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The Democratic Watchman

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The Democratic Watchman.

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Select Poetry.

THE BLIND MEN AND THE ELEPHANT.

A HINDOO FABLE.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

It was six men of Indostan,
 Who were about the elephant,
 Who went to see the elephant,
 (Though all of them were blind),
 That each by observation
 Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the elephant,
 And happening to fall
 Against his broad and sturdy side,
 At once began to bawl:
 "God bless me, but the elephant
 Is very like a wall!"

The Second, feeling of the tusk,
 Cried, "Ho! what have we here
 So very round and smooth and sharp?
 To me 'tis mighty clear
 This wonder of an elephant
 Is very like a spear!"

The Third approached the animal,
 And happening to take
 The squaring trunk within his hand,
 Thus boldly up and spake:
 "I see," quoth he, "the elephant
 Is very like a snake!"

The Fourth reached out his eager hand,
 And felt about the knee:
 "What most this wonderment is like,
 In my opinion," quoth he,
 "Is clear enough the elephant
 Is very like a tree!"

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
 Said, "E'en the blindest man
 Can tell what this resembles most—
 Deny the fact who can,
 This marvel of an elephant
 Is very like a fan!"

The Sixth no sooner had begun
 About the tusk to grope,
 Than, setting on the ev'ning tale,
 "That tusk," quoth he, "is like
 I see," quoth he, "the elephant
 Is very like a rope!"

And so these men of Indostan
 Disputed loud and long,
 Each one in his own opinion
 Exceeding stiff and strong,
 Though each was partly in the right,
 And all were sure to be wrong!

MORAL.

So, on theologic wars
 The disputants, I ween,
 Rail on, uttering strong and sure
 Of what each other mean,
 And prize the useless word
 Of what each other mean,
 Not one of them has seen!

Miscellaneous.

JENA AND AUERSTADT.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

In the year 1806, England, Russia, and Prussia formed a new coalition against France. Saxony commenced the campaign by invading Prussia with an army of 200,000 men, under the command of Frederick William, the Prussian King. Alexander of Russia, with an equal army, was pressing down through the wilds of Poland, to unite in the march upon Paris. England co-operated with her invincible fleet, and with profuse expenditures from her inexhaustible treasury.

The Emperor was greatly annoyed by this unprovoked attack, which thwarted all his plans for developing the industrial resources of France. He shut himself up for forty-eight hours to arrange the details of the campaign, and immediately dictated two hundred letters, all of which still remain the monument of his energy and sagacity. In six days, the whole imperial guard was transported from Paris to the Rhine! They traveled by post, sixty miles per day. On the 24th of September, Napoleon, at midnight, entered his carriage at the Tuileries, to join the army. His parting words to the Senate were:

"In so just a war, which we have not provoked by any act, by any pretence, the triumph of which it would be impossible to assign, and where we only take arms to

defend ourselves, we depend entirely upon the support of the law, and upon that of the people, whom circumstances call upon to give fresh proofs of their devotion and courage."

Placing himself at the head of his army, by a series of skillful maneuvers, he threw his whole force into the rear of the Prussians, cutting them off from their supplies, and from all possibility of retreat.

Being thus sure of victory, he wrote as follows to the King of Prussia:

"Sir, my Brother, I am in the heart of Saxony. My strength is so that your forces cannot balance the victory. But why shed so much blood? Why make our subjects slay each other? I do not prize victory purchased by the lives of so many of my children. If I were just commencing my military career, and if I had any reason to fear the chances of war, this language would be wholly misplaced. Sir, your majesty will be vanquished. At present you are uninjured, and may retreat with me in a manner conformable with your rank. Before a month is passed, you will treat in a different position. I am aware that in this writing, I may irritate that sensibility which naturally belongs to every sovereign. But circumstances demand that I should see no concealment. I implore your majesty to view in this letter, nothing but the desire I have to spare the effusion of human blood. Sir, my brother, I pray God that He may have you in His worthy and holy keeping."

