The next year we responded by showing such hospitality as we could in London to our hosts of the year before; and here it was supposed that the international courtesies on anything like a grand scale might fairly be allowed to terminate. The formal visits, as it were, had been paid, and the representatives of the two nations would meet in future on easy and friendly terms before each other's targets without the necessity of any special etiquette. However, Brussels having had its turn for several years, it occurred to the good citizens of Liège that they should like to hold out a challenge to all comers, and their glove has been picked up, not only by the English, but, we are glad to say, by the French civilian soldiers, and by the representatives of other nations. And this meeting, particularly of the French and English, on neutral territory, we take to be the really important feature of the meeting. No better place than the "cock-pit of Europe" could be selected for such a purpose, and that the meeting should come about, as it were, spontaneously, and at the invitation of the Sovereign of Belgium, gives it just the social character which is desirable. French soldiers know and respect English soldiers, and the English Army know and respect the French; but that the civilians of both countries should have a sample of what each could do, if fighting had to be done, is probably the best guarantee for peace.

The King of the Belgians, in the short and

excellent address which he made to the assembled riflemen at the Liège banquet, put in very terse language the fact which we have been endeavouring to bring out. He says: "Meetings of this kind should have as their only consequence perfection in the use of the arms of war, or the dexterity of those who take part in them. In bringing together so many brave men of nationalities so different, but equally devoted to their country, they will learn to know one another, to appreciate one another, to respect, between nation and nation, their character, their patriotism, and their individual aspirations and interests. Their tendency is to tighten the bond of the fraternity of nations, to favour the noble aspirations of our epoch towards the pacification of the world and the security of the rights of all."

The Burgomaster of Liège brings out also very happily the idea that there is a kind of propriety in the semi-warlike character of the friendly meeting between different nations in a country where they have so often met in fierce contest. We believe that the King and people of Belgium are in their character of independent and respected neutrals, doing a good work for Europe in thus bringing to the knowledge of one another the youth and manhood of their more powerful neighbours.

As for the meeting itself, considered as a tournament and as a holiday gathering, it appears from all accounts to be a brilliant success. We are particularly pleased to notice that the English Volunteers are said to be at their best as regards drill and discipline, and that the extemporized battalions are well organized and officered. It should never be forgotten that if we wear uniform at all, we should put on the discipline of the soldier as well as the coat. As far the shouting and jollity upon which some of our contemporaries have remarked we take little heed of it. Where there are numbers of young men out for a holiday there will be a very considerable exuberance of spirits, and probably a good deal of senseless noise. But this is only the overflowing of animal spirits, and we feel sure that in all important respects the English Volunteers will take the well-timed hint given to them by the Rev. Mr. Jenkins, last Sunday, to remember the good name which the British Army has always left behind it in Belgium.—*From The Volunteer Service Gazette.*

NATIONAL MUSIC.

Canada can boast of one peculiarly distinctive strain of music derived from the measured cadence of the paddle of the canoe which like that of the gondolier of Venice suggests a necessary song to bring the stroke into time. Moore's immortal, "Canadian Boat Song" has perpetuated the idea of the melody of the Canadian Boatman's Strain, yet a little less decoration would have made the air more like the original. The real boat song of the voyageur, heard in the stillness of the forest, simple though it be, yet according so perfectly with the indiscribable sigh of the pine, a sound which no one who ever has heard can forget, will never leave the memory of him who has listened to it. The song accompanying the steady tramp of the Varennes company, quartered at Amherstberg during the apprehension of the Fenian outbreak, was spirit-stirring as the celebrated "Hoc Tripudium Martis est" of the Hungarians.—The legitimate first owner of the soil possessed remarkable talent for music. Those who have heard the sweet chorus of Indian voices, lifted in praise to their Maker at the churches of the aborigines of Canada,

will recollect with a feeling of the deepest pleasure the sensations which those of adoration of the simple denizens of the forest, first afford him. For the Anglo-Saxon race, we can yet claim no musical talent in our land.—They are too busy to trouble their heads about such paltry matters. While at their workshop, or at their desk, they will whistle the airs that have been composed for them, but they have not "music in their souls."—*Dominion.*

CAPTURING MONKEYS.

Monkeys are pretty common, yet, as in all their families, remarkably cunning; has it ever occurred to the reader how they are taken? Pitfalls will take a lion, and the famished warrior of the forest, will, after a few days starvation, dart into a cage containing food and thus be caught. But how are the monkeys caught? The ape family resembles man. Their voices are human. They love liquor, and in Dartour and Sennar the natives make fermented beer, of which the monkeys are passionately fond. Aware of this the natives go to the parts of the forest most frequented by them and set on the ground calabashes full of the enticing liquor. As soon as the monkey sees and tastes it, he utters loud cries of joy which soon attract his comrades. Then an orgy begins, and in a short time the beasts all shew signs of intoxication. Then the negroes appear. The few who came too late to get fuddled escape. The negroes take some up and these begin to weep and cover them with maudling kisses. When a negro takes one by the hand to lead him off the nearest monkey will cling to the one who thus finds a support, and endeavor to get with him also. Another will grasp at him, and so on until the negro leads a staggering line of ten or a dozen tipsy monkeys. When finally brought to the village they are securely caged and gradually sober down, but for two or three days a gradually diminishing supply of liquor is given them so as to reconcile them by degrees to their state of captivity.

Figaro, writing on the suppression of bands in the cavalry, implores General Lebœuf not to cancel Marshal Niel's decision on that head. It declares that, if people in country towns who used to be enlivened by cavalry music are dissatisfied the measure is still popular with the trooper, who has no longer to salute the trombone or dread the sax-horn with the fair sex. The latter grievance appears to have worked terribly on the mind of the French private. The band (says *Figaro*) had long been viewed with a jealous eye, in consequence of its success in garrison towns. To believe that lively print, no trooper could enter a house without finding flute keys under the table or picking up a mouthpiece on the sofa. It may be asked if the same objections do not apply to the musicians of the infantry.

It is stated in one of the French papers that the Hindoos in the environs of Bombay have been much startled by the appearance of their God Vishnu, who has several times been seen at night whirling past them on a celestial wheel like a flash of fire. Directly he approaches them they prostrate themselves in the dust. Yet, all the time it is not really Vishnu; it is only a certain Mr. Kemp, who, ambitious to be the first velocipede rider under an Asiatic sun, has provided himself with one of these vehicles, but finding that the heat rendered it an incumbrance rather than a luxury in the daytime, is compelled to take his exercise upon it at night, by the aid of a lantern.