

THE JANUARY MAGAZINES.

"LIPPINCOTT'S." The January number of Lippincott's Magazine has the following table of contents:

"The Vicar of Bullhampton," by Anthony Trollope; "The Persecuted Woman," by the Fairy and the Ghost; "A Christmas Tale, with six amusing illustrations, by F. R. Stockton; "Our Christmas Eve," by Edgar Fawcett; "Our Capital," by William R. Hooper; "The Singer," a poem, by Lucy Hamilton; "The Philosophy of Self-Importance," by Edward Spencer; "Beyond the Breakers," a novel, part III, by Hon. Robert Dale Owen; "International Colours," by Hon. J. Ross Snowden; "Musings on an Old Man," by C. Meredith; "Going an Errand," a Christmas story; "The Critic," a poem; "Literary Lunatics," by Wirt Sikes; "Our Monthly Gossip," "Literature of the Day."

From Colonel Snowden's paper on "International Coinage" we quote the following paragraphs:

"It is a singular fact, noticed in the United States Mint report for 1858, that the weight of the coins in France, although founded upon a decimal system of value, cannot be expressed in decimals. Her normal coin, the twenty franc piece, is precisely 49.48 grams; most improveable and unscientific figure. Nor would the twenty-five franc piece, the counterpart of the proposed half-eagle and pound sterling, make any better show. It is not fit to be measured either by grams or grains. And yet this is the coin the United States and Great Britain are invited to adopt."

"In view of the awkward figures required to express the twenty-five franc piece, it has quite recently been proposed to slightly increase the weight of the piece to the standard of eighty-eight centigrams, or eight grains and one tenth, which corresponds with one hundred and twenty-five grains. This would, of course, by increasing its value, bring it a little nearer to the half-eagle and pound sterling. But even if this did remove the objection to a pound based upon the franc and its multiples, which in fact it does not—we do not know that France would agree to this change. Her proposition is to take her standards, and to require the other nations interested to conform to them. Moreover, we have no reason to believe that the modification of the original proposition would be satisfactory to Great Britain. It would require an alteration in the weight of the sovereign, and a change in its fineness from eleven-twelfths to nine-tenths—thousands—the present standard, to 900 thousandths, the standard of France and the United States. In fact, this new suggestion rather strengthens the position taken by Great Britain, that the nations interested are not prepared to adopt the system proposed, and that a general monetary conference, in which the whole subject may be considered, is desirable, and may lead to some practical and useful results."

"The foregoing considerations lead to the following conclusions:—1. The advantages of an international coinage are not overstated by its advocates. 2. There are practical difficulties in establishing and maintaining a unification of coins of different nations. 3. The propositions heretofore made are liable to serious and manifold objections. 4. The value of the gold dollar ought not to be reduced to any system adopted which would impinge upon it as the American unit of coin and money of account. 5. All nations should be invited to adopt the dollar as the most suitable money unit. 6. It is desirable that there should be a uniformity in the fineness of the gold coins of the different nations. 7. Great Britain ought to adopt the standard of the United States, France, Italy, and Belgium in this respect—namely, in the gold coins in 1000 parts by weight 900 parts of gold, and the balance to be made up of equal value. 8. A single standard, namely, gold, ought to be adopted by the nations. 9. A general monetary conference, as suggested by the British commissioners, is desirable, and may lead to useful and practical results."

"We make this extract from the essay on the 'Philosophy of Self-Importance,' by Edward Spencer—

"Vanity is, after all, only an exaggerated form of self-esteem, and he who esteems at least respects himself. The selfish virtues are not the most popular in the eyes of the world; it is likely, however, that they are among the most serviceable to the community. It is not, as is often remarked, that the easy good-nature which we admire in so many persons is apt to be no more than pure selfishness. Still, it is something to be good-natured. It is an admirably wholesome thing for society to possess good-natured people in its ranks, no matter what has made them so. Certainly, it is desirable that there should be a certain amount of good-nature, and that it should be so distributed as to be of the most serviceable use to the community. It is not, as is often remarked, that the easy good-nature which we admire in so many persons is apt to be no more than pure selfishness. Still, it is something to be good-natured. It is an admirably wholesome thing for society to possess good-natured people in its ranks, no matter what has made them so. Certainly, it is desirable that there should be a certain amount of good-nature, and that it should be so distributed as to be of the most serviceable use to the community."

