

FIGHTING the GUN-RUNNERS



THE HISTORY of the traffic in arms which goes on between Europe and Afghanistan via Muscat dates from the year 1851, when England, in guaranteeing the independence of the amir, agreed to supply him with rifles and ammunition from India at a reasonable price, to assist him to maintain that independence. These privileges the amir soon began to abuse by establishing a cartridge factory at Kabul and by trading in arms with the border tribes, who eventually became a menace to the towns and villages on the Indian frontier and even to Afghanistan itself.

After a while the advent of smokeless powder and modern arms rendered the Kabul factory obsolete, and the Indian government about this time stopped the supply of arms to the amir. Hence arose an extraordinary demand for modern rifles and ammunition both for the amir and for the border tribes, the selling price at Kabul of a small box rifle rose to as much as £50.

"Ha! Ha!" said the Afghan traders, rubbing their hands, "there is money to be made here; we will get rifles from Europe and the sultan of Oman, who lives at Muscat, will no doubt help us." Now in 1864 the Sultan of Oman had made a treaty with France by which he was allowed to import and export arms without interference, to enable his forces to keep out the warlike Bedouins of the interior.

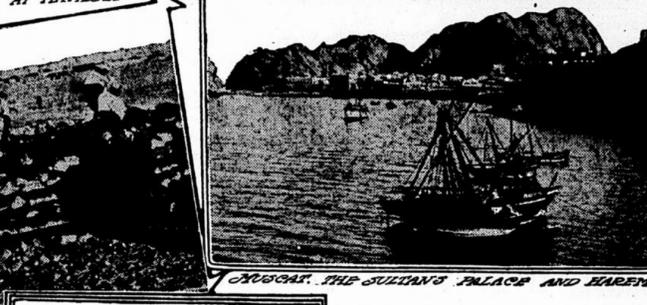
The usefulness of this treaty from a business point of view was pointed out to the sultan by the traders and he delightfully fell in with their



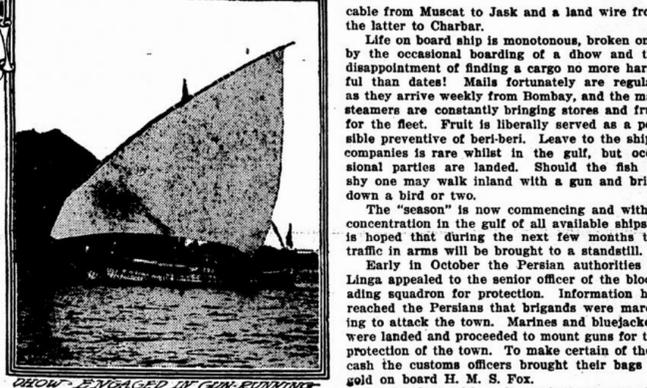
VIEW MARKET ON THE BARRAGE AT MATARAH



BUILDING A FORT OUTSIDE LINGO



MOUSCAT, THE SULTAN'S PALACE AND BARRAGE



VIEW FROM A FORT IN GUN-RUNNING ENTERPRISE - MUSCAT HARBOR

scheme. Rifles by the thousand began to arrive at Muscat from Europe and the Sultan, by imposing a six per cent. duty on all imports and exports of arms, etc., saw his income increasing by leaps and bounds. The traders sent their agents to Muscat and arranged for the arms to be conveyed in dhows across the Gulf of Oman to Persia, while parties of Afghans came down to the Mekran coast, collected camels and transported the arms northward to their own country.

This treaty of 1864 is thus the secret of the whole of the trouble. Efforts were made at the 1908-9 International Arms Traffic convention held at Brussels to induce the French government to annul the treaty, but in vain. The result is that the British East Indies squadron had to be strengthened and a rigorous blockade of the Gulf of Oman established, involving great expense to both British and Indian governments. Could this fifty-year-old treaty be annulled, the British warships would prevent arms being landed at Muscat and the whole gun-running business would collapse.

Steamers of many nationalities land arms at Muscat, where they are stored until the gun-running "season" begins. This lasts from December to April, the heat at other times being oppressive. Caravans can only travel when food and water is obtainable for the camels.

Some of the arms are conveyed to Matarah, a port about three miles from Muscat. At these two ports dhows are laden with arms under cover of night and leave whenever opportunity offers. By keeping within three miles of the Arabian coast a dhow is free from capture, but outside that limit the nakoda (captain) cannot say a word if his rifles are confiscated and his vessel sunk by a British man-of-war. Sohar is another depot for arms, and is supplied from Muscat. Three courses are open to dhows.

