

DAILY RECORD-UNION

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OAK PARK AGENCY—Carter's Blacksmith Shop, corner Thirty-fourth Street and Sacramento Avenue.

Weather Forecast. Northern California: Fair Sunday; warmer in the Sacramento Valley; fresh northwest winds.

WHY THERE HAS NOT BEEN INVASION EARLIER.

It is of first importance that the public mind should be cleared of all false notions about the usefulness of the volunteer soldier as an invader off hand.

The impression has prevailed to a remarkable extent that all we had to do was to call our citizen soldiery to arms, march them to the enemy's country, and proceed to whip the life out of the other fellows.

This false estimate has been greatly encouraged and fortified by the unwise statements of the sensational and thoughtless press, which have led people who have not studied the matter to believe that our gallant home lads are ready at a moment's call to engage in arms with any foreign comers.

In the days of the Civil War the two forces were much in the same physical conditions and engaged mainly on equal terms. The men on both sides were called suddenly from the walks and comforts of private life. They met on fields more equally than in any other war in which we have engaged.

But in this contest there is a very different condition of affairs.

Our men are in the first place to undergo a radical and trying change of climate. They are called upon to meet in largest part troops acclimated to the field of action, seasoned to camp life, and experienced to the extreme in the hardships of campaigns which have put to severest test their physical powers.

It has become, therefore, absolutely necessary to get our volunteers into hardy condition. Taken from home comforts and comparative ease and thrown suddenly into the discomforts of camp life, the restricted diet of the army ration and the hard service of drill, they are found to be soft, unready and physically unable to endure sudden climatic changes.

The most serious incumbrance for an advancing army is its sick list. Nothing tells more for defeat than the liability of a large percentage of the men being reported for hospital.

Hence it is that an "On to Havana" order could not be given upon the assembling of the volunteers. There must elapse time sufficient to accustom the men by degrees to hot climate conditions, to army fare, to deprivation of meals to the hard physical training that fits the men for long, hard marches, for steady runs, for carrying heavy burdens long distances, to making forced marches, and to camping under difficulties; to habituate the stomachs of the men to the simple, coarse fare of the camp and the field; to familiarize them with the stern discipline of actual service; to adapt them, in short, to the exigencies, trials, privations and necessities of the soldier in real warfare.

This requires time. To fail to take that time, and to march raw, soft and untrained men into a strange and trying climate, would have been the extreme height of folly. On that point no army officer of experience entertains the slightest doubt, especially when on arrival at the field of action the volunteers are to be confronted by trained, seasoned, acclimated troops, who have been inured to warfare and all the hardships of camp and barracks life.

When the Illinois troops landed in Washington recently they had to march two miles only, each carrying thirty pounds of accoutrements. The heat was 92 degrees. As a result, a large percentage of the men fell by the way, and ambulances had to pick them up and wheel them to their quarters.

When the volunteers assembled at Chickamauga Park diarrhea afflicted one-half the men, due to sudden change, and this ran in a large number of cases into dysentery. Not one of the regulars was so afflicted.

When the First Infantry of San Francisco was marched from the Presidio to the mail dock the other day, a very considerable number of the men "gave out," and some fainted. Yet the day was not hot, nor the march anything near what the troops must expect when they appear against a trained body of the enemy in a strange tropic land, and whom they are expected to drive out of their defenses and force into a retreat.

An officer in command of a regiment of volunteers now at the Presidio has found it absolutely necessary to forbid the bringing of dainties of food into the camp, delicacies and dishes such as the men were accustomed to at home. This, because he has discovered that he cannot harden his men on such fare, and that he can accomplish nothing with them until they are hardened to the extent of being able to thrive on camp fare of the regulation order.

At the Falls Church, Camp Alger, where some 20,000 volunteers with a few regulars are encamped, the sickness is so extensive that the troops cannot be moved without going out as skeleton regiments. All this sickness is of an order due wholly to sudden change of climate, water and food. What a crime it would have been to have thrown these men suddenly into the hot and malarious climate of Cuba.

It is to be noted right here that at Falls Church not more than a half-dozen of the regular soldiers reported on sick lists, and then only for trifling reasons. Indeed, we are assured that not one of them took to his bed. These regulars are what in army terms are known as "hardened" men.

It is a Spanish boast, not wholly true, that the superiority of the Spanish soldier is his ability to fight on an empty stomach. That is largely an unfounded claim, but there is enough truth in it to be worthy of consideration. But even if our volunteers were physically sound, and well hardened, they have not been and are not yet fully and adequately equipped. This is not the fault of the Administration, or of the army officers, or the Secretary of the War. It is chargeable wholly to the niggard policy of Congress, which has refused all these years, to make provision for war in time of peace.