"But there can be no question of the positive utility of the sentiment of self-importance to the well-being of human society. This puffing humors it is that hath produced so many great tomes, built such famous monuments, adorned such a manifold of mansions, to have their acts eternalized. 'Dignitas nostrorum, et diorum hic est,' to be pointed at, etc., to see their names inscribed, as Phryne on the walls of Greece, Phryne fecit this caused so many bloody battles. 'Et nocet oculis servare deum.' This, however, is a one-sided and narrow view. Education is the nurse of genius as well as the spur. It was the fame of Miltades that taught Theistocles to become famous. The walls of the Piræus, the fortifications of the Acropolis, yet stand to testify to the tremendous propinquity of vanity in one man's bosom. Do not let us forget that Napoleon did something else besides march into Russia and gild the dome of the Invalides. Do not let us forget that Richelieu produced something besides a bad tragedy. Do not let us forget that Cicero wrote and spoke other words besides his 'O fortunatum natum.' How nobly earnest this sentiment of self-importance makes the worker! We see Haydn solemnly at prayer before beginning the Creation. We see Do Thou earnestly researching God, each one in his own way, and each one with a different aim. It is the spirit of impartiality and justice. Less consequential men would not have had the courage to assume that the Delty had a personal interest in the result of their labors; but less consequential men would never have labored so faithfully and so well. Ah! if we could only all of us be vain enough to dedicate our performances to God, and feel a consciousness of His immediate interest in our work, what labors we should become, what tasks accomplish!"

"Rob men of this exalted self-importance—take from them the creative delight which flows in like a river along the broad, proud channel of self-consciousness—and you deprive them at once of all inspiration—you crush the germ of their excellence. In the aggregate, men will be willing to do nothing unless their own satisfaction be involved in the issue. And this it is which gives to vanity its energizing power, its operative activity in the human mind; for no hope of compensation is so flattering as that hope which springs up in recognition of the substantial honors and rewards from the lap of fame. Thus, as Lacon has it, 'Self-love, in a well-regulated heart, becomes, as it were, the steward of the household.'"

"THE GALAXY." The contents of the January number of the Galaxy are as follows:—

"Susan Fielding," by Mrs. Edwards, chapters xi to end, with an illustration; "My Light-houses," by H. H. "Science and Orthodoxy in England," by Justin McCarthy; "Ten Years in Rome," by the Old Admiral; "By Edmund Clarence Steadman; "Put Yourself in His Place," by Charles Reade, chapters xxviii and xxix,

with an illustration; "Brother of All, with Honorable Hand," by Walt Whitman; "Story of the Powder-boat," "In the Valley of the Shadow," by Albert S. Evans; "A Child's First Sight of Snow," by Sarah M. B. Platt; "A Monument of Trade," by Edward Crapsey; "The Pest of the Period," a chapter of the Morals and Manners of Journalism, by Richard Grant White; "The Mullet that Grows by Sudbury Wood," by T. W. Parsons; "Poisoned Air," by John C. Draper, M. D.; "The Galaxy Miscellany;" "Drift Wood," by Philip Quillibe; "Literature and Art;" "Nebulae," by the editor.

