Andover News.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 1893.

BOSTON is suffering from an epidemic of elopements, and it is supposed that a diet of baked beans and Saratoga water will have to be preached against as too exhilarating for the staid old Bostonians.

"IF Uncle Sam and John Bull should get hold of opposite ends of the same Sandwich and begin to pull—well, what then?" asks the Indianapolis News? Why, probably they would find more mustard than meat.

There has been a great yearly diminution during the last ten years in the number of soldiers in military or civil prisons in England and Wales. In 1884 there were 1117 soldiers in English prisons; in 1891 there were 433, and on the 31st of last December there were but forty-four. Last year not one soldier was sentenced to penal servitude. The expulsions for misconduct have decreased since 1888 from 2020 to 1590.

The New York Press estimates that about 1600 novels were published during the past six years, or 270 novels a year. These 1600 novels were written by 792 authors who signed their names and 130 who did not. Only 240 of these authors met with success enough to encourage them to write a second time. In all, 2600 persons have failed as writers of fiction during the last eighteen years, as against about 80 who have succeeded well and 120 who have succeeded tolerably.

The danger of freshets in streams and rivers is greatly increased as the country grows older up to a certain period; declares the Boston Cultivator. That is fixed by the time thorough underdraining begins. All the processes of cultivation help to make new virgin soil less absorptive of water. They diminish the vegetable matter in the soil, and close up the veins through which water, as it fell, was slowly drawn away into the subsoil and thence more slowly into springs. The beginning of underdraing reverses this process. It opens a permanent water-way beneath to which water slowly percolates through the soil, lessening danger from floods.

The Census Bureau has issued a bulletin of prisoners and paupers in the United States. Some of the facts stated are of interest. In 1890 there were in the prisons of the United States undergoing punishment for crime, 82,329 persons. Of these, 75,924 were males and 6405 females. There were 52,894 white males and 4416 white females, making a total of 57,310 whites. The colored prisoners numbered 24,277, of which 22,305 were men and 1922 were women. There were 407 Chinese prisoners, of whom 406 were males and one a woman. Of Japanese there were twelve males and one female; of Indians there were 322, 307 being men and 15 women. In the matter of nativity, of the 57,320 white prisoners, 40,471 (that is, 38,156 men and 2315 women) were born in the United States, and 15,932 (that is, 13,869 men and 2063 women) were born in foreign countries. As to the pauperage the statistics are also interesting. In 1890 there were in all the almshouses in the United States 73,045 paupers, of which 40,741 were men and 32,304 were women. Of the whole, 37,387 were white men and 29,191 white women. The colored race showed up with 3226 men and 3092 women. When it comes to crime, comments the New Orleans Picayune, the men of all colors and races vastly outnumber the women, but in poverty the numbers of the two sexes more nearly equal each other, although there are fewer pauper women than men, although from the weakness and social restraints imposed on the sex it would seem that female paupers should be in a majority, which is not the case. In respect to crimes, the colored people in proportion largely outnumber the whites, but when it comes to pauperdom the white percentage is much the larger. Thus it appears that the colored man is not so willing as the white to become a charge on the public. When he goes into prison it is against his wishes, but tenantcy in the poor-house is voluntary. The showing is not, however, particularly flatter[illegible]

CAPTAIN SMEDLEY.

A Romance of the Civil War.

BY MAJ. JAMES F. FITTS.

CHAPTER XIV.

COMING HOME.

IT was the 22d of May, 1863. No bloodier day occurred along the Mississippi. A determined effort was then made to carry the outworks by assault, the success of which would mean the surrender of Vicksburg. The attack was delivered by three heavy columns at three separate points, and repeated again and again through the day. At dark the same story had to be told everywhere. Impregnable works with a ditch before, approached only by narrow ways; a withering fire and cross-fire from behind them, in the face of which no troops could stand or advance; the attacking parties shot down by hundreds, mainly unable to cross the ditch or climb the parapet. The besieged fought under cover, and met with but slight loss. In the bloodshed and mutilation of that dreadful day it was proven that the defenders of Vicksburg would fight desperately for their works, and that the latter could not be taken by assault. Weary weeks of the pick and spade followed.

