

WEST POINT DRILL.

THE CADET AT HIS BEST IN MOUNTED SERVICE EXERCISES.

The Bugle Blares the Signal "Cannoneers Mount"—Warning Up to the Work—A Belch of Flame and Thunder Cloud—Another Signal.

Sharp at the stroke of 9 the classes are again in ranks, and the hour of battery drill has come. The "belch" march, as it is called, is already springing down the winding path to the "gun camp" battery at the water's edge, and presently you will hear a thunder of great guns that will stun all Orange county—or would, but for the barriers of the massive hills that shut us in on every side.

The liveliest spectacle, however, is here on the plain, for at all the drills and exercises which the cadet excels he is at his best in those of the mounted service. During horseman are the youngsters after two years' practice in the riding hall, and light battery drill in a famous place for exhibition.

Watch the boys as they go to their stations. The seniors, in their riding dress, gaudiest and cavalry sabers, swing easily into the saddles of the cannon, with various leading whips and plunging steeds and rattle and rear of hoof and wheel and hoarse-throated commands and stirring bugle peals, up the plain they come at tearing gallop until opposite the crowd of spectators at the guard tents, when there is a short, sudden halt, a simultaneous shout from the cannon, a violent rearing of horses as the lieutenants and sergeants halt short on line with the brilliant guidon—generally the most picturesque horseman of the warlike throng, and always posted on the flank nearest the ladies—a flash of sabers in the air, a sudden "fin in" of the line of cannon, and great clouds of white smoke, the long, before which, nimble as cats, the cannoniers have sprung from their seats, and are streaking it across the gap to where the chiefs are seated on their excited chargers.

With a sudden swirl. Around sweep the guns with sudden swirl that will high enough to send the three youngsters on each flank sensibly hanging on as though nailed on sticking plaster—there is a rattling and clanging of rattle locks, horse shouts of "charge" and "to the gun teams; gray and white forms lean and sway in and out among the wheels, sponges and rammers whirl in air; there is a belch of flame, smoke and thunder cloud, a following roar; another, another—half a dozen in quick succession; a thick redoubt of smoke settles down the plain and covers the cannon, and suddenly comes another flare of light. "Charge firing" is the shout, and the mimic scene of Buena Vista is over.

Even before the smoke has cleared away another order is given, with prompt, exciting response; plunging, rocking, cracking whips, a rush of teams, tinklers and cannons between the black mounds of the guns, a sudden whirl about of wheels and handspikes, and the next instant smoke and flame are belching in thunderbolts over the very ground where stood the waiting teams only a moment before. Then comes still another signal, a stowing away of handspikes and rammers, a rapid re-aiming of the limber teams, another "charge" away they go, the white legs of the cannons flashing in a race, the next instant comes another flare of light, another sudden whirl into battery, a thundering salute to the rocky heights to the west, an echoing roar from the great columbids and parrots at the "cannon" of the Hudson, and the Point fairly trembles with the shock and concussion. There is no hour of the day to match the excitement and clamor of that battery drill.—Charles King, U. S. A., in Harper's Magazine.

Cigars for Gen. Grant.

Gen. Grant was able to gratify his love for the weed at little or no tax upon his \$20,000 a year. So many of his friends are desirous of making him presents and his fondness for cigars was so universally known that the express companies were kept busy delivering him boxes of the choicest brands. I know of one gift to him of a box of 100 which cost the donor \$15—so, at least, the latter told me. I thought this was about the highest price ever paid for such goods, but the gentleman assured me that he had himself smoked cigars which had cost \$1.75 apiece. He had done so accidentally, however, for it was far from his disposition to be so extravagant. The gift to Gen. Grant came about in this way: My informant, a merchant of means, was about to visit the general in camp during the closing days of the war and thought a box of cigars would be appreciated as a delicate courtesy. Accordingly, he called upon a cigar dealer near his residence and requested him to get the best box of cigars within reach. It was a time when gold was over \$200, and the custom duties were very heavy. The package was duly delivered to him in a day or two and with it a bill for \$145. Astonished at the price he went to the cigar dealer, who said that the bill was correct.—Brooklyn Citizen.

Hair Oil and Hair Dye.

Few men use hair oil nowadays and fewer still use dye. A few years ago the use of both was common. The young scented themselves with the oil and the fading hair and even staid family men sought the appearance of age by applying the latter at frequent intervals. Now grayness, particularly if premature, is considered an masculine charm, and even ladies are not averse to owning it. Among the men who still resort to dye may be mentioned the typical "sport" of the steamer and street corners, who have even the semblance of age in his later blue waves and determined authorities.—Philadelphia Times.

