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POETRY.

From the National Era.

THE AMERICAN MECHANIC.

BY AUGUSTINE DUGANNE.

Lift up thine iron hand,
Thou of the stalwart arm and fearless eye;
Lift proudly now thy iron hand on high—
Firm and undaunted stand!

No need hast thou of gems
To deck the temple of thy glorious thought—
Thou hast the jewels which thy mind hast wrought,
Richer than diadems!

Thou art our God's high priest,
Standing before great Nature's mighty shrine;
For the whole world the glorious task is thine,
To spread the eternal feast.

Even like the Hebrew chief
Strikest thou the rock, and from its deep,
Mysterious heart, the living waters leap,
To give the earth relief.

Mighty among thy kind,
Standest thou, man of iron toil, midway
Between the earth and heaven, all things to sway
By thy high-working mind!

Thou canst delve in the earth,
And from its mighty caves bring forth pure gold;
Thou canst unwrap the clouds in heaven rolled,
And give the lightning birth.

Thou hast the stormy sea
Chained to thy chariot wheels, and the wild winds
Obey the o'erruling intellect that binds
Their rushing wings to thee.

Thou canst bid Thought go forth
Upon the electric pinions of the air,
And through the opposeless ether thou canst bear
Thy words from South to North.

Thou canst new lands create,
Where the wild rolling wave no mastery owns;
And the vast distance of opposing zones
Canst thou annihilate!

Lift then thy hand to heaven!
Spread thy toil sceptre o'er the sea and land;
Thou hast the world intrusted to thy hand—
Earth to thy charge is given!

Taking of Tobasco.

A correspondent of the New Orleans Commercial Times, who dates his letters on board of the frigate Raritan, June 27, gives the following description of the enterprise against Tobasco:

On the 12th the squadron anchored off the river Tobasco, and on the 14th, all things being made ready, we made sail.—The steamer Scorpion, bearing the Commodore's broad pendant, having in tow the Washington and Vesuvius, followed by the steamers Spitfire, Vixen, and Scourge, towing the Etna, Stromboli, Bonita, and Capt. Taylor's little vessel, the Spitfire, with the patent India rubber camels, for lifting our vessels over the shoals and obstructions thrown across the river—the boats of the squadron, about 50 in number, towing astern of all, presented a beautiful sight. About sundown we left Frontera, and with an occasional interruption from the overhanging branches sweeping our men overboard, we passed on very gently until 3 o'clock next day, when we captured a canoe with two Indians, from whom we learned that Bruno lay in ambush, with a large force, at two favorable positions, at points 15 and 20 miles further up. The tops were at once filled with sharp shooters, and officers were kept aloft on the look out. The place designated as the first point of attack, being passed without any interruption, we were beginning to feel secure, when a heavy volley opened upon us from the banks.—In an instant the fire was returned from the heavy guns of the Scorpion, Washington and Vesuvius, and from the small arms on deck and aloft. Lieuts. Blunt and Gansevoort, commanding field pieces mounted in launches, towing astern of the Vesuvius and Washington, sung out, 'Go it, boots,' and let drive, and the way those little pieces danced about those launches' decks, as these gallant fellows fired volley after volley, is nothing to you. The firing lasted about ten minutes; the big escopets balls whizzed through the rigging of the old Vesuvius in most mournful strains. It was a melancholy feeling, too, (music always makes one sad,) to be standing still and be shot at like a dog, and not see an enemy, and have no place behind which to *dodge* your devoted body. I thought of getting behind the mainmast; but, wo! wo! was me—there I found a big buck negro occupying the place. You know that I cared nothing about my own life, but it would have distressed my Sally sorely to have been hit in the head.—Strange to say, but one of our men was wounded, the balls nearly all passing over us.