From the anonymous "Story of the Powder Boat" we quote the following paragraphs with regard to the conception and execution of the famous plan for blowing Fort Fisher sky-high, which was one of the little failures of the war, the responsibility of which the officers of the army and navy have never been able to settle between them:—

While preparations were making, in 1864, for the attack on Fort Fisher, it occurred to General Butler that if a large quantity of powder could be confined in the form of a large magazine that explosion would be the destruction of the fort and garrison and even of the neighboring towns. The idea was suggested by the results of two very recent explosions: the one at Erith, in England; the other at City Point, on the James, in the close vicinity of the General's own headquarters. In October, 1864, on the south bank of the Thames, near Woolwich, two powder-magazines and two barges loaded with powder exploded, killing and wounding a number of persons. The explosion of barrels of powder in the two magazines, and 200 barrels in the barges. The latter were moored at the wharves. The total quantity of powder exploded was, therefore, about 100,000 pounds, or about 45 tons. The two magazines were 400 feet from each other, on the edge of the river, immediately behind the dike. The barges were alongside the wharves, one of which extended 130 and the other 122 feet into the river. Within a few yards of the magazines were three other magazines, one of which was 100 feet from the others. The magazines and cottages were the only buildings within a mile of the disaster. There were three distinct explosions: the first on board the barges, which tore asunder the large magazine and so caused the smaller one to explode; the second one on the wharves, which remained upon another. The barges were split into fragments and hurled into the air. The embankment was destroyed, and so were the cottages of the workmen. No damage, other than the breakage of glass and windows, was done outside of the tract of twenty acres, in which these buildings were situated. The shock was, however, felt more or less throughout London, distant, at the nearest, about fifteen miles; and some of the stonework sworn to before the coroner's jury make the distance at which the shock was felt as great as forty or fifty miles. A magazine a quarter of a mile from those blown up was uninjured, although a piece of iron was thrown through the roof, and the workmen inside of the magazine were so terrified by the explosion. Another magazine lay at a distance of a quarter of a mile from this one, and a Government magazine one mile, and neither received injury. The explosion at City Point took place on board an ordnance barge, moored alongside the wharf at that place. She contained about eight tons of ammunition, a part of it in boxes, the other in barrels. The barge was on a similar boat was moored to her off-shore side. The wharf was built on piles, and had upon it a wooden store-house of one story.

About three hundred feet of the wharf was destroyed, and the store-house exploded, cart, yet, although a small boat with several men in it, which was alongside the other barge, was capsized, none of the men were injured. A loaded railroad train was on the track on the opposite side of the wharf, and the engineer was killed by the explosion. The explosion, which was a very desirable result, and to obtain which the wind must be light from the west, was not effected. The explosion at City Point took place on board an ordnance barge, moored alongside the wharf at that place. She contained about eight tons of ammunition, a part of it in boxes, the other in barrels. The barge was on a similar boat was moored to her off-shore side. The wharf was built on piles, and had upon it a wooden store-house of one story.

IX. In case the enemy attempted to board, the Wilderness was to attack at once with grape and canister, to transports with the troops, and General Butler in his flagship, got under way and went to Beaufort, from which place they did not return until the 24th. The Admiral, however, determined to ride it out, and did so successfully, but the position of the party on the Louisiana was not pleasant in the extreme. She wallowed and rolled, and dragged the Wilderness almost down to the fleet, although Captain Arey let go all the anchors he had. She finally cut off from the Wilderness, and was taken in tow by the Nautilus, during the remainder of the night. After the gale ceased the sea went down rapidly, and the night of the 23d was clear and fine. The weather was quite cold, and the wind light from N. W. This was a very unfavorable wind, as the vessel would probably fall off the point, and the position of the party would not be pleasant in the extreme. She wallowed and rolled, and dragged the Wilderness almost down to the fleet, although Captain Arey let go all the anchors he had. She finally cut off from the Wilderness, and was taken in tow by the Nautilus, during the remainder of the night.

