

ARTILLERY EXPERIMENTS At SHOEBOURNESS.

An interesting experiment took place at Shoeburness this week, by direction of Colonel Elwyn, R. A., the commandant. A troop of horse artillery and battery of field artillery were ordered to construct gun pits for the protection of a sub-division, or two guns. They were limited as to time, and only furnished with the usual entrenching tools carried by every battery. Within half an hour, the field battery, which was working in very easy soil, composed of sandy loam, threw up a breastwork about 30 feet in length by 3 feet high, and 3½ feet thick. Behind this the ground was excavated slightly, so as to form a platform for the guns. Two small embrasures cut in the parapet completed the operation. Standing in front of this gun pit, one could just see the heads of the defenders over the breastwork. The horse artillery were working in much stiffer soil; still, they laboured with a will, the gunners seeming thoroughly to enter into the spirit of the thing. Two gun-pits, and two limber-pits 25 yards to the rear, were formed within an hour; the parapet of the latter being about 3ft. 6in. high by 3ft. thick, and of the former 4ft. high by 5ft. 6in. in thickness at the base, the earth, as usual, being excavated from behind. The parapets were formed of rough sods and stiff clay, mixed with sandy loam. All having been completed, the pits were armed with wooden models or dummies, all more or less roughly representing guns with their detachments. Fire was then opened upon them at a distance of 1000 yards by one of the 9-pounder bronze muzzle-loading rifle guns, belonging to the Committee on Field Artillery Equipment for India, using common and Shrapnel shell. The first few rounds were ineffective, the bullets of the Shrapnel and the pieces of the common shell, burst by time fuses, whistled harmlessly over the pits, or formed a lodgment in the parapet. At length a lucky shell struck on a gun wheel, broke up without bursting, killed three men, and destroyed the wheel. One of the Horse Artillery guns having thus been temporarily disabled, the fire was directed on the large gun-pit, containing the two guns of the field battery. This practice was attended with precisely the same result. After several ineffective rounds, a shell grazed the crest of the parapet and struck plump on a wheel, which it destroyed. This shell, although fitted with a time-fuse, burst on striking, blew two dummies to pieces, mortally wounded a third, and although it is impossible to estimate the moral effect on the rest of the detachment, it would doubtless have been considerable. The practice, so far as it has gone, shows that the best way to injure guns placed in pits is to fire direct at them with concussion shell. The gun used on this occasion had fired over 1000 rounds, yet it shot with great accuracy.—*Globe* of Saturday.

THE RIBBONMAN'S OATH

A correspondent of the *Dublin Express* gives the following as the correct copy of a form of Ribbon oath, recently found by the police in making a sudden irruption into a public-house in a country notorious for agrarian outrages.

"I (A. B.) hereby agree to become a true and loyal member of this society and I solemnly swear before Almighty God to be true and loyal to the brotherhood, and to each member of the same; and I will be obedient to my committee and superior officers, and agree to all their articles, laws, rules and

regulations that have been since the commencement, and all amendments added thereto, and to perform all duties imposed on me with loyalty, faith and fidelity; and I swear that neither hopes or fears, rewards or punishment, shall induce me to give evidence against any brother or brothers for any act or expression of theirs done or made collectively or individually. And in pursuance of this obligation I swear to aid, as best I can, with purse and person, any brother or brothers who may be in distress; and I further swear to own no allegiance to any Protestant or heretic Sovereign, ruler, prince or potentate, and that I will not regard any oath delivered to me by them or their subjects, be they judge, magistrate, or else, as binding. And I swear to aid, as best I can, any brother or brothers who may be on trial for any act or expression of theirs, before magistrate, judge, jury or else, and be ready at all times to aid by every means in my power to assist in procuring his or their liberation, and, if myself a witness, to disregard any oath delivered to me on such occasions by judge, jury, magistrate, counsel, clerk, lawyer, official, or else, and that I will not regard such oaths as binding. And in revenge for the sufferings of our forefathers, and protection of our rights, I further swear to aid as best I can, in exterminating and extirpating all Protestants and heretics out of Ireland or elsewhere; to hunt, pursue, shoot and destroy all Protestants or heretic landlords, proprietors, or employers, and also to hunt, shoot, pursue, and destroy all landlords or proprietors belonging to the Church of Rome should he or they evict his or their tenants from any house, land, home, or holding of theirs. And further solemnly swear, to aid as best I can, in burning, sacking and destroying all Protestants or heretic churches or places of worship, and all houses used as such by members of different heretical denominations in this country, and to level the same to the ground.

