

## THE SOLDIER'S DRESS.

There is scarcely any question which requires so much careful consideration at the present moment as that of the dress of our soldiers. For many years past the subject has been keenly criticised in many shapes but little progress has been made in the matter. Notwithstanding all that has been said with a view of improvement in the dress of the soldier, he is left with the same heavy load to carry, and the same unsuitable clothes to wear as he was almost a quarter of a century ago. Instead of going with the times, as civilians do, and adopting a style of dress the most conducive to health and comfort, we continue to clothe our military in a manner as inconvenient and injurious as can possibly be devised, and then wonder that there is so large a percentage of sickness in the Army. Disregarding common sense, which tells us that if a man has to walk a long distance he encumbers himself only with the baggage he actually requires, the practice in the Army is altogether the reverse, and it is really a pitiable sight to witness during hot weather a regiment of the Line on the march to change barracks. The principle to be carried out is that the soldier should be so clothed and accoutred that his movements are not impeded, and he has perfect freedom for his arms, but, encased as he is in a multitude of straps, with a heavy pack at his back, he is like a machine, only able to turn in the given direction, so that it is not to be wondered at if he suffers from chest disease amongst other things. Altogether, if an endeavour had been made to render the soldiers' dress, in many instances as ridiculous and uncomfortable as possible, greater success could scarcely have been better obtained. In this respect, the Household troops are little if at all better off than their brethren of the Line; all appear to have been tarred with the same brush. What, for example, can be a more ludicrous sight than to see a Life Guardsman, of six feet two or three inches in height, in undress uniform with a shell-jacket barely long enough for a boy half the size? Then, again, the full dress, though undoubtedly imposing as a Sovereign's escort, is hardly fitted for actual Service, and in summer time must be somewhat perplexing to the wearer. Notwithstanding it is well understood our Household cavalry, by reason of their weight, will ride down "anything" in the world, it would be highly desirable to find a little more consideration shown both for man and horse. It is only charitable to suppose that the scanty proportions of the undress is compensated for by the extraordinary weight of the full dress, and that an average must be struck between them. A charge on the "Scrubs" is one of the prettiest sights that can well be seen, although we cling to the opinion that fewer men would be unhorsed, and the charge itself better executed, if less weight were carried by both man and beast. Traditional as unquestionable are the bearskins of the infantry, they must be uncommonly inconvenient in a high wind, and must render it a difficult matter for the wearer to keep his equilibrium; but we suppose they will not be got rid of for the present. Indeed, whichever way we look there is ample room, and there are sufficient reasons for improvement. A brass helmet may be essential to the calling of a fireman, but it can scarcely be considered appropriate for a Dragoon in a scorching sun during a long march. We are not quite inclined to go to the lengths of a Life Guardsman, who, having fought at Waterloo, was questioned on his return as to the dress

in which he would like to fight again, supposing the necessity to arise, replied "In my shirt sleeves"; but we certainly do think that the greater ease given to a soldier, the greater will be the freedom with which he will use his limbs, and consequently, when in action, will inflict more severe punishment upon the enemy. It is notorious that at the time of the Crimean war our men threw away their packs by wholesale, and so it would be the case again if some judicious alteration is not made in their equipments. We are most desirous that the English troops should be smart in appearance and kept up to the mark; but it is simply absurd to thrust a man into clothing that fits like a straight jacket, and maddens him. Whenever shall we take a hint from our foreign neighbours? Both the French and Prussian soldiers are far more appropriately accoutred and clothed than are ours; they carry less weight on their backs in time of peace when changing barracks as on the march, and are not so absurdly loaded when in action as to render it a matter of actual necessity to throw away their packs. The weight a horse carries is far above what he should do if activity is desirable or thought to be of any moment, and we hold it to be most undesirable that this exceptional state of things should continue. Heavy caps and helmets, tightened socks, as well as clothing that keeps men warm when they should be kept cool, and cool when they ought to be warm, must not only injure the soldier's health but impair the efficiency of the Service, cause unnecessary expense, and create disease. Times out of number suggestions have been made by competent persons to alter this state of things, but they have been invariably ignored. It is just possible that the critical position in which the country is now placed, may induce those in authority to make such alterations in the soldier's dress, that if he should be called upon to fight, he may be enabled to do so with the same ease and freedom as other men, and not bound up as he is at present in swaddling clothes—*The Broad Arrow*.

