

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

FROM THE UNITED SERVICE JOURNAL.

## CONSTANTINOPLE IN 1831.

FROM THE JOURNAL OF AN OFFICER.

The changes effected both in the dress and manners of the inhabitants of Constantinople, and in the style of the city itself, since I last visited it in 1818, were to me most surprising and unexpected. Certainly the greatest portion of the imposing appearance of the Turks has been lost by the recent reform in their costume, which formerly was rich, elegant, and varied; but under their present Frank or European garb, they have become an ill dressed, slovenly, nay, even in most cases, a ridiculously mean-looking race. The crimson stuffed cap (or fesk) surmounted by a blue spreading tassel, descends low on the eyebrows, and how deeply must its wearers sigh after the proud and fanciful turban. The younger and less respectable Turks, who have adopted the new costume, put on short round jackets with upright collars, buttoned to the chin, and, according to the season, wear very loose white calico or woollen cossack trowsers. The older and more respectable classes, make use of loose, long surtout coats with stiff straight collars; waistcoats, loose trowsers, and tie black shoes complete their dress; and sometimes a dirty white neckcloth is tied uncomfortably about their throats. To conceal, however, this cruel abolition of a beautiful national dress, a military cloth cloak is worn by the Effendis, which conceals the horrors of their present habiliments. So altered are the gentry on the new costume, that I should say, their next step would be to turn Christians. The European dress was never intended for a Mahomedan or even an Asiatic. Tight shoes, long stockings, pantaloons, coats with no opening at the sleeves, must all be inconvenient, and may gradually diminish the strict observance of religious ceremonies and ablutions, which are likely to be neglected by their frequency, and when rendered more harassing by the embarrassments of dress, may soon be seldom performed. It is astonishing the effect dress has on the habits of the human race: thus the Turks become more dignified and slothful than by nature they were intended to have been, because they could neither manage on foot the arrangement of their heaps of clothes, nor walk with comfort in their slippers. Since the tails of their coats have been clipped, certainly they move about with more activity. The sword is much more rapid in the work of conversion than the tongue. The Sultan uses the former weapon without any remorse, and it must be confessed, after all, that the Turks are a dastardly people, easily intimidated, submissive, and eringing. This has become particularly apparent since the destruction of the Janisaries. I can scarcely comprehend by what means the Turks could ever have been successful in their campaigns against the Europeans. As men, we are their superiors in height, figure, bodily strength, and ever did, I should say, possess more innate courage: still Vienna, by a mere chance, escaped becoming a Pashalik of the Porte.

Military costume is the fashionable dress of the day, whilst all copying from the Sultan, wear their beards the same length as his, and pull their fesk, or caps, equally low over their foreheads. The appearance of the troops, considering the disadvantages they labour under, is by no means so indifferent as might have been expected. Their head-dress, the round red cap, is most unbecoming, and their arms, clothes, and shoes are far from good. They have attained that style of discipline and military knowledge which it is easy by dint of exertion to instill into soldiers, but I doubt if the European officers employed as instructors are capable of advancing their pupils farther in the scale of improvement. Perhaps, indeed, the government thinks enough has been effected, and considers their army to be in a high state of perfection, without being able to perform any combined evolutions. The corps of infantry I have seen are composed of very young men, who almost might be called boys: they go through the drill of a company tolerably well, and have evidently acquired a military deportment. The uniforms of the regiments differ; some have round cloth jackets with no facings; others have the cuffs, collars, and facings of the breast red. The national color for the army is blue. Some corps are dressed better than others, and finer cloth is given to those forming the guard of the palace. With the exception of a few of the senior officers, none have beards; they are in general good-looking, seem to pride themselves on their dress, and are clean. In former days the grandees of the court used to keep in their employ large retinues of young men, who frequently were of very reputable character; the Sultan ordered these swarms of idlers to be discharged, and being an intelligent, good-looking, and by no means a bigoted class, they served to officer the troops of the new regime. The distinction of rank throughout the army is made apparent by stars of different metals, size, and