The awning of the Scorpion, I was told, was cut up pretty badly. The Vesuvius' sides were pretty well peppered—but for the foresight of the Commodore, in stationing sharp shooters aloft, we must have suffered severely, they had heard of our being armed with the revolving rifle, and had a most awful horror of exposing themselves to its effects. They were afraid of raising their heads to take aim, for fear of showing themselves to the men aloft, and being shot. This nice little brush was monopolized by the three vessels named, all the rest being some miles astern. We learned in Tobasco that Bruno commanded here in person. We kept on up the river, and anchored at sundown at a place called the Devil's Bend. About 2 hours after, the rest of our forces came up, and anchored in line astern. At this place we expected the most formidable opposition. Here is a long reach of a mile and a quarter in length—the river narrows, and an obstruction thrown across the bar, with a strong breast work commanding it, made my heart go 'pit pat, pitti pat,' as I thought of the morrow and the distress of my Sally, should a Mexican pill enter my stomach. As the shades of evening stole over us, we were fired upon again from the bushes, the discharge breaking a man's leg on board of the Vesuvius. We opened the big guns on them again, cleared the woods of the mosquites, and went to bed.

At daylight, Lieuts. May and Alden were sent ahead some 100 yards or so, to sound on the bar and examine the obstructions, which could be seen projecting out of the water. This was a perilous undertaking, but they went boldly to work, when a shower of balls were poured down upon them from the breastwork and bushes. Lieut. May's boat being in advance, received the fire, severely wounding him and several of his crew, compelling the boats to return to the vessel. The order was then given for the forces to embark in the boats, and form into line, three deep, in the middle of the river. This was done with great despatch, and in beautiful order. Capt. Buchanan was particularly noted for the beautiful style and celerity with which he brought his division into line; his men were the best equipped in the expedition. Whatever Buch. does he does well—whether in the fighting line or horsing a midshipman—this last he does *beautiful*, and nothin' else. Captains M'Cluney and Adams were likewise remarked for the coolness and decision with which they gave their orders, in the confusion that must necessarily occur in bringing fifty or sixty twelve oared boats into line, in a narrow river, and under the fire of the enemy. This is no small merit I think. In advance of all, was the 'old hoss' *heself*, sitting quietly in his barge, with his broad pendant flying, forming the most conspicuous mark for Mexican shot, and his mouth puckering out as if he did not care a d—n for all the Mexican bullets in Tobasco. While forming into line, a heavy cannonading was kept up from the vessels. At a signal given from the Commodore, the steamer ceased firing—the men gave an awful shout—700 oars dipped their blades into the water, and a thousand Yankee tars stood on the banks of the Tobasco. Good! I was that; and my Sally sustained no loss.

The forces were now drawn up in the order of march—the pioneers and scouting party commanded by Lieutenant Maynard in advance—then the Marines under the command of Captain Edson—then the 'old hoss' and suite, with his broad pendant in front—the artillery, by Captain Mackenzie, and infantry, in two divisions, by Capts. Forest and Breese—the ambulance party following after, to pick up the killed and wounded. And now you should have been here with your note book, to gather a few scraps as they fell from Jack, when pitching him up to the artillery. I have often been called a Jackass, says one, but little did I think that my mother's son would ever be called upon to fill the place of one! Marching about three hundred yards brought us out of the woods into an open space; the grass and flags up to our arm-pits, and an occasional marsh to wade through, rendered our advancing exceedingly painful and laborious. We had ten field pieces dragging after us, with twenty rounds of grape and canister, yet our tars never flinched, but dragged them through muck and mire, and planted them in the plaza in Tobasco. As we neared a dense chapparal skirting the woods, the Mexicans opened on us again. Captains Mackenzie and Buchanan immediately brought forward the artillery, and opened on the thicket, the marines and infantry advancing and returning the fire at the same time. About this time, the word ran along the line that the enemy was advancing on the right—the field pieces were trained on them, and in the act of firing, when discovered to be Lieut. Maynard, with his pioneers, returning from a scouting expedition; five seconds later, and they had been dead men. The Mexicans retreated before us as we advanced, keeping up a running fire, but rarely showing themselves. It was impossible to charge them for the marshes and chapparal; there was no means of forcing our way through the woods, the undergrowth of briars, vines, *snakes*, scorpions and other vegetables, rendering it perfectly impregnable. We now struck into a foot-path, which we kept until we got in sight of Tobasco.

