

A SOUTHERN BATTALION.

Packed into its term of service were hundreds of thrilling incidents, in which, however, the thirty-fourth Virginia Battalion had a by no means unique experience. It served both as cavalry and infantry, and in both did honest service to the cause it espoused. The battalion was organized by General Humphrey Marshall in Smith county, Virginia, January 14, 1863, by the election of Captain V. A. Witcher Lieutenant Colonel and Captain William Stratton, major. Charles Edwards, of Bangor, Maine, was appointed adjutant, but resigned in 1864, after distinguished service, and was succeeded by John T. S. Wade, who served with distinction to the end of the war.

Shortly after its organization it was ordered to Staunton, Va., and during the month of March, 1863, was ordered to report to Brigadier General William E. Jones, at Edgingburg, Va. In April and May, 1863, it accompanied General Jones in the expedition made by him and Imboden to West Virginia and participated in all the engagements. At Greenland Gap it greatly distinguished itself by charging and taking a church after two of Jones' best regiments had failed. Charging on horseback, the command surrounded the church and held its position under a heavy fire, until Private Henry Mitchell, of Company A, climbed from his horse up one of the corners of the church and set it on fire, compelling the surrender of a hundred of Mulagan's command, who held the building.

On this expedition General Jones caused the heads of a large number of oil barrels to be knocked out and the oil burned. A great deal of it ran into the Little Sandy river and the flames spreading covered the surface of the river with fire, presenting a scene awfully grand. For what purpose the oil was destroyed it is hard to tell. Our battalion occupied Ringwood, Fairmont, Grafton and other points and saw fighting at all of them, as well as at Cheat river bridge, which General Jones failed to capture and destroy. The battalion had a sharp fight at one end and gained ground, but a vigorous attack was not made at the other end to support it. In the latter part of May the command was ordered to report to Brigadier General A. S. Jenkins, and in a few days was detached and sent with Major General Rhodes' Division of infantry from Bunker's Hill, where the battalion had severe fighting in driving a detachment of Federals out of some brick houses. In this engagement Lieutenant Anderson Christian, of Company B, was killed while gallantly leading his company in a charge. Before starting in the charge he took off his shoes, as useless appendage.

Having defeated the federal infantry and artillery at Martinsburg, General Rhodes ordered the battalion to attack some six hundred Federal cavalry, which was trying to cover their artillery. Dashing forward through the town the battalion charged and broke the Federal cavalry and put it to rout, capturing a battery and many prisoners. The battalion at a gallop pushed on to Williamsport, across the Potomac, and early next morning routed a body of Federal cavalry. Being joined by Gen. Jenkins, whose command had in detachments been with General Ewell at Berryville and Early at Winchester, the whole command pushed forward through Hagerstown, Chambersburg and Carlisle to the immediate vicinity of Harrisburg, where the battalion charged and drove out of their entrenchments a body of militia. Covering the withdrawal of General Jenkin's command from Harrisburg the command on the evening of the first day's fighting with the brigade joined General Lee's army in the rear of Gettysburg. On July 3, under the immediate command of General Stuart, the battalion was dismounted in line of battle and in front of Hubbel's barn, where it fought a New Jersey regiment and some Vermont troops. In the evening being charged by a regiment of Michigan troops, under Colonel Alger, it rallied and captured the colors of the Michigan cavalry.

Returning from Gettysburg, where the command had suffered immense loss in killed and wounded, Adjutant Edwards being among the latter, the battalion, with General Stuart, passed through Emmitsburg to Hagerstown and Williamsport, fighting incessantly. At Gettysburg Private William Pritchett during the cavalry charge was attacked by three Federal cavalrymen. Shooting and killing one, he clubbed his gun and killed with a blow one of the others, and was himself shot down with a ball in his thigh by the third, but managed to rejoin the command that night, and, though a cripple for life, returned to Virginia and served through the balance of the war.

