THE FOREIGN LEGION.

MEN OF THE ORGANIZATION.

Much of France's Glory Due to the Undying Energy of the Regiment—Hard Fighting.

The Foreign Legion was decidedly the most remarkable regiment in the French army. For nearly half a century, writes a correspondent of the New York *Times*, it did as much hard fighting and marching as any regiment in the world. It was never allowed to enjoy any rest, and when not fighting or marching it was working. The regiment has done as much to build up a flourishing colony in Algeria as to win battles for France, and the roads and other public works which have transformed a wilderness created by Moslem sloth and barbarism into a rich garden are largely the work of its sturdy hands. Notwithstanding its life of constant privation, bad pay, and poor food, the regiment attracted men from every corner of Europe. They were of all races and nations, and represented every grade of social life. There were among them political refugees, social outcasts, hard cases, men of refinement bowed down by misfortune, disgraced officers, impoverished "nobles," and bright youths full of soldierly spirit, drawn thither by the glamor of the French name or seeking a life of adventure. Most of the officers and a sprinkling among the ranks were Frenchmen, but the presence of hundreds of Belgians, French-speaking Swiss, and Germans from near the Rhine, gave the regiment the appearance of being more French than foreign.

Yet this heterogeneous gathering of men of different races, speaking different languages, held together only by the bond of discipline and love for soldiering, had an *esprit de corps* as strong as that of any regiment in any European army, and was just as proud of its record. The regiment played a conspicuous part in the conquest of Algeria and the suppression of the insurrection which followed it, gave a good account of itself in the Crimea, won fresh laurels at Magenta, came out of the inglorious Mexican adventure without loss of prestige, and by the example of its courage and discipline helped to inspire confidence and steadiness in the raw levies with which Gambetta vainly sought to stem the torrent of invasion after the disasters of Sedan and Metz. A sketch of a year's sojourn with this regiment during one of its peaceful intervals may be of interest.

In the beginning of 1861 I was in my nineteenth year and had a decided taste for soldiering. I lived in Dublin, but my inherited political connections forbade my entering the British army. The French was my ideal of an army and the zouave the highest type of the modern soldier. I wanted to be a zouave. I had read every life of Napoleon that I could lay hands upon, and was full of the idea that every French soldier carried in his knapsack the baton of a marshal of France. I was familiar with the exploits of the Irish brigade from Cremona to Fontenoy and dreamed of epaulets and crosses. Marshal MacMahon had recently been presented with a sword of honor by the people of Ireland, and I had contributed my mite. Armed with a letter from the present Lord-Mayor of Dublin to Professor J. P. Leonard, who had made the presentation to MacMahon at Chalons, and another to John Mitchell, I arrived in Paris, but soon found that no influence could get a foreigner into any regiment but the Foreign Legion, except he had first served seven years in the latter. I enlisted in the Second Foreign regiment May 2, 1861, and started for Marseilles next day. Marseilles is twenty-eight days' march from Paris, and was allowed 28 francs to get there as best I could. My *feuille de route* procured me a reduction in railroad rates, but as I only got the money by instalments at certain points indicated, it took me four days to cover a journey made by continuous railroad travelling in twenty-four hours. I could have walked it, had I been inclined, so long as I got to Marseilles within the prescribed limit. I stopped over in Melun, Auxerre, Macon, and Lyons, sleeping, as best I could, on benches at railway stations, and living on less than two francs a day. On the way I picked up with several conscripts going to join their regiments and veterans returning from furlough, and on arriving at Marseilles all were sent to the Fort St. Jean, which was used as a depôt of embarkation for Algeria.

