

## BAITLES WITH CLOUDS

Novel Use of Cannon in Foreign Countries.

### TESTS MADE IN ITALY AND FRANCE

Professor Serviss Tells How Man Has at Last Begun to Rule the Clouds—Vine Growers' Method of Employing Artillery Against Thunder and Hail Storms.

Travelers in the valleys of the Po and the Rhone during the past season have had an opportunity to witness a new and thoroughly scientific use of cannon in battles fought without bloodshed, yet ending with rout on one side and victory on the other. The vine growers of northern Italy and of southeastern France have begun to employ artillery against thunder and hail storms, writes Professor Garrett T. Serviss in the New York Journal. In many cases the women have been the cannoniers, and the roar of the contest has frequently recalled that of an actual battle. As many as 15,000 guns have been engaged in the vine wars along the great valley of the Po and its bordering plains, and government assistance has been given to the combatants in both France and Italy. The enthusiastic reports of those who have taken part in the novel defense of the vineyards are filled with stories of constant success against the enemy.

These battles with storms have thus assumed great practical and scientific interest and importance. It seems to have been demonstrated that it is perfectly feasible by shooting at the clouds of an advancing and gathering thunderstorm to break up their array and to introduce so much confusion in their ranks as to prevent entirely the formation of hail, the fall of which during such storms often results in the ruin of many acres of costly vines. A single cannon shot, a commanding eminence suffices to protect about 60 acres of surrounding land. But isolated guns are not efficient. They must be used in batteries covering many salient points suitably chosen with reference to one another, and the system of pickets connected with the guns needs to be as carefully organized as in the case of an army.

Many times these battles take place at dead of night. The sentinels, seeing suspicious clouds gathering, give the alarm, and immediately at all the stations within the threatened district the guns are manned and at a signal are fired in concert at the clouds. Twice a minute the volleys roar at first and after that more slowly until the danger is past. Blank charges are used, and anular whirls of air, like smoke rings, dart from the muzzles of the guns to a height of a mile or more, tearing asunder the gathering clouds and causing so much commotion in the electrically charged vapors that the conditions which lead to the formation of hail are prevented, and only gentle and refreshing rain falls instead of the dreaded bombardment of ice projectiles.

The best reply, perhaps, to those who doubt the efficiency of this system of defense against storms is that the insurance companies have reduced their rates to the vine growers in the protected regions 33 per cent since the guns have been in use. What works so well in France and Italy would doubtless work equally well in this country, and Professor E. W. Hilgard has already suggested that the system should be introduced in our middle west, where great damage is caused by thunderstorms.

When a beginning like this is once made, nobody is ever able to predict what the end will be. It has long been the dream of some meteorologists that man would eventually attain to a sufficient command over the elements to enable him, if not absolutely to rule the clouds, at least to interfere successfully with their movements and formation. It is an old superstition among many races that magicians and wizards can make and prevent rain and direct the wind in its course. Whether this is a half conscious memory of some past age of human mastery over atmospheric phenomena or a prophetic tendency forecasting the direction of scientific progress, at any rate the success of the vine growers' protective artillery proves that man's control over the powers of the air is not all a dream.

A few years ago the failure to produce rain in a season of drought by firing dynamite bombs from balloons discouraged efforts in the direction of the artificial production of desirable states and conditions of the weather, but now it seems that the problem only needed to be attacked from a different side in order to give promise of at least a partial solution. There would be no cause for wonder if in a few years it should be found practicable, by means similar to those employed in Italy and France, not only to protect vineyards from hail storms, but to dissipate the destructive power of many local tempests and even of the dreaded western tornadoes themselves.

At the immense atmospheric disturbances, hundreds and thousands of miles in linear extent, which are technically known as cyclones, will ever submit to human control is far too much to expect, but the world will be a pleasant dwelling place after local storms have been robbed of their terrors, and man will be a proud rider when he can feel that the winged horses of the air obey his bridle rein.

### Plan to Improve British Army Horses.

An attempt is being made to improve the existing system of purchasing horses for the British army. The war office has decided to offer at various provincial agricultural shows \$250 each for horses likely to make military mounts.