## TRUE HEROISM.

The battle of Alival was fought on the 23rd day of January, 1846. It was the bloodiest in modern history up to that time, since then it has been eclipsed in its sanguinary character by Inkerman, Solferino, and by Sadowa. At one time the Sikh cavalry had well nigh captured Sir Harry Smith himself, who was obliged to shift his position in consequence. At this moment an officer of his staff was struck down by a fragment of shell, which shattered his right thigh and hip-joint in a hideous manner. Some men of his troop, seeing him fall, obtained leave to run to his assistance, and in a few minutes he was on a stretcher and being carried to the rear. The men were devoted to him, and they carried him thro' that dreadful field of slaughter with as much care as if conveying a baby to its cradle. When within a short distance of the staff-surgeon's tent, they came upon a private of the regiment, lying desperately wounded. The poor fellow looked up piteously and touched his cap, as he recognised his officer in agony on the stretcher. Captain C— called to the men to halt, and to raise him up slightly; leaning over, he soon saw the nature of the soldier's wound, which was far less dangerous than his own.

"Lift me out," he said; "I can't move; you lift me out; that'll do, gently—yes that's broken too," (they touched his back.) "So—now carry him to the doctors; they can do nothing for me, not too late for him

yet—just a little more so," (facing the enemy,) "that's it."

"But, sir," remonstrated one of the men. "Be quick with him, then come back; I'm not likely to have left this," he added, with a slight smile.

The men did as ordered, depositing the wounded trooper, they went to Captain C—. He had not, indeed, left that; he lay facing the enemy still, and the playful smile with which he had addressed to them his last words lingered yet on his face; but his troubles were over; victory or defeat were now alike to him, and he had left the field, of strife for that peaceful world where dwell the spirits of the just made perfect.

The instances of men hopelessly wounded refusing to monopolize the doctor are by no means rare; and if a battle field is sometimes a scene of outrages at which humanity shudders, it occasionally provides us with unsurpassed heroism and self-sacrifice.

Our advices from Hong Kong state that an expedition was about to start for Tientsin. Colonel A. K. Gore, of the 29th Madras Native Infantry, was to take command; and it would consist of 200 men of the 75th Foot, 800 men of the 29th Madras Native Infantry, and two batteries of Artillery, under the command of Captain Sexton, R.A.

The Halifax Citizen of the 26th ult. says "There was on exhibition at the bank of Montreal yesterday 358 ounces of gold, the product of 50 tons of quartz, got out by 30 men in one month at the Albion mines, Montague, of which Mr. Walter Lawson is agent. The total product of gold from the new mines at Montague for the past month amounts to 533 oz. 13 dwts. 10 grains."

UNITED STATES—The militia authorities of the State of New Jersey have just arranged for the first militia rifle match upon the English and Canadian systems. It is to be held near Newark, on the 22nd and 23rd of September. The Hythe system and the Springfield army rifle is to be used. The match is to be in two stages. In the first, all comers compete at one and two hundred yards. The thirty best shots are to be allowed a second competition at three and four hundred yards. The ten who lead at this range are again to compete with Winchester rifles, but at what range is not stated. The rifle match promises to be popular, and in a year or two the distance will be extended to a thousand yards as is the case in Canada.

## THE LOSS OF THE CAPTAIN.

The sinking of the iron clad Captain of the Spanish Coast on Thursday morning last, with all on board, is a calamity such as has not befallen the British navy since the Royal George, with Kempenfeldt and twice four hundred men, went down at her anchor at Spithead. At night the vessel rode the waves the finest war ship, perhaps that ever sailed these seas. At dawn her consort swept the horizon in vain for the least trace of her. Only later in the day some stray spars and small boats that the great deep had given up attested her dismal fate. In the face of so terrible a disaster as this—a disaster which not only swallows up the superb specimen of naval architecture ever known, but carries down with it five hundred gallant English sailors—it may seem harsh to dwell on mere points of technical precision; and yet in the interests of humanity it is proper that the build of the Captain should be touched on, that the revelation of its now lamentably well-proven