The Fort St. Jean was a tumble-down old place and the accommodations very bad. I found a motley crowd there waiting for shipment to some point in Algeria. There were shy young country-fellows, conscripts from every part of France, many of them speaking only their patois; grizzled veterans, soldiers of the line, zouaves, Turcos, chasseurs d'Afrique, hussars, guides, and artillerymen. There were Belgians, Hollanders, Germans, Swiss, Poles, and Italians on their way to the Foreign Legion, and a detachment of Spahis just returning from Syria, where they had been protecting the Christians from the Druses, whose murderous propensities had recently been exercised rather freely. The Spahis were all Algerian Arabs, and splendid fellows physically. There was no drill or military duty of any kind performed by the men at the fort. They were up at the regular hour, answered to roll-call, and got their regular meals, but spent the rest of the day strolling round the town or lounging in the fort. Guard only was done by a detachment of the Forty-second of the line.

After a month spent in this most cosmopolitan of cities, where I had an opportunity of examining every variety of national costume, and hearing every language spoken along the Mediterranean coasts, we at length started for Oran on board a steamer of the Messageries Imperiales, now the Messageries Maritimes. The vessel was crowded with soldiers and emigrants going to settle in Algeria—French, Germans, Italians, Poles, Jews, and Maltese—and I found the accommodation and food for deck passengers infinitely superior to that supplied by English steamers of the same character. We stopped a few hours at Barcelona and Valencia, and on the afternoon of the third day put into Merz-el-Kebir, the port of Oran. On landing we marched straight to Oran, some six kilometers distant. Here we were quartered in an old fort on the top of a hill, said to have been built by the Spaniards some centuries ago. We had no beds, but lay on chopped straw shaken on the floor of a dingy old room with walls many feet thick and scarcely a ray of light. Here we were supplied with white canvas blouses and trousers, linen drawers, light woollen undershirts, shoes, and white canvas gaiters, but no stockings. In Algeria pieces of old shirts, washed every day, and wrapped around the toes and heels, supply the place of stockings. Guard duty at the fort was done by a regiment of zouaves quartered in the town, and the free-and-easy way in which these fellows did their work was in striking contrast with the rigid discipline of the English army, and even with that prevailing in French regiments at home.

On sallying out to see the town, the first thing that attracted my attention was a zouave on sentry at one of the back gates of the fort sitting on a big stone, his rifle between his legs and a long pipe in his mouth. He had the Crimean and Italian medals, and the "medaille militaire," which is given for bravery on the field and wounds.

After three days' stay in Oran—which is a thoroughly eastern town, full of Arabs, negroes, Berbers, picturesquely-dressed Jews, and camels—we started on the march for Sidi-bel-Abbes, the headquarters of the Second Foreign regiment. Each man had his blanket and his portion of a shelter-tent coiled up and strapped over one shoulder and under the other arm, with his little tent-pole in two pieces, a piece of rope, and three pegs tied to the back of it. This, with his canvas suit, made marching easy. Cooking-cans were carried by each in turn, and as we halted at a village every night the meat and vegetables were bought as we halted. The bread each man carried for himself, on his back or in his stomach, as he might prefer. One man gathered up the wood, another fetched water, another made the fire and acted as cook—every one did something. We had a canteen full of coffee about 3 o'clock in the morning before starting, another about 10 o'clock, and soup, with about half a pound of beef, some vegetables, and bread, at 1 or 2 o'clock, after we halted for the day. Any one who had bread for the evening could eat it, and those who had a sou or two to spare clubbed together and had coffee in the evening. We always started before daybreak and had the day's march over before the hottest part of the day. One day's experience made us familiar with the shelter-tent, and three, four, or more men joined together to make the tent according to fancy. Our average day's march was about eighteen miles.

As the old sergeant in charge knew every inch of the ground, we frequently quitted the high road and marched across the country. Generally the ground was hard and parched and covered with "bronssaille," or a stunted little shrub the soldiers called "palmier." We passed three or four villages on the way, inhabited by a mixed population of French, Spaniards, and a sprinkling of other nationalities, and each having close by its Arab village, composed of immense tents of a dirty brown color. For some miles on each side of all these villages there were well-cultivated farms, and, as we neared Sidi-bel-Abbes, we found a high state of cultivation. We marched for a couple of miles before entering it through luxuriant gardens, over magnificent roads shaded by large trees. We arrived there on the afternoon of the third day. Sidi-bel-Abbes is a walled and fortified town, having four gates, at each of which there is a strong guard. Nearly half of it was at that time taken up with barracks, stables, parade-grounds, etc., and if it has grown since it must be on the outside of the walls. The garrison numbered over three thousand men of all arms.

