

THE INVENTION OF COLT'S REVOLVER.

The Louisville *Express* is responsible for the following curious story in reference to the invention of the pistol which goes by the name of "Colt's revolver." If the story is not true, it is at all events ingeniously devised to bear the semblance of truth, but it is simply given here as a curiosity:—

"There are people in Tennessee who will tell you a queer story about the way in which the late Col. Colt invented the repeater which bears his name, and which enabled him to leave a widow with an income of nearly \$400,000. They say that some twenty or twenty-five years ago a gunsmith from Fayetteville, in that State, went to Nashville in search of employment, and as he was a skilful workman and a sober, industrious man, he soon found something to do in one of the shops there. He was what the world calls 'a good, easy fellow,' always at work, but always poor, wasting most of his time upon inventions of his own, some of which were worthless, and some of which he lacked perseverance and the means to complete and introduce to the public. Among the last named was a repeating pistol, a model of which he had made at Fayetteville and brought with him to Nashville. He had never had it patented, for twenty or twenty-five years ago it was far more troublesome to procure a patent for a new invention than it is in our day, inventors in obscure villages knowing little or nothing about the process by which patents were obtained.

"Working in the same shop with our Fayetteville gunsmith was a young journeyman from Connecticut, named Colt. The new-fangled pistol was drawn from the inventor's trunk one day, and exhibited to the workmen. Colt 'took a good look at it,' examining it with the greatest care; but like the shrewd Yankee he was, said nothing as to its merits. In a few days Mr. Colt threw up his situation in the Nashville shop and returned to his native State. Nothing more was heard of him until he turned up as the inventor and patentee of Colt's repeater—the identical repeater the Fayetteville gunsmith exhibited to him in Nashville.

"This is the story they tell in Tennessee. We do not vouch for the truth of it, though we think it likely that it might very safely be done. Colt died a millionaire, leaving a wife and several children to mourn his loss and rejoice in his genius and to enjoy an income of \$397,000. The Fayetteville gunsmith may or may not have starved to death. If he did not, it was because it is and always has been impossible to starve in so plentiful a country as Tennessee."

PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND THE CLOSE OF THE AMERICAN WAR.

General Sherman has made an interesting contribution to the history of the closing days of the war. It will be remembered that when the Confederate General Johnson surrendered to Sherman in April, 1865, terms were accorded to him which were deemed far too liberal by the public, especially as they went beyond the conditions made by Grant with Lee. It has been represented that Sherman acted under direct instructions from President Lincoln, but he now tells his countrymen that he alone was responsible for the terms made, and afterwards disavowed by the Government. In March, 1865, Mr. Lincoln, Generals Grant and Sherman, and Admiral Porter, met to consult on the final move against the enemy. The generals discussed the probability of Lee falling upon Sherman in the open coun-

try. "Mr. Lincoln, in hearing us speak of a final bloody battle, which I then thought would fall on me near Raleigh, did exclaim more than once that blood enough had already been shed, and he hoped that the war would end without any more. The question arose, what was to be done with Jefferson Davis and other leaders? President Lincoln 'left me,' writes Sherman, "under the impression that all he asked of us was to dissipate these armies, and get the soldiers back to their homes anyhow; the quicker the better, leaving him free to apply the remedy and the restoration of civil law." Mr. Lincoln evidently wished that Mr. Davis should succeed in effecting his escape from the country, "as well as all the other leading Southern politicians, against whom public indignation always turned with a feeling far more intense than against Generals Lee, Johnson, and other purely military men." The historians of the war, says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, cannot afford to overlook this letter of General Sherman.

THE TURKISH IRON-CLAD TURRET SHIPS.