Participating in the engagements of Hagerstown, Williamsport, Funkston, Jones' Cross-roads, most of the time

detached as sharpshooters for the cavalry corps, the battalion recrossed the Potomac and took part in the engagements of Leetown, Opeckon Bridge and Miller's Hill, where it greatly distinguished itself, with a detachment of the Thirty-sixth Virginia Battalion, all under the command of Colonel Witcher, by holding a position after the rest of the forces had, with the artillery, been driven from the field. When the centre and left were reformed and reinforced it charged and drove the enemy back for more than a mile. It was soon ordered to East Tennessee and joined Brigadier General John S. Williams' command. Under him the Thirty-fourth participated in the engagements of Blue Spring, where, though the Confederate forces were defeated, the battalion retired in good order and covered the retreat at Rheastown and Davis Mill. It greatly distinguished itself in these engagements, as well as at Blountville. At Blue Spring Sergeant Johnson, of Company E, whilst lying in line of battle behind a tree, was shot and killed by a ball which struck a limb some fifty feet above him and, glancing downward, struck him in the left side and abdomen.

With Bottle's regiment of Tennesseeans the battalion fought at Zollicoffer and under Brigadier General William E. Jones bore brilliant parts in the engagements of Rogersville, Baufman's Ford, Thornhill, Elizabethtown, Bawl's Bridge, Weyerman's Mills, and under Colonel Witcher the battalion defeated Federal forces on John's Creek and at Louisa, Kentucky; at Turkey Cove, Greary Cove and the gap of the mountain, near Bran Station, at the last place charging dismounted after dark a Federal force, driving it from its position and capturing its camp and equipage. At Toyville, Tennessee, it charged a large Federal brigade in the night, driving it out of its camp. At Wyman's Mills it charged and broke a Federal line of infantry and captured two companies of prisoners. At Thornhill it captured, in 1864, twenty wagons loaded with supplies for General Burnside. In Lee county, Virginia, it captured a Federal wagon train of thirty-nine wagons belonging to the Federal garrison at Cumberland Gap. The command was engaged at Mount Airy and Marion in the battles between Stoneman and Breckenridge, and bore conspicuous parts in both. In the battle of Marion Colonel Witcher's horse was shot under him, and his foot being entangled in the stirrup, the horse fell upon him and had to be lifted off. After this battle the command was ordered to Lynchburg and dismounted to meet General Sheridan's forces, who had captured Early's command at Waynesborough, and it was supposed would push on to Lynchburg. The command was shortly afterwards ordered back to Southwestern Virginia and soon disbanded. The battalion was armed with muzzle-loading Enfield rifles, pistols and sabres, nearly all of which were captured, as well as their McClellan saddles.

In August, 1863, William Stratton, major of the Thirty-fourth Battalion, went, under Witcher, on an expedition into West Virginia. At McDonald's, Witcher, who was in command, being in front with the advance guard, rode up within thirty yards of a company of the Thirty-fourth Ohio Infantry. The Federals were in an apple orchard at the side of the road. Witcher and the advance did not discover the Federals until they were ordered to halt. Putting spurs to their horses Witcher and the advance rode through. Stratton hearing the firing in front, gallantly charged with his whole force and captured the entire Federal force, excepting only one man. Moving forward two miles to Wyoming Court House, Witcher attacked and drove the Federal forces out of the town and followed them several miles in the direction of Flatop Mountain. Then he resumed his march in direction of Logan Court House and upon the 3d of August, when within eight miles of that place, learned that a strong detachment of the Fourth Virginia Federal Regiment under Major Hall had gone in the direction of the Big Sandy. At daybreak on the 6th Witcher with his whole force started in pursuit and late in the afternoon overtook, attacked and defeated the Federals after a bloody engagement. Major Hall was killed and Witcher, Stratton and Lieutenant Taylor, commanding Rowan's company, were badly wounded.

The Drug Clerk.