It was with the greatest difficulty that the artillery could be got along, and but for the indomitable energy and perseverance of the officers commanding them, they must have been left on the road. But before such men as Mackenzie, Buchanan, Perry, Gansevoort and Blunt, it was no use—the chapparal *fell back*, the high flags bowed their devoted heads, the bullfrogs said bloody hounds, (not nouns) and hopped away, and the tad-poles, having no legs, wagged their tails and exclaimed 'we are dead tad-poles,' and the artillery passed along. Our march now for two or three miles was uninterrupted by the appearance of a Mexican, but the roadside was strewed with cartridges, beds, haversacks, and other indications of people moving in a hurry. Scouting some distance in advance of the main body, the pioneers suddenly came upon a large party of the enemy waiting to give us a volley as we approached. Maynard charged in upon them in gallant style, and routed them out—and now you should have been here to have seen what a Texan would call a specimen of 'tall walking,' the Mexicans running and the pioneers after them. The yellow varmints seemed to think that they were losing too much time in their feet touching the ground *so often*, so they picked them up, and we soon saw nothing but a cloud of white specks in the distance, like coat-tails shivering in the wind.—Maynard's *runners* are of no contemptible dimensions, and he soon left his own men far astern, but he was a snail alongside of the Mexicans. There were enough of them to have eaten up his little force, numbering but 30 men, and half of them armed with axes.

This was our last brush, and towards evening the advance guard came in sight of the fort commanding the approach to the city by land and water. I have never seen a more commanding position—constructed on a bluff, taking in a line of the river one mile and a half long, exposing our vessels to a raking fire the whole distance. In the fort they mounted three 32s, three heavy field pieces and a 24 pound carronade, and as the Scorpion and Spitfire came round the bend of the river, they opened on them from the fort with grape and round shot. The two little steamers came steadily along, paying more attention to steering clear of the shoals than of the shot. The scorpion coming up first opened her fire as she got abreast, the Spitfire joining in; the grape fairly rained, and soon drove the enemy from their guns. Their fire slackening, and Capt. Bigelow thinking the fort silenced, put on steam and passed on up to the city, when the fire re opened from the fort, which the Spitfire returned most gallantly, again driving them from their guns. The Scorpion at this time landing a party of men to take possession of the town, and thinking in the fort that they were about to be attacked in the rear, prepared to limber up their field pieces, when Lieut. Porter landed with a force from the Spitfire and gallantly rushed up the hill to board, when the enemy fled, leaving two of their field pieces behind all hitched up for moving off. He then hauled the guns and hoisted the American flag. Capts. Lee and Bigelow of the Spitfire and Scorpion acquitted themselves most creditably. These were the only vessels the shoalness of the water would admit of coming up at the time.—The wheel houses of the Scorpion and Spitfire were driven in by the shot from the fort, paddles shattered, wheels shot away, and several men and an officer wounded. With the assistance of Capt. Taylor's camels, the Etna and Scourge were subsequently brought over the bar. We now formed into line, and with flags flying marched into the city to the tune of "Oh! git along John." On reaching the public plaza, the men and officers were quartered in the public buildings around the square, the commander and suite occupying the government house. Every Mexican had left the city. Not an officer of the government, civil or military, could be found in the place. We were in the city nine days, during which time not an outrage was committed by a man, and private property respected most rigidly. At night our jolly tars would assemble together in squads of a hundred in the plaza, and sing their seasongs. Such music had never before been heard in Tobasco. The ladies always assembled in the balcony of the Spanish Consul's house regularly every evening, and never left until the last note was sounded. There are few concerts in the world equal in my opinion to the music of a hundred sailor's voices. The guns were all put on board of the steamers, and the forts and magazine razed to the ground. On the 26th we left Tobasco. Capt. Van Brunt left as governor. The Etna, Spitfire and Scourge remained to hold possession of the place. Bruno is still in the woods in command of 1,400 men, and will no doubt annoy the vessels from the river banks. And now that I have come to the end of my journey, I will ask a question: Is it our fault that these yellow rascals would not stand and fight? Is it our fault that more of us could not get killed and wounded?—Is it our fault that Bruno with two thousand men, would not stand before one thousand jars, and be shot at? And lastly, is it my fault that the President and Secretary have not discrimination enough to discover my merits and promote me?

