

BIOGRAPHY BOILED DOWN.

BY THE FAT CONTRIBUTOR.

Plutarch—I only know this gentleman by reputation. He is always spoken of in the plural number. "Plutarch's Lives" is a common expression, but how many there were of him I am not prepared to say.

General Duke of Wellington—An officer of the British army—Mr. Longfellow makes honorable mention of him as the "Warden of the Cinque Ports." Cinque means five, and he was the protector of five principal points, usually denominated Five Points. He lived to a ripe old age and died.

Julius Cæsar—Son of old man Cæsar. He was born at Rome in his infancy, and upon arriving at the state of manhood he became a Roman. He was a fighter and a warrior of some note. His friend Brutus one morning asked him how many eggs he had eaten for breakfast, and he replied, "*Et tu Brute!*" His friend became enraged at being called a brute, and stabbed Cæsar quite dead.

Mahomet—Author of the Koran, an exciting romance, which he wrote in the Mammoth cave at Mecca. He was the author of a religious creed with which he stuffed Turkey, and tried to get up a broil in Greece, but failed, many of his early followers suffered great persecutions. Some of them were burnt at the stake. He had three temples—one at Mecca, and one on each side of his head.

Guy Fawkes—a warm-hearted impulsive Englishman, who believed the Parliament too good for this earth, and devised an expeditious method of elevating the members to a better sphere. He was interrupted in his good intentions, but for which circumstances he would, doubtless have made a great noise in the world. He was executed for his disinterested benevolence, and was subsequently burnt in a place called Effigy.

Bonaparte I—A harem-scarem sort of a fellow who occupied a position of considerable responsibility in the French nation. The impression went abroad that he was ambitious, which damaged his reputation materially. He gained the respect and admiration of the French nation because happily, he was not a Frenchman. When asked if he thought he could govern France, he replied, "*Où Corsican.*" The close of his life was not so bright as its beginning, but there was some of it in a narrow compass.

THE DOG OF THE REGIMENT.

Animals are invariably great pets with soldiers. In Austria almost every regiment has a dog, and we of course had ours. Hector had his peculiarities; he was attached to no one in particular, but always recognized a Jager by a friendly wag of his stump of a tail. He was a short, brown-haired beast, of no particular breed, and first joined us in the battle of St. Lucia. Whence he came no one knew, but he was over to be seen in the thickest of the fight and firing, and before the end of it was severely wounded. He was considered to have shown great bravery, and was immediately voted into the Jager corps, and made an honorary member of each mess-table. From that time whichever mess Hector graced with his presence at the dinner-hour (and he never failed to turn up at one or the other,) the cook, after allotting the portions, always made one for Hector, and called out his name in turn with the others—a proceeding which the dog perfectly well understood and listened for. Whenever any of the Jagers were mustered for parade, Hector always turned out and took up his position behind the commanding offi-

cer in front of the staff trumpeter. On the occasion to which I have alluded, i. e. our final separation from the old companies, Hector, seeing that some movement was in contemplation, hurried on to the ground, but was not noticed until the last moment, when some of the men called him to accompany them back to quarters, while we called him to go forward with us. The dog looked first at one and then at the other, with a profoundly reflective air; but observing that we were in full marching order, while the others were only in fatigue dress, he decided, to our great joy, that duty required him to cast in his lot with us, and accordingly trotted cheerfully by our side during that long day's march. Those who hold the doctrine of the metempsychosis of souls would have little difficulty in believing that the spirit of a brave, active, and thoughtful officer was imprisoned in Hector's poor uncouth form.

SHAKING HANDS UNDER THE ALPS.

A correspondent of an Italian paper describes the scene when the two working parties in the Mont Cenis tunnel met and shook hands:—

The earlier use of improved machinery enabled the labourers from the Italian end at Bardonecchia to make a greater advance than their fellow-workers from Modane, and the advantage was maintained to the end, so that the last act in the drama was accomplished, as we see, at some distance to the north of the half-way point. The proceedings are thus described in the *Opinione*: "The band, composed of labourers, struck up the 'Royal March' and the country folks flocked round the mouth of the tunnel as we made our triumphant entry in four railway carriages. We were about a hundred in all. Knowing that the temperature would be very different in the bowels of the earth, we had doffed our winter garments, exchanging them for lighter materials, a precaution of which we had no cause to repent, for before we had made a kilometre the centigrade thermometer marked 17 deg. above zero, and then successively 20, 23, and 29, 50 deg. [63 deg. 68 deg. 73 deg. and 85 deg. F.] During work the temperature rises to 35 deg. [95 deg. F.] At the end of the six or seven kilometres, the rails not being laid down beyond this point, we had to alight and proceed on foot. The dense darkness was lighted up by the torches and lanterns borne by the workmen.

