

troops, of those mysterious war panics which sometimes take place among even seasoned old fighters just as unaccountably as stampedes occur among cavalry horses or baggage mules?

We have once before quoted Lord Wolesey upon a kindred subject in the N. Z. TABLET. 'The public little know,' said he, 'how often soldiers "cut and run." On one occasion my own men ran from me in sheer panic, leaving me alone. All soldiers run away at times. I believe that the British soldier runs away less than the soldier of any other nation, but he also runs away sometimes. There is a great deal of human nature in soldiers, but the loss from skulking and desertion in the great conscript armies of the Continent attains dimensions of which the English public have no notion.' During the Peninsula War two crack British regiments were once on the march. A false rumor suddenly went like an electric shock through them. They threw down arms, abandoned baggage, and bolted madly in all directions—a mere disorderly mob crazed with blind terror. South Africa had an evil reputation for such unceremonious leave-takings long before the outbreak of the present wretched and long-drawn campaign. At Majuba Hill, for instance, both Boer and Briton felt the cold impact of a simultaneous scare when they stood facing each other at short range. But the Dutchman had the steadier nerve: he pulled himself together sooner and was 'quicker on the draw' than Mr. Atkins. That was all. Several small panics occurred during the Zulu War. Some of them were caused by near-sighted or excited sentries mistaking a bush or shrub or chunk of rock for a Zulu. One was brought about by a harmless, necessary cow, browsing the sparse herbage too near the camp. The battle of Isandlana (January 22, 1879) could not have proved such a crowning disaster to the British troops but for the panic which seized the men as Cetewayo's hordes of dark-skinned warriors swept down upon them. Another raging scare led to the follies of Ginghilovo, which has been ever since known in military circles by the appropriate name of 'Fort Funk.'

Few living men have seen amidst the battle smoke so many different nationalities engaged in

... that noble trade
That demi-gods and heroes made—
Slaughter and knocking on the head,

as Mr. Archibald Forbes. He was with the German army in the campaign of 1870-71; he saw the red and fiery close of the Commune in Paris; he was on every side of the triangular duel between Carlists, Republicans, and Alfonsists in Spain; he went through the Serbian war in 1876 and the Russo-Turkish campaign in the following year; he witnessed the taming of the hill men in India, and was in the thick of fighting in Afghanistan; and he went through the laager-making, powder blazing, helpless blundering, and kraal-burning that have been dignified with the name of 'war' against the once-dreaded Cetewayo, king of the Zulus. His campaigning experiences have left him somewhat of a sceptic on the subject of military courage. In his *Barracks*, *Bivouacs*, and *Battles* he almost falls plump into the rank military heresy of declaring that a 'naturally' brave man is almost as rare as a *Notornis Mantelli*. In fact, it would almost appear from his words that 'there ain't no sich a person.' But perhaps Archibald means by a 'naturally' brave man one who is merely hard—as some criminals are—or one who is stupidly indifferent to, or stolidly disregarding of, life, like some Eastern fatalists? 'My own belief,' says he, 'founded on some experience of divers nationalities in war-time, is that most men are naturally cowards. I have the fullest belief in the force of the colonel's retort to the major. "Colonel," said the major, in a hot fire, "you are afraid. I see you tremble." "Yes, sir," replied the colonel, "and if you were as afraid as I am, you would run away." I do think,' continues Forbes, 'three out of four men would run away if they dared. There are, doubtless, some men whom nature has constituted so obtuse as not to know fear, and who, therefore, deserve no credit for their courage; and there are others with nerves so strong as to crush down the rising "funk." The madness of blood does get into men's heads, no doubt. . . . But most men are like the colonel of the dialogue—they display bravery because in the presence of their comrades they are too great cowards to evince poltroonery.'

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THE CHINESE CRISIS.

THE CHURCH IN THE FLOWERY KINGDOM.

HEROIC DEFENCE OF THE CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL.

(From our own correspondent.)