As the sunburned and dust-covered crowd of recruits marched into the barrack square the whole regiment turned out to look at us. Every man was looking for a friend or countryman, and we were plied with questions in all sorts of languages as to where we came from. As the soldiers of the Legion rarely, if ever, saw a newspaper, they wanted the latest news of their own country, as well as information about friends. It was a novel sight to see men of the same regiment talking in half a dozen different languages, and all knowing enough of French, good or bad, to make it the common medium of intercourse. I found two countrymen of mine, or rather they found me after diligent inquiry, and they were the only representatives of the race in the regiment. One of them, who afterward during a second enlistment won distinction and a commission in the Franco-German war, was a strapping, handsome fellow named McElroy, from the County Down, but was at that time a simple grenadier. The other, a bronzed veteran named Moriarty, with a breastful of medals won in twelve years' service from the Crimea to Italy, Kabylia and Morocco, was muleteer to the company to which I was assigned. He had been in France since early childhood, spoke little English, and that little with a strange mixture of a French accent and Kerry brogue. Poor Moriarty, a born soldier and fit for nothing else, after coming safely through the disasters of the Franco-Mexican war, was, I believe, killed in one of Chanzy's battles on the Loire in 1870.

I afterward found two Englishmen and four Americans. The Englishmen were young fellows who had found themselves penniless in Paris after a spree, and enlisted in the Legion for lack of something better. The Americans were of widely-different types. One was the son of a wealthy New York widow, and had been living a fast life in Paris. His mother stopped his supplies, and to spite her he drove in a carriage with a spanking pair of horses to the Ministry of War and enlisted. He lived a miserable life in Algeria, with chills and fever all the time, and soon managed to get his discharge. The day before he left he borrowed four sous out of my scanty purse and went away without saying good-by. Another was a southern man of education and refined manners who was eating his heart out because he could not get away to join the Confederate army. He disappeared suddenly one day, and I have no doubt he afterward figured in the American civil war. The third was a short, chubby, good-natured little Pennsylvania Dutchman, who had worked on a farm in Illinois, and had been over half the world in American merchant vessels. He deserted his ship in Genoa, made his way to Marseilles, and donned the uniform of the Legion. He, too, was dying to take a hand in the fight at home on the Union side, and after a few months of hope deferred finally succeeded in deserting and making his way to New York. The fourth was a handsome octoroon from New Orleans, whose father, a wealthy planter, had sent him to Paris to be educated, and he had won the degree of bachelor of arts. Shortly after the outbreak of the civil war his remittances stopped, and he, too, went into the Légion.

Like all French regiments previous to the introduction of the present system, the Second Foreign regiment was as large as three English and American ones. It consisted of three battalions of eight companies each, one in each battalion being grenadiers and the other voltigeurs, the grenadiers leading on the march, and the voltigeurs, or light company, bringing up the rear. The total strength was always over 1,800, and sometimes went up to 2,400. Each battalion was commanded by a chef de battalion, or commandant, who held a rank between those of captain and major, and there was also an adjutant-major and an adjutant for each battalion, the latter corresponding to the English sergeant-major, but ranking higher than a non-commissioned officer. Each company had a sergeant-major corresponding to the English color-sergeant. The great majority of the officers and many of the non-commissioned officers were Frenchmen, the rest being mainly Belgians, Swiss, Poles, Germans, and Italians. Of the rank and file the largest number of one nationality were Germans; then came the Belgians, Swiss, Poles, Italians, Spaniards; and there were a few from all sorts of out-of-the-way places—Russians, Greeks, Levantines, of mad blood; Roumanians, Servians, and others. Physically, the men were of all sorts and sizes; but the average was very much above the French regiments of the line, and a better set of men could not be found for the hardest kind of campaigning.