This narrative does not aim to give a circumstantial account of these operations; yet because some of those of whom we write were there, and saw and participated in these things, it is right to refer to them. Victor Hugo, in writing of Waterloo, gives us conspicuous instances of personal valor. They were matched in the heroism of the American volunteers in the actions along the Mississippi. Men yet live who can tell you how at Vicksburg a Sergeant with a handful of men penetrated an outwork and held it awhile, though commanded by a higher one, till all but the Sergeant were slain on the spot. They will tell you of flags being planted on the parapet and idly waving there all day; for when those who assaulted were beaten off they covered the place from the approaches with their rifles and shot down all who tried to seize the flags from within. Hurled back from the face of the works, the assailants crouched behind anything that would offer cover, and fired at the top of the parapet. In the ditch and near it they hung to this grim warfare till nightfall, when they were withdrawn. Thousands were sacrificed in the useless attempts.

Our Mountain Battalion, worn to about the proportions of a company by the service it had seen during that month, was in the assault. The remnant fell back from the slaughter, and during the following hours the survivors gathered themselves together. Not more than one-half reported. With other victims, the missing were lying in the ditch or before it, dead or hurt beyond the power of motion.

Captain Hankins found himself in command. "Where is the Colonel?" he asked.

Nobody remembered to have seen him after the first fierce rush into the fire from the works. One man, who carried a plank to bridge the ditch, was certain that when he fell Colonel Smedley caught up the plank, laid it across, dashed over it, and shouted to the men to follow.

"Yes, that was so," another said. "I was close behind him when a ball caught me in the leg and I had to come away."

"I'm afraid he's gone," groaned Hankins.

The men anxiously compared notes. Several had seen him on the other side of the ditch, trying to mount the work; but the incessant flashes of fire and puffs of smoke from inside it filled the air with confusion, and they lost sight of him. No man had seen him fall; but it was certain that he had not returned, or he would be among them then.

There was a flag of truce next day to bury the dead, and several of the mountaineers were of the party. Among the hundreds of slain they searched everywhere for the body of Colonel Smedley, but did not find it. They came back with heavy hearts. Many of the bodies were in such a condition, from exposure to the sun, that identification was impossible. They did not doubt that his was among them. Captain Hankins reported him as dead. It appeared in the lists published in the Northwestern papers. Major Brandon, convalescing at Cincinnati on detached service, saw the report and read it to his wife—for Alice Clay bore her old name no longer. They had been married the previous winter, resolved to secure even the transient happiness that the situation offered.

"Dead?" repeated Alice; "I never saw him, but you have always praised him so, and poor Mrs. Baird, too, that he has seemed near to me. O, when will this dreadful work end?"

"This is heavy news for me," said the Major. "It is like the loss of a brother. But it will be sadder for you than you think."

"O, Graham!"

She swiftly comprehended his meaning; the arms of the young wife were about his neck; she was sobbing on his shoulder.

"Must you go?"

"Yes; there is no field officer with them now; I owe them a duty that I must not shirk."

"You are not able to travel."

"The doctor told me this morning that I was in condition to be discharged from here any time. I have been lingering for your sake, knowing that I was fit for active duty."

"What shall I do? You know everything is disturbed again about Knoxville; perhaps I might not be able to reach there at all. Where shall I go?"

"Come with me to the front!" Brandon replied; "or, at least, as near there as you can get. There will be some place not far from our lines where I can leave you in safety. I don't want to leave you yet, if you'll believe it."

He certainly merited the embrace that he received.

All this occurred some days after the 22d of May. On the night of that day a Confederate on guard behind the works discovered a body lying up the steep inclined face of the part where he watched, so near to the top that one hand had been thrown up and rested there.

"That Yank got pretty far before he was stopped."

CHAPTER XV.

DIVIDED.

For many days following the existence of Charles Smedley was as a troubled dream. He raged in a delirium of fever caused by his wound. He was in the East Tennessee mountains; he was in imminent peril of his life; he begged his captors not to put him to a disgraceful death, protesting that he had ever been a stanch Unionist. He was leading the mountaineers against the enemy; he fought over again both days at Shiloh; again he toiled toward Vicksburg, through battle and slaughter; and, last of all, he led his men up to the deadly assault. Such were the subjects of his ravings, and they continued to disturb his brain until he was wearied into sleep. So it was for many days.

When at last he awoke to life and consciousness, feeble, but realizing that he should recover, he found himself in a comfortable bed in a well-furnished apartment. A negro woman waited in the room, and a man in the Confederate uniform sat by his bedside.

