

derfully adaptable. Its adoption has been urged for many years in the English service by Sir Francis Head, in different books and pamphlets, and the Russian cavalry have put it to practical use since 1814. After the battle of Montmirail in that year, General Osten Sacken succeeded in carrying off all the heavy guns in his retreat by harnessing fifty horsemen with long ropes to each piece. Although the ground was of the heaviest nature, the guns were brought off without difficulty. At the camps of instruction in the Russian service the use of the lasso harness is constantly practised.

In our own cavalry, at the commencement of the war, sets of lariat ropes were issued, with iron picket pins. These were soon disused. Their intention was to confine the horse at night, and permit him to graze while so tethered. In practice it was found that the horses were certain to get entangled in the ropes, and cut their hind pasterns very dangerously. The picket was far too short to be of any use, and the rope too weak. But a modification of the system might be made very useful. A lariat rope of sufficient strength, of leather if practicable to be used to drag off guns, waggons, etc., would prove a most valuable addition to our cavalry equipment.

In the matter of foraging this is more especially the case. Grain is always collected from farmyards, and there is not a farm anywhere in which one or more carts or waggons are not to be found. If the foraging party numbered, say fifty men, height or ten of them would be amply sufficient to drag a loaded waggon back to the regiment. A waggon can easily be loaded with five or six thousand pounds of grain, which would take in the horseback system of transportation, from one hundred to one hundred and twenty horses to carry, at fifty pounds a horse. The rest of the party would be disposable as vedettes, scouts, and escort, if foraging in presence of the enemy. If bad mudholes intervened, any force up to fifty horses is instantly available to extricate the load of forage. No time is requisite to harness up. Each man puts the noose or lasso around the waggon at some or any projection, and fifty horses can pull as well as one.

This system of foraging will be found particularly good in case of an attack by the enemy. A foraging party as at present constituted is almost defenceless. Every horse is so heavily loaded that he cannot gallop fast or far. The forage has to be thrown off if fighting begins, and if the attack is repelled much time is lost in picking it up again.

By impressing carts and waggons, and using lasso or lariat ropes, this trouble is entirely avoided. Four horsemen are sufficient to drag the waggon and the rest of the men are available to protect it. The lassos can be detached instantly, or the waggons can be abandoned by all hands till the enemy is repulsed. It will not run away, and the enemy cannot carry it off unless he too carries lassos. But if foraging parties are attacked at all, it will almost always be by guerillas, partisan troops raised in the surrounding country, and quite unprovided with regular equipments. Once beaten off the journey can be resumed. If the worst comes to the worst, it is but an ordinary fight.

By using lassos, impressing carts, and putting all foraging parties under charge of officers of the Quartermaster's Department many abuses and dangers will be avoided. Nine foraging parties out of ten are attacked while scattered and plundering. Under the carrying system the scattering is almost unavoidable. Every man has to be at work, and vigilance is relaxed.

Under the system advocated all this is changed. Foraging will be done by brigades, not regiments. A party strong enough to protect itself from any attack, say a troop from each regiment, the whole about one hundred strong, is detailed to accompany the brigade quartermaster. One officer of the day should command this escort, which should be prepared for just one thing, to fight if necessary. The quartermaster should have his clerks, orderlies, etc., detailed to act as scouts while on the march, to range ahead and ascertain the location of stores of grain, barns, farms, etc. These men should be as lightly equipped as possible to enable them to be good scouts. The present practice is that they become genteel killers on a march.

The nearest farm being found, it should be quickly occupied, the party moving on the trot. A cordon of pickets should be thrown around at once, and the escort halted, while the officers and one or two men enter the farmyard. All negotiations should be conducted by the officers alone. The owner of the house should be civilly treated, and told that food and grain are all that is to be taken. He is certain to be civil. In those parts of the South in which the most intense acrimony existed during the late war, I never remember an instance where civility on our part did not bring corresponding civility from the enemy. The men should on no account be allowed to pillage for themselves. They are perfectly certain to plunder, and in that case to rouse enough acrimony of feeling to render guerilla warfare a certainty.