"I also swear to have no intercourse, communion, or trade, neither to buy or sell, barter or exchange, give or take, or have any dealings whatever with said Protestants or heretics, unless on such occasions as cannot be avoided.

"I also swear to defend the farmer, the poor man and the widow and the orphans of any brother against the oppression of landlords and the tyranny of the Saxon laws; and I further solemnly swear to do all in my power to procure the independence of Ireland, and aid as best I can in allowing none but Irishmen to possess land, and Ireland for Irish.

"I also solemnly swear to shoot, destroy, burn and pursue to death any former brother who may turn informer or traitor, or who may refuse to perform any duty ordered by his committee or superior officers, or any other duty which may fall by lot or otherwise to execute. And I agree that my person shall be at all times at their service, to go wherever required or whatever sent, and also to aid by every means in my power any brother or brothers of this society executing the orders of other committees or officers belonging thereto, though not in my district, and to aid as best I can for them in the performance of their duty.

"And I most solemnly swear to keep all secrets, passwords, signs, orders or otherwise belonging to this society, and that I shall never divulge the same by word of mouth or otherwise; and I swear neither to mark, or indite with pen, pencil, stone, chalk, or any other mineral or substance above or under wood, above or under water, above or under land, above or under air, on the sea

or elsewhere, or to use therewith any substance whatever above or under, &c., be it herb, tree, shrub, wood, liquid, mineral, or else, above or below this earth, above or under, &c., in the sea or elsewhere, to be true or inform of any signs, secrets or passwords, orders, doings, actions or expressions that have been, are being, or that will be belonging to this brotherhood."

A form of oath so prolix must be a heavy tax upon the memory of the conscientious Ribbonman who wishes to discharge his duty fully.

THE OLDEST CITY IN THE WORLD

Damascus is the oldest city in the world. Tyre and Sidon have crumbled on the shore, Baalbec is a ruin; Palmyra is buried in a desert; Nineveh and Babylon have disappeared from the Tigris and Euphrates. *Damascus remains what it was in the days before Abraham*—a centre of trade and travel—an island of verdure in the desert—a presidential capital," with martial and sacred association extended through thirty centuries. It was near Damascus that Saur of Tarsus saw the light above the brightness of the sun, the street which is called Strait, in which it is said "he prayed," still runs through the city. The caravan comes and goes as it did a thousand years ago: there is still the sheik, the ass and the water wheel, the merchants of the Euphrates and the Mediterranean still "occupy" these "with the multitude of their wares." The city which Mahomet surveyed from a neighbouring height, and was afraid to enter, because it was given to men to have but one paradise, and for his heart he was resolved not to have it in this world," is to-day what Julian called the "eye of the East," as it was in the time of Issiah "the head of Syria." From Damascus came the damson, or blue plums, and the delicious apricot of Portugal, called damasco, damask or beautiful fabric of cotton and silk, with vines and flowers raised upon a smooth bright ground, the damask rose, introduced into England in the time of Henry VIII., the Damascus blade, so famous the world over for its keen edge and wonderful elasticity, the secret of whose manufacture was lost when Tamerlane carried off the artist into Persia; and that beautiful art of inlaying wood and steel with silver and gold, a kind of mosaic engraving and sculptural united called damaskening—with which boxes, bureaux, swords and guns are ornamented. It is still a city of flowers and bright waters, the streams of Debanon and the "river of gold" still murmur and sparkle in the wilderness of the Syrian gardens.

The *Omaha Republican* describes the Indian Chief Red Cloud, as probably one of the most crafty and intelligent Indians on the plains. Physically, he is a model of perfection—if we may except a slight stoop in his shoulders. When erect, as he always stands when angry or in earnest, his height is six feet two inches. He has a ponderous head, with a high forehead and massive brain. His judgment seldom fails, and his instinctive perception is most acute. The face would be handsome only for a too prominent nose, slightly inclined to the hook order. His eye is black and sharp, ever rolling and watchful, the guardian of his bloody reputation, as it were, and seeming to dictate the hellish designs so readily accomplished by his followers.

With Phil. Sheridan on his track, this good-looking monster will soon pay the penalty of his crimes by a swing from an improvised gallows.