By the use of palladium in the hairspring and balance, a Geneva watchmaker claims to have produced accurate time pieces which are unaffected by magnetism.

A Nihilistic Family.

AN AMERICAN TOURIST'S INTERVIEW WITH STUDENT SVETLOFF.

A Little Lady's Passionate and Revolutionary Outburst—A Strange Kind of Piano Music—Warnings of an Anxious Mother—Pill in Prison.

My first visit was to a student named Svetloff. I found him in bed. He received me very suspiciously, but after reading the letter I handed him he changed his tone and invited me to sit down. It was a regular dwelling of a bachelor. The shoe brush lay at one end of the room; books, pamphlets and papers were scattered around the floor. Shirts, collars, and various pieces of clothing occupied a number of chairs, and half a dozen empty wine bottles and glasses, remnants of a previous feast, left no free space on the table. The host wanted to be excused. He would not change his habits for a moment, he said, for anybody in the world, and he would feel sick and unhappy all day if he neglected his toilet. A party of friends came together in his room the night before and had a good time, he added, pointing at the empty wine bottles. He spoke French, of course, so readily excused me for not having the best knowledge of his native tongue.

A sturdy young fellow, a servant, brought in a huge tub and filled it with cold water. I arose to go, but Mr. Svetloff kept me back, saying I need not feel uneasy and might consider myself at home. He plunged himself in the tub, remained there for awhile and then proceeded to make up his toilet. Finally, fresh and smiling, he reached me his hand, offering to become friends.

At noon we left his room to visit a family named Choudin, to whom I also had a letter of introduction. We were received by a young lady of striking beauty and amability. "Lina Nikolayevna Choudin," said my Nihilistic friend, unceremoniously introducing us. She gave me her little hand, and a sweet, happy smile beamed from her dark blue eyes as she heard my name pronounced. Plainly dressed, with a profusion of flowing brown hair, a rosy checked face and a faultless frame, she looked a picture of grace and loveliness.

"So you are an American—a free born American!" exclaimed the little lady. "An American tourist you are. I never saw an American in my life. I am glad they are so good looking. Mamma and we all will be extremely happy to dine with an American gentleman."

It seemed as though the stream of words from the mouth of my hostess would never cease to flow. I got confused, and attempted to return the compliment and to excuse myself to the best of my power. But the young lady and I were seated at the table, and she introduced me to her mother, a venerable old lady, and then successively to her three brothers. A dinner party so merry I never attended in my life. I felt myself perfectly at home. Lina, who sat next to me, was doing up her witty remarks and pointed questions. Svetloff was sarcastic and spoke always to the point. The old lady all the time sought to tame her talkative daughter, calling her to order at every bold question she put. The young man—Lina's brother—was not less inquisitive. Lina overheard me with questions. I had to tell her what I knew about the social, political and economic conditions of women in America, name her eminent female orators and champions of women's rights, our female writers, doctors and artists, our actresses and other women of fame, and explain our school system with women as distributors of knowledge and light. She listened eagerly to my answers and explanations, and, suddenly, thinking me for the patience with which I listened and replied to her questions, she broke out with her eyes sparkling, and ignoring the cautioning appeals of her mother: "That is what we don't have and want to have here. Are we, perhaps, worse than your American women? They are freer, they enjoy life, independence, liberty, we are slaves, doomed to end our lives in dungeons or Siberia."

Svetloff applauded the passionate outburst, the young Choudins ironically leaned over the table to shake hands with their little sister, while the mother, all confused, tried to excuse her. "Lina is so forgetful," she said. "I fear her madness will bring her one day into trouble." Svetloff assured the old lady that I was an American, not a member of the imperial detective force who would give her daughter away. Mme. Choudin indignantly replied that she did not entertain such an idea for a moment, and, addressing herself to me, she added: "In Russia people here become so guarded! She did not end her sentence, for suddenly strange sounds of music, coming from the open door of the drawing room, filled the air. I looked back and saw Lina sitting at the piano. How wonderful was her music! Never before had I heard a combination of sounds with such a singular, bizarre, now complaining, now caressing, and almost moaning color of tone. Now she dragged and prolonged the measure so that it sounded like the moaning of the wind; but then she tumbled and hurried it, making me think that I was listening to a cat's paw. I felt puzzled and captivated, but at the same time I enjoyed the music. Slowly the wrath or passion of the fair pianist subsided, the music assumed a certain color of calmness, and the tones began to hop on the key board like larks fatigued over a stagnant surface of a lake.