WE have heard a great deal indeed about the inconveniences which the members of the *Corps Diplomatique* and other foreigners have had to put up with in Peking during the siege, but comparatively little of the almost total extirpation of Christianity in whole Viceroyalties, and of the frightful means by which that extirpation was brought about. Yet history, it seems to me, will pay very little attention indeed to the lamentable fact that for several weeks delicately-nurtured men and women had to live on horse-flesh and rice and in momentary fear of death, while, attaching a great deal of importance to the destruction of the Hanlin Library, with all its wealth of priceless volumes and to the barbarous murder of thousands—perhaps tens of thousands, of Christians. Massacres on a much larger scale might, it is true, mean little in a country where human life is so cheap as in China, but these massacres seem to me to have nipped Chinese Christianity in the bud. Their effort will, in fact, be the same as that of the massacres of Christians in the seventeenth century in Japan, and China, when it awakens, and it soon must awaken and follow in the footsteps of its Eastern neighbor, it will be emphatically a Pagan nation. The consequent effect on the course of history will be considerable.

While awaiting authoritative detail, which I am to have in a few weeks from a Peking resident better able perhaps than anyone else in the Chinese capital to furnish me with such detail, I should wish to draw attention in your columns how enormously disproportionate is our sympathy (1) for the foreign community in Peking and (2) for the Chinese Christians. Yet the latter seem to me to deserve our sympathy most, for their sufferings have been dreadful. Two months ago a distinguished ecclesiastic here said to me, *La chrétienté en Chine est tout à fait dévalisée*; but it seems to me that it has been murdered as well as robbed. Putting together the isolated items of news which have so far come to hand in regard to this subject, we became convinced that the damage which has been done to mission work in China—not only in North China but in Hunan and other places—is almost irreparable. Such items are innumerable, so I shall confine myself to giving one or two of them. A high Chinese official who recently wrote 'A Dairy of Events in Peking' for the *North China Daily News* says, under date of June 29, that 'When the fighting between the Chinese troops and the Boxers first began, a large number of native Christians made a sortie from the British Legation with the object of escaping. They were all armed with rifles and struck at whomsoever opposed them. Many of the regular troops and Boxers then chased the Christians and went about hunting for them, so that no one could venture on the streets. No mercy was shown to the Christians, and wherever found they were at once killed. Some of the houses searched were also set fire to afterwards, and the Christians who were taken out of them were led to the Lamp-light Market, where they were burned to cinders.'

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE NATIVE CHRISTIANS.

This is what happened in Peking. The same scenes took place however, as far south as Hen-chian-fu in Hunan, where, in addition to the Christians being murdered and their dwellings destroyed, the Franciscan Bishop of the diocese, Monsignor Antonio Fantosati, and three Fathers were put to death. In Po-tung-fu and in Mutang similar scenes were enacted. In Manchuria, to use the words of a non-Catholic correspondent there, 'the learned and genial Bishop Guillon, of Moukden, the gentle and pious Père Emonet and a brother priest, Sister St. Croix, and another lady of the French mission have all won the martyr's crown, and the churches (including the fine Catholic Cathedral), hospitals, and mission houses have been looted and burned.' But my object here is not to deal with the sufferings of foreign missionaries: it is to draw attention to the incomparably greater sufferings—greater, that is, more widespread—of the mute, uncomplaining Christian natives. This case of Moukden is an instance of how the latter are neglected in this connection, for, while much has been written about the murder of the French missionaries and nuns, not a word has been said, so far as I am aware, about the slaughter of converts that occurred at the same time. Nearly the same silence is maintained in the case of that terrible massacre at Chenohon, Hoochen Prefecture, Chihli Province, where the troops of General Li Ping-heng put to death no fewer than 1000 Christians. In spite of the appalling nature and extent of this tragedy little attention was, as I have said, paid to it by Europeans until it was found that it had stirred up the indignation of the prominent Chinese authorities south of the Yellow River, several memorials being despatched to Peking denouncing Li for the deed and demanding his dismissal from office. One of these memorials was sent by Li Hung Chang.

All evidence tends in short to show that our anxiety for the fate of the Ministers in Peking blinded us to the fact that the extirpation of a section of the Chinese people, a most important section, too, when their potential as apart from their numerical value is considered, was being carried on in a manner which recalls the stories told by Egyptian hieroglyphics and Babylonian tablets but seldom recorded in annals written on paper. We have in fact seen butcheries on a frightful scale accompanied by an intense hatred of Christianity worthy of a Nero. Some journalists blame the missionaries, it is true, and the converts, but I think that these journalists would have found Nero to have been a very good fellow if they had lived in his time, and quite right in preventing those vagabond Galileans from meddling with the worship of the immortal gods and the ordered family life of the people. There can