"At last we stood before the curtain of rock still stretched between the two open portions. In this mass a hole had been pierced, allowing the parties on the opposite side to shake hands. You may well imagine with what feelings we contemplate the work accomplished, thinking of the untiring activity, the intelligence, and the dogged endurance with which the gigantic enterprise had been carried through. The mines were prepared, and nothing remained but to charge them and apply the match. Perspiring at every pore, we had to retrace our steps about a half a kilometre, in order to allow this last operation to be performed. The open of a Dante could alone describe this Vulcan's forge, and its half-naked, bronzed figures sitting to and fro in every direction, torch in hand.

"Close upon 5 o'clock a terrible detonation was heard. The first mine had exploded. So violent was the shock that all our lights were at once extinguished, and we remained in utter darkness. Then crash upon crash in quick succession, volumes of smoke, a fearful stench of gunpowder, and the breach was opened. We sped forward. What a solemn moment was

that. We jostled one another most unmercifully in our hurry to pass through, for every one was eager to be foremost. The first over was the engineer Graton, who had to duck his head to avoid many a knock against the shattered masses of rock. And then the double current of visitors from Bardonecchia and from Modane met, and our cries of "*Viva l'Italia! Viva Vittorio Emanuele!*" resounded sepulchrely through the vaulted passago. The great work was accomplished after 13 years and 40 days of unremitting toil; and as we shook hands all round we recalled to mind how many had tried to throw cold water upon the scheme, declaring it physically impossible, or at best very doubtful."

Large naval ships, drawing from twenty to thirty feet of water, have a very large amount of pressure exerted against the lower part of their hulls, and Admiral Inglefield of the British navy has invented a hydrostatic engine to utilize this hydrostatic power as a mechanical force for actuating their steering gear. Such apparatus was fitted to Her Majesty's ship *Achilles*, and afterward in an improved form to the Turkish iron-clad *Fethi Bulend*. The machine consists of an hydraulic cylinder to be placed on the keel of the ship with a piston and rod, very much after the manner of the ordinary steam cylinder. Into this the water will be admitted in the ship through a Kingston valve. To the piston rod of this cylinder is attached a plunger pump of the diameter of three inches thus giving an accumulated force in the pump of say 100 times the pressure in the working cylinder, or equal to 1,000 pounds on the square inch. The water is conveyed from a chamber surrounding the pump to a four-inch hydraulic ram attached to the end of a lever of a ratchet-brace, the ratchet-wheel of which is keyed fast to the steam shaft of the propeller. There is a ram box attached to the ram cylinder, which is actuated by a pin in the ratchet-lever to which it is connected by a rod working the valve, and thus causing a continuous action of the ram as long as the water pressure is permitted to act. When the screw is started into motion the ratchet-wheel runs away from the pawl, and leaves it behind in its revolutions. To prevent the clinking noise, and to guard against accidents to the gear when the ship's main steam engines started the pawl is lifted out of the way and secured by a pin especially provided for the purpose. The joints in the hydraulic pipes are upon a patented principle. The two ends are merely placed together and secured by a nut, packed with an india-rubber ring, which is pressed upon by the water, packs the joint as close and as tight as in the case of the leather packing in an hydraulic ram. One of the great difficulties to be overcome in the application of the hydrostatic machines has been that of securing good connections in fitting the apparatus so low in the hull and in making perfect the orifices where the pipes have to pass through the bulkheads. During the testing of the machine the pressure gauge steadily registered 1,000 pounds to the inch and was brought to a standstill at very considerably higher pressure when the discharge cock was shut off, under this enormous pressure the whole machine and its accessories were perfectly tight no "weeping" at any of the points nor a "tear" anywhere to be discovered. Such a power, always ready as soon as the Kingston valve is opened, is valuable for any work, steering, turning turrets or screw shafts, raising guns, or in ships provided with the proper wells, raising the screw bodily.