I remained with the Nihilistic family—for all, even the old lady, entertained revolutionary ideas—until late in the afternoon. Svetloff's honest face brightened more and more during the flow of his eloquence. Lina's father, he said, was a colonel in the Russian army. He died at Plevna during the last Russo-Turkish war, leaving his family in good circumstances. Besides, the old lady became so guarded! She did not end her sentence, for suddenly strange sounds of music, coming from the open door of the drawing room, filled the air. I looked back and saw Lina sitting at the piano. How wonderful was her music! Never before had I heard a combination of sounds with such a singular, bizarre, now complaining, now caressing, and almost moaning color of tone. Now she dragged and prolonged the measure so that it sounded like the moaning of the wind; but then she tumbled and hurried it, making me think that I was listening to a cat's paw. I felt puzzled and captivated, but at the same time I enjoyed the music. Slowly the wrath or passion of the fair pianist subsided, the music assumed a certain color of calmness, and the tones began to hop on the key board like larks fatigued over a stagnant surface of a lake.

What are you doing, Tommy? asked a Sioux Falls lady of her young son who was sticking up stakes around the backyard. "Patin' a addition," replied the young hopeful, whose father is a real estate agent. "How are sales?" "Bully, ma!" Stubby Jones takes that corner there by the gate for a peanut and Lina's maid, Bill Smith and Dutchy take a block by the barn for their circus on Hen Jones is talkin' 'bout takin' two lots by the apple tree for to tie up his dog on so's his dad can't shoot it. Say, ma, I'll let ye in on the ground floor on that lot by the corner of the house there to stand your flower pots—take it for five cents and a handful of raisins, seeing it's yours.—Dakota Bell.

LIFE AT WEST POINT.

AN EX-CADET GIVES A FEW BITS OF HIS EXPERIENCE.

His Reception at the Barracks—Undergoing an Ordeal of Impertinent Questioning—The "Plebbs" and Their Masters—One of the Nuisances.

My own experience on reporting at West Point may be taken as a fair example of the way in which newcomers are treated. My appointment required me to report to the adjutant of the United States military academy on June 11, and at 9 o'clock on that day I presented myself. The adjutant examined my appointment papers, and sent me over to the hospital to stand my physical examination.

At the hospital I was told to strip off all my clothing, and a board of surgeons proceeded to examine me with a view to ascertaining whether or not I possessed the physical qualifications necessary to enter the United States army. They made me hop across the floor on one foot and back on the other, weighed and measured me, tested my eyes and hearing, and finally sent me back to the adjutant with a sealed envelope containing their verdict. The adjutant opened the envelope and informed me that I had been accepted. He then sent me over to the barracks in charge of an orderly. Right there my trouble commenced. Thus far I had come in contact with regular army officers only, and nothing had happened to impair my dignity or lessen my self-esteem, but now I was to be placed under a cadet corporal, and learn for the first time that between plebs and yearlings there is a great gulf fixed. On my arrival at the barracks I was met by two cadet officers, a sergeant and a corporal, and the following conversation ensued:

"Take off your hat, sir," said the corporal, "and hang it on the floor."

I obeyed, wondering if that was the only hat-trick Uncle Sam allowed his boys.

"What is your name, sir?" asked the sergeant.

"John Smith," I answered.

"Sir," said the sergeant, "sir, what do we care whether your name is John or George or Zachariah? Now, sir, what is your name?"

"Smith," said I.

"No, sir," said the corporal, "your name is not Smith, but Mr. Smith, and remember to put a sir on when you speak to your superiors. Now, sir, what is your name?"

"Mr. Smith, sir," I replied.

I thought all this was funny, and couldn't repress a smile. I was at once ordered to "stand at attention," but, of course, smiled only the harder.

The corporal, a stout fellow nearly six feet high, stepped up to me and directly in front of me, and stooping down to my eyes, jumped up sticking his nose in my face. This maneuver surprised me so completely that I did not know what to do or say.

"Sir," he yelled at the top of his voice, "do you intend to obey me?"

I felt tempted to knock the fellow down, but not knowing whether or not he really had any authority over me, I concluded that prudence was the better part of valor, and remained quiet, but was now so thoroughly angry that I no longer felt any inclination to smile.

After having deviled me to their hearts content, the two cadet non-commissioned officers conducted me to the office of Cadet Lieut. D—, who had been detailed to take charge of the new men.

"What is your name, sir?" asked the lieutenant.

"Mr. Smith, sir," I answered.

"Well, Mr. Smith, hold up your head, get your back straight, drag in your chest, and your shoulders back, and assume the position of a soldier when you speak to me, sir."