The most satirical shot at illegible prescriptions that we have yet seen is the following from the Medical Age:

A gentleman received a note from his lawyer which he was unable to decipher. On his way to his office he met a friend at the door of a drug store. The friend, after vainly attempting to read the note, suggested that they step inside and hand it to the druggist without comment. The druggist, after studying it in silence for a few minutes, stepped behind his prescription case and in a short time returned with a bottle of medicine, duly labeled and bearing directions. When the gentleman saw his lawyer he was informed that the note was a notice for him to call at his office between 3 4 p. m. of the following day. It is a pretty difficult matter to "stick" the regulation druggist.

How to converse.

Conversation is a veritable Proteus, as powerful as it is elusive; an art requiring peculiar gifts for its successful practice, and only to be acquired by long and intimate contact with past-masters in the craft. But while it is beyond the possible for any but the highly gifted few to attain the proud position of a leader in conversation, it is within the reach of all to exert an influence on their intimate circles, and, if not destined to become brilliant talkers themselves, at least to foster the development of this fascinating art among their associates.

We often say that other people can not talk, when the fault is with ourselves. Almost anyone can talk, and talk well, on some subject. The art here lies in finding the particular bent of our interlocutor and directing conversation in that channel. It is a common failing to assume that what interests oneself is of equal interest to others. What people specially crave is intelligent appreciation of their own pursuits or ideas. We know of one lady, the happy possessor of an extremely sweet sympathetic countenance, who was pronounced by a glib, egotistical talker, "the finest conversationalist he had ever met," although she afterwards declared in her private circle that she had actually not spoken a word while he expatiated upon his favorite hobby.

Another excellent rule is the avoidance of personal remarks; it is seldom that conversation can deal with individuals with bordering on the critical; it is best to talk about things, events, incidents, a book, a picture, the new play, and subjects that will not be likely to suggest personal criticism or uncharitable allusions.

Although an extensive fund of information is, no doubt, of material service in furnishing topics for conversation, yet, it by no means follows that such equipment is an indispensable requisite. Profound discussions are suited to the leisurely privacy of a studious residence. What is needed in society is a light, vivacious commerce of ideas, or even transient remarks, and its secret is assuredly given in this maxim of La Buyere: "Brilliance in conversation consists far less in the display of wit than in the talent of calling forth the wit of others." Here again, as in other departments of social art, a good natural desire of making the most of other people's good points is a potent auxiliary to success, but the hostess' tact and watchfulness must ever be on the qui vive to prevent what is caviar to some from becoming ashes to others and here comes in the subtlest perhaps of all arts, that of making a timely diversion, of adroitly turning the current of conversation to a new channel without offending vanity or wounding susceptibilities. Occasionally, and under the influences of a superior mind, even the most superficial talk will rise to the height of intellectual or moral converse, but it should not be allowed to dwell too long on so lofty a plane; the tension is too great for ordinary occasions and a skillful management must quickly bring conversation back to a more accessible level.

In close kinship with conversation, but lighter and more playful, is the untranslatable causerie for which Dumas and his friend so pined in their foreign exile. The causerie is not a talk, for the talk may all be on one side, and the causerie can not exist without reciprocity; it is not a chat, for it supposes more straightforwardness and wit than the word chat conveys. It is more familiar and intimate than conversation. It admits of more freedom; it is the delightful converse between the privileged few who remain at a friendly house after the company have gone; it is so refreshing, and so highly prized even by the loftiest minds that Sainte Beuve would truly say: "Causerie is one of the sweet things that one would wish to prolong for ever."

This familiar mode of conversation is particularly dear to the French. It is a form of intercourse which is essentially Gallic. They do not find it among other nations, and in prolonged sojourns in foreign lands the yearning after it amounts with them to positive nostalgia. There are few among their visitors who have failed to notice this national trait. Scribe, the prolific librettist, says: "To talk familiarly (causer) with a friend is to commune with one's best self." Texier misses the charm in England. "In English society people speak they never talk."