1. To make a bold dash from Muscat to Persia. This is dangerous, involving a long passage, part of which must necessarily be in daylight.

2. To hug the coast to the westward and with a favorable breeze to negotiate the thirty miles or so across on a dark night.

3. To creep along the coast to the south, using Karat as a jumping-off place. A dhow would then steer for Karachi, and at the approach of night would alter course and make straight for the vicinity of Gildadar.

The blockading squadron consists of H. M. ships Fox, Philomet, Proserpine, Perseus, Alert, Odin, Sphinx, Redbreast and Espiegle and is called the Persian Gulf division. In addition there are seven steam launches hired from the British India Steamship company by the Indian government and armed. These launches are officered and partly manned by the royal navy. Of course this squadron cannot be maintained in the gulf at full strength or anything like it, as ships must periodically refit and the crews recuperate at Bombay or Colombo. The organization of the blockade is in the hands of Capt. A. T. Hunt of the Fox, whose ability in coping with the traffic has obtained a double reward—an admiralty extension of his appointment and the execrations of the baffled traders of Kabul.

The system of intelligence which has been organized is nearly perfect. The wireless station at Jask transmits to the Fox news of the departure of dhows from Muscat and also any information regarding the presence of Afghan caravans or the landing of arms on the Persian coast. Captain Hunt disposes of his available vessels along the Mekran coast according to the needs of the moment. Ships' cutters and pinnacles, armed with maxim guns, are sent away in charge of officers and lie in near likely landing places. They are provisioned for about a fortnight and

must make the best of it until their ship comes round again to revictual them. The three-mile rule does not obtain on the Persian side and a dhow may be destroyed on the beach if she has carried arms and the arms may be followed up by a landing party if necessary. Few dhows succeed in getting across with arms, and the number which attempt the passage is growing beautifully less. Still the blockade must not be relaxed.

The wireless station at Jask is of great interest, having been recently erected by the Indian government inside a concession obtained from Persia. It is the "bete noire" of the Afghans, as it betrays all their doings, and they have threatened it with destruction. It is guarded by a detachment of Indian troops and surrounded by wire entanglements and earthworks. There is a

cable from Muscat to Jask and a land wire from the latter to Charbar.

Life on board ship is monotonous, broken only by the occasional boarding of a dhow and the disappointment of finding a cargo no more harmful than dates! Mails fortunately are regular, as they arrive weekly from Bombay, and the mail steamers are constantly bringing stores and fruit for the fleet. Fruit is liberally served as a possible preventive of beriberi. Leave to the ships' companies is rare whilst in the gulf, but occasional parties are landed. Should the fish be shy one may walk inland with a gun and bring down a bird or two.

The "season" is now commencing and with a concentration in the gulf of all available ships it is hoped that during the next few months the traffic in arms will be brought to a standstill.

Early in October the Persian authorities at Linga appealed to the senior officer of the blockading squadron for protection. Information had reached the Persians that brigands were marching to attack the town. Marines and bluejackets were landed and proceeded to mount guns for the protection of the town. To make certain of their cash the customs officers brought their bags of gold on board H. M. S. Fox.

An incident with a distinctly humorous side

unhappily subsequent proceedings, and something of the kind was badly needed because the enemy did not materialize. The pirate-brigand Sheikh Mazkur had heard of the Persians' difficulty and hurried to their "assistance." Seventy miles from Linga Mazkur landed, presumably to do a little raiding on his own account. Leaving his three dhows anchored, he plunged inland. While absent H. M. S. Odin came along and seized the three dhows, which were towed to Linga. There it was discovered that Mazkur had, some time ago, taken one of the dhows from some Persians, to whom it was returned. The other two dhows were well saturated with kerosene and burned off the town as a warning to any persons who contemplated following the example of the sheikh. When the flames had attained a good hold a bag of powder on one of the dhows exploded, sending up a beautiful column of white smoke.

HIS BELOVED WIVES

"Ever hear of Bucklesberry?" said a man from North Carolina the other day. "Well, it is a district in Lenoir county about twenty miles from Goldsboro. Twenty years ago it used to abound in curious characters.

"Almost everybody in the neighborhood was named Sutton. At the time of which I speak was the most representative citizen of the community was Ben Sutton. Ben had one of the nicest, neatest little one story houses you ever saw, and when one day I met him on the road and was invited to partake of his hospitality at midday dinner I accepted with alacrity.

"We entered the house from the rear and almost immediately sat down at a table that literally groaned under the weight of ham and sweet potatoes, collards, corn pone, turnips and huckleberry pie. Ben's hospitality made him see that I got away with the whole of an enormous second helping.

