

## THE ENCHANTED SHIRT.

BY COL. JOHN BAY.

Fytte ye Firsto: *wherein it shall be shown how ye Truth is too mightie a Druggie for such as be of feeble temper.*

The King was sick. His cheek was red  
And his eye was clear and bright;  
He ate and drank with a king's zest,  
And peacefully snored at night.

But he said he was sick, and a king should know,  
And doctors came by the score.  
They did not cure him. He cut off their heads  
And sent to the school for more.

At last two famous doctors came,  
And one as poor as a rat—  
He had passed his life in studious toil,  
And never found time to grow fat.

The other had never looked in a book;  
His patients gave him no trouble,  
If they recovered they paid him well,  
If they died their heirs paid double.

Together they looked at the royal tongue,  
As the King on his couch reclined;  
In succession they thumped his august chest,  
But no trace of disease could find.

The old sage said, "You're as sound as a nut."  
"Hang him up," roared the king in a gale—  
In a ten-knot gale of royal rage;  
The other leech grew a shade pale;

But he pensively rubbed his sagacious nose;  
And thus his prescription ran—  
The King will be well if he sleeps one night  
In the Shirt of a Happy Man.

Fytte ye Seconde: *tellth of ye search for ye shirt and how it was nigh founde but was notte, for reasons qu; are sayd or sung.*

Wide o'er the realm the couriers rode,  
And fast their horses ran,  
And many they saw, and to many they spoke,  
But they found no Happy Man.

They found poor men who would fain be rich,  
And rich who thought they were poor  
And men who twisted their waists in stays,  
And women that short hose wore.

They saw two men by the roadside sit!  
And both bemoaned their lot;  
For one had buried his wife, he said,  
And the other one had not.

At last they came to a village gate,  
A beggar lay whistling there;  
He whistled and sang and laughed and rolled  
On the grass in the soft June air.

The weary couriers paused and looked  
At the scamp so blythe and gay;  
And one of them said, "Heaven save you friend!  
You seem to be happy to-day."

"O yes, fair sirs," the fæcal laughed  
And his voice rang free and glad,  
"An idle man has so much to do  
That he never has time to be sad."

"This is our man," the courier said;  
"Our luck has led us aright."  
"I will give you a hundred ducats, friend,  
For the loan of your shirt to-night."

The merry blackguard lay back on the grass,  
And laughed till his face was black;  
"I would do it, God wot," and he roared with  
the fit,  
"But I haven't a shirt to my back."

Fytte ye Third: *Shewth how His Majestic ye King came at last to sleepe in a Happy Man his shirte.*

Each day to the King the reports came in  
Of his unsuccessful spies,  
And the said panorama of human woes  
Passed daily under his eyes.

And he grew ashamed of his useless life,  
And his maladies hatched in gloom;  
He opened his windows and let the air  
Of the free heaven into his room.

And out he went in the world and toiled  
In his own appointed way;  
And the people blessed him, the land was glad,  
And the King was well and gay.

## OUR IRON-CLAD FLEET.

(From the U. S. Army and Navy Journal.)

In our editorial of Feb. 10th on Our Naval Resources, we stated the conclusion to which our Navy Department seem to have come in regard to the present condition of

our iron-clad Navy, this conclusion being that a majority of them are only fit for the scrap heap. That the fifty-one vessels classified under the head of iron-clads in the Navy Register make a very poor show everywhere but on paper, is unfortunately too true; but we should have a care how we are misled by this fact into such a wholesale condemnation of the system of iron-clad construction upon which we have thus far proceeded, as some of our naval authorities seem inclined to indulge in. Chief Constructor HANSCOM, for one, tells us in his annual report that our monitors "were built in violation of established principles of naval architecture; have been of no practical service to the country, unless the name of iron clad has spread terror through the earth." That they were built in violation of "established principles of naval architecture," we presume not even Captain ERICSSON will assume to deny. So was the first vessel which depended for motive power upon a kettle of hot water in the hold, instead of upon masts and sails and shrouds above deck; and like the steamboat, our monitors have established principles of naval construction all their own, and have compelled every nation in Europe to adopt these principles in the construction of iron-clad vessels. With sixteen turreted vessels afloat in the English service, fifteen in the French, and nineteen in the Russian service, it will not do for our Chief Naval Constructor to thus lightly set our monitors aside. The iron-clad navies of the world bear testimony to the fact that the resources of science have been exhausted in vain in the endeavour to supersede the Monitor as a means of offensive or offensive-defensive warfare on the water. The judges on Naval Structures at the conclusion of the Paris Exhibition expressed the opinion that "a monitor with a single turret and an uncluttered deck is the most perfect structure for naval defence."