value, attached to the left breast. Corporals and sergeants have brass stars, lieutenants and captains gold enamelled ones; majors the same, of a larger size: whilst the colonels have diamond stars, with gold or silver chains affixed to them, which hang from the front point of the shoulder. The troops are constantly assembled in the splendid barracks built by the Sultan, are regularly paid, and well fed. Asia chiefly supplies the recruits: the muskets seem in general to be old ones repaired, excepting those of the palace guards, which are new, with much gilding on the barrels and on the blades of the bayonets. Some of the regiments have bands—that of the Sultan's is very numerous, and plays tolerably well, but their instruments are bad, sharp, and clamorous. The system of drill adopted is, I believe, French, and the officers employed are mostly of that nation. A M. Galland, attached to the Sur Asker Pasha, or commander-in-chief, organizes the infantry, and M. Keleiso, a Sardinian, has charge of the cavalry. The latter is a favorite of the Sultan, and is said to be a person of talent and respectability. However, the situation of an European officer in the service of the Turks must be one of humiliation; formerly, they were not allowed to wear swords—they were not respected, which may arise from their individual characters, and the pay they receive is very small. Indeed, the system of the government always has been and ever will be illiberal, and it is astonishing how the Sultan ventures at particular periods to diminish the pay of his newly-raised troops, on whose fidelity and attachment his safety seems entirely to depend. When first the new system was established, the pay of each private was, I believe forty piastres (ten shillings) a month, and has been reduced by degrees to less than thirty, which is a small pittance considering the habits of a Turk, who must smoke, sip, coffee, and be comfortable. Twopence a day, about the amount of their present pay, will scarcely provide these luxuries, and these straitened means have occasioned universal discontent throughout the army. Several plots have already been discovered, amongst the officers to create a revolution in the government; and after a certain time, when more union is established amongst the different branches of the army, it may become as ungovernable a body as the corps of Janisaries. In most countries the soldiery are the gayest and best dressed portion of the community, but in Turkey the case is quite different. The officers, as I before remarked, are often fine young men, and whilst passing their guard houses, I have been surprised at their ardour in learning their duty: the drill book in manuscript was then produced, the battalion of sticks was speedily arranged, and columns were formed and deployments made in quick succession. On observing my comments, they have laughingly said, 'is that well done Captain?' The Turks, take them in the right way, are, I believe, a good natured people, and I never saw a better behaved body of men than the new troops; they are always ready to give every assistance to foreigners when required. The city of Constantinople is much improved by being kept very clean, by the erection of new bazars, by the embellishment of the old ones, and by the guardianship of a very vigilant police. The streets are now free from all rubbish and offensive objects; no notice is taken of foreigners; and even European females, without the slightest change of costume may walk through every part of the city unmolested, and almost unobserved.

## SONG.

WHEN the world is full of flowers,  
Who would not gather them?  
Autumn winds and winter showers  
Some come and wither them.  
Youth and love I own are brief;  
But why should we make a grief,  
Looking for the yellow leaf  
Ere the bud is blown?

Many thoughts are link'd to laughter;  
Why should we bury them;  
Sighs and tears may come hereafter;  
No need to hurry them.  
They who through a darken'd glass  
View the minutes as they pass,  
Make the sun a gloomy mass;  
'Tis at the fault's their own.

T. H. BAYLEY.

**TIGERS.**—During a music party at J. D.'s, the conversation turned on that ferocious animal, the tiger. A gentleman asserted that there never was an instance of one being tamed; and told the following anecdote in support of his assertion. A gentleman who had returned from India, brought with him a young tiger of so docile a nature, as to be suffered to run about his study of a morning, whilst he was reading or writing. One day in the winter, while he was sitting in a cabriolet chair, near the fire place, reflecting on a passage he had been reading, with a book in his right hand, and his

left hanging over the arm of the chair, the animal approached and licked it. This at first he thought nothing of, till, it having been repeated several times, he felt a soreness on it; and looking at the beast, he perceived that he had, from the roughness of his tongue, drawn blood, which having tasted for the first time, his infuriated eyes and eager countenance, left not a doubt upon his mind, that had he withdrawn his hand, the tiger would have sprung upon him and destroyed him. Thus circumstanced, he fortunately had sufficient presence of mind to keep his hand in the same position, whilst with the other he reached one of his pistols from the mantel-piece, and preserved his own life by shooting the tiger through the head.