Women are the natural leaders and guides of polite conversation, but the art requires reciprocity, and it is an indispensable condition that the male portion of society should bring a reasonable quota to the sum total of intelligent commerce, and that a mutual and common interest should be felt, both by men and women, in a sufficient number of subjects to supply materials for an interchange of ideas. In the prevailing condition of affairs this is not the case. Men are usually too tired or too heavily burdened with cares exclusively their own to bring to evening reunions a fresh and free-working mind. Few men, even among college gradu-

ates, retain inclinations or find leisure to cultivate an interest in matters of art or literature, while on the contrary, women do find time to read, if not to study, and at least to dabble a little in the mildest forms of art culture, if only because it is fashionable. Thus a diversity of interests or tastes arises, which grows apace, and often results in complete separation when each party deliberately concludes to follow a different path; and then farewell to conversation for on what could it feed?

Conversation is a form of harmony which can not exist without mutual concessions and amiable sacrifices of jarring elements; it is not the chosen field of the social ascot, for it is based upon reciprocal toleration of individual views and opinions; it is the pleasant neutral ground of amicable conflict and good-humored sparring. It is the whetstone that sharpens wit and brightens intellect. It acts like an invigorating tonic in the necessary relations of life. It assists in maintaining and developing of polite language.

A Bride's Unconcern.

Said an observant gentleman to an Albany Journal representative the other day: "Did you ever notice the perfect ease and self-assurance of a bride? Coming up on the cars from New York recently I saw a young lady carrying an immense bouquet of roses in her hand come into the car with a friend of the same sex and a gentleman whose polished beaver, fresh lavender necktie, and boutonniere, and especially whose affectionate regard for the young lady with the bouquet, stamped him as a bride-groom. There was trepidation in every movement of the young man, but the young lady marched up to her seat, passed the bouquet to the porter, hung up her cloak, or rather passed it to the young man to hang up, calmly took her seat, and began to read a novel. The young man sat in his chair and looked at her with all-consuming eyes, and then whispered to her, then put his hands on the arm of her seat, and evidently hungered for a warm embrace. The lady paid not the slightest attention to him beyond answering his questions in monosyllables and looking out of the window, but his ardor did not cool till Poughkeepsie was reached, when he insisted upon bringing in a lunch. But the young lady insisted on going out for it, and so relieved the bridegroom of his embarrassment, and herself of some annoyance. It was amusing all the while to observe the efforts of the bridegroom to divert the gaze of a number of Assemblymen who were on board the car and who had a full realization of the situation. It was also amusing to notice the utter failure of his attempts and the success of the efforts of the bride to appear entirely unconcerned."

The Captain and the Alligators.

Cap. Brabo of the Anita was, if anything, more entertaining than Capt. Lund Jr. He certainly talked more and told more stories. He was careful not to tell anything about alligators that he could not prove. He talked well into the evening and had a large audience. As several passengers expressed it, "the Captain is half the trip," and he certainly did add much interest to it. He was well posted, knew the haunts of the alligators, and when he said we would see one at a certain point we were seldom disappointed. Altogether we counted between thirty-five and forty of them on our trip up that would measure from one foot to fourteen feet in length. At one time the Captain said: "When we round that point on the left you will see a humped-backed alligator," and, sure enough when we rounded the point there lay on the east bank in the warm mud, basking in the sun, an alligator about nine feet long, with a huge bump on his back. He required many toots of the steamer's whistle, as did many of them, before he awoke and slipped off into the river. Bye and by one lady passenger, thinking that the Captain was exerting himself to entertain the passengers, ventured to remark: "Isn't the Captain tired telling us so many stories, and pointing out interesting places and things?" "O, no," said the Captain. "Madam, I am wound up every day, and it would not do to stop me before I run down. When I run down I will tell you," and sure enough, as we neared our destination he remarked: "I am running down," and soon his voice was heard giving orders to his crew.—Florida Letter in Boston Transcript.

He Realized It.

"Young man," said an apostle solemnly, "do you realize, when you retire at night, that you may be called before the morning dawns?" "Yes, sir," responded the young man, "I realize it fully. I am the father of a 3-weeks-old baby"—Puck

However useful the handkerchief may be, it is nearly always destined to meet with a cold reception.

"For the Croupier?"

