EXTRAORDINARY as the fact seems, the American Civil War is the only great war of which we have an adequate history in photographs: that is to say, this is the only conflict of the first magnitude in the world's history that can be really "illustrated," with a pictorial record which is indisputably authentic, vividly illuminating, and the final evidence in any question of detail.

Here is a much more important historical fact than the casual reader realizes. The earliest records we have of the human race are purely pictorial. History, even of the most shadowy and legendary sort, goes back hardly more than ten thousand years. But in recent years there have been recovered in certain caves of France scratched and carved bone weapons and rough wall-paintings which tell us some dramatic events in the lives of men who lived probably a hundred thousand years before the earliest of those seven strata of ancient Troy, which indefatigable archeologists have exposed to the wondering gaze of the modern world. The picture came long before the written record; nearly all our knowledge of ancient Babylonia and Assyria is gleaned from the details left by some picture-maker. And it is still infinitely more effective an appeal. How impossible it is for the average person to get any clear idea of the great struggles which altered the destinies of nations and which occupy so large a portion of world history! How can a man to-day really understand the siege of Troy, the battles of Thermopylae or Salamis, Hannibal's crossing of the Alps, the famous fight at Tours when Charles "the Hammer" checked the Saracens, the Norman

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There have been, of course, only two wars of this description since 1865: the Franco-Prussian War was, for some reason, not followed by-camera men; and the marvellously expert photographers who flocked to the struggles between Russia and Japan were not given any chance by the Japanese authorities to make anything like an adequate record.