Fatalities in War

INTERESTING COMPARISONS.

Modern warfare differs from ancient and mediaeval conflicts, not only in the weapons used, but in the percentage of the wounded who survive a battle. In the days of the hand to hand fighting with pike and sword, battleaxe and dagger, the casualties of a beaten army were liable to be total. The wounded were usually taken prisoners or slain. Few men escaped the close pursuit of the victors.

Even the winning side had a smaller proportion of losses, merely temporary or technical, than armies suffer in these times, when every man hit by a ritle ball figures in the casualties and nine out of sen reported wounded recover and rejoin their command. In modern war the losses published after a battle ean be cut down to twenty-five or thirty per cent, of the official numbers in ascertaining the permanent diminution of the forces engaged.

In this respect, however, battles differ widely. Sometimes actions fought at close range under peculiar conditions, as, for instance, where the storming of strong works defended by heavy artillery is involved, the propor tion of casualties which mean death may rise to something like the terrible

mortality of mediacval yars.

When the Russians fiong themselves on the French and Sardinian lines at the Tehernaya Rivey, before Schustopol, in 1855, they left about 3300 dead on the field, and their wounded seemed to number only about half that number. These preportions were so reher. These proportions were so remarkable that it must be taken for granted that many wounded Russians were sent to the rear and never reported as hurt.

The following shows how greatly the fighting in the Russo-Lapanese war falls short of the havoe which marked many notable battles of the last 200

Borodino-French loss, 30,000; Russian, 40,000.

Waterloo-French loss, 31,000; allies, Austerlitz—French loss, 7800; allies, 35,000.

Wagram-French loss, 30,000; Austrian, 35,000. Friedland—French loss, 8000; allies,

Eylau-French lose. 20,000: allies.

Hohenlinden--French loss.

Austrian, 20,000; Dresden—French loss, 3000; allies, 27,000.

Leipsic-French loss, 55,000; allies,

Jema-Auerstadt-French loss, 14,000; Prussian, 45,000. Blenheim—French loss, 40,000; al-

lies, 13,000.

Malplaquet — French loss, 20,000;

allies, 18,000. Rossbach— -Prussian, 500; allies, 7500 Zerndorf-Prussian, 11,000; Russian,

Kunerdorf-Prussian, 18.500; allies, Magenta -French-Sardiman, 4000;

Austrian, 17,000. Solferino— French-Sardinian, 18,000; Austrian, 20,000.

Sadowa - Prussian, 9000; Austrian.

Gravelotte- German, 21,000; French,

Scdan-German, 9000; French, 38,000. Inkermann - Russian, 9000; allies. 2500.

The Alma — Russian, 5500; alies,

Sebastopol (final)— Russian (?); at-lies, 10,000. Plevna — Russian, 40,000; 55,000. Turk.

-Federal, 23,186: Confede-Gettyshurgfederate, 17,804.
Antietam— Federal, 12,500; Confede-

rate, 25,900.

rafe, 25,900.
Chickamanga — Federal, 15,851; Confedderate, 17,804.
Chancellorsville — Federal, 16,000;
Confederate, 12,821.

- Federal, 12.469 : Соп Wilderness

Stone River — Federal, 11,578; Con-plerate, 25,560. federate, 25,560 Petersburg -- Federal, 10.586; Con-

federate, (?). Skiloh—Federal, 13,573; Confederate.

Spottsylvania - Federal, 14,931; Con-9000.

Cold Harbour--Federal, 14,931; Confederate, 1700. Fredericksburg--Federal, 12,353; Con-

Chattanooga — Federal, 5616; Confederate, 8684.
Bull Run-Federal, 2952; Confederate, 2952

rate, 1751.

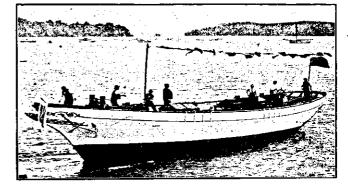
A little comment is required. dino had the most casualties of any single battle in modern times. The fighting at Leipsic lasted more than fighting at Leipsic lasted more than three days. In the latter battle the French lost about 25,000 ill and wounded men, whom they had to abandon in hospitals as they retreated. These are not included in the figures given. At Borodino, Leipsic, and other battles of Napoleon's wars the French force included many nationalities such as Pules, Italians, Belgians, etc.

In the wars of Frederick the Great the army he defeated at Rossbach was mainly French. At Kunerdorf the force which routed him was chiefly Russian. The French defeat at Sedan was follow-The French defeat at Sedan was followed immediately by the surrender of an army of 86,000 men. The losses at Plevna cover a siege of months, but the Russians and their Roumanian allies lost 16,000 in four days fighting. The Turkish losses were chiefly int he surrender of 40,000 men with the fortress.

The worst ten minutes of the civil war was the first rush of the Union army against Lee's works at Cold Harbour. In half an hour the federal loss was about seven thousand. Probably thirty-five hundred fell in ten minutes. At that rate 21,000 men would be put out of action in an hour, or 250,000 in a day, such as the struggle at Waterloo covered.

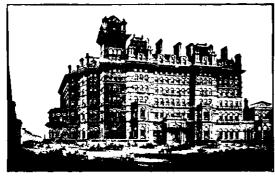
" Blethering."

The fine art of "Blethering" is the subject of a paper in "Scribner's Magazine." To blether, we are told, is to "enlarge the spirit under the cramping influence of adversity or the crass monotony of toil, by entering temporarily into league with the imps of inconsequence." Among famous bletherers there are mentioned such names as Lamb, Whistler, Shakespeare, Thackeray and George Meredith. From the examples given, it is clear that blethering is a tonic and a virtue. Goldsmith met Johnson's ponderous solemnities with admirable blethering. Swift was a dry bletherer, rather too fond of logic. Burke, on the other hand, never blethered, which was a failing. A bull, if Irish, is supreme blethering, for it is not a mere stupid blunder, but a witty, inconsequential, upside-down statement of truth. In the following passage the writer gives an instance of physical as distinct from mental blethering: "Among our personal acquaintances we probably could find numerous less illustrious but equally authentic examples of the blethering spirit. I know a man of honourable years and literary profession who went upon a solemn occasion to deliver an address before his Alma Mater. The address was eloquent, and moved his hearers. Later they discussed its noble imagery, unaware that its author was then rolling down the green sward of a hill at the back of the college buildings, enjoying a blother such as the mind of youth could in nowise conceive."



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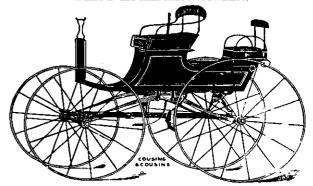
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