### Songs of Praise

Ottawa, Jan. 20, 1900.  
I have used SURPRISE SOAP since I started house and find that it lasts longer and is better than other soaps I have tried.  
J. Johnston.  
Frederickton, N.B., Dec. 15th, 1900.  
Having used SURPRISE SOAP for the past ten years, I find it the best soap that I have ever had in my house and could not use any other when I can get SURPRISE. Mrs. T. Henry Troup.  
St. Thomas, Ont.  
I have washed for three brothers that work on the railroad, and SURPRISE SOAP is the only soap to use. We tried every other kind of soap, and still everybody why our overalls have such a good color.  
Maudie Logan.  
Montreal.  
Can't get wife to use any other soap. Says SURPRISE is the best.  
Chas. C. Hughes.  
SURPRISE is a pure hard SOAP.

### General Stark in a Hole.

There is nothing like old letters and old diaries for bringing history to life again. What historian has drawn such a picture of the hero of Bennington as this, borrowed from the journal of Colonel Israel Angel of Rhode Island? Even the spelling gives color to the truth of the account.  
"Sept. 21st 1780. A Rany morning but soon broke away the gentlemen met again this day to settle the dispute between Barron Sturgeson and Col. Hazen but did not finish the business, went to dobs Ferry in the afternoon on our way back a merry scene happened Genl Stark going to water his horse at a place called The Stone, mired him, and got him into the mud and mire. The Genl got out without any damage except bedaubing himself with mud, the adj. gen. also mired his horse, but he got out without difficulty. Genl. Stark was drawn out by the Soldiers."—Youth's Companion.

### Imitation Teeth.

At an earlier period in the development of the art imitation teeth were made as perfect as possible, in respect to both shape and whiteness, so that their freedom from blemish often rendered their falsity more conspicuous. Nowadays the matter is better understood, and defects are purposely made in order to contribute to illusion.

### Recrimination.

First Boy—Your father must be an awful mean man. Him a shoemaker and makin you wear them old boots!  
Second Boy—He's nothin to what your father is. Him a dentist, and your baby only got one tooth—Irish Independent.

Many a man looks upon marriage as an institution that enables him to put his property in his wife's name.—Chicago News.

### A Bull by Lord Russell.

"The late lamented Lord Chief Justice Russell had, I believe, little in his accent to indicate that he was born on the other side of the St. George's channel," says a correspondent, "but now and then, like all his countrymen, he would betray his nationality by perpetrating what is called a bull. I remember, a good many years ago, I was at a political meeting at Balam. It was in 1880 or thereabouts, when coercion was the burning question. Lord (then Sir Charles) Russell made an impassioned speech in favor of liberty, in the course of which he said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, if the government coercion bill is carried so man in Ireland will be able to speak upon politics unless he is born deaf and dumb."  
"Curiously enough, nobody laughed. Every one seemed so overawed by the eloquence of the speaker that the bull to all appearance passed unnoticed, a testimony surely to Lord Russell's power as an orator."—London News.

### Cleopatra and Her Pearl.

It is said that Cleopatra made a banquet for Antony, the costliness of which excited his astonishment, and when Antony expressed his surprise Cleopatra took a pearl earring, which she dissolved in a strong acid, and drank to the health of the Roman triumvirate, saying, "My draft to Antony shall far exceed it."  
There are two difficulties in this anecdote. The first is, that vinegar would not dissolve a pearl, and the next is that any stronger acid would be wholly unfit to drink. Probably the solution is this: The pearl was sold to some merchant whose name was synonymous with a strong acid and the money given to Antony as a present by the fond queen. The pearl melted, and Cleopatra drank to the health of Antony as she handed him the money.

### It Keeps Them Well.

That is exactly what our Vapo-Cresolene will do for your children. When any contagious disease is in the neighborhood you can keep your children from having it by allowing them to breathe in the vapor every night. Not a disease germ can live in this vapor, yet it is perfectly safe. You see it is that little "ounce of prevention" you have heard so much about. It brings quick relief from croup, colds, coughs and other throat troubles. Vapo-Cresolene is sold by druggists everywhere. A Vapo-Cresolene outfit, including the Vapo-Cresolene, complete, \$1.50; extra supplies of Cresolene, 25 cents; illustrated booklet containing the physicians' testimonials free upon request. Vapo-Cresolene Co., 150 Fulton St., New York, U.S.A.