To this letter no reply was returned. In two days from this time, the advance guard of the French met the Prussians, strongly entrenched upon the plains of Jena and Auerstadt. It was the evening of the 13th of October. The sun was just sinking with unusual brilliancy behind the western hills, when the proud army of the Prussians, more than one hundred thousand strong, appeared in sight. Three hundred pieces of artillery were concentrated into batteries, and a squadron of eighteen thousand cavalry splendidly equipped and with their armor, were drawn up in line of battle upon the plain.

Napoleon immediately took possession of the Landgrafenberg, a steep, craggy hill which the Prussians had supposed inaccessible to artillery, and from whose summit the long lines of the Prussians extending many leagues, could be clearly discerned. As the gloom of night settled down, the blaze of the Prussian camp fires, extending over a space of eighteen miles, illumined the scene with almost an unearthly glow.

Couriers were dispatched to hasten on the battalions of the French army. To encourage the men, Napoleon, with his own hands, labored through the night in blessing the ranks, and clearing the way that he might plant a battery upon the brow of the Landgrafenberg. As brigade after brigade arrived, they took the positions assigned them by their experienced chieftain. South and Ney were ordered to march all night to a distant point, to cut off the retreat of the foe. To ward morning Napoleon threw himself upon the ground on the bleak hill side, to sit for an hour the frigid bivouac of the soldiers.

At four o'clock, he was again on horseback. A dense fog covered the plain, showing the sleeping host. Under cover of this darkness, Napoleon ranged his troops in battle array. Enthusiastic shouts greeted him as he rode along the lines. At 6 o'clock, the first Prussian lines in every direction. For eight hours the battle raged with fury never before or since surpassed. The ground was covered with the dead; the shrieks of the wounded, trampled beneath the hoofs of charging squadrons, rose above the thunder of the battle. About 1 o'clock P. M., the Prussian General sent the following frantic dispatch to his reserve:

"Loose not a moment in advancing your yet unbroken troops. Arrange your columns so that, through their openings there may pass the still unbroken bands of the battle. Be ready to receive the charges of the enemy's cavalry, which, in the most furious manner, rides on, overwhelms and sabres the fugitives, and has driven into one confused mass the infantry, artillery and cavalry.

The Prussian reserve, twenty thousand strong, with unbroken front, now entered the field, and for a moment seemed to arrest the tide of victory. Napoleon stood at the head of the Imperial Guard, which he had had in reserve as hour after hour he had watched and guided the terrible fight. A young soldier, impatient of this delay, at last, in the excess of his excitement, shouted, "Forward! Forward!" Napoleon turned sternly to him and said:

"Now now! What heedless boy is this, who ventures to counsel his Emperor. Let him wait till he has commanded in thirty pitched battles before he proffers his advice."

It was now 4 o'clock. The decisive moment had arrived. Murat, at the head of twelve thousand horsemen, fresh and in perfect array, swept down upon the plain, as

with earthquake roar, charging the bewildered, exhausted, bleeding host, and, in a few moments, the works were done; the Prussian army was destroyed. Like an inundation the fugitives rushed from the field, ploughed by the batteries of Napoleon, and trampled beneath the tread of his resistless cavalry.

While this scene was transpiring on the plains of Jena, another division of the Prussian army was conducting a similar disaster on the field of Auerstadt, twelve miles distant. As the futilities of both armies were driven together in their flight, in confusion and dismay unparalleled horsemen, footmen, wagons and artillery in densest and wildest entanglement, there rained down upon them the most terrible storm of balls, bullets and shells.

Night came at length. But it brought no relief to the vanquished. The pitiless pursuit was uninterrupted. In whatever direction the shattered columns fled, they were met by the troops which Napoleon had sent anticipating the movement. The king himself narrowly escaped capture during the rout of that terrible night. Accompanied by a few companions on horseback, he leaped hedges and fences, and plunged through forests and fields, until he reached a place of safety. The Prussian lost in this one disastrous fight twenty thousand killed and wounded, while twenty thousand more were taken prisoners.

No military chieftain has ever manifested so much skill in following up a victory as Napoleon. In less than fourteen days every remnant of the Prussian Army was taken, and all the fortresses of Prussia were in the hands of the French. The king, a wretched fugitive, driven from his realm, fled for refuge to the army of Alexander. Never before in the history of the world, was so formidable a power so speedily and utterly annihilated.