"I strolled out upon the front porch after the meal and to my horror there stood in the yard, just in front of the house, a row of four handsome tombstones, each with a grave attached. My host had lingered inside, so I went out and inspected the stones. One bore the inscription, 'To my beloved wife, Annie.' The second was, 'To my beloved wife, Kate.' The third read, 'To my beloved wife, Maggie,' and the fourth, 'To my beloved wife, Jennie.'

"Good heavens, have I struck a Bluebeard?" I exclaimed.

"Then I looked at the dates of decease. They

were from two to five years apart. I turned around, and there was the present Mrs. Sutton looking at me with a smile on her face.

"Look pretty don't they?" she said, "You see, Ben likes to sit out here on the porch and look at the tombstones and tell me what a good wife Annie or Kate or Maggie or Jennie was to him. It doesn't hurt me, and he gets lots of fun out of it."

"But you can bet your sweet life there is no place there for me. In the first place I made him promise me before we were married that he wouldn't put me there if I died before him. In the second, I mean to outlive him. You see, Ben looks pretty husky, but he is nearly 60, and I am not yet 30.

"Oh, no, I don't mind the tombstones or the graves. For one thing, they keep negroes away from our place. You see there is the chicken coop on one side of the yard and the watermelon patch on the other, and you could get a ducky to go into either after sundown for any number of chickens or watermelons.

"The only thing I mind about it is that people try to tease me and tell me that Ben's already got my tombstone ready lettered and all, except as to the date of my death, but I guess I'll fool them all."

"She did, too. Poor Ben was gathered away to her numerous predecessors within a year or two after that. I have never been down in that part of the state since then, so I don't know what she did with the tombstones."

Novel Marriage Ceremony

Every one acknowledges the nerve and daring of the automobile racing mechanic, but just at present the palm must be awarded to a Nebraska, Orrin A. Curtis, employed as mechanic in a garage in Davis City, Neb. In a six cylinder, 50 horsepower car, and with Miss Lillian P. McCracken as his "driver," Curtis drove on his "high" on one evening recently, and started on a journey that

may end only with death. "Until death doth part," read Rev. Cleveland Kleibauer, as he stood in the tonneau of the swaying car and pronounced Orrin A. and Lillian P. man and wife, with another young couple as witnesses.

The young people never will be able to tell exactly where they were married, because they were going something like 50 miles an hour. But

they had permitted her to go to him after the operation, "I shall not re-cover. They think I will, but they are mistaken. I feel it. I am going to die."

"No, no, John!" she cried. "Don't say that! You mustn't die! I haven't a thing that is fit to wear to a funeral."—Judge.

Expensive Schooling. "Experience is the best teacher." "Well, she ought to be; her teacher comes mighty high."

Not to Be Thought Of. "My dear," he feebly said, after

WASHINGTON GOSSIP

The White House Is Closely Guarded



WASHINGTON.—Probably no other building in America is so well policed as the White House. It takes 42 men to do it daily. If any mischievous stranger should seek entrance, he would not get far. Twenty-four men guard the outside of the building and 18 the inside. Eight are in the executive offices. Fourteen guard the White House within and without at night. The number of men enumerated does not include the secret service men who guard the person of the president and who are sometimes in service to guard the members of the president's family. Every door in the White House has its policeman constantly on guard.

There are always two in the basement of the executive offices, where there is a large door leading from the street for the reception of supplies. There is always a policeman at the kitchen entrance. Two men in livery, not policemen, guard the main entrance into the White House at the north portico. In the daytime there is a policeman in the east room and one each at both stairways that lead to the private apartments of the president and his family on the upper floor.

There is a policeman always in the basement, the entrance to which is from the east wing of the mansion. At night a policeman guards the basement corridor of the interior, another

the corridor of the main floor and another the corridor of the upper private floor.

Outside there is constant vigilance in front and in the rear, if the White House may be conceived as having any rear. The south front is as beautiful as the north front and indeed more so. A policeman is always on guard at the south portico, and especially so at night. One parades with the regularity of a sentryman the half covered corridor leading from the White House to the executive offices.

That the White House should have to be thus carefully guarded may seem strange to Americans whose chief executive is after all only a democrat who is a citizen temporarily, holding a high public office. But it is necessary. Three Presidents have been assassinated, although none ever at the White House. It would seem none ever could be because of the vigilance kept there. But a fierce light plays upon the White House and the occupants of it, especially the president. It attracts all kinds of people, and cranks are ever dangerous. Many is the one apprehended before he has gone far. And in this land of liberty there are also other people who have dangerous ideas centering on the life of the chief magistrate.