The majority of the recruits had served in the armies of their own countries, yet it took months of incessant drill, owing to their want of knowledge of the language, to familiarize them with the French system. We were up at 3:30 every morning, had a canteen of black coffee, burnished and cleaned our rifles and accoutrements, paraded at 6, and were marched outside the town and drilled till about 9, when we returned to barracks for breakfast. From then till 2 in the afternoon every man was confined to barracks on account of the torrid heat, when the recruits were again marched out for drill and kept at it till about 4:30, when they returned to dinner. From that till tattoo they were free to do as they pleased.

In six weeks I was "passed to the battalion," and was marched out with my company every second day before breakfast for regimental exercise. The training was of the hardest kind. We marched and countermarched, wheeled, turned, and charged over miles of broken ground, formed square, were massed in divisions of two companies, etc., during the first half of the morning, and after a short rest were put through company drill, bayonet exercise, and skirmishing. This continued for several weeks, at the end of which we were given a rest. During these exercises we were not in heavy marching order, carrying only the knapsack, made of untanned cow's hide with the hair on, with the ordinary kit inside. After this, for some weeks, each company was taken out separately two or three times a week for target-practice. The rifle was the Minie and was marked 1845. It was, of course, a muzzle-loader, and, unlike the Enfield, the use of which I had learned from revolutionary drill-masters in Ireland, the hammer was adjusted to stand at full-cock and at quarter-cock. In the latter case it covered the cap without pressing on it. In loading we put the cap on first and rammed in the cartridge after. I never heard of any accident from this dangerous method in any other case but my own, but in that one the captain of my company was very near losing his life. He moved in front of me just as I rather carelessly raised my rifle for ramming home; the hammer slipped down, and the bullet whizzed within a few inches of his head. I was terribly frightened, but as no one noticed the accident I took care to say nothing about it, and it was never known.

The rifle practice over, we were practiced in long marching with the full kit in our knapsacks and a blanket and overcoat strapped over it, but without the shelter-tents and cooking utensils carried in a campaign. This made us good marchers and kept us in good condition. During all this time we were doing guard duty of the most varied kind—at the barracks, the town gates, over military prisoners working out in the brushwood miles away from the town, and at an Arab fair, lasting several days, held in a space enclosed by a ditch outside the town walls. The latter was a most interesting experience. It was a perfect Babel. There were swarthy Arabs in their long, white burnouses, tall, athletic, white-skinned Berbers whom the French called Moors, with white turbans, white linen tunics, knee-breeches of the same kind, bare shins, yellow slippers and no stockings; Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians, Maltese, Turks, negroes, and most picturesquely dressed Algerian Jews with much finer physique than that of their Algerian brethren—all talking loudly in a dozen different languages. All the products of the country and of the countries south of the Sahara and the manufactured goods of France were to be found there, and the bargaining and squabbling between Israelites and the sons of Ishmael was a sight to be remembered forever. Sentinels were placed at intervals of a few yards around the inclosure to prevent the entrance of any one except through the gate, where a toll was collected, but the utmost vigilance could not prevent Arab horsemen from jumping the ditch and dashing into the crowd where it was impossible to recognize one Arab from another. On returning from one of these fairs, the sergeant of the guard, a disgraced Prussian lieutenant, committed suicide by shooting himself with his rifle.