Accordingly, the Wilderness once more took the tow-line, and the Kansas again took her position as a stern range. At a quarter before eleven the two vessels passed the Kansas and stood to shore W. by S. S., running slowly. At twenty minutes before twelve, fifty-five minutes after leaving the Kansas, the Wilderness was in two and a half fathoms of water, with the beach and the embrasures of Fort Fisher plainly discernible. The signal was not given, and the Louisiana remained in position. Slowly but steadily she approached the beach; and to the spectators on the Wilderness she seemed almost on shore before she anchored. Arey had to veer out nearly two hundred fathoms of line to the beach, and her before she brought up. Then all was quiet.

Those were solemn moments. Lamson and his brother officers stood aft on the hurricane deck, watching with eagerness the dim outline visible in shore of the Louisiana, and in an instant the light of light shot upward, and in an instant the powder-boat was plainly visible, as if by moonlight! It was a moment like that, which comes to drowning men before they sink for the last time. For to every one on board the Wilderness, the one thought occurred—"The fire has broken away from them!" The next instant, destruction, annihilation was expected.

"Pool!" said Lamson, when half a minute had gone by without any explosion; "they are only hauling fire, and the light shines through the canvas, and the false smoke-stacks are visible. Who closed the eyes of the sentries on the beach and the parison in the fort puzzled every one. The liebel newspapers which gave an account of the explosion explained this. The Louisiana was seen, but was thought to be a gunboat which had gotten aground, and had been abandoned and was a fire. It was impossible for them, in the obscurity of the night, to judge of her distance from the beach; and as several of our small tugs had at times during the night, and ordered her to get aground, and had blown up from the blockade been abandoned and no particular attention.

Soon the light was extinguished, and all was dark again. The night had become thick, and the Louisiana was scarcely discernible from the deck of the Wilderness.

Twenty minutes passed. The sentries still continued their walks on beach and parapet, and their challenges were occasionally heard. At length Arey announced, "They are coming," and soon the boat and her crew were under the quarter, "All right," was the word from Rhind, as he came on deck; and although orders were to cast loose the boat and let her go, he coolly remarked that she "was too good a boat for the Rebels to be sent to the bottom," and he ordered her hoisted up, this being done, "Four bells" was the word from Rhind, who had been bottling up his steam, and the Wilderness darted away to the eastward at a speed of fifteen miles an hour.

In obedience to the Admiral's instructions, the history was now thrown with great rapidity to notify him that the powder-boat had been placed, and arrangements made to explode her. This done, the party joined in congratulations on the success of the affair thus far, and hopes that the results would equal general expectation. According to Commander Rhind's estimate, the Louisiana had been anchored within three hundred yards of the beach. It was hoped that, the wind being light, she would swing to the flood tide, with her stern towards the shore. But as she swung to wind; so that she had to be securely anchored with two anchors, and short scope of chain, just sufficient to hold her firmly.

The clocks had been set at ten minutes to twelve, to run an hour and a half; and the candles of the chandler had been cut to burn an hour and ten minutes to one on the morning of the 24th, and awaited the explosion. The clocks should have exploded the powder at twenty minutes past one, and the chandler at twenty minutes before two. But it was not until nearly two to that the explosion took place; and by that time the after part of the vessel was wrapped in flames.

At that moment (1:40 A. M.) a huge column of fire rushed straight upward, four loud explosions followed at intervals of about half a second, and all was dark again.

Rhind turned to his officers and quietly remarked, "There's a fizzle!" and went below. In fact, he had feared all along that the arrangements for securing instantaneous explosion would fail, as there were no fuses laid in the great mass of powder under the deck. As these arrangements, however, had been made by the ordnance officers, he did not attempt, on his own responsibility, to alter them, but gave his whole attention to carrying out the directions he had received, with the utmost carefulness.

When day broke, the Wilderness steamed out to the flag-ship, to the west of which they were most heartily welcomed as men risen from the dead. Indeed, the Admiral informed Commander Rhind that, when they had parted the previous evening, he had never expected to see any of the party again in life.