It is truly a most Christian duty to extract a sentiment of piety from the works and appearances of Nature. Our Saviour expatiates on a flower, and draws from it the delightful argument of confidence in God. He gives us to see that taste may be combined with piety, and that the same heart may be occupied by all that is serious in the contemplation of religion, and be at the same time, alive to the charms and loveliness of Nature.—*Dr. Chalmers.*

☞It is stated that each gun of Bragg's battery, at the battle of Buena Vista, made upwards of 250 discharges during the engagement.

Imperial Guard of Russia.

From the New Haven (Conn.) Register.

A REVIEW OF SIXTY THOUSAND MEN.—We have received a letter from a friend in Europe, from which (though not intended for publication) we cannot forbear making an extract. The writer had the good fortune to be present at the last annual review of the late Russian Imperial Guard, by the Emperor of St. Petersburg—which is composed of 60,000 men; and as such descriptions are so seldom afforded the American reader, it will be read with interest:

ST. PETERSBURG, June, 1847.

* * * Every year this review takes place at the Imperial City, preparatory to the departure of the troops for their summer quarters. For about four hours I had a good view of the magnificent sight, and my hurried pen will fail to give you an adequate description of its exceeding splendor. When I arrived upon the ground the troops had already began to march.—The balconies and windows of the public buildings and elegant private residences surrounding the field, were filled with ladies and gentlemen, and the sides of the field itself covered with a dense mass of men, women and children.

On one side of the field a gorgeous tent was pitched upon a raised platform, for the Empress, and before her majesty and the Emperor the troops were to pass in review. The panoramic view of the whole field, you can readily imagine, was beautiful. But to the review itself of this great body of troops who (in part only) compose *gardé Imperiale* of the Emperor Nicholas, and who are distinct from the main army of Russia, which I believe numbers near one million, rank and file.

The foot soldiers, infantry principally, first passed in review, marching by platoons of companies containing, perhaps, one hundred and fifty men each, and in double order. As the several platoons arrived opposite the Emperor, the peculiar Russian hurrah went up the whole length of the line, making the welkin ring. The soldiers were all picked men, tall, athletic, and every one of them with a heavy black moustache. They moved with mathematical precision, and whether on a slow or quick march, seemed like pieces of mechanism, and their muskets not varying, it seemed, an inch either in the height or inclination given to them.

Of all the marching I have seen, and I have seen the American, French, Dutch and Prussian soldiers, none will at all compare with the Russian. The uniform of the infantry was blue and red, not unlike our militia uniform in Connecticut.—It was about two hours before the Infantry had passed in review, and then came the cavalry, advancing in double order, by platoons of sixty horses abreast; and here was a sight that beggars description, and which, when I recall it, seems like a magnificent vision. First came a company of Caucasian Princes, mounted upon black, coal black fiery steeds, with long manes and tails, almost sweeping the ground.—The Caucasians were dressed in a red garment fitting closely to the skin, and over this a finely wrought steel chain armor covering the entire body, fell from the head loosely over the neck and shoulders; upon their feet they wore a kind of sandal, and upon their legs leather leggins, similar to those of our Indian warriors; across their backs they carried a bow with well filled quivers; in their hands a carbine, and in their girdles the savage looking *yaghtigâhn*.

They are a fierce, though handsome looking set of fellows. Next came the Tartars, upon their wild looking, fleet little horses—the horses, all of them, carrying their necks forward and their heads high up in the air, as if sniffing the breeze; or, so uniform was the line of heads, as if they were all drawn up by pulleys. The costume of the Tartar soldier is a blue frock, trimmed with silver, and a kind of scull cap, bound with fur; in his hand he carries a spear, the end of which he rests upon the head, between the ears, of his horse. Then came the Chevalier Lancers, splendid looking men, dressed in white cassimere, with heavy and highly polished brass breast plates, and brass helmets surmounted by the Imperial eagles, all mounted upon most elegant horses. Regiment after regiment passed by, each regiment with different colored horses, and the horses in each regiment so well matched in size, form, color, and indeed every respect, that to distinguish them, each had braided in his mane his number, upon a small plate.