After four months of this kind of work the regiment was sent in detached companies to various parts of the province of Oran. My company and another were sent to a place called Sidi-Moussah, about half-way between Mascara, Abd el Kader's old capital, and Saida, the nearest important town to the desert border, to construct a road. Others were sent to the same work in other places, and others again were allowed to work with farmers for wages. We had six days of a weary march under a broiling sun, over dusty roads, and weighted down with a load of from sixty to eighty pounds a man. This company was divided into squads, each squad cooking for itself and taking care of its own provisions and cooking utensils, which were carried by each man in turn. In addition to this I had a number of books, so that when I first strapped on the knapsack I was unable to stand up straight. Many men—mainly those who been drinking—fell out before the first day's march was over, but, although I was nearly exhausted, I trudged along "keeping the best side out," and was near the head of the column when we halted for the day. I continued this throughout, and on the third day was on the point of fainting when we reached our destination. It was this hard training that made the Algerian troops so effective in the Crimea, in Italy, and Mexico, and it was they who did the best fighting in the early battles of the Franco-German war, where the French were enormously outnumbered, as well as badly led. After a few months of road-making, for which we were paid eight sous a day extra, and which was also excellent training for a campaign, we were marched back to Sidi-bel-Abbes and put through another course of regimental manœuvring. I had seen a good deal of the country and the people and been brought into contact with men of all arms of the French service—zouaves, turcos, spahis, chasseurs d'Afrique, soldiers of the line, and the *enfans perdus* of the "Batallion d'Afrique" (all ex-military convicts)—and the enthusiasm for the French service which had kept up my spirits during a year of toil and privation was giving place to another feeling. I constantly received papers from home, and when I read of the difficulty over Mason and Slidell I thought there was bound to be war between the United States and England. I wanted to take a hand in it, as I felt confident there would be an insurrection in Ireland. I was tired of poor food and 7 sous every five days for pay, having to shout "*Vive l'Empereur*" to order on the Emperor's *fête* day had nearly choked me, and I didn't like the prospect of being sent to Mexico to fight for an Austrian adventurer against a republic. I had never been ten miles away from home before and I was desperately homesick.

At last my relief came. In the early part of 1862 the opposition in the Corps Legislatif made a fuss over the expenditure for the army, and to appease the clamor it was decided to disband about forty thousand men—who were replaced by the next conscription—and all having only a certain term to serve were allowed to go home, the Government paying their expenses as far as the frontier of France, to which they wished to go. I availed myself of the opportunity and returned home in time to find that the Mason and Slidell difficulty had been settled, for which I was extremely sorry. Many Poles left at the same time to take part in the insurrection which took place that year.

Many soldiers of the Legion have settled down in Algeria, obtaining free grants of land, and make good colonists. The population is very mixed, and has some of the best elements of the French, German, Spanish, and Italian races. The country has a most fertile soil, although there is a scarcity of water, which is gradually being remedied, and for much of its prosperity the outcasts and adventurers from every land who formed the Foreign Legion have prepared the way by hard work and harder fighting.

Opinions From the People on the Commission.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Sir,—In your paper of the 21st instant you did me the favor to publish my letter suggesting quadruple taxation coupled with a rebate of 75 per cent. where paid in coin or greenbacks before maturity, thus making coupons so worthless that their holders would be prepared to meet the proposed commission in a frame of mind disposed for compromise.

Parenthetically you remark, "We fear this scheme is impracticable," but do not state the ground of your apprehension. May I ask it?

My objections to the Fulkerson bill, if I understand it, are: First, as shown by you in your editorial of February 24th, it actually enhances the value of coupons; second, insofar as operative it directly diminishes by one half the revenue of the State.

The plan I proposed, (see your issue of February 21st,) or any plan thereto equivalent—viz., a heavy increase, accompanied by a proportionately heavy rebate, of taxation—would, I think, prove a "coupon-killer," while leaving the available revenue fully as great as now. Am I mistaken?

Your columns being a sort of "third house" for the expression of opinion direct from the people at home, I would like to keep the floor long enough to say that, so far as my observation goes, the "commission scheme" commands by no means universal favor. Our hard-fisted and hard-run farmers are already saying: "*Why* three five-thousand-dollar sinecures for '*somebody's*' friends to tell the bondholders what they know already—the amount of actual work involved being what the three, if they are familiar with the subject, could perform in as many hours? Fifteen thousand dollars, besides travelling, clerical, and other expenses, gone out of poor old Virginia's scanty purse—for nothing!"