Recommended and sold by C. H. Gunn & Co., Central Drug Store, Chatham.

### A YANKEE BARGAIN DRIVER.

The Lesson He Gave a New York Real Estate Man.

The farmers of Connecticut have not lost any of the old time Yankee cunning for which they have been noted since the days of the 13 original states. A New York real estate man had an experience there which convinced him that they were just as good bargain drivers as ever. He tells the following story:

In making out the papers for some Brooklyn property the signature of a Connecticut farmer was wanting, and I decided to go to Mystic, a small town in the eastern part of the state. The man lived some distance in the country, and I applied at a livery stable for a rig and driver.

"I am sorry that I can't give you a driver," said the liveryman, "but there is a funeral in town today, and all of my men are busy. The horse knows the way, though, and he'll take you there without trouble."

I doubted it when I saw the horse and still more when I saw the cart. I was brought out, but I finally reached the right farm. I had no sooner left the cart to go up to the farmhouse than the horse started for home of his own accord. He turned around and shot that the cart was broken and was broken into bits.

"That will cost you about \$200," said the farmer.

"But the whole outfit is not worth more than \$7," I protested.

"No matter," said the farmer, "the city and must have money. At least the liveryman will think so. He will take the cart into court if you don't pay his price, and then it will cost you about \$300."

I decided that I did not care to go back to Mystic and went to the next farm to find a man who would drive me to another station, eight miles away.

"I'll give you \$5 to drive me to the station," I said.

"I couldn't drive you anywhere today," was the answer.

I doubled my offer.

"No, I can't do it. I've been drivin around all day, and it would kill my horse," replied the farmer, who knew he had me "up against it."

"I'll buy your horse. How much do you want?"

"Well, I calculate he stands me in about \$18, and my time is worth \$2 more to drive you over," was the way he figured it out.

I paid over the money, and we started for the station with barely enough time to catch the train. He drove with the lines and I with the whip, and between us we made it.

"How much will you give me for the horse, now that I'm through with him?" I asked.

"Don't want the horse. He's no use to me. Take him with you," said the man, knowing very well that I couldn't take the horse on the train.

"Will you give me \$3 for him?" And as I made the offer the train came into the station.

"I'll give you \$1.50 and not a cent more," said as I was about to make the station agent a present of the beast.

I took the money and at the same time made a vow to myself that never again would I deal in property which had connec-tion connections.—New York Tribune.

### Two Men.

A good story is told of a northerner in Atlanta who was a prescription clerk in a drug store and who occasionally helped out at the cigar counter. He had only been in the store a few weeks when one day a pompous, unassuming man came in and asked for a cigar. He chatted pleasantly with the young man while he was lighting his weed and then sauntered out.

A minute or two later a big, pompous man promenade past the store. His appearance and manner conveyed the idea that he was a man of some importance and that he really realized it. Indeed he was the kind of a man whom people involuntarily turn to look at.

"That," said the new clerk, looking after the pompous man reflectively, "must at the very least be the governor of Georgia."

"Wrong," replied one of the other clerks. "You just sold a cigar to the governor of Georgia. He was that quiet, unassuming little fellow. The big, pompous chap is his private secretary."—Saturday Evening Post.

### A Job That Paid.

Mr. Monnier tells this story about official life in China: "A short time ago the emperor of China made up his mind that the street of the legations in Peking should at last be paved. To insure the work being done he himself provided the money, some \$10,000. This sum was handed to a high official of the public roads and highways department. It entered into the mind of this dignitary that the work could be done for much less. He very soon found an enterprising contractor who undertook the task for \$3,000. No. 2 had, however, views similar to those of No. 1 and was equally successful in finding a No. 3, who, in his turn, considered \$2,500 an extravagant sum for so high official of the public roads and highways department. It entered into the mind of this dignitary that the work could be done for much less. He very soon found an enterprising contractor who undertook the task for \$3,000. 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