

## Literature, &amp;c.

## THE SPIRIT OF THE MAGAZINES.

## SONG OF THE STORM.

BY FRANCIS M. FINCH.

I am Storm—the King!  
I live in a fortress of fire and cloud,  
You may hear my batteries sharp and loud.  
In the summer night,  
When I and my warriors arm for the fight;  
And the willows moan,  
And the cedars groan  
As they bend beneath the terrible spring  
Of Storm—the King!

I am storm—the King!  
My troops are the winds, and the hail and the rain;  
My foes the woods and the feathery grain,  
The mail-clad oak  
That gnarls his front to my charge and stroke.  
The ship on the sea,  
The blooms on the lea,—  
And they writhe and break as the war cries ring  
Of Storm—the King!

I am Storm—the King!  
I drove the sea o'er the Leyden dykes;  
And, a deadlier foe than the burgher pikes,  
To the walls I bore  
The 'Ark of Delft' from the ocean shore,  
O'er vale and mead,  
With Warlike speed,  
Till the Spaniard fled from the deluge-ring  
Of Storm—the King!

I am Storm—the King!  
I saw an Armada set sail from Spain  
To sprinkle with blood a maiden's reign.  
I met the host  
With shattering blows on the island coast,  
And tore each deck  
To shreds and a wreck:  
And the Saxon poets the praises sing  
Of Storm—the King.

I am Storm—the King!  
They called their village the fair, young queen  
Of all that dress in the garden's green.  
I huled the wave;  
It was glory to see the Cataract rave!  
It wailed and tore  
With a splintering pour,  
And none relief to their help could bring  
From Storm—the King.

I am storm—the King!  
My marshals are four—the wart Simoon,  
Sirocco, Tornado, and swift Typhoon;  
My realm is the world,  
Wherever a pennon is waved or furled.  
My stern command  
Sweeps sea and land;  
And none unharmed a scoff may fling  
At Storm—the King!

I am Storm—the King!  
I scour the earth, the sea, the air,  
And drag the trees by their emerald hair,  
And chase for game  
With a leap and a scream, the prairie flame,  
The commerce ark  
And the pirate bark.  
And none may escape the terrible spring  
Of Storm—the King.

Fraser's Magazine contains an article entitled  
"THE INTERPRETER," from which we  
take the following extracts, which furnish  
some graphic scenes and incidents witnessed  
at Sebastopol:

## DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL OUT.

MANY a time has it made my heart ache to see a troopship ploughing relentlessly onward with her living freight to "the front"—many a time have I recalled *Æsop's* fable, and the footprints that were all towards the lion's den—many a time have I thought how every unit there in red was himself the centre of a little world at home; and of the gray heads that would tremble, and loving faces that would pale in peaceful villages far away in England, when no news came from foreign parts of "our John," or when the unrelenting *Gazette* arrived at last and proclaimed, as too surely it would, that he was coming back "never, never no more."

Boom!—there it is again! Every eye lightens at that dull, distant sound. Every man's pulse beats quicker, and his head towers more erect, for he feels that he has arrived at the *real thing* at last. No sham fighting is going on over yonder, not two short leagues from where he stands—no mock bivouac at Chobham, nor practice in Woolwich, Marshes, nor meaningless pageant in the Park; that iron voice carries *death* upon its every accent. For those in the trenches it is a mere echo—the unregarded consequence that necessarily succeeds the fierce rush of a round shot or the wicked whistle of a shell; but for us here at Balaclava, it is one of the pulsations of England's life blood—one of the ticks, so to speak, of that great Clock of Doom which points ominously to the downfall of the beleaguered town.

Boom! Yes, there it is again; you cannot forget why you are here. Day and night, sunshine, and storm, scarce five minutes elapse in

the twenty-four hours without reminding you of the work in hand. You ride out from the camp for your afternoon exercise, you go down to Balaclava to buy provisions or you canter over to the monastery at St. George's, to visit a sick comrade—the iron voice tolls on. In the glare of noon, when everything else seems drowsy in the heat, and the men lie down exhausted in the suffocating trenches—the iron voice tolls on. In the calm of evening, when the breeze is hushed and still, and the violet sea is sleeping in the twilight—the iron voice tolls on. So when the flowers are opening in the morning, and the birds begin to sing and reviving nature, fresh and dewy, seems to scatter health and peace and goodwill over the earth—the iron voice tolls on. Nay, when you wake at midnight in your tent from a dream of your far-away home—O! what a different scene to this!—tired as you may be, ere you have turned to sleep once more, you hear it again. Yes, at midnight as at noon, at morn as at evening, every day and all day long, Death is gathering his harvest—and the iron voice tolls on.