The Lancers are all picked men, and are of the flower of the Russian army, the officers being of noble blood; and were it not for the different colored pennants they carry upon their lances, and the color of the horses, no one regiment could be distinguished from another, so nearly alike are they. After the Lancers, came the Imperial Hussars, in their costume of red, with high fur caps, and mounted every one upon white steeds. This regiment, it is said, is the favorite regiment of the Empress. Then came the Imperial Carbineers, mounted on black horses, and dressed like the Lancers, except that their helmets and breast plates were of steel highly polished. Following these came the Cossacks—their black steeds carrying their heads high in the air. The dress of the Cossacks is similar to that of the Tartars, which I have above described, except in their caps, which are high and of fur; their weapon is a steel, sharp pointed lance.

* * * *

The rear of this immense body of cavalry, amounting to over 30,000, was bro't up by regiments of mounted artillery, six horses, three abreast, to each gun, and of sappers and miners; and then came the baggage wagons, and the ponton train.—But the greatest sight was the marching of the horses attached to the different regiments. They seemed like machines.—You think it "strange," no doubt, and yet 'tis no less "strange than true," that every horse in marching kept perfect time, with his feet, with the music. I never saw soldiers on foot do it better—indeed, not so well, for when a quick, lively tune was played by the music, every horse commenced a trot and kept up the same uniformity of step as before, when on a walk. And then to see those horses wheel by companies, and in double order, coming round with the precision of a compass describing a circle! it exceeded anything I ever imagined.

After the whole army, for the Imperial Guard is organized as an entire and distinct army, had passed in review before the Emperor, the infantry left the field, and the cavalry remained in full possession of it, and went through with some evolutions. First the Caucasians came at a full run down the field, and then the other regiments in succession. After this, the whole body stationed themselves at some distance opposite the Emperor, in close order, and at a given signal half of this body, over 15,000 horsemen, started on a run and suddenly halted a few feet in advance of the Emperor, preserving, as they halted, the compactness and the same perfect front which they had before starting. A few more evolutions which I have not time to write about now, finished the review of the day—a day which has done much to impress upon me the remark of Napoleon, that with an army of Russian soldiers he would conquer the world. He spoke of the soldiers, not of the officers, of whom he had not a high opinion.

The Russian soldier is a mere machine, and has not a thought beyond his church and the Emperor, and for both he believes it his duty to live, and die. Most of the army is composed of serfs or slaves; and the pay of the soldiers is only about $3 per annum. He is fed upon a coarse bread and a kind of soup, and upon some great fete day he is given meat as a luxury. The pay of the Russian officer is also very small. A lieutenant gets but 500 rubles per annum, which is a little more than $100; a captain 700 rubles, and a colonel only 2,000 rubles. You ask how they live? The officers generally have a competency beyond their pay; some few there are who have not, and their condition is worse than the soldier's, for the latter is provided with a uniform, and is fed at the expense of the Emperor.

I finish this letter by daylight, yet it is after ten o'clock, P. M. The sun does not set here, at present, until 9½ o'clock, P. M.

LACONICS.

'I'm in the wrong,' is said to be the most difficult to pronounce of any sentence in the language.

A liar is a bravo towards God, and a coward towards man.

Utter no word that will wound the feelings of those who are in humble circumstances.

Man passes his life in reasoning on the past, in complaining of the present, and trembling for the future.

Ambition often puts men upon doing the meanest offices; so climbing is performed in the same posture with creeping.

Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent.

An idle reason lessens the weight of the good ones you gave before.

The most extravagant people in the world are those who live on other people's money.

Never speak of natural defects in the company of the deformed.

The grain is God's bounty—the flowers are his smiles.

He who puts a bad construction on a good act, reveals his own wickedness at heart.

There is a sentiment as beautiful as just, contained in the following:

"He who forgets the fountain from which he drank, and the tree under whose shade he gambolled in the days of his youth, is a stranger to the sweetest impressions of the human heart."

Life to the young is a fairy tale just opened—to the old, it is a tale read through, ending with death.

Our word for it, he that eats another's bread will die poor, or his children will eat the bread of charity.

He that would govern his actions by the law of virtue must regulate his thoughts by the rule of reason.

Truth is clothed in white, but a lie comes forth clothed in all the colors of the rainbow.

Tears are the cordial in which we bathe our sorrow.

Beware of him who disregards reputation.

Plutarch says, in his life of Alexander, that the Babylonians used, during the dog days, to sleep on skins filled with water. The Boston Times adds that in these days men sleep on skins filled with liquor.