Our endorsement of the advice to dispose of the iron clads at League Island had no reference to the monitors *Dictator*, *Passaic*, *Montauk*, *Lehigh*, *Catskill*, *Jason*, (*Singmon*) *Nahant*, *Nantucket*, *Canonicus*, *Wyandotte*, *Mahopac*, *Manhattan*, and *Saugus*. All of these, except the *Dictator*, ought to be at once hauled out of water and thoroughly repaired, the armour backing removed, and solid armor introduced in place of the present laminated plating on the turrets as well as on the sides. It is greatly to be regretted that the Monitor fleet, considered by Admiral DAHLGREN to be in a perfect working condition at the end of the war, was not then hauled out of water and the bottoms of the vessels repainted. We warned the Navy Department at the time against the blunder of keeping iron vessels of 600 tons burthen in the water exposed to corrosion, which, even in fresh water, will in a short time prove destructive. Placed on land and properly taken care of, the machinery put in motion—say, once a year—vessels like the monitors are good for a generation.

Respecting the "Light Draughts," it should be observed that while the hulls are useless, their turrets (if strengthened by solid plating), as well as their machinery, might be rendered useful for harbor-defence vessels, for, be it remembered, such vessels need not have great speed. The work to be performed by them is that of attacking the enemy's ship, not on the coast, but after the entrance of the hostile vessels, and while taking up a position in the interior of the harbor for the purpose of shelling.

Captain ERICSSON is quoted by the *London Times* as saying that at the present moment the English iron-clads could, in spite of our

forts and 15-inch guns (without available carriages), steam up to the Battery. We have quite too much faith in the possibilities of Yankee ingenuity under the pressure of war to believe that this will ever be done, but certainly there is nothing in the present condition of our means of defence to disprove the statement. Protected by the iron netting which the English have lately devised for harbor attack, our proposed torpedo boats, with their twenty feet poles with a powder bag at the end, would be laughed at by our assailants, nor would stationary torpedoes prove any certain protection against an enterprising enemy employing mechanical means for destroying these contrivances and clearing and buoying the passage as he advances. No doubt a stationary torpedo suspended in the channel at a proper depth below the surface of the water is a very dangerous obstruction, but we must not shut our eyes to the obvious fact that these structures are of such a frail character that they may be easily destroyed unless we have some means of protecting them against interference. And thus far there is no evidence to show that any other means of auxiliary defence equals that of light draught vessels carrying impregnable turrets, protecting guns of the heaviest calibre. Such vessels cannot be run down by sea-going iron-clads, as their light draught would enable them to lie in shoal water by the side of the channel, from whence the approaching vessels could be attacked while entering a harbor. Hence it will be well to reflect before we destroy the turrets and machinery of the light-draught monitors at League Island. If their hulls are worthless, let them by all means be consigned to the scrap heap at once as we have already recommended, but it will be time enough to discard our monitors altogether when our naval and military doctrinaires have proven in actual practice that they have provided us with more efficient means of defence.

## THE TRADE IN FIRE-ARMS.

(From the New York Times February 13.)

The business of buying and selling arms though an important one before the civil war, during the rebellion, reached to an enormous extent. Since that period, with occasional lulls, it has been a very constant one. Save England and Prussia, there is not a single country in Europe, Africa, Asia or South America that has not been a large purchaser of arms from the United States. South America and Mexico seem to be wanting something to blow their heads off with, or to rip out their vitals with all the year round. They may be described with Cuba as being always on the market. Lead in musket balls is never heavy in these parts, and lines of guns are always going off. An insatiable desire for every kind of weapons of destruction seems to influence them. In Mexico revolutions and counter revolutions can be counted upon with the same certainty by the trade as grocers are sure of disposing of their extra stock of plums and citron about Christmas time. Minor South American States are always making pronunciamientos, and all such long sounding terms have for their interpreters gun shots and sabre-slashes.

The revolutions made of late years in breech loading pieces did for a while unsettle the market, yet there is demand for muzzle-loaders. Even the old fashioned "Brown Bess," with the gaping muzzle and gun flint arrangement, at present considered as a pre-Adamite weapon has its admirers. In fact there is a good demand for them. Did you hunt the market through you could