## BALACLAVA.

Ashore at Balaclava! What a scene of hurry and crowding and general confusion it is! Were it not that every second individual is in uniform and bearded to the waist, it would appear more like the mart of some peaceful and commercial sea-port, than the threshold of a stage on which is being fought out to the death one of the fiercest and most obstinate struggles which history has to record on her blood-stained pages. There are no women, yet the din of tongues is perfectly deafening. Hurrying to and fro, doing as little work with as much labor as possible, making immense haste with small speed, and vociferating incessantly at the top of their voices, Turks and Tartars, Armenians, Greeks, and Ionians, all accosted by the burly English soldier under the generic name of "Johnny," are flitting aimlessly about, and wasting her Majesty's stores in a manner that would have driven the late Mr Hume frantic. Here a trim sergeant of infantry, clean and orderly, despite his war-worn looks and patched garments, drives before him a couple of swarthy nondescripts, clad in frieze, and with wild elf-locks protruding over their jutting foreheads, and twinkling Tartar eyes. They stagger under huge sacks of meal, which they are carrying to yonder storehouse with a sentry pacing his short walk at the door. The sacks have been furnished by contract, so the seams are badly sewn; and the meal likewise furnished by contract, and of inferior quality, is rapidly escaping, to leave a white track in the mud, also a contract article, and of the deepest, stickiest, and most enduring quality. The labors of the two porters will be much lightened ere they reach their destination; but this is of less moment, inasmuch as the storehouse to which they are proceeding is by no means water-tight, and the first thunder-storm that sweeps in from the Black Sea is likely much to damage its contents. It is needless to add that this edifice of thin deal planks has been constructed by contract for the use of her Majesty's Government.

A little further on, a train of mules, guided by a motley crowd of every nation under heaven, and commanded by an officer in the workmanlike uniform of the Land Transport, is winding slowly up the hill. They have emerged from a perfect sea of mud, which even at this dry season shows not the least tendency to harden into consistency, and they will probably arrive at the front in about four hours, with the loss of a third only of their cargo, consisting of sundry munitions which were indispensable last week, and might have been of service the day before yesterday, but the occasion for which has now passed away for ever.

A staff officer on a short sturdy pony gallops hastily by, exchanging a nod as he passes with a beardless cornet of Dragoons, whose English charger presents a curious study to the anatomy of a horse. He pulls up for an instant to speak to Ropsley, and the latter turns to me and says,

"Not so bad as I feared Vere. It was a mere sortie, after all, and we drove them back very handsomely, with small loss on our side. The only officer killed was young——, and he was dying, poor fellow! at any rate, of dysentery."

This is the news of the day here, and the trenches form just such a subject of conversation before Sebastopol as does the weather in a country house in England—a topic never new, but never entirely worn out.

Side by side, Ropsley and myself are journeying up the hill towards the front. A sturdy batman has been in daily expectation of his master's return, and has brought his horses down to meet him. It is indeed a comfort to be again in an English saddle—to have the lengthy, powerful frame of an English horse under one—and to hear the homely, honest accents of a provincial English tongue. When a man has been long amongst foreigners, and especially serving with foreign troops, it is like being at home again to be once more within the lines of a British army, and to add to the pleasure of our ride, although the day is cloudless and insufferably hot in the valleys, there is a breeze up here, and a pure bracing air that reaches us from the heights on which the army is encamped.

It is a wild, picturesque scene, not beautiful yet full of interest and incident. Behind us lies Balaclava, with its thronging harbor and its busy crowds, whose hum reaches us even here, high above the din. It is like looking down on an ant-hill to watch the movements of the shifting swarm.

