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"THE OPERATIONS OF WAR EXPLAINED AND ILLUSTRATED."

A single volume of 456 pages and 17 maps, carefully selected, has appeared under the above title, from the pen of Colonel Hamley, Royal Artillery.

It is written in a style that enables the non-professional reader to understand the principles illustrated, and is the first publication that embodies, with the general principles, the application of all the modern agents, steam locomotion, electricity, and breech-loading firearms, and the notice of grand tactics, coming down to the late Prussian-Austrian campaign.

The plan of the work is in six general parts. The first—describes the conditions of modern war; the second—the considerations governing a campaign; the third—the relations of opposing armies with reference to their communications; the fourth—the relations without reference to communications; the fifth—the uses of obstacles; and the sixth—the various systems of tactics, with a chapter on the minor operations of war.

The whole of the work evidences great care in the preparation, and the attention paid to the explanations of the conditions under which armies operate, renders it easy to follow the description of the narrative throughout.

The opening chapter illustrates the necessity of a secure starting point; the two chapters which follow we reproduce:—

NECESSITY OF GOOD ROADS FOR ARMY OPERATIONS.

The fortified line of magazines constituting the base being formed, it is indispensable to a sustained and dubious enterprise that good roads should exist between the magazines and the army as it moves away from its base. In mountainous districts, where the roads are so rugged and steep as to be unfit for wheeled vehicles, the necessary supplies must be carried on pack-horses or mules. But the quantity which an animal can draw is so much greater than that which it can carry, that the numbers of animals and the extent of road they occupy must be immensely increased. It is therefore very difficult, almost impossible, to supply a very large army, under such circumstances, for a

long campaign; and roads practicable for carriages are indispensable to all operations, except those which aim at attaining their results in a brief and definite time. And not only must the roads be good in the ordinary sense, but they must be great main arteries of the region, solidly constructed. Anybody who lives in the neighborhood of a newly-established brickfield, will see how quickly the parish roads are broken and wrought into hollows by the passage of the heavy brick carts. The trains that follow an army, laden as they are with ammunition, pontoons, platforms for guns, siege-artillery, and other ponderous materials, soon destroy all but the best roads. In order, then, that the enormous stream of supply may be uninterrupted, it is necessary that the roads should be of the best construction, like our own highways and the great paved chaussees of the continent. The proof of this is found in the difficulties under which armies begin to labor directly they are thrown on bad roads for their supplies. Our own experience in the Crimea shows that even seven miles of soft soil interposed in winter between an army and its depots, may be almost a fatal obstacle; and General McClellan, in his report of his campaign in the Yorktown Peninsula, tells us—"On the 15th and 16th the divisions of Franklin, Smith, and Porter, were with great difficulty moved to White House, five miles in advance; so bad was the road that the train of one of these divisions required thirty-six hours to pass over this short distance." And again, speaking of the movement from the York river to Williamsburg, he says, "The supply trains had been forced out of the roads on the 4th and 5th to allow the troops and artillery to pass to the front, and the roads were now in such a state, after thirty six hours' continuous rain, that it was almost impossible to pass empty waggons over them."

But it is not only on account of the supplies that great armies operate by great roads. It is also because the march of the troops and artillery becomes on bad roads so slow and uncertain that all the calculations on which a general bases a combined operation are liable to be falsified, and the rapidity necessary for a movement intended to surprise or foil an adversary is lost, so that the design is foreseen and frustrated by the enemy. An example of the different rates at which troops move over a good and a bad road is afforded by the campaign of Waterloo. Napoleon following Wellington, and Grouchy following Blucher, both quitted the field of Ligny on the afternoon of the 17th June. The Emperor, marching by the great paved chaussees of Namur and of Brussels, assembled his army that night in

the position of Waterloo, seventeen miles from Ligny. Grouchy, moving by country roads, had great difficulty in bringing his 30,000 men to Gembloux, five miles from Ligny, by 10 o'clock the same night. And, to quote more modern instances, General McClellan says, "On the 14th of March, a reconnaissance of a large body of cavalry, with some infantry, under command of General Stoneman, was sent along the Orange and Alexandria railroad to determine the position of the enemy, and, if possible, force his rear across the Rappahannock; but the roads were in such condition that, finding it impossible to subsist his men, General Stoneman was forced to return." And on another occasion, when the Confederates suddenly fell back from near the Potomac, just as he was commencing to advance upon them, he speaks of their retreat as "unfortunate, in that the almost impassable roads between our position and theirs deprived us of the opportunity for inflicting damage, usually afforded by the withdrawal of a large army in the face of a powerful adversary."

While, however, impressing on the reader the absolute necessity of good roads for the sustained operations of a campaign, it is not asserted that considerable bodies of troops never move by indifferent roads. Many instances of the contrary would appear in a short course of military reading. Thus, Napoleon carried 40,000 men from Switzerland to Italy, over the St. Bernard; but this was for the sake of obtaining by surprise an advantage of position over the Austrians, and, that position attained, he had the great roads of Italy for his future movements, and the territory between the Alps and the friendly to him and hostile to the Austrians was available for supplies. Again, Wellington, following the French in 1813 on the great road of Valladolid and Burgos, quitted it to throw his army across difficult mountain paths; but he did so for the purpose of shifting his base from Portugal to the northern ports of Spain, with which he presently opened new communications. And McClellan, crossing the Potomac after Lee, subsequent to the battle of Antietam, moved by the road from Harper's Ferry along the foot of the Blue Ridge which is probably hilly and broken; but as soon as he reached the Manassas railway he came into direct communication by that railway with Washington. Thus each of these movements was of brief duration, and made with the definite object of immediately attaining a new and more convenient communication with the depots of supply.

Whatever advantages good roads can confer must be immensely increased when railways are employed. In using them, the