It is almost unnecessary to state here, what has been for a long time so well known to the public, that the explosion failed to damage the works. It was felt heavily at Wilmington, and distinctly at Beaufort; the former about thirteen miles from the point, about half a mile from the shore to the ground about two and a half miles from the fort, declared that "the explosion jumped them about like-pop-corn." But, on the other hand, a number of wooden buildings on the point, about a mile and a half from the place where the powder-vessel was blown up, were not even injured.

It has been the custom to refer to this affair as the failure of the attempt to blow up Fort Fisher. But it is hoped that the readers of this article will carefully discriminate between the failure to obtain certain expected results, and the failure of the expedition. The expedition did not fail; the attempt to blow up the forts did. The powder-vessel was placed and exploded according to orders; and the failure consisted entirely in the effects of the explosion not fulfilling the sanguine expectations of the projectors.

X. Should the fort open and the Wilderness be disabled, an effort should be made to drive off the sentries from the beach, and the vessel to become inevitable—the final measures should be adopted. Mr. Preston being in view of this contingency, stationed in the lower-room, was upon signal from Captain Rhind, to blow up the Louisiana, to assure the success of the enterprise. This was to be done, to use Preston's own words, by "striking a lighted candle into the nearest open bag."

XI. The signal for the self-destruction of the party was to be three distinct and measured raps on the deck, to be given by Captain Rhind.

The Admiral cordially approved of the above plan of operations, with the exception of the tenth and eleventh articles. But being told that these had been adopted by the unanimous vote of the party, he reluctantly assented to them all.

The gale continued to blow with great fury until the afternoon of the 23d. On its first appearance, transports with the troops, and General Butler in his flagship, got under way and went to Beaufort, from which place they did not return until the 24th. The Admiral, however, determined to ride it out, and did so successfully, but the position of the party on the Louisiana was not pleasant in the extreme. She wallowed and rolled, and dragged the Wilderness almost down to the fleet, although Captain Arey let go all the anchors he had. She finally cut off from the Wilderness, and was taken in tow by the Nautilus, during the remainder of the night.

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X. Should the fort open and the Wilderness be disabled, an effort should be made to drive off the sentries from the beach, and the vessel to become inevitable—the final measures should be adopted. Mr. Preston being in view of this contingency, stationed in the lower-room, was upon signal from Captain Rhind, to blow up the Louisiana, to assure the success of the enterprise. This was to be done, to use Preston's own words, by "striking a lighted candle into the nearest open bag."

XI. The signal for the self-destruction of the party was to be three distinct and measured raps on the deck, to be given by Captain Rhind.

The Admiral cordially approved of the above plan of operations, with the exception of the tenth and eleventh articles. But being told that these had been adopted by the unanimous vote of the party, he reluctantly assented to them all.

The gale continued to blow with great fury until the afternoon of the 23d. On its first appearance, transports with the troops, and General Butler in his flagship, got under way and went to Beaufort, from which place they did not return until the 24th. The Admiral, however, determined to ride it out, and did so successfully, but the position of the party on the Louisiana was not pleasant in the extreme. She wallowed and rolled, and dragged the Wilderness almost down to the fleet, although Captain Arey let go all the anchors he had. She finally cut off from the Wilderness, and was taken in tow by the Nautilus, during the remainder of the night.

After the gale ceased the sea went down rapidly, and the night of the 23d was clear and fine. The weather was quite cold, and the wind light from N. W. This was a very unfavorable wind, as the vessel would probably fall off the point, and the position of the party would not be pleasant in the extreme. She wallowed and rolled, and dragged the Wilderness almost down to the fleet, although Captain Arey let go all the anchors he had. She finally cut off from the Wilderness, and was taken in tow by the Nautilus, during the remainder of the night.