On our right the plain, stretching far and wide, is dotted with the Land Transport—that necessary evil so essential to the very existence of an army; and their clustering wagons and scattered beasts carry the eye onward to a dim white line formed by the neat tents and orderly encampments of the flower of French cavalry, the gallant and dashing Chasseurs d'Atrique.

## CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE.

On our left the stable call of an English regiment of Light Dragoons reaches us from the valley of Kadikoi, that Crimean Newmarket, the doings of which is actually chronicled in *Bell's Life*. Certainly an Englishman's nationality is not to be rooted out of him even in the jaws of death. But we have little time to visit the race-course or the lines—to pass our comments on the condition of the troopers, or to gaze open-mouthed at the wondrous field-batteries that occupy an adjoining encampment—moved by teams of twelve horses each, perhaps the finest animals of the class to be seen in Europe, with every accessory of carriage, harness, and appointments, so perfect as not to admit of improvement, yet, I believe, not found to answer in actual warfare. Our interest is more awakened by another scene. We are on classic ground now, for we have reached the spot whence

'Into the valley of death  
Rode the six hundred.'

Yes, stretching down from our very feet, lies that mile-and-half-gallop which witnessed the boldest deeds of chivalry performed in ancient or modern times. Well might the French general exclaim, '*C'est magnifique!*' although he added, significantly, *mais ce n'est pas la guerre!* The latter part of his observation is a subject for discussion, but of the former there is and can be but one opinion. *Magnifique* indeed it must have been to see six hundred horsemen ride gallantly down to almost certain death—every heart beating equally high, every sword striking equally hard and true.

'Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,  
As fearlessly and well.'

Not a child in England at this day but knows as if he had been there, the immortal valley of Balaclava. It is needless to describe its situation, to dwell upon the position they were ordered to carry, or the fire that poured in upon front, flanks, aye, and rear, of the attacking force. This is all matter of history; but as the valley stretched beneath us, fresh, green, and smiling peacefully in the sun, it required but little imagination to call up the stirring scene of which it had been the stage. Here was the very ground on which the light brigade were drawn up; every charger quivering with excitement, every eye flashing, every lip compressed with the sense of coming danger. A staff officer rides up to the leader and communicates an order. There is an instant's pause. Question and reply pass like lightning, and the aide-de-camp points to a dark, grim mass of artillery, bristling far away down yonder in the front. Men's hearts stop beating, and many a bold cheek turns pale, for there is more excitement in uncertainty than in actual danger. The leader draws his sword, and faces flush, and hearts beat high once more. Clear and sonorous is his voice as he gives the well-known word; gallant and chivalrous his bearing as he takes his place—that place of privilege—in front—"*Noblesse oblige*," and can he be other wise than gallant and chivalrous and devoted for is he not a gentleman? and yet, to the honor of our countrymen be it spoken, not a man of that six hundred, of any rank, but was as gallant and chivalrous and devoted as he—he has said so himself a hundred times.

So the word is given, and the squadron leaders take it up, and the Light Brigade advances at a gallop; and a deadly grasp is on the sword, and the charger feels his rider's energy as he grips him with his knees, and holding him hard by the head urges him resolutely forward—to death!

And now they cross the line of fire: shot through the heart, an aide-de-camp falls headlong from the saddle, and his loose horse gallops on, wild and masterless, and wheels in upon the flank, and joins the squadron once more. It is begun now. Man upon man, horse upon horse, are shot down and rolled over; yet the survivors close in, sterner, bolder, fiercer than before, and still the death ride sweeps on.

"Steady, men—forward!" shouts a chivalrous squadron leader, as he waves his glittering sword above his head, and points towards the foe. Clear and cheerful rings his voice above the tramp of horses and the rattle of small-arms and the deadly roar of artillery. He is a model of beauty, youth, and gallantry—the admired of men, the darling of women, the hope of his house.—Do not look again—A round shot has taken man and horse, he is lying rolled up with his charger, a confused and ghastly mass. Forward! the squadron has passed over him, and still the death-ride sweeps on.