No, gentlemen. Let our Lieutenant-Governor (who has the whole subject at his fingers'-ends), associated with any other two salaried government officials, draw up a full statement and ultimatum, countersigned by the Governor. Let this be sent, not by personal ambassage, as if we were living in the fifteen or sixteenth century, but by *mail*, to the syndicate which is hounding us, and spread, further, upon both the American and English press, so that it may reach not only the individual bondholders, but the entire reading and reflecting public of both hemispheres.

Let this statement recount *ab initio* the origin of this debt in a scheme of internal improvements, the diversion of which to seaports without the State "enriched them and left her poor indeed." Let it then recite the calamities that next overwhelmed her for four long years, during which her hills seldom ceased to vibrate to the thunder of hostile cannon; the cloud, blacker than battle-smoke, that settled down upon her valleys, with the return of so-called peace; the giving away of one third of her landed domain; the confiscation of so many millions of slave property; the destruction by fire and rapine of so many millions more in other forms (writing *currente calamo* I cannot itemize); the prostration of every interest and industry within her borders; the death, disablement, or enforced self-exile of a large proportion of her young men, the "hope and prop of every State"; that crowning outrage, the injection into the veins of her body politic of a black and fetid current, which has poisoned her life-blood forever; the enslavement of the days of reconstruction; the treachery of her own sons (*et tu, Brute!*) that followed it.

Notwithstanding all which, where the forfeit of the bond was demanded by the inexorable creditor, she, Antonio-like, having naught wherewith to pay, offered her bosom to the knife—her very women standing ready with their rings and jewels to "make up the tale." How and why a settlement at that time was frustrated let impartial history tell.

In very truth beggared, torn, bleeding, and inanimate, the once-proud Old Dominion, as the result of war, has given up the ghost; and what is left of her—the "new Virginia" that has succeeded—is morally, legally, actually no more responsible for the obligations of the "old" than were Greece or Poland after their martyrdom. In such cases, according to Vattel, the conqueror is bound for the debts of the conquered. And before high heaven we may justly claim that the Federal Government is in equity responsible to the creditors of Virginia!

At least let us have no *extravagant* "commission." Put the affair in charge of suitable parties. If not already in State employ, compensate them fairly, and strengthen their hands for the work by well-digested legislation before they enter upon it. I speak for many.

Very respectfully, TUERI.

Fauquier county, Va., Feb. 27, '86.

A pretty dress is in brown surah, trimmed with fine wool guipure. The box-plaited skirt has five rows of lace, graduated widths, with intervals about two inches between rows, set plainly on the skirt and plaited in with it. There is a very short and full apron of silk, without trimming, and three rows of lace are set across the back drapery.

A new pocket crimping apparatus just patented will be hailed with delight by those whose front curls are not of nature's design. This convenient little apparatus is so compact as to make it possible to carry it in the pocket and is charged with some sort of fluid which, with the help of a match, will heat the little curling-iron within a few moments.

CLEVER TRICKS.

A Lecturer Shows How Magicians Deceive the Sight.

[Brooklyn Eagle.]

Mr. Robert Spice, of Philadelphia, lectured last Tuesday evening in the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association of this city before a large audience on the subject of "Magicians and Their Ways." He began by saying:

I am going to tell you exactly how they do these things. Of course, I shall not tell you everything, because I do not know myself. There is a saying that "the quickness of the hand deceives the eye." I don't know who said this, but it is not true. The quickness of the hand never did and never can deceive the eye. I am going to begin by changing one article into another. Here is a goblet of ink. I shall change it into water. You see this little wand in my hand. I had almost forgotten what a magician never would have forgotten. For every effect there is a cause, and the magician has recognized this, and has met it by telling you that it is his wand that changes one thing into another. Here you see is a goblet of ink. I dip this card into it, and you see it is black on that part which touched the fluid. So you see it is really ink. Now I cover the goblet with a handkerchief, and I wave the wand, and now I take off the handkerchief, and you see that ink is changed to water. That appears to be what has happened, but it is not. The water never was ink. Here is the ink, the piece of black cloth which fits in the goblet. But you saw me put a white card in the ink and take it out part white. Well, I simply turned the card around like this, and there you see it is half black on one side. Then Mr. Spice got two young men to come on the platform with him and hold two marked coins, one an English penny and the other a fifty-cent piece. Though the young men stood the width of the platform away from each other, he made their coins change places, so that the man who had held the fifty-cent piece found himself with the English penny, and *vice versa*. He did this, he explained, by having three coins. The fifty-cent piece he got from the audience, but the penny was given to him by his assistant on the platform. He really got two pennies from this source, and palmed one of them. He gave each of the young men a marked coin to hold. Then to be sure no mistake was made he carried the 50-cent piece and the marked penny across the platform from one man to the other. The trick was performed in returning the coins. In place of giving the marked penny to the man who had previously held it Mr. Spice palmed that coin and substituted the unmarked penny. The holder did not examine this, because he had previously satisfied himself that the coin was all right. Going to the man who had held the 50-cent piece, Mr. Spice held that coin up and asked him if he recognized it. "Yes, he did." Whisking out a handkerchief Mr. Spice covered the 50-cent piece and apparently gave it to the young man to hold. He did not, though, for under the handkerchief he changed the 50-cent piece for the marked English penny. Concealing the 50-cent piece and crossing the platform, Mr. Spice next exchanged it under cover of a handkerchief for the unmarked penny which the young man in front of him held. Then waving his wand he ordered the coins uncovered, and the men found to their astonishment the change that had taken place. Not knowing anything about the third coin they could see no way of accounting for the change.

Borrowing a handkerchief from a young lady, the lecturer next pretended to burn it and yet restored it whole. This was a very simple trick, but it deceived every one, for they failed to see the piece of cotton to match the handkerchief which the lecturer drew from the top of the clenched hand in which he held the borrowed article.

Mr. Secretary Wilkie's handkerchief was borrowed, and after being shown to the audience the lecturer hung it over the back of a chair, and coming forward shook his coat and rolled up his sleeves to convince the spectators that there was nothing concealed in them. He whisked the handkerchief off the chair and squeezed out half a pound of candies from it. This was done, he explained, by having a white linen bag hanging by a hairpin to the back of the tidy on the chair over which he had hung the handkerchief. This bag was kept so wide open by a spring of whalebone that the sides of the mouth were drawn tight, retaining the candy till the springs were squeezed. The bag was hung up by the bottom and picked up mouth downward. After being emptied it was palmed. Next a tea-caddy with three compartments was shown to be empty by opening one compartment at a time and exhibiting it to the spectators. Beans were put in the central compartment, and the caddy was set on a table on one side of the platform. On the other side of the platform a cylindrical box was set on another table. A handkerchief was put in this. Mr. Spice waved his wand, and returning to the cylindrical-box, flourished it in the air and poured the beans out of it. From the tea-caddy he took the handkerchief. Then he closed both box and caddy, waved his wand again, and produced the beans from the caddy and the handkerchief from the cylindrical-box. Then he showed how it was done. The cylindrical-box was double-ended, with a partition in the middle. It had beans at one end and a handkerchief at the other end. The tea-caddy also had beans and a handkerchief. A slide fitted in it, and while one compartment was opened at a time, the slide was dropped with its freight into one of the closed compartments. A 25-cent piece was next marked, and a small boy with a large grin mounted the stage to assist in the coming trick. The regular assistant produced a ball of white worsted, which was held up and shown. The marked coin was passed around, the small boy was given the ball to hold, and Mr. Spice, taking the 25-cent piece in his hand, pretended to wheel it along the strand of worsted which he had pulled out from the ball. When all the worsted was unravelled the marked coin was found in the middle. The lecturer showed a flat, tin tube, around which the worsted had been wound. He had dropped the marked coin through that and drawn out the tube unnoticed. It was an unmarked 25-cent piece he had pretended to throw. Next he showed how to tie a property-knot. A larger boy than the last one, adorned by a larger smile, tied the wrists of the magician and then passed a long piece of cord around one arm. This he tied at the ends, converting it into an endless belt. He held it tight and pulled back, and Mr. Spice waved his hands in the air for about a minute, and the rope fell from him. He did the trick over and did it slowly, and showed the spectators that by working the end of the rope around his hand on the arm about which it was bound the rope would pull out at the back of the wrist.