"Well, Colonel ——, you're on the mend, I should say," said the officer, in a hearty voice.

"I really don't know what to say," replied Smedley, feebly. "I believe I know myself now, but I can't tell anything that has happened since—since——"

"Say since you tried to visit Vicksburg in rather a rude way, on May 22d, and got some good Confederate lead into you for your pains," said the good-natured officer.

"Ah—I remember. The 22d of May—yes, I shall not forget that day very soon. What date is it now?"

"June the 5th."

"Two weeks passed! Is it possible? How is the siege getting on? Have our lines advanced any? Is there talk of a surrender? What does General Pemberton——"

In his excitement Smedley tried to sit up in bed. The other put a strong hand on his breast and held him down.

"Lie still, sir, if you please. You must know that you are a prisoner, and at present under my orders. You are not to excite yourself, because that would be bad for you in your present condition. For that reason I shall not answer the impertinent questions you have just asked; and also, for the reason that it would not be prudent to give such information to a prisoner."

Smedley looked at the officer. He was too weak to ask more questions, after his sudden exertion. The other perfectly understood him.

"Lie still and don't talk, and I will tell you all you ought to know. I am Dr. Singleton, at your service the Confederate surgeon who dug the bullet out of your back that went pretty near through you, and came pretty near finishing you. I believe you are going to get well: that is, as well as a man can ever be, with such a wound—but you'll fight no more battles. You've got nothing to do but to lie here, take the good nursing that you are having, and get as strong as you can as soon as you can. I'll come to see you once in a while. Good-by, for the present."

He rose to go. An imploring look in his patient's eyes detained him.

"Well?"

"Where am I? What place is this? It doesn't seem like a hospital. I——"

"Stop!—you shall not talk. This is not a hospital. *What* it is, I am forbidden to tell you."

He walked hastily out, to escape more questioning. Smedley closed his eyes and fretted himself over this mystery till the black woman brought a small staud to his bedside and told him that he was to have some broth.

"Aunty," asked the patient, "where am I?"

"Wha is you, honey? In yo' bed, to be suah."

"Now, do tell me," he coaxed. "Whose house is this?"

"Yo' isn't to know," was the emphatic reply; and the nurse proceeded to administer the nourishment.

For almost three weeks he lay there, visited each few days by the doctor, carefully nursed and watched with, and gradually growing stronger. He had dreams and visions that he thought must be remnants of his delirium; once he thought a sad and beautiful face was bending over him, and the vision was so real that he could with difficulty dismiss it from his mind.

"Aunty," he asked, "was there a lady here just now, while I was asleep?"

"A lady? Only yo' ole aunty. What's got in yo' head, honey?"

New efforts to ascertain what house he was in, or how hostilities progressed were as vain as before. When he was able to sit up and walk about the room, a suit of citizen's clothes was laid out for him, the negro woman informing him that his own clothes had been spoiled by his blood and the doctor's shears.

"But who furnishes these for me?" he asked.

"Yo' find out. I nebber tell."

The days passed. Six weeks had gone since he received his wound, and no explanation had yet been given him. He felt able to walk a distance; he grew restless and fretful. Finally he said to his nurse:

"Aunty, I can't stay here any longer. I must go out and learn the news, even if I get put in confinement for it."

"Jes' wait till to-morrow, honey. Yo's to go then."

"Go—where?"

"I can't tell yo'. Wait jes' one day."

He had been treated here so kindly, spite of the mystery that attended the treatment, that he felt like complying. He rose in the morning eager to go abroad. The nurse restrained his impatience, insisted on a careful toilet and a good breakfast, and was provokingly slow in her movements. It was hard for Smedley to recognize himself in the glass. His attendant had cut his hair during his convalescence, but his face was grown with a thick beard, which contrasted strangely with his sunken cheeks and hollow eyes.

The nurse led him into a handsome parlor and left him, bidding him wait a moment. From the sofa where he sat he could look over a range of roofs lower down the hill and see where chimneys had been prostrated and roofs plowed with shot from the bombardment of the fleet.

He withdrew his eyes into the room. A cry of surprise came from his lips; he could not repress it. Isabel Montford stood before him.

Aye, it was herself! Simply dressed in black, without an ornament to relieve its severity, her regal face calm and serene, though bearing marks of deep suffering, she looked upon him without a smile, almost without expression.

