

JU-JITSU

POLITICS form no part of the barrack-room debating society. Mr. Atkins lives in a world of his own, and is not interested in the subjects that agitate his civilian brother.

He is interested in personalities, certainly, and Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Rosebery are very real persons to him ; but talk about the respective merits of Free Trade and Protection and he will yawn. Very high politics, politics that make for war ; parliamentary proceedings, that have direct bearing upon pay, promotion, and uniform, are of the first importance ; and does an hon. member ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the refusal of the proprietor of the *Green Man* to supply two soldiers in

uniform with liquid refreshments, that hon. member may be certain that he will achieve a popularity out of all proportion to the service he has rendered the Army. ' .

High politics include, of course, the Russo-Japanese war. As to the cause of that unhappy conflict no opinion is offered, since that is a matter which does not greatly concern the soldier ; but the conduct of the campaign has won unstinted admiration for the plucky little Easterners.

I learnt this much from Smithy (we were watching an Army Cup match), and I learnt also that the popularity of a foreign Power may easily be exploited with profit.

“ We ’ ad a long talk about it the other night down in our room. Dusty Miller —him with the crooked nose—said that the Japs was winnin’ because they ’ d got

a better rifle than the Russians. Jimmy Walters said it was because the officers was more friendly with the men than what ours was.

" 'All you chaps are talkin' through your 'eads,' sez Nobby; 'it ain't rifles, it ain't guns, and it ain't officers.'

" 'You know a fat lot,' Spud Murphy stuck in. 'If it ain't none of them, what is it?'

" 'Jue Jitsoo,' sez Nobby, with a cough.

" 'Who's she, Nobby?' I sez, an' all the other chaps said the same.

" 'Jue Jitsoo,' sez Nobby slowly, 'is a sort of thing that you hit a chap without touchin' him, in a manner of speakin'.'

" 'Talk sense, Nobby,' sez Spud, 'an',' he sez, 'don't try to talk about things you don't know nothin' about.'

" 'I'll show you what I mean,' sez

Nobby, gettin' up from 'is cot. 'I read about it in a book I bought—come 'ere, Dusty.'

“‘What for?’ sez Dusty, shrinkin' back.

“‘I want to show you 'ow it's done,' sez Nobby, takin' orf 'is coat an' rolling up 'is sleeves.

“‘Show Smithy,' sez Dusty.

“‘Show Spud,' I sez, very hasty.

“Spud didn't like the idea, but Nobby said it was all right.

“‘If you 'urt me,' sez Spud, threatenin', 'it's me an' you for it, Nobby.'

“‘Don't cry,' sez Nobby, takin' 'old of Spud's arm, an' then started to explain.

“‘Suppose you're a thief,' 'e sez.

“‘No snacks,' sez Spud.

“‘Suppose you come 'up to me on pay-night an' try to pick my pocket.'

“‘You ain't ever got anything on a pay-night,' sez Spud, with a larf.

" 'Well,' went on Nobby, not takin' any notice of Spud, ' I just ketch 'old of you like this—an' that—an' there you are.'

" An' before Spud knew what was happenin' there he was, on the floor—whack!

" ' Don't you do that again,' sez Spud, gettin' up.

" ' Now,' sez Nobby, gettin' Spud by the throat, ' suppose you're a dangerous criminal an' I'm a policeman——'

" ' Leggo,' sez Spud, strugglin'.

" ' I just push you in the face, kick your leg, butt you with my 'ead—and there you are!' An' down went Spud on 'is back—bang!

" ' Look 'ere,' sez Spud—he never could take a joke—' look 'ere,' he sez, ' don't you try your funny tricks on me, Nobby, or——'

" ' What's the good of gettin' out of temper,' sez Nobby, an' we all said the

same, so did a lot of chaps who'd come up from the room downstairs when they 'eard Spud fall. So we told him it was for the good of the reg'ment, an' we was all learnin' Ju-What's-its-name, an' we said no one else was strong enough to be experimented on, an' so we calmed him down, an' he said he'd go on bein' an experiment.

“ ‘Suppose I'm a robber,’ sez Nobby, ‘an' try to pinch your watch. Now what you've got to do is to catch 'old of my throat an' 'arf strangle me.’

“ ‘I can do that,’ sez Spud, brightenin' up.

“ ‘An' what I've got to do is to prevent you,’ sez Nobby. ‘Now here I come, pretendin' to lift your watch.’

“It was as good as a pantomime to watch Spud waitin' to land one on Nobby when 'e got close enough; but somehow when Spud jumped forward to choke

Nobby, Nobby wasn't there, an' down went Spud all in a 'eap.

"'E got up, feelin' 'is legs, to see if they was broke, an' Shiner Williams, who happened only to arrive at that minute, asked Nobby to do it again, because he wasn't lookin' at the time.

"' That's what you call Ju-jitsoo; is it?' sez Spud.

"' Yes,' sez Nobby, puttin' on 'is coat, ' that's why the Japs always win, an' the Russians always lose.'

"' That's Ju-jitsoo, is it!' sez Spud, takin' orf 'is coat.

"' That's it, Spud,' sez Nobby. 'I 'ope it'll be a lesson to you—I don't charge you anything for learnin' you—but I'm willin' to give lessons at fourpence a time to any young military gentleman present. Who'll 'ave fourpenn'oth?'

"' That's Ju-jitsoo, is it?' sez Spud, in a sort of dream; an' then 'e makes a

rush, an' knocks poor old Nobby over an' sits on him.

" 'What's the Ju-jitsoo for this, Nobby?' sez Spud, givin' him a punch.

" 'Lemme get up,' sez Nobby.

" 'Suppose you're a big-footed liar of a soldier what gets flattened out an' sat on for bein' too comic—what do you do next?' sez Spud, givin' Nobby a smack on the 'ead.

" 'I haven't read that part yet,' gasps Nobby. 'Let me get up an' 'ave a dekkoo at the book.'

" 'Let 'im get up, Spud,' I sez.

" 'Hullo, Smithy,' sez Spud, 'what are you stickin' your ugly nose in for?'

" 'Never mind my nose,' I sez; 'let Nobby up, or I'll give you a wipe in the eye,' I sez.

" So Spud got up an' so did Nobby.

" 'I see,' sez Spud. 'Ju-jitsoo means always havin' a fat-'eaded pal handy to take your part,' he sez."