So the tricks went on amid great amusement. The magician was thin and of a serious countenance and impressive manner, and he had a dry way of saying ridiculous things which brought down the house.

Strength of the Confederate Armies.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

The questions of your correspondent "S. C. R.," which you do me the honor to refer to me, should have had a prompter reply but for a press of other duties.

A strictly accurate statement of the number of soldiers *enrolled* by the Confederate authorities, and the number actually in service at different periods, would involve more careful calculations and take more time than I can now give to the subject. But I have at hand authorities which give the numbers with a sufficient approach to accuracy for all practical purposes. In Volume VII. *Southern Historical Society Papers* (pages 287–290) there is a correspondence between Dr. Joseph Jones, of New Orleans (the then able secretary of the Southern Historical Society) and General S. Cooper, the distinguished Adjutant and Inspector-General of the Confederacy, in which the question of numbers and losses of the Confederate armies is very ably and satisfactorily discussed.

Referring any who may desire more detailed information to that correspondence, I will simply state that these able and painstaking writers agree that "the available Confederate force capable of active service in the field did not during the entire war exceed six hundred thousand (600,000) men. Of this number not more than four hundred thousand (400,000) were enrolled at any one time; and the Confederate States never had in the field more than two hundred thousand (200,000) men capable of bearing arms at any one time, exclusive of sick, wounded, and disabled."

In Volume II. *Southern Historical Society Papers* (page 6-21) General Early, in his able and complete reply to the romance of General Adam Badeau on "The Relative Strength of the Armies of Lee and Grant," quotes a correspondent of the New York *Tribune* (believed to be William Swinton, author of "The Army of the Potomac," &c.,) as saying that after a careful estimate of the Confederate returns on file in Washington, he "judges that six hundred thousand (600,000) in all were put into the Confederate service during the period of the war." This confirms the estimate of General Cooper and Dr. Joseph Jones, and cannot be far from the truth.

We have more exact figures of the numbers enrolled by the Federal Government. Mr. Stanton, Secretary of War, states in his report at the close of the war [see *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Volume II., page 20,] that the United States Government put into service *two million six hundred and fifty-six thousand five hundred and fifty-three men* (2,656,553), and the more accurately-compiled statement of the Adjutant-General's office at Washington [see *Southern Historical Society Papers*, Volume IX., pages 134–136,] gives the quota furnished by each State and Territory, and foots up the enormous aggregate of 2,859,132 of men actually furnished.

The United States, therefore, put into the field *nearly five times as many men* as the Confederacy could muster. If, then, with these immense odds in their favor certain writers in *The Century*, Mr. Rossiter Johnson in the New York *Examiner*, and other "historians" (?) of that ilk are to be believed, and the Federal forces were beaten by "overwhelming numbers" wherever *we* gained a victory, then there was an amount of blundering stupidity on the part of the Federal authorities and their generals with which their harshest critics have never yet charged them.

The better explanation seems to be that given by General Early: "Our men in gray had a habit of so multiplying themselves in battle that each man always *counted several* to the men opposed to them."

Respectfully,

J. WILLIAM JONES,

Secretary Southern Historical Society.

Richmond, Va., February 26, 1886.

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