A week ago the German Minister gave a handsome dinner party in honor of the 90th birth-day of Kaiser William. The occasion, of course, was replete with incidents of the long and eventful career of this wonderful man. One of the most interesting anecdotes related by a countryman of the Emperor was in regard to his early youth, and which seems to be little known. Since public gambling has been forbidden by law in Germany the votaries of fortune from all Europe, who used to fill the hotels at Ems, Baden, etc., have flocked to Monaco. The story runs that Kaiser William, while he was still Crown Prince and a dashing young officer, entered the Kursaal at Ems, wearing an overcoat which concealed his brilliant uniform, and, approaching the crowded table, placed thereon a coin of small value, about a dollar. With a contemptuous gesture the banker tossed the coin upon the floor, with the remark: "For the croupier." Again the unknown gentleman threw down a coin and lost, the banker repeating his action and words, to the amusement of the other players. It was then, as now, the custom of the banks to set aside a certain sum each day, and put up a notice of the amount beyond which they could not play. If the losses amounted to this sum the bank must close.

William glanced at the notice—200,000 francs—quietly remarked that he would play for the whole bank. "Who are you?" exclaimed the dealer, with sudden respect. For reply the future Emperor of Germany then opened his coat, displaying the imperial star upon his breast. The cards were dealt, the Prince won, and the bank was broken. Taking up the enormous sum he deliberately dashed it on the floor, exclaiming, "For the croupier!" then, turning on his heel, left the apartment.—Baltimore American.

Bazaine's Mexican Daughter.

Among the loveliest of all the lovely daughters of the tropics is Eugenie Bazaine, daughter of the French exile, Marshal Bazaine. But, you will ask, how did Marshal Bazaine's daughter find a home in the Mexican Capital? It is a romantic story. Marshal Bazaine was the representative of Napoleon III. when the latter espoused the cause of Maximilian, aspirant to the throne of Mexico, and he came to Mexico, and marshaled the French troops as a representative of the French Emperor, in the interest of the Austrian Duke, until the star of the latter began to wane. Bazaine became owner of palatial residences and he levied tribute of the richest haciendas. While in Mexico he became enamored of a Miss De La Pena, a lovely Mexican girl, and ere returning to France left a boy and girl babies, fruit of a lawful marriage. As a French exile he is now in Spain, where his Mexican son is also an officer in the army, but his Mexican wife and daughter are living here in a quiet way on the north side of the Alameda. His possessions were naturally confiscated by Juarez and the Liberal party, so that the income of the wife and daughter does not afford them opportunities for extravagant display. The Mexican Government, however, has generously allowed them to retain a home, but, though a fine, substantial residence, a stranger would ask in passing an explanation of the gloom that seems to surround and overshadow it. Miss Bazaine is one of the prettiest girls in Mexico. She is about 19 years old, and, being the daughter of a Mexican mother and French father, possesses the united charms of both races.—City of Mexico Letter to the St. Louis Republican.

The Age of Hamlet.

Mr. Wilson Barrett's theory is that Hamlet was only 19 years old. Prof. Henry Morley's theory is; "Shakspeare's play opens with the watch over the sea against attack by Fortinbras for recovery of land lost thirty years before, when the father of Fortinbras, the King of Norway, lost the land and with it his life, wagered by him in a duel with the father of Hamlet. The time elapsed since that duel, which was on the day of Hamlet's birth, is precisely told in the Fifth act (pages 166-7), where the gravedigger says that he became a gravedigger 'that day our last King Hamlet o'ercame Fortinbras,' which was 'the very day that young Hamlet was born, and presently adds, 'I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.' Thus Shakspeare clearly fixes Hamlet's age as 30."

Wild Flowers.

Wild flowers are now quite the fashion. At a wedding that recently took place the display of wild flowers was beautiful in the extreme. Curtains of wood ferns were caught back with golden rods, and a bower of holly and oak was fringed with clusters of the scarlet bittersweet berries. Daisies were also used in abundance, while the beauty of the little Church of St. John was enhanced by the masses of white blossoms and oak branches, as well as roses and hydrangeas.