

have been a defeat instead of a victory. The Egyptians did not shoot straight because they were flurried, that is, were deficient in fire-discipline; our men "recoiled" after a very brief experience of a devilish but comparatively harmless battle-din, because the ardour of the first rush having died out of them, fire-discipline was not strong enough in them to keep them braced to hold the ground the rush had won them. It was fortunate that in Hamley they had a chief who had prescience of their feebleness of constancy, and had taken measures to remedy its evil effects.

During the afternoon and evening of August 18th, 1870, six regiments of the Prussian guard corps made repeated and ultimately successful efforts to storm the French position of St. Privat. What that position was like the following authentic description sets forth: "In front of St. Privat were several parallel walls of knee-high masonry and shelter trenches. Those lines, successively commanding each other, were filled with compact rows of skirmishers, and in their rear upon the commanding height lay like a natural bastion, and girt by an almost continuous wall, the town-like village, the stone houses of which were occupied up to the roofs." There was no shelter on the three-quarters of a mile of smooth natural glacis, over which the regiments moved steadfastly to the attack; every fold of it was searched by the dominant musketry fire. They tried and failed, but they kept on trying till they succeeded. And what did the success cost them? The six regiments (each three battalions strong) numbered roughly 18,000 men; of these 6,000 had gone down before Canrobert quitted his grip of the "town-like village." One-third of their whole number! It was the cost of this sacrifice that caused the Germans to adopt the unprecedented step of altering their attacking tactics in the middle of the campaign. But the change was not made because the troops had proved unequal to the task set them, but because the cost of the accomplishment of that task, in the face of the Chassepot fire, had been so terrible. Now I am not concerned to exalt the horn of the Prussian fighting men at the cost of the British soldier. I will assume, and there is precedent in favour of the assumption, that the British soldier of the pre-dodging era could take his punishment and come through it victoriously as stoutly as any German that ever digested *erbswürst* and smelt of sour rye-bread. Of the 10,000 British fellows whom Wellington sent at Badajos, 3,000 were down before the torn old rag waved over the place. Ligonier's column was 14,000 strong when the Duke of Cumberland gave it the word to make that astounding march through the chance gap, a bare 900 paces wide, between the cannon before the village of Vezon and those in the Redoubt d'Eu, right into and behind the heart of the French centre on the bloody day of Fontenoy. There is some doubt whether those quixotic courtesies passed between Lord Charles Hay and the Count d'Auteroche, but there is no doubt whatever that when the column, thwarted of the reward of valour by deficiency of support, had sturdily marched back through the appalling cross-fire in the cramped hollow-way, and had methodically fronted into its old position, it was found that at least 4,000 out of the 14,000 had been shot down. Carlyle, indeed, makes the loss much heavier. Yet a notable example of the British soldier's gluttony for punishment is furnished in the statistics of the Inkermann losses. The total force that kept Mount Inkermann against the Russians amounted to 7,464 officers and men. Of these, when the long fierce day was done, no fewer than 2,487, had fallen, just one-third of the whole number. The manner in which our soldiers successfully contested their fearful odds in this battle is a phenomenal example of fire-discipline of the grand old dogged type. It is but one, however, of the many proofs that the world has no stancher fighting man than is the British soldier intrinsically.

Than "annihilation" there is no more favourite word with the critics of manœuvres and sham-fights. In a notice of a mimic battle near Portsmouth in *The Times* of the day I write these lines occurs this observation: "The guns of the fleet would have annihilated Colonel Thompson's advance on the left along the sea shore." In truth it is as hard a thing to "annihilate" a body of troops as it is to kill a scandal. In a literal sense there is scarcely a record of such a catastrophe; if used in a figurative sense to signify a loss so great as to put the force suffering it *hors de combat*, there is amazing testimony to the quantity of "annihilation" good troops have accepted without any such hapless result. Here are instances taken almost at random. The Confederates, out of 68,000 men engaged at Gettysburg, lost 18,000, but Meade held his hand from interfering with their orderly retreat. Of that battle the climax was the assault of Pickett's division, "the flower of Virginia," against Webb's front on the left of Cemetery Hill. Before the heroic Armitage called for the "cold steel" and carried Gibbon's battery with a rush, the division had met with a variety of experiences during its mile-and-a-half advance over the smooth ground up to the crest. "When it first came into sight it had been plied with solid shot; then half-way across it had been vigorously shelled, and the double cannisters had been reserved for its nearer approach. An enfilading fire tore through its ranks; the musketry blazed forth against it with deadly effect." This is the evidence of an eye-witness on the opposite side, who adds, "but it came on magnificently." Yes, it came on to cold steel and clubbed muskets, and, after a desperate struggle, it went back foiled, to the accompaniments which had marked its advance. But, heavy as were its losses, it was not "annihilated." Pickett's division survived to be once and again a thorn in the Federal side before the final day of fate came to it at Appomattox Court House. In the September attack on Plevna, of 74,000 Russo-Roumanian infantry engaged, the losses reached 18,000. Skobelev commanded 18,000 men, and at the end of his two days' desperate fighting, not 10,000 of these were left standing. But there was no annihilation, either literally or conventionally, if one may use the term. The survivors who had fought on the 11th and 12th September were ready at the word to go in again on the 13th; and how they marched across the Balkans later is one of the marvels of modern military history.