Was it a vision? Was he still disturbed by his old delirium? The windows were open to the breeze from the river that relieved the heat; he looked out again, and assured himself that this was really Vicksburg, and not the creation of a distempered fancy. He turned his eyes to that glorious presence; it was still there; the creature of his hopes, his prayers, was near him. He essayed to rise, but she motioned him to remain seated.

"I know you are not very strong yet," she said, in the familiar voice that thrilled him through. "You know me, do you not?"

"Know you?—Miss Montford—Isabel—you are my preserver. I owe you my life. What——"

She checked his raptures with a simple gesture.

"It is true that I found you at the hospital, sorely wounded, and had you brought here, where you could receive better care. You have escaped death; I am glad. This has been a house of mourning ever since you last entered it. The dreadful war has dealt hardly with me. My mother is dead, both brothers fell in battle, my father lies now at the point of death, from the horrors and hardships of the siege. You have suffered, too. I would it had been in a better cause, but I will not judge you. My own sorrows and the agonies I have daily seen have humbled my pride. There was none other to do for you, an enemy, what I did; therefore I have done it."

"Say not an enemy," he cried. "We must not, cannot be enemies."

A burst of music from the hill above came faintly down to them; his pulse quickened as he recognized the tune, "Rally Round the Flag."

"Do you know what that means? Vicksburg, worn out with starvation, has capitulated; your people are marching in. Go and join them. We shall never meet again."

He rose and stretched out his hands to her. His heart was too full for speech.

"You do not mean it," he whispered.

"It is as I say. What bond, even of friendship, is possible between us? There was a time when I would have given you everything; when my heart went out fondly to you, and yearned for your companionship and protection through this struggle, through life itself. I called to you; others sought me, but my soul demanded you. That call you slighted; you fled from me and joined the enemies of my country."

"I joined the friends of my country—the defenders of the old Union and the old flag," said Smedley, proudly. "Never shall I apologize for that, to man or woman. You knew my opinions; you must have understood that I dared not expose them to be overcome by your fascinations. What safety was there for me? It was you who compelled me to go, and I have taken the only part that was possible for me."

His voice was feeble, but firm. His words aroused her; he saw her struggling to repress her feelings. He went on.

"Yet we are not enemies. Not a day, not an hour of my absence but I have thought of you or dreamed of you. I have prayed for this hour, when I could tell you all——"

"Tell it not!" she cried. "There is a gulf between us that never may be passed. We are separated wider than if the poles divided us. A moment ago I said I would not judge you; now you compel me to. Think what you have done! You, Mississippi-born, with pride of lineage and high achievements behind you, to consort with the foes of the South, to overrun her fair territory, to occupy her cities, to bring armed havoc and destruction upon her! At the very threshhold of your former home you are struck down, sword in hand. Out of the recollection of happier days, I have given you life, but I can give you naught else. There is blood between us; the blood of my kindred. Farewell, then, go in peace; look around on the misery you have helped to make, but never again come to Isabel Montford with words of love. I follow the fortunes of my cause; I will survive or perish with it. Again, farewell; you will see me no more."

The cruel words sent a chill to his heart. He started toward her with clasped hands.

"Oh, Isabel——do not say it! If you but knew——"

"I know all you would say. I have decided."

"And is this all?"

"All."

Without another word, without a touch of the hand, she left him. What followed seemed as part of a vision. He thought the old negress brought him a stick to lean upon, and mumbled something about "Missy awful rebel, now I tells yo'." He found himself upon the street, moving slowly in a dazed way. There were few people abroad; the city rested in the hot sunshine in a kind of sullen silence. Over several roofs he saw the stars and stripes flying; and now, to the music of "The Year of Jubilee," a column in blue marched with springing step past him. Familiar vivas greeted him from the ranks, hands were waved to him, and soon, as the column went on, his mountain soldiers hailed him with cries of rejoicing. No, it was not a dream. Vicksburg had fallen, Port Hudson would follow, the river was freed—the Confederacy severed; but Charles Smedley scarcely realized the triumph in the bitterness of his own defeat.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Secretary Smith's New Departure.

WASHINGTON, March 27. — Secretary Hoke Smith announces the desires to see at his office all persons who wish to be heard on the subject of appointments to official positions in the Territory of Arizona. He is of the opinion that much valuable time may thus be saved, and a better knowledge of the merits of the several candidates obtained than by any other method.