*Last week we gave a specimen of the political articles in Blackwood's Magazine: we insert the following, which is well worthy of perusal, to enable our readers to form some idea of the raciness of the CRITIQUE in that extraordinary clever periodical. A prize Poem, by Alfred Tennyson, is the subject under consideration.*

ALL men, women, and children, then, are manifestly poets, except those who write verses. But why that exception? Because they alone make no use of their minds. Versifiers—and we speak but of them—are the sole living creatures that are not also creators. The inferior animals—as we are pleased to call them, and as indeed in some respects they are—modify matter much in their imagination. Rode ye never a horse by night through a forest? That most poetical of quadrupeds sees a spirit in every stump, else, why by such sudden start should he throw his master over his ears? The black bird on the tip-top of that pine-tent is a poet, else never could his yellow bill so salute with rapturous orisons the reascending Sun, as he flings over the woods a lustre again gorgeous from the sea. And what induces those stock-doves, think ye, to fill the heart of the grove with soft, deep, low, lonely, far-away, mournful, yet happy—Thunder; whet, but Love and Joy, and Delight and Desire, in one word, Poetry—Poetry that confines the universe to that wedded pair, within the sanctuary of the pillared shade impervious to meridian sunbeams, and brightens and softens into splendour and into snow divine the plumage beautifying the creatures in their bliss, as breast to breast they croonendoo on their shallow nest!

Thus all men, women, and children; birds, beasts, and fishes, are poets, except versifiers. Oysters are poets. Nobody will deny that, who ever in the neighbourhood of Prestonpans beheld them passionately gaping, on their native bed, for the flow of tide coming again to awaken all their energies from the wide Atlantic. Nor less so are anils. See them in the dewy stillness of eve, as they salute the crescent Dian, with horns humbler indeed, but no less pointed than her own. The beetle, against the traveller borne in heedless hum, if we knew all his feelings in that soliloquy, might safely be pronounced a Wordsworth. Thus are we all poets—high and low—except versifiers. They, poor creatures, are a peculiar people, impotent of good works. Ears have they, but they hear not—eyes have they, but they will not see—nay, naturalists assert that they have brains and spinal marrow, also organs of speech; yet with all that organization, they seem to have but little feeling, and no thought; and but by a feeble and monotonous fizz, are you made aware in the twilight, of the less existence of the obscure ephemerals.

But we fear that we are getting satirical, than which nothing can well be more unbecoming the character of a Christian: So let us be serious. Many times a month do we hint to all such insects, that Maga looks upon them as midges. But still will they be seeking to insinuate themselves through her long deep veil, which unlike she wears at gloaming; and can they complain of cruelty, if she brush them away with her lily hand, or compress them with her snow-white fingers into unlingering deaths? There is no such privileged place in this periodical world now as the fugitive Poets' Corner. All its regions are open to the inspired, but the versifier has no spot now wherein to expand his small mealy wings; and you see him sitting disconsolate as one of those animalcule who, in their indolent brownness are neither flies, bees, nor wasps, like a spot upon dandelion or bunweed, till he surprises you by proving that he has wings, or something of that sort, by a feeble forewell flight in among nettles some yards off, where he takes refuge in eternal oblivion.

It is not easy to find out what sets people a-versifying; especially now-a-days, when the slightest symptoms of there being something amiss with them in that way, immediately subject them not only to the grossest indignities, but to the almost certain loss of bread. We could perhaps in some measure understand it, were they rich, or even tolerably well-off; in the enjoyment, let us suppose, of small annuities, or of hereditary nail-yards, with a well in the corner, overshadowed with a bounteous bush; but they are almost always, if in at the knees, out at the elbows; and their stockings seem to have been compiled originally by some mysterious process of darning upon nothing as a substratum. Now nothing more honourable than virtuous poverty; but then we expect to see him with a shuttle or a spade in his hand, weaving 'seventeen hunder linen,' or digging drains, till the once dry desert is all one irritated meadow, green as the summer woods that fling their shadows o'er its haycocks. He is an insufferable sight, alternately biting his nails and his pen, and blotching whitey-brown with hieroglyphics that would have puzzled Champollion. Versifying operatives are almost always half-witted creatures, addicted to drinking; and sell their songs for alms. Persons who, in what are sometimes called the middle-classes, or even in more genteel or fashionable life, such as the children of clerks of various kinds, say to canal or coal companies, are slow to enter upon any specific profession, trusting to their genius, which their parents regard with tears, sometimes of joy, and sometimes of rage, according as their prophetic souls see the brows of their offspring adorned with laurels, or their breeches with tatters. Sensible parents crush this propensity in the bud, and ruthlessly bind the Apollon apprentices to Places; but the weaker ones enclose contributions to Christopher North, as if they had never heard of his cruelty, and thus is the world defrauded of many a tailor. What becomes of all the versifiers when they get old—if, indeed, they ever do get old—we never yet heard any plausible conjecture; though we have ourselves seen some in mid-