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A GOOD SOLDIER

Some of the Qualifications are Enumerated.

HOMELY AND SIMPLE DUTIES

An Anecdote in Point—Some Historical Facts—Importance of Training.

(Army and Navy Journal.)

An officer of a militia regiment tells the story of his experience while in camp in front of Santiago, Cuba. He was a Southerner by birth, and a young man, whose ample fortune had saved him from the necessity of taking thought for himself. He could not make a fire nor could any of his men, and so they went hungry in the midst of plenty. In the neighboring camp, occupied by a company of Uncle Sam's Buffalo soldiers, as the Indians call the colored troops, rose the cheering flames of innumerable camp fires and from them came the grateful incense of frying bacon and boiling coffee. Swallowing his pride, for he had nothing else to swallow, this Southerner warrior ventured to go into the negro camp and ask if he might have the privilege of frying his bacon and boiling his coffee at their fire. "Sartin, honey," said a hospitable negro, "sit right down and help yourself."

After what was to a hungry man a most delicious repast the white soldier was filled with that sense of peace and charity toward all men which follows a good meal.

"Talk of messing with a negro," he said afterwards, telling the story, "I would not only eat with him, but I could sleep with him. He is more than a friend; he is a brother."

It is this capacity to care for himself, and to make the best of adverse conditions, that forms one of the most essential qualifications of a good soldier. The question of victory is not merely one of fighting, but of preparation for the encounter, of marching and counter-marching. The soldier's life is a monotonous round of tiresome duties enlivened at rare intervals by dangerous episodes. A battle is an occasional interlude "in the long round of digging, marching, bridge building and road making, escorting mule trains, mounting guard, dragging wagons through the mud, and loading or unloading stores." No previous training can give a man the experience of battle, but it can do very much to fit him to acquit himself with credit when the day of battle comes.

During the last summer our Army lost more lives in camp and suffered more from disease than they did from the bullets of the enemy in a sharp campaign.

Even with the wisest of management, the conditions were such in Cuba that the spread of disease was so rapid after the surrender of Santiago that the Spaniards could, as an officer of the Regular Army said, have driven our Army away with sticks if they had only waited. Such is the controlling influence of the conditions that are wholly apart from the mere fighting.

Excellent service was rendered in our last war, as it has been in previous wars, by young men who had no sufficient military training, but who had aptitude, and quickly learned to adapt themselves to their new conditions. But they will themselves testify that they found much to learn, and that they could have served with even greater credit if they had received before entering upon active duty the preliminary instruction that they found the need of when it was too late.

Experience has shown that any military system which ignores the necessity for rigid training in the actual routine of Army life is, and always must be, a failure. Famous victories have been won by men trained in other schools than that of the Army, as at New Orleans; but these are the exception. The troops at New Orleans fought behind breastworks. They were commanded by Jackson, a hero of the Revolution, and the wars with the Indians, and the men under him were "magnificent marksmen, backwoods-men, frontiersmen, Indian fighters—men who never fired until sure of their aim."

It was experience with this class of men that gave our forefathers that confidence they had in a militia organization. What General Knox said in its favor was qualified by his recommendation of a system of universal military training. This has been adopted by Germany and France, but an experience of over a century under our constitution shows that it cannot be applied to this country until we are prepared to accept conscription, instead of volunteering, for the recruiting of our volunteers. The practical question is, what we are to do in the absence of it, and we are obviously limited to a choice

between trained and untrained Volunteers. What credit we have for Lundy's Lane during the War of 1812, was won by General Scott with his brigade of Regulars, trained and drilled most carefully by the General in person. The story of our experiences on land during that war as a whole, with incompetent officers, and undisciplined and mutinous militia, could only, as Gullan C. Verplanck once said, make one "hear-sick of his country's shame." Hull's surrender, the surprise of Chandler at Stony Creek; the capture of Boerstler at the Beaver Dams; the abandonment of Fort George, by McClure; the disaster at Chryslers, are part of this shameful record, as is also the surrender and burning of the capital at Washington.

If we have hitherto escaped overwhelming disaster in spite of our reliance upon untrained troops, and undisciplined valor, it is because we have had in every war at least a nucleus of skilled soldiers.

It was the sturdy veteran Miles Standish, fresh from his service in European wars, who saved the infant colony of Plymouth from the open and secret hostility of the Indians. It was Washington and the soldiers of the French and Indian wars and men trained in frontier life who formed the backbone of the armies of the Revolution. It was the soldiers trained in a similar school who won our honors in Mexico. It was the soldiers of the Mexican war who were the chief reliance of both North and South during the Civil War and finally, it was a corps composed almost entirely of such soldiers and of the well trained regiments of the Regular Army who brushed aside the Spanish defenses at San Juan and gave us the signal victory which ended the Spanish war.

And certainly when we come to the Navy, no one can doubt that it was Dewey and men like him, trained in the school of Farragut and Porter, who swept the Spaniards from the seas and gave us victories at which the world has not yet ceased to wonder.

TRIMMING YARDS.

Any "shellback," whether abait or before the mast will recognize the value of a machine which, particularly in time of need as well as ordinarily, will brace or square the yards in five minutes in a gale of wind. This is Captain Jarvis's patent brace-winch. Captain Jarvis was out to Sydney in the Earl of Dalhousie. After leaving the Dalhousie he made a trip to Portland as master of the British ship Duntrune, and then forsook the sea to teach navigation and perfect his brace-winch. A year ago one of the winches was affixed to the Norma's foremast. There are three purchases on the machine, and with it they can handle the ship like a toy. The mate of the Norma thus speaks of its working: "In the old days when it was blowing off the Horn and we came to wear ship, didn't we catch it. One minute we would be rolling in the scuppers, the next our brains would be almost knocked out with a flying rope, and then the end of the braces would persist in getting out through some of the holes, and then there would be the devil to pay. Finally, when we got the ship around, and it was a very dark night, I would have to go aloft to see that the yards were braced up sharp. Now three men can go to the winch, and, lifting the brake, can swing the yards around in five minutes. No matter how the winds blow or how heavy the sea, it makes no difference. All three yards are trimmed at the same moment without any fuss or danger."

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will. It makes the liver, kidneys, skin and bowels perform their proper work. It removes all impurities from the blood. And it makes the blood rich in its oxygenating qualities.

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