The two iron-clad turret ships which arrived in Constantinople last week from France, and have been anchored off Dolma Bagtché (says the *Levant Times* of the 22nd ult.), got up steam on Wednesday morning for a trial trip in the Marmora, after which they entered the Inner Horn, to take on board their guns, which were brought out by the Propontis. The same steamer also landed at the arsenal 1,500 cases of shot and shell. The guns are 300-pounders, each weighing 15 tons. There are four of them—one for each turret. The turrets, which are spherical, are made to revolve by winches worked by hand. The vessels are ram-headed and barque rigged, with derrick masts. The funnel is placed amidships, between the two turrets, and its loftiness not only makes it an easy mark for the enemy's shot, but adds to the unsymmetrical appearance of the craft—the ugliest looking vessels that have ever appeared in these waters. They are very heavily plated and, unlike the Mahmoudieh and her three sister ironclads, their rudders are protected against shot. The work about the vessels is not so distinguished for high finish as to affect the pre-eminence of English ship-builders. As is known, the original order for them was given, not by the Porte, but by the Chilean Government, in view of hostilities with Spain. The Chileans, on settling that difficulty, had no occasion for them, and on the occurrence of the recent crisis, the Greek Government began to treat for their purchase, when the Porte stepped in and bought them. However efficient an armament they may prove to be, the Greek Government, considering the turn affairs have taken, and its imppecuniosity, may congratulate itself on having been anticipated in the bargain.

"DIXIE."

In the first place, the song and chorus of "Dixie" was composed and arranged by Dan. Emmet, a member of a travelling minstrel party, who, while at Mobile, in the winter of 1857-8, heard some negro labourers singing on the levee while loading a steamboat with cotton. The thought struck Dan that, with a little change of measure, it could be made a good song and "walk around," which generally winds up a negro minstrel concert. Dan arranged it and produced it. It became a success and was sung and played all over the country. In the spring of 1861, Mrs. John Wood came to

New Orleans to play an engagement at the Varieties theatre. During the time she appeared in Brougham's burlesque of "Pocahontas." At the first rehearsal of the piece everything went well till nearly the close of the second act. Tom McDonough, the prompter, got up a Zouave march and drill by twenty-two ladies, led by Susan Denin. Everything went smooth, but the music for the march could not be fixed upon. Carl Patti was leader of the orchestra, and he tried several marches, but none suited McDonough; one was too slow, another was too tame, and another not enough of spirit. At length Patti struck up the negro air of "Dixie." "That will do, Patti—the very thing," said Tom, and "Dixie" was played and the march gone through with, and the chorus by all the characters. At night it received a double encore and "Pocahontas" had a "run," and from that time out the streets and parlours rang with "Dixie." The war broke out that spring, and the military bands took it up, and "Dixie" became to the South what the Marseillaise hymn was to the French. And that is how it became the popular song of the South.

A MAN OVERBOARD.

An act of extraordinary gallantry has been performed by Lord Walter Kerr, Commander of Her Majesty's ship *Hercules*, off Lisbon. When sending down topgallant yards at sunset, on Sunday, April 4, a man fell overboard from the maintopgallant yard. The commander, Lord Walter Kerr, who was on the poop, commanding, the instant he saw the man fall into the racing tide of the Tagus, at once flung off his cap and jacket, and plunged after him. Had the noble and gallant officer taken time to think, he might have, without prejudice to his courage, well have hesitated before placing his life at the mercy of a current of such well-known danger. The man was at some distance from the ship when Lord Walter jumped overboard, but after considerable exertion, he reached and supported the unfortunate man until both were rescued by a boat from the ship. The chances for any man overboard in the Tagus are few enough, and, but for the gallantry of his commander, the man had no chance at all, having become insensible from a blow.—A Hong Kong paper tells a similar story, but with an unfortunately different result. H. M. S. *Himalaya*, on her voyage from Hong Kong to Ceylon, was going 10 knots before a steady monsoon breeze, when the cry of "A man overboard!" was heard. The officer of the watch, Mr. E. H. Cunningham, navigating sub-lieutenant, without a moment's hesitation or waiting to remove any portion of his clothes, jumped overboard to the rescue. The life-buoy was let go, the ship rounded to, and boats lowered, but sad to say, the gallant young officer alone was saved. Mr. Cunningham said, "When I got to him he said he was all right and could swim. 'Then strike out for the life-buoy,' and we swam on. Presently I heard a cry, and turning, I heard him say, 'No use, sir; I can't go on; take care of yourself.' And before I could get to him, he went under and rose no more." The unfortunate man must also have been a gallant fellow to take his fate so manfully.

The Swiss riflemen have invited the English volunteers to take part in their national prize competition.

The people of New York are uneasy concerning the condition of their harbour fortifications. Recent investigations prove conclusively, that the city is almost defenceless against the attacks of an iron-clad fleet.