Besides, Americans, and especially American women are very inquisitive and given much to vandalism. They come in shoals to Washington, and their first thought is the White House. They want to inspect it from bottom to top. They want to miss nothing, and many of them would like to take away mementoes. Their audacity and lack of manners and observance of other properties is amazing.

Bankers Quick to Detect Bad Money

THE exact chance of any one person having a bad piece of money is hard to determine, for the reason that no one, not even the secret service, knows at any one time just how much counterfeit currency is in circulation. But from years of experience the government agents at Washington have figured out that in paper money the proportion of bad to good is about \$1 to \$100,000, and in coin somewhere between \$2 and \$3 to \$100,000.

The larger the coin or bill to be counterfeited the greater the danger of detection and the need of a more expensive plant. The commonest way of making spurious coins is the turning out of base metal coins—but the operation is expensive. Silver, for instance, cannot be successfully cast. Base coins with silver in them must therefore be struck off in a steel die—a die representing days of work on the part of an expert engraver. Then there must be a powerful press to make the impressions, to say nothing of all the expenses of running a chemical laboratory and keeping it secret.

In the counterfeiting of paper money there are three methods used, copying by hand, photographic reproduction, and the raising of genuine bills from lower to higher denominations.



HA, HA! I'VE DISCOVERED A COUNTERFEIT BILL THEY CAN'T FOOL ME

It takes a good man a whole day to change one bill. Five raised ten are the most frequent offenders of this sort. The workman thus makes \$5 a day.

And yet in spite of all care and all precautions, counterfeiters are eventually run to earth. Why? Three reasons: Bank, secret service and system. In the long run most money in circulation comes into the hands of some bank. And there the counterfeit, good or bad, eventually meets its downfall. Tellers and cashiers handle so much currency that they seem to be gifted with second sight.

If he cannot tell at first glance whether the money is bad, he consults two monthly counterfeiting magazines and usually finds what he is after. The magazine people co-operate with the secret service. And the next teller or cashier who gets the mate of the note knows right off what the counterfeit is.

Woman Soldier Now Seeks a Pension



NOT many men have had the varied and adventurous life led by Mrs. Louise E. Bliss of Sheridan, Wyo., who has just applied for a pension on the grounds that, dressed as a man, she served four years in the federal army as a member of Company G, Sixty-third infantry, from Illinois, from 1861 to 1865. Mrs. Bliss is now an old woman, with white hair and wrinkled face, and as a result of her military career she has a scar left by a bullet fired at Vicksburg; a long gash across the upper left arm is a memento of Corinth and a Confederate saber.

According to the story told by Mrs. Bliss to the pension agent, and sworn to by her, she was living in Illinois at Jonesboro, when the war broke out. She was enthusiastic and patriotic and wanted to join the army, but out of course could not do so in skirts. So she cut off her hair, obtained a suit of men's clothing and applied for enlistment. In the excitement and hurry of the early days of enlistment, when there were thousands of applicants, the disguised girl was passed off and found herself a member of Col. McCowan's regiment, the Sixty-third infantry. She was assigned to Company G under Captain Richardson.

After drilling and being otherwise "whipped" into line, the Sixty-third started south and with it went the girl soldier. For four years she stood the strain of army and camp life, taking her "medicine" as it came to her, and in all ways being treated as were the other soldiers of the regiment.

Just before the war ended the true sex of the young soldier became known to a comrade, and immediately after being mustered out of the service because of the termination of hostilities, she married John Sibley, who had served in the same company and regiment with her throughout the war.

Because of her slight figure and effeminate appearance Mrs. Bliss was once chosen to "masquerade" as a woman and play the spy. This was during the Vicksburg campaign, and so successful was she in that role that she gained extremely valuable information for her commanding officer.

Uncle Sam Warns Against Mosquitoes

WAR on the mosquito as well as on the house fly has been declared by the department of agriculture. As a disseminator of disease the mosquito is branded as being as great a menace to humanity as the fly. L. O. Howard, chief of the bureau of entomology, has issued a bulletin on the protection of communities from mosquitoes. He lays stress on the necessity of abolishing breeding places of the insect pest.



Where the rain barrel and rain water tank are necessary they should be screened. The waste places in the immediate vicinity of a house should be carefully searched for tin cans, bottles and wooden or tin boxes in which water can accumulate, and all such receptacles should be destroyed or carried away. The roof gutters should be carefully examined to make sure that they are not clogged so as to allow the water to accumulate.

