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OBSERVATIONS.**A Dry Oven.**

Germs propagate and grow rapidly in a warm, moist air. They avoid hot, dry air when possible. Among these small individuals Nebraska has a poor reputation. This summer has been fatal to all microbes who distrusted the premonitory signs of a very dry, hot summer. The superstitious microbes migrated, the rest stayed and were baked in a dry oven until their graceful forms ceased to quiver under the microscope. Consequently in this region for three months there has been little acute illness. No red, yellow or blue quarantine cards have been hung on the houses.

The grasses withered and the pastures could not satisfy the cattle. For the first time in a decade Nebraska cattle feeders had to feed their stock hay and more expensive fare. But it is an ill wind still that blows nobody good, and the pollen that dried up before it was ready to be blown into eyes and throats has saved the season, now so nearly over, from universal and unqualified execration.

The chronic hay-fever sufferers are singing paeans. The general drought has spread even to their countenances. Their eyes are not the head waters of little streams. They lie down at night without suffocation, neither do they use a dozen handkerchiefs a day and need two dozen. Hay-fever victims who board are not obliged to ask in the hearing of an easily-amused table-full for puddig when they mean pudding. This summer they have sounded the "ell dees" and "en gees" of our far-flung tongue as perfectly as though the vegetable world were frozen instead of dried up. "Ell dees" and "en gees" are just as dead to these summer im-patients as they are to us, and it is a sad parting that the for-

mer takes of these particular wedded consonants every recurring mid-summer season. Christian sympathy, natural affection and a universal preference for the beautiful incline other people to forget the barren harvest fields and to rejoice with those members of the family who for one summer have enjoyed a reprieve. A desperate case of hay-fever in the family or the neighborhood is a draught upon sympathy as well as the cherished love of the beautiful. The sufferings of next summer's pollen can be assuaged both by the current sympathy and by the supply stored and not consumed in the summer of 1901.

Lessons of the Boer War.

Small, compact nations like Switzerland, which have been afraid of absorption by greedy, stronger neighbors, are much relieved by the object lesson of the Boer war. A group of twenty men armed with long-range rifles firing smokeless powder cartridges can easily pick off a battalion. The disadvantage is entirely on the side of the invaders. Victory is not so much a question of bravery, though the Boers are not cowards, as it is of a plentiful supply of ammunition and an impenetrable, rocky ambushade.

Natives having the advantage of a topographical knowledge of their own country and well armed can repulse the strongest nation in Europe or Asia. If the Chinese were an observing people and not so self-satisfied because of the accomplishments and achievements of their remote ancestors, it is certain that this lesson of a few Boer farmers, well armed with long-distance repeating rifles and smokeless powder, would impress them with their own potential strength.

Neither Russia nor England nor France nor Japan, nor all four combined, could take Manchuria or Mongolia if the Chinese were united, properly armed and modern fighters. They have the advantage in numbers, their country produces food enough to feed the army and the laborers too, and they are not cowards—no fatalists are cowards.

The foreigners in China are confined to the coasts, except in the case of the Russians along the northern frontier. Foreign knowledge of the interior of China is vague, and if the subtle Chinese could add smokeless powder, Boer indomitableness and a comprehension of the strength of their enemies to their agricultural resources, they would be invincible and their kingdom would remain whole.

M. Jean de Bloch, the foremost authority on modern warfare, recently declared in a lecture delivered in London that the results of the Transvaal war were not due to the defects in the British army, but to the constant impossibility of determining the enemy's position. He said further that the boasted German methods of attack

would have broken down under similar conditions.

The close formation is obsolete absolutely. Books on military tactics and maneuvers written before the Boer war are useless except as it is ornamental for the soldier to know complex military maneuvers for the sake of dress parade and grand reviews.

It is supremely necessary that the soldier should be an expert long distance marksman. Experience in stalking deer where he has learned to crawl noiselessly along the ground for miles, taking advantage of every rock and depression, is more valuable to the modern private than to be drill-perfect.

Lord Roberts said that when he went to South Africa he issued a general order that the men in attacking files were to be six paces apart. Very soon the distance was increased to ten paces and then to twenty. Guns, lances and belts were painted khaki so as to increase the invisibility of the troops. Khaki is the color of the African landscape. Like the chameleon, troops should be clothed in the color of the background against which they are to fight, especially when the enemy is securely hidden behind rocks and armed with long-distance rifles that shoot smokeless powder.

M. de Bloch, who is a Russian and no fonder of the English than other Russians, said that the English are not to be blamed for the long deferred victories in the Transvaal, nor are the Boers to be extravagantly praised for any exceptional military or personal qualities. He said that "the results in South Africa are wholly due to smokeless powder and long-range, quick-firing rifles which involve dispersion and invisibility to a degree unheard of formerly, and to the possibility of putting a large number of cartridges at the disposal of one rifleman."

The few that held the pass at Thermopylae were aided by their position. Only a few at a time could oppose them and those few who went to force the pass and were killed in heaps, were just as brave as the defenders. The lesson of the Boer war will strengthen every small nation in the world. Perhaps the lesson was needed. At any rate William of Germany has been more thoughtful ever since the war began.

To keep their empire intact, of course the Chinese need something more than modern arms and modern methods and clever generals. The nation itself and all the individuals composing it must be exasperated into a passionate patriotism and a minute-man eagerness to protect the country and prevent its partition. The civilized world has accepted a future in which parts of China have been seized and settled upon by Russia, England, Germany, France and Japan. But it is not so certain. The Boxer uprising was a symptom of awakened, mad patriotism, and the

inconceivably great empire may yet protect herself.

France has just lessened her term of military service from three to two years and Germany is considering the subject of lessening hers. The conscription or compulsory military service is driving young men out of Germany and out of France, and if the elaborate military tactics are to be dispensed with, it will not take so long for men just to shoot straight. The Boers never learned tactics, but they learned to shoot when very young. It will not be necessary to make target practice compulsory. Every boy who can get a gun and is allowed to use it, will learn to shoot.

Deb's of Honor.

Maurus Jokai, the Hungarian novelist, is already familiar to English readers through translations of "A Hungarian Nabob," "The Nameless Castle," "The Lion of Janina" and others. "Debts of Honor" is his latest story to be translated.

There is a pessimism and constitutional melancholy that is peculiarly Slavonic. As far apart as Tolstoy and Jokai are in literary art and style, in the unilluminated blackness of their view of life and the future, of the worth of effort and of the ineffectualness of religion and of the mistake of having been born at all, Tolstoy and Jokai resemble each other as the darkness of one moonless, starless night resembles the darkness of another moonless, starless night.

Somewhere a very good book suggests that it is well for the children of men to weep with those who weep and mourn with those who mourn; but mourning except for one's own private poignant and inextinguishable grief, does not long endure. The sorrows of the world and of collective man are so huge, when contemplated as a whole, the life of one man from birth to death is so full of grief that when the ennui, the endless repetitions, the illnesses of his life are considered and summarized in a book, to read it does but add to his burdens. The twelve hours of activity in real life are separated by eight-hour periods of unconsciousness and rest, from which man awakens refreshed and encouraged, with new inspiration for the new day.

In a realistic story which relates a man's life from boyhood to old age, we get the effect of the disappointments, we feel the weight of life; but the periods of unconsciousness, the re-inspiration of sleep, the scent of the morning, the depth and height of the sky, the soaring liquid song dropping from immeasurable ether to earth, have not their full value. Consequently the old fairy stories where tailors marry princesses and ugly ducklings are swans, are more true to life than Ibsen's plays or Tolstoy's novels.

It is so much easier to describe and communicate sorrow. Joy and the