The gaps are awful now, the men told off by

threes look in vain for the familiar face at right or left; every trooper feels that he must depend on himself and the good horse under him, but there is no wavering. Officers begin to have misgivings as to the result, but there is no hesitation. All know they are galloping to destruction, yet not a heart fails, not a rein is turned. Few, very few are they by this time, and still the death-ride sweeps on. They disappear in that rolling sulphurous cloud, the portal of another world; begrimed with smoke, ghastly with wounds, comrade cannot recognize comrade, and officers look wildly round for their men; but the guns are still before them—the object is not yet attained—the enemy awaits them steadily behind his gabions, and the fire from his batteries is mowing them down like grass. If but one man is left, that one will still press forward; and now they are on their prey. A tremendous roar of artillery shakes the air. Mingled with the clash of swords and the plunge of horses, oath, prayer, and death-shriek fly to heaven. The batteries are reached and carried. The death-ride sweeps over them and it is time to return.

In twos, and threes, and single files, the few survivors stagger back to the ground from whence, a few short minutes ago, a gallant band had advanced in so trim, so orderly, so soldier-like a line.

The object has been obtained, but at what a sacrifice! Look at yon stalwart trooper sinking on his saddle-bow, sick with his death hurt, his head drooping on his bosom, his sword hanging idly in his paralysed right hand, his failing charger, wounded and feeble, nobly bearing his master to safety ere he falls to rise no more.—The soldier's eye brightens for an instant as he hears the cheer of the Heavy Brigade completing the work he has pawned his life to begin. Soon that eye will glaze and close forever. Men look round for those they knew and loved, and fear to ask for the comrade who is down, stiff and stark, under those dismounted guns and devastated batteries horses came galloping in without riders; here and there a dismounted dragoon crawls feebly back to join the remnants of what was once his squadron, and by degrees the few survivors get together and form something like an ordered body once more. It is better not to count them they are so few, so very few. Weep, England, for the chivalry! mourn and wring thy hands for that disastrous day; but smile with pride through thy tears, thrill with exultation in thy sorrow, to think of the sons thou canst boast, of the deed of arms done by them in the valley before the eyes of gathered nations—of the immortal six hundred—thy children, every man of them, that rode the glorious death-ride of Balaclava!

## THE CAMP.

There must have been at least two hundred thousand men at that time disposed around the beleaguered town, this without counting the Land Transport and followers of an army, or the crowds of non-combatants that thronged the ports of Kamiesch and Balaclava. The white town of tents stretched away for miles divided and subdivided into streets and alleys; you had only to know the number of his regiment to find a private soldier, with as great a certainty as you could find an individual in London if you knew the number of his house and the name of the street where he resided—always presupposing that the soldier had not been killed the night before in the trenches, a casualty which cannot be overlooked. We rode down the main street of the Guards division, admired the mountaineer on sentry at the adjoining camp of the Highland brigade, and pulled up to find ourselves at home at the door of Ropsley's tent, to which humble abode my friend welcomed me with as courteous an air and as much concern for my comfort as he would have done in his own luxurious lodgings in the heart of May-fair. A soldier's life had certainly much altered Ropsley for the better. I could see he was popular in his regiment.—The men seemed to welcome back the Colonel (a captain in the Guards holds the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the army), and his brother officers thronged into his tent ere we had well entered it ourselves, to tell him the latest particulars of the siege, and the ghastly news that every morning brought fresh and bloody from the trenches.

As a stranger, or rather as a guest, I was provided with the seat of honor, an old shrivelled bullock-trunk that had escaped the general loss of baggage on the landing of the army, previous to the battle of the Alma, and which, set against the tent-pole for a "back," formed a commodious and delightful resting-place. The said tent-pole, besides being literally the mainstay and prop of the establishment, fulfilling all the functions of a wardrobe, a chest of drawers, and a dressing-table; for from certain nails artfully disposed on its slender circumference, depended the few articles of costume and necessities of the toilet which formed the whole worldly wealth of the *ci-devant* London dandy.

The dandy aforesaid, sitting on his camp-bedstead in his ragged flannel shirt, and sharing that seat with two other dandies more ragged than himself, pledged his guest in a silver-gilt measure of pale ale, brought up from Balaclava at a cost of about half-a-guinea a bottle,