Those examples of stoicism, of fire-discipline strained to a terrible tension, but not breaking under the strain, were exhibited by soldiers who did not carry into practise the tactics of non-exposure. The Russo-Turkish war, it is true, was within the "cover" era, but the Russians in this respect, as in a good many others—such, for instance, as in their lack of a propensity to "recoil"—were behind the times.

OUTING AND THE WHEELMAN, for January, is such a number as we might expect to spring from the union of the two leading out-door magazines of the continent. It is exceedingly tasteful in appearance; in contents it is rich and well varied. It is the only magazine we have devoted entirely to the literature of out-door recreation and physical culture. Mr. Maurice Thompson, in this number, commences a delightful serial called "Summer Sweethearts." Mrs. M. H. Catherwood completes the story "Castle Trundle." Mr. John Burroughs contributes a charming and sympathetic paper entitled "A Salt Breeze." Finely illustrated articles are "Holiday Art," by Miss Amanda B. Harris, and the breezy opening paper called "A Wheeling in Norambega," by Mr. John S. Phillips, which is fortunate in being accompanied by the spirited sketches of Mr. Sandham. "The Crown of Wild Olive" is an out-door "classic," in more ways than one. We quote the "Ballad of the Wheel," by Mr. Clinton Scollard:—

#### BALLAD OF THE WHEEL.

Through the winding lanes where willows lean,  
And the stately elms their shadows throw,  
Past the woodland bowers of sunlit green,  
Where the dusky brave, with bended bow,

In the halloed time of the long ago,  
Would soft, like a stealthy panther, steal,  
We fling dark care to the winds that blow,  
And spin away on the whirling wheel.

By the highways broad, where, fair, is seen  
The bloom of the alder, white as snow,  
Down hillsides steep on the road between  
The vineyards wide with their vines a-row,  
Nigh meads where the murmuring brooklets flow  
And rushes tall in the breezes reel,  
We fling dark care to the winds that blow,  
And spin away on the whirling wheel.

On days when spring is a verdant queen  
And bright-eyed buttercups, gleam and glow.  
'Mid hours when the forest's emerald sheen  
Is scorched by suns that the tropics know,  
In autumn-tide, ere the winter's woe,  
Whether bells of morn or eve outpeal,  
We fling dark care to the winds that blow,  
And spin away on the whirling wheel.

ENVOI.

Come, riders, all, be ye swift or slow,  
And join in the praise of the steed of steel!—  
We fling dark care to the winds that blow,  
And spin away on the whirling wheel.

—CLINTON SCOLLARD.

#### BOOK NOTICES.

BIOGRAPHY OF SIR CHARLES TUPPER. By Charles Thibault. Montreal: L'Etendard print.

This is a paper-covered book of 148 pages, and with respect to the language in which it is written, is intended, so far as can be ascertained, as English. The biography of one, whose public career has been in many important respects so distinguished, and so interwoven with the most prominent movements in our modern history, could not fail, if properly written, to be a book of marked importance to a Canadian public. Therefore, one naturally opens the little work by M. Thibault with much expectancy; but before he has read half a page his interest in the career of Sir Charles will have evaporated, and with loosed garments he will have made up his mind to read the book for its style. For style, it has the most wonderful that we have ever seen. There is nothing in any literature like unto it. Take this: A man "must rise with the tide of popularity, and from the mountain heights on the crest of the waves, dictate to the people beneath." But M. Thibault ought to know that the tide does not rise to the top of the mountains now, that it rose thither only once; and that we have given us the rainbow as a sign of the covenant that the world is not to be drowned again. If M. Thibault has never seen a rainbow, he ought to get somebody to show him one, so that he could be clear on the point before writing another book. The same author also says, p. 3: "Fame may snatch you unawares,"—and we may add that it is sure to snatch him if he writes a book or two more like this one. In endeavouring to show that the subject of the book has some little blue blood, the author trails Sir Charles through a number of irrelevant battle-fields without proving anything, and then bursts out into these sublime statements: "Where is the power that can hold a child separated from the one who gave him life! against the bayonet of the foe a child would rush, that he might fall into the arms of his mother." M. Thibault does not say whether he intends to represent the mother here as holding the bayonet, that the child might run it into himself in trying to get into his mother's lap; but if he does mean this, she is a cruel, heartless mother, and the author in his next book should denounce her. On page eight, M. Thibault has these two sentences, running in the order in which we reproduce them. It would be preposterous for us to say that they mean nothing, for most assuredly are they bursting with meaning; but so profound is their significance that a prize is hereby offered to whomsoever shall expound them: "Blood is the purest criterion of love. Isaac Brock, one of the Tupper family, shall be amongst the number." Of course he will; and next year will be last week, and the cat will walk off with the clouds, and divers other things shall happen to the same effect. On page 12 a birth is recorded, but we are not able to ascertain who it is that was born, whether Sir Charles Tupper or his grandfather. If Sir Charles was born, M. Thibault ought to state it so explicitly; if he was not, then our suppositions are all a mistake, and somebody else was born passing himself off for Sir Charles Tupper. In a second edition, for no doubt thousands of this book will sell, the question of nativity ought to be set at rest. But we cannot linger any longer over this volume further than to extract two or three sentences. Page 12: "Oh, sacred system of a mother's tenderness, why should we take from thee those hidden treasures!"—a perfectly intelligible statement. On page 23: "Sir Charles reasons like a German, fights like a *Hussian*,