Napoleon had now no relapsing since Napoleon left Paris. An army of two hundred thousand men, in thorough discipline and drill, had, in that time, been either killed, taken prisoners or dispersed. Not a hostile regiment remained. A large number of fortresses strengthened by the labor of ages, and which had never deemed impregnable, had fallen into the hands of the victor, and he was reposing in security in Berlin, in the palace of Frederick the Great.

The story of this wonderful achievement passed over the exciting universal amazement. In recalling this man, said the Emperor Alexander, "I see not but children attacking a giant."

McClellan and Beauregard.

Russell's "Our Own," correspondent of the London Times, gives the following comparison between McClellan and Beauregard in his last letters:

"By my mind there is something of resemblance between the men. Both are below the middle height. They are both squarely built, and famed for their muscular power since their college days. Beauregard is full and round, with a Napoleonic tendency to embonpoint, subdued to incessant exercise. Beauregard sleeps little; McClellan's temperance requires a full share of rest; both are spare and Spartan in diet, studiously quiet. Beauregard is rather staid, and if not metallic, is of a grim gaiety; McClellan is genial even in his reserve. The density of the hair, the squareness of the jaw, the firmness and regularity of the teeth, and the outlines of the features are points of similarity in both, which would be more striking if Beauregard were not of the true Louisiana Creole tint, while McClellan is fair complexioned. Beauregard is a dark, dull, student's eye, the dullness of which arises, however, from its formation, for it is full of fire, and its glances are quick and searching. McClellan has a deep, clear eye, into which you can look far and deep, while you feel it searches far and deep into you."

Beauregard has something of pretension in his manner; not haughty, but a folding armed, meditative sort of air which seems to say, "Don't disturb me; I'm thinking of military movements." McClellan seems to be always at leisure; but you feel at the same time you ought not to intrude too much upon him, even when you seek in vain for the grounds of that impression in anything that he is doing or saying. Beauregard is more subtle, crafty, and astute. McClellan is more comprehensive, more learned, more impressionable. Beauregard is a thorough soldier; McClellan may prove he is a great general. The former only looks to military consequences, and disregards popular manifestations; the latter respects the opinions of the outer world, and sees political as well as military results in what he orders. They are both the creatures of accident, so far as their present positions are concerned. It remains to be seen if either can control the current of events, and if in either the artilleryman or cavalry officer of the old United States army there is the stuff of which history is moulded, such as that which the Springfield of Bismarck or the leader of the Trossides made.

McClellan and Beauregard in Mexico. Some guard duty on one of these dark frosty nights, when I call to mind the standing before a burr-fire, whose gleaming rays shoot into the dense pine forest, which surrounds you as if they were searching for some hidden foe, one's mind naturally is affected, and every shadow and tree has an association which awakens the soldier to a full appreciation of his sentinel duties. But such a night as last night—dark, dreary, wet, and disagreeable in the extreme—has an entirely different effect and we cluster around the fire, piled high with its best light and most genial rays to spread humor and life among those who stand sentinel around it. Then as if exasperated at the fierceness of the wind, and crack, crack, crack, and his out a string of profane, but not uncomprehensible, but the guard must be vigilantly maintained through the night, and we dare not sleep; for you must know, Mr. Editor, that sleep courts the soldier's eyelids as sweetly under the dropping rain as it does in his tent, if perchance, he has a gun blanket for a bed, and his knapsack for a pillow.

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"I sat in my tent one evening, just before the battle of the city of Mexico, the captain came to me with a corporal. I have been requested to send a trusty non-commissioned officer to the general tonight as a messenger. Will you go?" I replied in the affirmative, thanking the captain for his confidence. Our company was at that time detached from its regiment, and was doing special duty at General Scott's headquarters. In the discharge of that duty, I had made a point of being specially attentive and had thereby gained the confidence of our captain, and once or twice was commended by old "Puss and Feathers" himself. I brushed up my old clothes, and brightening my shoes and brass plates in the nearest manner possible, that evening presented myself to the Adjutant General for instructions. I found that the council about to meet for the consideration of General Scott's plans for taking the city, was to be composed of all the Colonels in the division, and that my duty would be to go errands, and attend to bringing charts, paper or whatever might be required.

