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## The Volunteer Review.

AND

## MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

"Unbred, unbought, our swords we draw,  
Toward the Monarch, fence the Law."

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, NOV. 25, 1873.

**TO CORRESPONDENTS.**—Letters addressed to either the Editor or Publisher, as well as Communications intended for publication, must, invariably, be *pre-paid*. Correspondents will also bear in mind that one end of the envelope should be left open, and at the corner the words "Printer's copy" written and a two or five cent stamp (according to the weight of the communication) placed thereon will pay the postage.

THE BAZAINE trial, or rather broad farce, drags its weary length along, with apparently little prospect of fair play for the accused. The President of the Court, albeit a Prince of Royal blood, is not above or below the theatrical effect which the average Frenchmen must always display. On a recent occasion, in his defence, the unlucky Marshal urged that he was obliged to take the initiative altogether, as no Government he could recognize existed, except the scoundrels at Paris could be so called: the Prince President was not ashamed to interrupt him with the exclamation—"What! France, then, no longer existed!"—a remark certainly true as regarded its national autonomy, but calculated to injure the prisoner in the eyes of a proud as well sensitive people, whose national vanity makes them blind to defects of national organization.

In French legal practice, the *interrogatory* bears a conspicuous part. It is a series of questions addressed by the Judge to the prisoner, leading him, if possible, to incriminate himself, as, notwithstanding what his witnesses might say, his answers or the admissions into which he might be entrapped are used as evidence against him. In the Englishman this is evidently unfair as well as unjust; as it puts the prisoner at a great disadvantage and as the glory of the law is to obtain a verdict, not to elicit truth, the chances against the accused are increased ten-fold, especially if any object, political or otherwise, is to be gained by his condemnation.

After the exclamation quoted above, a contemporary remarks:—"This was the most discouraging part of the Marshal's examination, and to make it worse he declared that in using the words in his examination 'to obtain neutrality for the army,' he meant to obtain an armistice for the purpose of establishing a regular government. The President reminded the accused of his military oath, and asked him whether he observed the regulations forbidding capitulation in the open field. Bazaine pleaded as justification the existence of an insurrectionary government.

"The President—"Does the imperial constitution, to which you considered it your duty to remain faithful, authorize negotiating and treating with the enemy as you did?"

"The Marshal replied that it did not. He maintained that the capitulation was compulsory. He had resisted to the last, 'not having even a morsel of bread left.'"

"The accused was embarrassed in manner, and often hesitated in making his replies to the searching interrogatories of the court."

The objects of the Marshal were evident enough. He tried to save France from degradation and from Trems and his co-conspirators; and for this he is probably doomed. A pen-and-ink sketch of the above scene must close our remarks for the present on this extraordinary trial:—

"At every moment the marshal, in the interest of his defence, tries to introduce some incidental narrative, some unknown particular; but at every moment the duke stops him with, 'I think, Marshal, that incident will come in more appropriately at such and such a time,' and he brings him back within the narrow limits of the interrogatory he means to put him through. At a given moment the marshal stops and says, 'Will you allow me, *Monsieur le President*, to read you an order emanating from me?' 'Is it of interest marshal?' 'Of great interest.' 'Yes, but is it of interest for the question now before us?' 'Yes, *Monsieur le President*.' 'Then read it, please,' and the marshal puts on his double eye-glass, the duke his most attentive look, and the marshal reads, so that anyone coming in just then would think that it was a council of war, not to judge him, but to deliberate with him in common. On another occasion this scene occurs again, but in a more dramatic form. The duke has got to the battle of Borny, to the bloody affairs of Rezonville. St. Privat, and Grave-

loite. He strikes the marshal home, he presses him, he harasses him. But, then, you did not want to break through in the direction of Verdun, you did not comply with the orders, the desires of the Emperor, who wanted you to cross the Moselle. 'Will you allow me, *Monsieur le President*, to read you one of Napoleon I.'s commentaries?' 'Is it opportune, Marshal?' 'Perfectly so, *M. le Duc*.' Thereupon the marshal begins to read a passage:—"A commander-in-Chief should never take into account the orders of a general or prince who is at a distance from the field of battle," &c. Meanwhile the interrogatory narrows its circle; it becomes more pressing. 'Did you reflect that the road by Gravelotte was a dangerous defile eleven miles long? Did you destroy the bridges so as to prevent the enemy from pressing, and secure your own retreat? Had you not on the heights where you were supplies for two days? Why, instead of taking advantage of them to march forward, did you allow them to return? Why did you keep your reserves on your left which was protected, and why expose your right when your retreat might be cut off?' And the questions follow close upon each other. It is like fencing. The marshal parries, covers himself, makes a return thrust by advancing some military principle, but at length the duke draws from the marshal's answers this conclusion, which is like a thrust right home:—"It is then true, as was maintained, that you never had any intention of going to Verdun, and that your only object was to camp before Metz?" The marshal feels the blow. He hesitates and then replies sharply, 'I have not said so. I stuck fast to Metz, which was my supreme resource, but with the firm resolution of re-organizing the *cadres* which had been destroyed and omitting any way through?'"

The correspondent of the *Times* astutely remarks at the bottom of this sketch, "The two fencers are worthy of each other and both very clever; but one has the *beau rôle* of avenging the country; the heavy, crushing task of the other is to save from this his honor and his life, both alike threatened." The careful readers of the trial, who judges impartially, will altogether dissent from this statement of the case. The honor of France is no less on its trial than the honor of Marshal Bazaine, and so far nothing has been elicited by the interrogatory to justify the infamous charges which have been framed to accomplish "the *beau rôle* of avenging the country." If all that has thus far been elicited is true, the country is disgraced by the disclosures as far as a great and noble nation—noble in spite of its faults—can be disgraced by the misdeeds and misunderstandings of its representative men and its governing classes. The fact is, however, that the circumstances of the war were unprecedented; and if Bazaine, or his staff either, were at fault in allowing political considerations to have any influence on their military duties—and this has yet to be proved—some allowance must be made for the responsibilities of a time when a country, struggling against the fearful odds for its very existence, was suddenly split into factions by the revolution in Paris.

Another correspondent says:—"A stronger contrast to the elaborate exactitude of the duke cannot be imagined than that afforded by the rough and ready rapidity of Marshal Bazaine. His voice is muffled; he speaks with great precipitation, often interrupting the president, and in so low a tone that the official stenographers, now placed close to his elbow, often frequently look up perplexed as they strive to put out