It was reported by cable the other day that England had issued orders to store three years of army provisions. That process under the British system it is said will take about one month. For Great Britain has storage places ready, men trained to select and store, and a perfected system of army support. It is stated by experts that Germany and France have constantly on hand equipments sufficient to outfit armies just twice the size of those they maintain.

We have found that we had not in stock even shoes and stockings enough for one-half the men we called into the volunteer force, while we had in storage not army clothing sufficient to re-supply the regulars alone.

There is no citizen soldiery in the world better than ours. We do not believe there is any man. None as surely braver, more manly, intelligent or representative of the best America has to show in civilization. But no matter how intelligent, brave, patriotic, independent and free the man, he is not made a soldier by simply shouldering a musket. The "embattled farmers" of the revolution who met the British at Lexington came from the plow and the field and were hardy men. Yet it is known that even they could not have maintained themselves against the trained regulars of King George for any considerable time, even though their battles had been fought on ground of their own choosing. The patriotic army even in those days met with precisely the same difficulties confronting us to-day, unreadiness and unfamiliarity with the hard necessities and severities of war.

It is well known to army men that General Taylor resisted the wish of the Administration to move from Texas upon Mexico with his command for a long time, largely because he was seasoning his men and hardening them to meet Mexican forces accustomed to the field and the climate. He left New Orleans with 1,700 men in July, 1845, and encamping at Corpus Christi had by November 4,000 troops. When he got the preperatory order to advance to the Mexican border from his defense of Texas territory, he paused in March, 1846, on the Rio Grande, until Arista crossed and engaged him in May, when the famous battle of Palo Alto was fought. He had enjoyed the advantage of two months in which to prepare his men to meet the Mexicans. That he might have provoked earlier assault is thoroughly believed, but that he did not wish to do so for physical reasons, as well as national ones, is equally believed.

So the history of all wars teach us that raw levies are not to be moved at once as armies of invasion into lands with which they are unaccustomed and into climates they are not in some measure prepared to adapt themselves to. Nor are they, save when they are to encounter bodies of their own character, to be taken into action until there has been time taken sufficient to harden them in some degree.

THE BATTLE FLAGS.

The proposition is now widely debated to return the Confederate battle flags held in Northern State armories and at Washington, to the Southern States from commands of which they were taken in the war of the rebellion. This is generally favored throughout the Northern States. So far, from the South there has been but one dissenting voice heard. The Charleston "News and Courier" thinks it is too late now to make the transfers. It says:

It is too late now to think of returning the battle flags. Let them stay where they are, where they will illustrate forever the valor of the men who fought under their tattered and blood-stained folds, and where they will also serve to show the spirit of those who kept them when their return would really have meant something of brotherly regard and true national spirit.

This is ill tempered. The flags are not held now as evidences of victory but rather as mementoes of one of the most gigantic struggles of all history. There could be no time more fit, we take it, than the present, when North and South are once more shoulder to shoulder for the one banner of the nation, to place these relics of an intestine war in the archives of the several States whence they came.

The transfer would not be regarded as an act of magnanimity, nor as a concession, nor yet as reviving memories of an unhappy period. On the contrary, it would be simply a transfer of relics to the historical collections of the States where they properly belong.

The battle flags captured by our Southern brethren from Union commands, in the same spirit should be returned to their homes, and thus each State will come into possession of relics identified with the most trying times in its history. We cannot understand why there should be a single voice of opposition heard to the plan of transfer.

Correspondents from Paris for the Eastern press are agreed upon the statement that the feeling of animosity towards the United States is greatly increasing in France. It is spreading throughout the republic until the every day life of an American in that country is made miserable by the sneers and taunts with which he is assailed. The bitterness is especially manifest in the

press of the country. The cry with them is that "the Latin races must stand together." One thing is significant, however, that the French press has charged the public mind with false impressions. Our reasons for going to war with Spain are uniformly misstated; our actions on sea and land are distorted, and our legislation is misinterpreted. We are represented as cruel, ambitious, persecuting and unjust, and our invasion of Cuba is treated as an attempt to wrest a colony from Spain for mercenary purposes. Perhaps when the French learn the truth there will be a turn in the sentimental tide. Through all this, however, the French Government maintains an amicable attitude and is kept busy denying to our Government stories that it is acting in an unfriendly manner, or is conspiring with Spain against us.