Well the council met, and I was at my post. It was the finest body of military men I had ever seen together, and when they assembled around that table, and the General stood towering high above the rest, I could not help but admire him more than ever. After the customary salutation and organization, they sat down in regard to rank, beginning with General Wool and succeeding each other in seats, as seniority of rank gave them privilege. It was no time for delay, and the General spoke rapidly and with earnestness, occasionally referring to some one on the right or left for information or corroboration. Thus carefully and explicitly were the movements and marches, the sallies, and sorties, the whole plan developed, so that all seemed to understand. But presently a plan was discovered, the perplexed look of those around the table, that a very serious mistake had been made, but from what cause, my knowledge of military affairs did not enable me to judge. A dispute arose between some Colonel and the engineer-in-chief, in regard to the position and strength of some battery, and the topography of the surrounding country. The colonel said that frequent reconnaissance of the ground, from the fact of his being encamped near the place in question; led him, even in direct opposition to the chart of the engineer, to protest against its truthfulness, and he would urge upon the General to make himself sure of the state of affairs before he fully completed his plan. But the engineer-in-chief, in regard to the position and strength of some battery, and the topography of the surrounding country. The colonel said that frequent reconnaissance of the ground, from the fact of his being encamped near the place in question; led him, even in direct opposition to the chart of the engineer, to protest against its truthfulness, and he would urge upon the General to make himself sure of the state of affairs before he fully completed his plan. But the engineer-in-chief, in regard to the position and strength of some battery, and the topography of the surrounding country. The colonel said that frequent reconnaissance of the ground, from the fact of his being encamped near the place in question; led him, even in direct opposition to the chart of the engineer, to protest against its truthfulness, and he would urge upon the General to make himself sure of the state of affairs before he fully completed his plan.

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Well the council met, and I was at my post. It was the finest body of military men I had ever seen together, and when they assembled around that table, and the General stood towering high above the rest, I could not help but admire him more than ever. After the customary salutation and organization, they sat down in regard to rank, beginning with General Wool and succeeding each other in seats, as seniority of rank gave them privilege. It was no time for delay, and the General spoke rapidly and with earnestness, occasionally referring to some one on the right or left for information or corroboration. Thus carefully and explicitly were the movements and marches, the sallies, and sorties, the whole plan developed, so that all seemed to understand. But presently a plan was discovered, the perplexed look of those around the table, that a very serious mistake had been made, but from what cause, my knowledge of military affairs did not enable me to judge. A dispute arose between some Colonel and the engineer-in-chief, in regard to the position and strength of some battery, and the topography of the surrounding country. The colonel said that frequent reconnaissance of the ground, from the fact of his being encamped near the place in question; led him, even in direct opposition to the chart of the engineer, to protest against its truthfulness, and he would urge upon the General to make himself sure of the state of affairs before he fully completed his plan. But the engineer-in-chief, in regard to the position and strength of some battery, and the topography of the surrounding country. The colonel said that frequent reconnaissance of the ground, from the fact of his being encamped near the place in question; led him, even in direct opposition to the chart of the engineer, to protest against its truthfulness, and he would urge upon the General to make himself sure of the state of affairs before he fully completed his plan.

McClellan and Beauregard in Mexico. Some guard duty on one of these dark frosty nights, when I call to mind the standing before a burr-fire, whose gleaming rays shoot into the dense pine forest, which surrounds you as if they were searching for some hidden foe, one's mind naturally is affected, and every shadow and tree has an association which awakens the soldier to a full appreciation of his sentinel duties. But such a night as last night—dark, dreary, wet, and disagreeable in the extreme—has an entirely different effect and we cluster around the fire, piled high with its best light and most genial rays to spread humor and life among those who stand sentinel around it. Then as if exasperated at the fierceness of the wind, and crack, crack, crack, and his out a string of profane, but not uncomprehensible, but the guard must be vigilantly maintained through the night, and we dare not sleep; for you must know, Mr. Editor, that sleep courts the soldier's eyelids as sweetly under the dropping rain as it does in his tent, if perchance, he has a gun blanket for a bed, and his knapsack for a pillow.

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