A working party should be detailed to dismount, unarmed, to load up the waggons with whatever is available. If their arms are left them, they are sure to bully some one on the premises when out of sight of their officers. The waggons being loaded with grain (it must be remembered that ten thousand pounds will be a full day's rations for a thousand men), the question of food should always be decided in a manner as merciful to the non-combatant as possible. An ox furnishes more meat if he is driven away, and causes less exasperation of feeling, than the slaughter of a yard full of chickens. An officer should always take as little as he possibly can, consistent with feeding the command.

The advantages of foraging by brigades, and of using drag ropes to haul forage, are manifold.

First. You carry away more forage, and distribute it with less waste, besides incurring no more danger than on picket duty.

Second. Your own discipline remains perfect, without that inevitable relaxation that comes of marauding and even of individual foraging.

Third. The country people are less exasperated.

This last advantage is very appreciable. Under irresponsible individual foraging the poor farmer is no sooner quit of one party of the enemy than others come galloping up yelling like fiends. The poor man is kept in a continual state of anxiety and alarm, and his helpless family of women are liable to constant insult. It is these insults of marauders more than the losses that raise the spirit of guerilla warfare in a country—a spirit of all others the most annoying in its results to a regular army. A corps of cavalry of three divisions, each of three brigades, under the brigade system of foraging will only have to find nine well-to-do farmers within a radius of five miles or a circuit of thirty. Each farmer will only receive one

visit, and if he has not enough he will very gladly tell you the name of his next neighbor, so as to equalize the burden and save himself. Very few farmers cannot furnish fifty sacks of some sort of grain or its equivalent in hay, and a hundred sacks will feed a brigade for a whole day. It is true that you borrow the man's waggon; but as it will be left in camp, he can easily get it the next day, when the column moves on. Nine farmers out of ten will be glad to purchase exemption from marauders at such a price.

War is a cruel thing at its best, and in cavalry raid, living off the country, the barbarities committed are often inconceivable. The exasperation of feeling caused by them is sure to produce the guerilla spirit, or bushwhackers. The excesses committed by our own forces in the Shenandoah valley and other places brought on this phase of war in Virginia. The consequences were so grave, that to save his army from constant raids, General Sheridan was compelled to lay waste the whole valley, burning every house and barn that would afford cover to guerillas. The measure, founded on grim necessity, was worthy of Attila. A different system at the commencement of the war, severer discipline and less robbing, would have saved us from guerillas altogether. The advantages of severe discipline are manifold. The country people dread a well-disciplined army less, the enemy dread it more. An army of marauders is lax in discipline, and must go down before equal bravery and better discipline in its enemy's troops.

Brigade foraging with drag ropes, as I have recommended, removes all excuse for straggling on the march, keeps the command uniformly supplied, and excites the minimum of ill feeling in the country. On a raid it will be found the best way in any country whatever, whether poor or rich. If the party has to visit several places in a poor country, each waggon should be sent back, as loaded, with five or six men to guard and drag it. Care must be taken not to weaken the party too much in this way however. In a rich country a single large farm will often supply a brigade.

Safeguards should in all cases be left at houses that have supplied the troops, to protect them from future pillage. In a friendly country, where foraging becomes necessary, receipts should be given by the quartermasters for feed and provisions. If the Commissary Department is separated from the Quartermaster's Department (which it certainly ought not to be,) the brigade and regimental commissaries must attend to the provision part of the foraging, remembering always the economy of flour or meal, as mixed with meat in the invaluable sausage ration.

But as soon as a raid is over, and the cavalry has rejoined the Army, supplies should be regularly issued. No system of foraging, however good, can supply an army for any length of time. The system of making war support war is well enough with an active general who can end a campaign in six weeks. If long sieges and tedious operations are indulged in, a base and supplies are absolutely necessary. Cavalry is the only arm of the service that can be said to be comparatively independent in this respect. As far as food is concerned, a well-equipped and well-mounted body of cavalry thirty thousand strong, commanded by a general like Sheridan, could march from one end of the United States to the other, and if placed in Europe could do as they pleased, in summer, from Paris to Moscow. But even they are forced to have a depot somewhere to supply