It is singular that in these days the French should forget that there was a time when they were the inveterate foes of the Spanish, and that they revenged themselves upon them in a terrible manner. Philip II, it will be remembered, sent an expedition against the Coligny colony established at Beaufort in 1565. It was announced as an expedition to conquer Florida, though Spain at that time claimed to own Florida and exercised jurisdiction over it. Menendez led the Spanish forces with the intention of driving out the French, who were overcome in the first meeting and massacred, men, women and children, except twenty. Another band of 200 was met and surrendered on promise of being spared, but 192 were stabbed to death. A third lot were captured and executed to the last soul. But Dominic de Gourgues avenged his countrymen. At his own cost he fitted out an expedition and descended upon the Spanish, who were found in three forts. He overcame them and following the Spanish precedent butchered the garrisons, not sparing one, Menendez alone escaping. Later he returned to Florida and re-established Spanish rule. The worst of it was that the two expeditions were projected on religious grounds, proving anew that religious wars are the most merciless of all.

A story came recently from Montreal that Spain had secured from France the Island of Miquelon, off the coast of Newfoundland, as a coaling station, from which point, as a base, a Spanish fleet could operate against the towns and cities of the North Atlantic coast of the United States. There has been no confirmation of the story. If France permitted such acquisition pending a war between the United States and Spain, it would be a distinct act of unfriendliness amounting to violation of the neutrality laws. Spain could not hope to hold the island so near to our coast. Its fortification could not now be made adequate to successful defense.

Well, we are in the midst of war, yet the Bureau of Statistics shows for our foreign commerce, that the balance of trade in our favor for April was increased \$43,500,000. The showing is also made that for the ten months ending with April our foreign trade amounted to \$514,245,000, or \$157,000,000 more than in any full fiscal year in the commercial history of the country, and \$214,500,000 more than in the corresponding ten months of the preceding year.

Among other things the French press is raking up against Americans to embitter French sentiment against us is the story that General Grant, when President, sent to Germany a dispatch of felicitation in 1871. And then they tell also how when Grant was making his tour of the world Victor Hugo refused to meet him. An intelligence put to such straits to stir up hatred has a weak case in advocacy.

The Engineering Corps of the country is now being called into the army and it is well. In modern warfare the command without an engineering corps is at a distinct disadvantage. Sherman's army of 60,000 men had 4,575 engineers; the army of the Cumberland had 3,860, and the Army of the Potomac 4,390, besides the regular battalion and the regiment of engineers of the Army of the James.

That nervous Consul of Spanish blood down in one of the West Indies who asked a Yankee skipper the other day how many of the late rebel States of the South had risen up in this war against the Government, ought to be furnished with safe transport and clean bill of protection to come over and see for himself. His report might do good missionary work among benighted Dons.

Sharp fellows are these theatrical managers. They were quick to discover how the American heart is wrapped up just now in the American navy, and in consequence it is a poor play and a poorer show that takes the boards nowadays without being whipped into shape to admit of some reference to the navy and the gallant commanders of our fleets.

What is the matter with the professional fighters? We have not heard of one of them who used to tie his waist up in the American flag and pummel the other fellow in the prize ring who has enlisted to lick a Spaniard.

In the taboo put upon "war news" just now, the public is enabled to accurately estimate just how far the lurid and sensational press was engaged in the congenial task of lying, of magnifying inconsequential, and distorting mites into mountains.

Zola's second trial is now on, but so absorbing is the war news that what a few weeks ago was a matter of intense interest to our people now commands no attention whatever.

One more fine protected cruiser with dynamite tubes is added to our navy, and was brought safe to port by the gallant Oregon. Hall, the "Buffalo," sometime the "Nitchery."

The American people are learning now how great a virtue patience is. And how splendidly they are taking the lesson, too.

PRESENT-DAY THOUGHTS.

By "Nemo."

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There is a tendency among some thinkers to regard the present war as a terrible reversion to barbarism. They think of it as a turning of the back upon civilization. I will agree with them if they are speaking of Spain, but I will not agree with them if they are speaking of the United States. The arguments they advance are familiar enough and well understood. They are the worst passions of men; that civilization gains more during the quiet times of peace than in the bustling hours of war; that the advancing thought of the world favors bloodless arbitration. We should be unprogressive indeed if we with all these statements, for they are all true; but they are not always true. They are untrue in relation to ourselves. This we can dare to say, though fully aware that here and there in our forces are men of violent feeling who rejoice in the color of their bayonets and the blood of their enemies. 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