THE SOLDIERS' RECORDS

The Government Completing Work of Tabulating.

The most remarkable feat of typification ever brought to success—perhaps the best illustration of the power of method in human affairs—is now in completion in one of the departments of the general Government, says a writer in the Philadelphia Press. An idea which will save $800,000 a year to the nation, which has preserved vast and invaluable records and has made minutes worth days in the administration of an important branch of the national affairs, is certainly a matter of everybody's concern.

The preservation of the records referred to, if nothing else has been accomplished, is so important that it may be called absolutely indispensable. In those records are the individual histories of the Union forces in the War of the Rebellion. They were crumbling to dust; if lost they could never be replaced, and not a day too soon was the solution of the problem of their preservation reached.

All the records of the volunteer armies are filed in the Record and Pension Office of the War Department. This office should not be confounded with the Pension Office of the Interior Department, with which it has no connection. The adjudication of pension claims is the work of the Pension Office. With that class of work the Record and Pension Office of the War Department has nothing to do further than to furnish to the Commissioners of Pensions the histories of soldiers in order that their claims may be adjudicated.

In one of the rooms of the Record and Pension Office I saw a small basket fastened against the wall. It contained some dozens of decaying bits of paper. Colonel Ainsworth, chief of the office lifted them gently. They ran through his fingers and fell like dead leaves into the basket.

"These are fragments of soldiers' records," said he. "Every one of them bears a soldiers' name or some essential part of a soldier's story. They will be taken from this basket, and, with infinite care, put together like the pieces of a child's puzzle. It can be done; it has been done in many cases which looked as hopeless as this. Then the facts which they disclose will be preserved in clearer form and forever."

The ink upon the fragments was faded, the names barely legible; but the writing will be deciphered, the facts will be correlated, and a soldier's story will be saved, on the very threshold of oblivion, by the nation which he served. And when the record is called for—and a thousand such are demanded every day—it will be found, not by an interminable search of smouldering sheets and volumns, but instantly, as one turns to a word in a dictionary where its full meaning is set forth.

The wonderful system which makes this possible may be appreciated when one learns that there are about 30,000,000 separate entries relating to over 2,000,000 persons in the original war records; that two or three or perhaps 100 of them may refer to a single soldier; that these were in the first place scattered as if for the purpose of concealing them, and that to-day it is as easy to find all of them which bear upon a single case as it is to turn to a man's name in the directory.

Now and then during my stay amid the records I saw men with small baskets passing rapidly through the rooms.

"They are the mail carriers," said Colonel Ainsworth. "I have introduced a system of communication between the various parts of the offices which obviates one of the worst forms of delay existing under the old system. In such a large office as this, where papers pass through many hands, much time is ordinarily lost by the accumulation of matter upon the various desks. A clerk could finish his work upon a great many papers and then transfer them to the next man, who might have been waiting in idleness for some hours. That is impossible now. I have messengers who start from the main office at five-minute intervals and make the rounds.

Each clerk has a basket of cards bearing the numbers by which various departments are designated. When he has finished work on a paper he fastens to it a card bearing the number of the department to which it should go next. The carrier takes it from a box provided for it and delivers it by number. When it is to be returned the clerk simply turns the card over, and there upon its back is the number of the department from which it came. The next carrier going the opposite way takes it back. By this system the average delay is not more than two and a half minutes. It used to be twenty-four hours."

It is now proposed to reduce the records of the Revolution and the War of 1812 to the same system, and doubtless this will be done. Then this Government will have the most complete military history that exists anywhere.

A Giant Oak Cut in Indiana.

An oak tree, six feet in diameter at the butt and fifty-two feet to the first limb, was felled near Castleton, Ind., the other day. Above the first limbs was made a twelve-foot log. It produced 6,000 feet of lumber, and, reckoned by its rings, is 500 years old. It is thought to be the finest specimen of its kind in the country and will likely be taken to the World's Fair.—[St. Louis Republic.

THE following list shows the number of profit-sharing establishments in the different countries: France, ninety-two; Austria, three; Sweden, four; Italy, four; Switzerland, sixteen; Germany, twenty-six; Belgium, five; United States, thirty-five; Portugal, one; Spain, one; England, sixty-four; Denmark, four; Holland, five; Russia, one; making a total of 265 in all.