"The chicken pans in the poultry yard, the water in the troughs for domestic animals, the water cup of the sidewalk are all places in which

RE-CLOTHING OF UNCLE SAM'S ARMY



NEW DOG TENT WITH A BUILT IN POLE FOR THE SINGLE POLE

NEW STYLE OLD STYLE NEW STYLE OLD STYLE

UNCLE SAM'S infantryman—who has to walk as well as fight—may well bless the year 1911, for the weight of his kit is to be lessened by almost one-half. The regulation 56 lb. is cut to 46 lb. with everything on, and stripped for real work in the field the foot soldier will carry but 30 lb. now, thus fitting him the better for marching and fighting. When a soldier goes into a fight there are certain things which he must carry if he is going to be of any use to his country. These are, first of all, his weapons—rifle or revolver—and the proper ammunition, the first-aid packet, one trenching tool, water—a thirsty soldier cannot hit a flock of barns—a mess kit, and then more ammunition. Nowadays 210 rounds are not considered any too much for the first dote of ammunition. What he does not need in a fight is his shelter—the "dog tent," overcoat, blanket, and poncho.

Today the trenching tool is regarded as next in importance to the weapon. Each man carries either a pick mattock, a shovel, or an axe. Certain men also have wire-clippers. With shovels a whole regiment can hide itself in little holes in thirty seconds, and dead soldiers are no use to a government. The old days of standing up in the face of the bullets are gone now. The only time a soldier shows himself to the enemy, if he can help it, is in the final rush. Advances are not permitted until superiority of fire is assured.

But there are a score of marches to every skirmish, and the tabulated list gives the essential things that each infantryman must carry with him, all of which are distributed more or less evenly about his person.

Here is the tabulated list of the United States infantryman's kit:

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| One rifle | One trenching tool |
| One gun sling | One haversack |
| One bayonet | One bacon can |
| One bayonet scabbard | One condiment can |
| One cartridge belt | One mess can |
| One hundred rounds | One fork |
| One trenching tool | One spoon |
| One first-aid packet | Toilet articles |
| One pair of socks | One pair of socks |
| One first-aid pouch | One woolen blanket |
| One canteen | One haversack |
| One canteen cover | One emergency ration |
| One cup | One emergency ration |
| One trenching tool | And the pack, which consists of: |
| One pack-carrier | One shelter half |
| One blanket | Five shelter tent poles |
| One poncho | One poncho |

Scores of further suggestions from officers have been received by the United States war department, which is responsible for this new departure, to make the soldier more efficient in time of war. An ambulant kitchen—made of tin cans and other things—meat on the march—is one of the newest wrinkles proposed. Automobiles for a mobile army are demanded now. The blanket has been cut to weigh 3 lb. It is proposed to abolish the coat in the field and substitute a sweater in its place.

Other recommendations are that the sergeants carry no rifle in the field but have revolvers and bolos instead. Likewise the cooks are to be relieved of the rifle and have revolver and bolo, thus enabling them to carry sufficient utensils to cook for the company when other transportation has been abandoned.

It is proposed to do away with the old campaign hat and to substitute the mounted police hat, which has a lower crown and a wider brim and is more comfortable. With it goes the individual "housewife." The company will carry a kit for mending for the entire outfit. A seckerchief is to be made part of the uniform. Officers will not carry their sabres in the field, and tobacco and soap will be made part of the ration. The foot soldier's little tent has been made much lighter. Nowadays each man has a half shelter tent, with fire pins and one jointed pole; his "bunkie" lugs the other half. Now the poles are abolished. The rifle acts as a front pole and a rope takes the place of the rear pole. In case of a surprise the rifles are even handed to get at. But even better the lessened weight will be carried in much easier fashion.

The illustration shows a front view of the new equipment of the United States foot soldier with cartridge belt.



Infantryman in New Equipment.

foot is due to the untiring efforts of the officers who make up the United States Infantry Association which was organized some years ago. Its president is Lieut.-General John C. Bates, Brigadier-General Clarence R. Edwards is vice-president, and Major George H. Shelton is secretary and treasurer.

Joke Made His Credit Good.

To illustrate the fact that some persons are devoid of a sense of humor, this story, according to the New York Tribune, was told at a downtown luncheon club: "I forgot to pay my new-boy last night and when I saw him this morning gave him the five cents due him and said: 'I thought every minute last night you'd send a collector for this.' 'Now—not on your life; not if you owed me twice as much.' An hour later the boy came to my office, where he had never been before, waited for me, and when I came, said: 'Say, I'm awful sorry you thought I was sore about de nickel. You needn't pay me never till you want to, and about sendin' for it—nix.' I thanked him, and now, for trying to crack a joke, I have secured a long line of credit."

Not Jack's View, However.

Marks—Jack married an heiress but he says she won't let him have any money to spend.

Park—Lucky dog! He reported me only a rich wife, but he's a grad one.