"Now, sir," continued Lieut. D—, when I had assumed the position of a soldier, "do you see that book up there?"

"Yes, sir," I replied.

"Well, then, keep your eyes fastened on the letter 'I' on the back of that book while I ask you a few questions, and don't you dare to lay your slimy eyes on me, sir. Who is your predecessor, sir?"

"His name is Jones," I answered.

"No, sir," he yelled, "how dare you put yourself on an equality with an officer of the United States army? Graduate of this institution! Mr. Jones is your predecessor, sir."

I made haste to disclaim all intentions of putting myself on an equality with Mr. Jones.

"What was your previous condition of servitude, sir?" was the next question. I understood by the way of the questioner that I knew what had been my condition of life previous to arriving at West Point, and so answered that I had been a farmer's son.

Lieut. D— then asked me if I had any pistols, bowie knives, confederates or blacking. I confessed having a box of the latter last year in my trunk, and was ordered to turn it in to him immediately. Cadets, I afterward learned, are not allowed to keep blacking in their rooms, but have their shoes blacked in the shoemaker's shop under the barracks. When Lieut. D— had finished questioning me, he assigned me to the room which I was to occupy until I had passed my entrance examination. Every day before being admitted into the academy must pass two examinations, the physical, which I have already described, and the academic. The academic examination generally lasts about a week. During that time the applicants for admission, known officially as "candidates," but called "plebs" by the cadets, were subjected to every sort of indignity by the cadet officers, whose duty it is to protect them.

The candidates that succeed in passing their examinations become at once cadets of the fourth class, and are no longer called "plebs," but for a whole year are known by their fellow cadets as "plebs." Soon after their admittance the plebs are transferred to a camp, where the first and the third classes (the second always being absent on furlough) have preceded them, and where they are destined to spend two months of torment. While in camp the plebs are slaves to the other class men, and spend a great part of their spare time in doing "menial services" for their masters. "Menial services" in cadet slang means cleaning guns, polishing waist plates, sewing torn gloves, bringing water or doing any odd job that a yearling (third class man) or first class man may want done.

OUR CATTLE QUEENS.

EIGHT HUNDRED OF THEM RAISING HERDS IN COLORADO.

Refined, Intelligent Women, They Successfully Look After Their Own Interests—A Denver Reporter's Chat with a Prolific Cattleman.

"Are you personally acquainted with many women engaged in the business of cattle raising?" asked the reporter.

"The gentleman gave a long whistle. 'Well, I should think so,' he said. 'I've studied them for years. You want to know what kind of women they are? I'll tell you what sort they are, young man; they're ladies, that's what they are. Now, I don't mean by that that they would be afraid of soiling their hands if occasion required; no, indeed; nor of doing a charitable action which would necessitate some personal exposure on their part, for they are generous to a fault. What I mean to say is, that they are as a rule refined and intelligent women, who read and think and are capable of making a good appearance in society. I don't know as I have ever seen one of them who is physically unattractive, outside of the judgment they exercise in the stock business, which is phenomenal. Most of them have a genius for business, and nine-tenths of them know how to appear in a drawing room.

"In most instances they are rich and know well how to use their money to advantage so as to get the most good out of it. Many of them are wise and cautious, and while they are such I assure you they are both wise and kind. You will find that they rule their households with firm hands, and that their husbands and children, to use the biblical expression, 'rise up and call them blessed.'

"Stock women are much like others, save that they have wider judgment on practical subjects. They are decidedly businesslike, because they appreciate the vast interests which they have at stake, and the quick conception with which all women are gifted enables them to see clearly what the inevitable results would be of one false move. They know that their decisions must be well weighed; that they must act only under the most careful consideration, and that once having acted they must abide by their decision with a calm, unswerving spirit. It is a good training school for a woman. It takes all that idiotic nonsense about nerves out of her and gives her brain a cool, common sense poise which many a man might envy.

GREAT RESPONSIBILITIES. "I know of no position in life which I find rather my daughters would fill. It is one burdened with great responsibilities, of course, but what mode of life is not where there is anything to be gained? I assure you I should not consider it as a clear misadventure if the entire business interest in any way with the refinement of those whom I hold most dear."

"But you have doubtless met stock women of a directly opposite class, have you not?"

"Oh, yes; there are necessarily exceptions to all rules. The uncouth woman of the most careful consideration, and that once having acted they must abide by their decision with a calm, unswerving spirit. It is a good training school for a woman. It takes all that idiotic nonsense about nerves out of her and gives her brain a cool, common sense poise which many a man might envy.

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