Accordingly, the Wilderness once more took the tow-line, and the Kansas again took her position as a stern range. At a quarter before eleven the two vessels passed the Kansas and stood to shore W. by S. S., running slowly. At twenty minutes before twelve, fifty-five minutes after leaving the Kansas, the Wilderness was in two and a half fathoms of water, with the beach and the embrasures of Fort Fisher plainly discernible. The signal was not given, and the Louisiana remained in position. Slowly but steadily she approached the beach; and to the spectators on the Wilderness she seemed almost on shore before she anchored. Arey had to veer out nearly two hundred fathoms of line to the beach, and her before she brought up. Then all was quiet.

Those were solemn moments. Lamson and his brother officers stood aft on the hurricane deck, watching with eagerness the dim outline visible in shore of the Louisiana, and in an instant the light of light shot upward, and in an instant the powder-boat was plainly visible, as if by moonlight! It was a moment like that, which comes to drowning men before they sink for the last time. For to every one on board the Wilderness, the one thought occurred—"The fire has broken away from them!" The next instant, destruction, annihilation was expected.

"Pool!" said Lamson, when half a minute had gone by without any explosion; "they are only hauling fire, and the light shines through the canvas, and the false smoke-stacks are visible. Who closed the eyes of the sentries on the beach and the parison in the fort puzzled every one. The liebel newspapers which gave an account of the explosion explained this. The Louisiana was seen, but was thought to be a gunboat which had gotten aground, and had been abandoned and was a fire. It was impossible for them, in the obscurity of the night, to judge of her distance from the beach; and as several of our small tugs had at times during the night, and ordered her to get aground, and had blown up from the blockade been abandoned and no particular attention.

Soon the light was extinguished, and all was dark again. The night had become thick, and the Louisiana was scarcely discernible from the deck of the Wilderness.

Twenty minutes passed. The sentries still continued their walks on beach and parapet, and their challenges were occasionally heard. At length Arey announced, "They are coming," and soon the boat and her crew were under the quarter, "All right," was the word from Rhind, as he came on deck; and although orders were to cast loose the boat and let her go, he coolly remarked that she "was too good a boat for the Rebels to be sent to the bottom," and he ordered her hoisted up, this being done, "Four bells" was the word from Rhind, who had been bottling up his steam, and the Wilderness darted away to the eastward at a speed of fifteen miles an hour.

In obedience to the Admiral's instructions, the history was now thrown with great rapidity to notify him that the powder-boat had been placed, and arrangements made to explode her. This done, the party joined in congratulations on the success of the affair thus far, and hopes that the results would equal general expectation. According to Commander Rhind's estimate, the Louisiana had been anchored within three hundred yards of the beach. It was hoped that, the wind being light, she would swing to the flood tide, with her stern towards the shore. But as she swung to wind; so that she had to be securely anchored with two anchors, and short scope of chain, just sufficient to hold her firmly.

The clocks had been set at ten minutes to twelve, to run an hour and a half; and the candles of the chandler had been cut to burn an hour and ten minutes to one on the morning of the 24th, and awaited the explosion. The clocks should have exploded the powder at twenty minutes past one, and the chandler at twenty minutes before two. But it was not until nearly two to that the explosion took place; and by that time the after part of the vessel was wrapped in flames.

At that moment (1:40 A. M.) a huge column of fire rushed straight upward, four loud explosions followed at intervals of about half a second, and all was dark again.

Rhind turned to his officers and quietly remarked, "There's a fizzle!" and went below. In fact, he had feared all along that the arrangements for securing instantaneous explosion would fail, as there were no fuses laid in the great mass of powder under the deck. As these arrangements, however, had been made by the ordnance officers, he did not attempt, on his own responsibility, to alter them, but gave his whole attention to carrying out the directions he had received, with the utmost carefulness.

When day broke, the Wilderness steamed out to the flag-ship, to the west of which they were most heartily welcomed as men risen from the dead. Indeed, the Admiral informed Commander Rhind that, when they had parted the previous evening, he had never expected to see any of the party again in life.

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