

and men which, as in France, is wholly destructive of discipline, or the tendency to tyrannise, which is characteristic of very many who are raised from their fellows to a command over them. A soldier, who was once asked to express his choice between promotion from the ranks and the existing system candidly declared for the *status quo* on the very reasonable grounds that sergeants were always down upon the privates for trivial matters which were altogether outside the legitimate region of control, and concerning which officers were generally ignorant and always indifferent. None doubt so much in exercising the petty privileges of power as those who have been subjected to it and are greedy of possessing it. Every one who knows anything of the British Army, is willing and eager to admit that the non-commissioned officers are the backbone of the force, and it is their untiring zeal, efficiency, and pride of rank, which make them so; but, apart from the reasons which we have assigned as barring the way to their admission into the higher ranks, will any candid mind assert that with all their worth, they are the men that the army would prefer to follow, and to whom it would offer its most ready allegiance? Again, if the upper and middle classes are to do any fighting at all under our system of voluntary service, it is clearly in the officers' ranks that they must be found. High personal character, good social position, and superior attainments, in a sense, other than professional, are important *desiderata* for officers of an army like our own. The two latter qualifications are not to be looked for in the ranks, yet without them it would be difficult to ensure to officers that moral influence over men which, we repeat, is indispensable to that discipline and mutual confidence which the French so deplorably lacked. Genius is the only other means that we know of to the acquirement of the ascendancy of the leaders over the led, and it is unnecessary to add that genius, whether for war or peace, is too rare to be admitted into the calculation. We may be perfectly sure it would never be over looked.

"But whilst it is thus easy to cite objections to promotion from the ranks in the case of our own Army, it is well that those who believe in the system should be aware of its restricted operation in the country of its origin. In an official statement issued by the French War Office, it appears that out of a total of 314 generals, only 18 generals of division and 32 of brigade were promoted from the ranks, the remaining 262 having come either from the Polytechnique or from St. Cyr. Truly a marvellous decline! and one which may be expected to fall still lower after the sad experience of the system as a system in recent years. With a higher standard of national education it is possible the day may come when the great objection to promotion from the ranks would be removed; but our army would assuredly in such an event be other than it is, for we hold education of such a character as would justify it to be wholly incompatible with our system of service. The lapse into the German principle of service would be unavoidable. We are sanguine that the moral and discipline of the Army would be irretrievably injured by an attempt under existing circumstances to alter the method of officering it; and with these few observations we are compelled to conclude for the present our comments upon a subject which has of late engaged the paternal attention of more than one zealot in the cause of Army Reform."

We have to thank the courtesy of Lieut. Colonel E. Rice, United States Army now stationed at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, the talented inventor of the "Rise Torpedo Bayonet" and author of the Formulae for its tactical application as well as of a very valuable pamphlet on "Rapid field fortification for Infantry" also the inventor, of "hooks, hook hands, and hook swivels for attacking rifles, muskets and carbines" as well as author of a pamphlet descriptive of their use for a copy of a "Collection of Tactical Studies," by Major WILLIS LYMAN of the United States Army. This valuable contribution to military literature consists of an "Introduction" by the author, in which he crystallizes the following: "Infantry tactics in detail from the French of Captain EMILE PORTIER, the German Company column, and Antoinette Manoeuvre for 1873.

"English formations for attack."

It is at present with the "introduction" which we shall deal and heartily join in the desire of the author that it will "direct the attention of young military men to the comparative study of the tactics of the Field of Battle," and certainly when that study is presented the attraction as well as pleasing style of his little brochure we would not give any officer credit for literary taste on whose mind it would not make a favorable impression.

Major LYMAN lays down as an axiom that "Tactics is a science whose principles are fixed and immutable, but in the application of those immutable elements to new conditions no applied science is today in a state of more active transition and development." In the service to which the gallant author belongs there has been a recent revision and assimilation for all arms" founded on the necessity for constant tactical change, and the fact that in all armies "Infantry" is the principal arm, that all others should be assimilated thereto, and that the successful application of what may be called the whole machine depends almost if not altogether on the perfection of such assimilation. In order to arrive at this point the drill or parade movements are confined as nearly as possible to those finding practical application in war," and should consist of:

"1. Movements to reach the field of action.

"2. Means of massing and deploying for action.

"3. Movements of attack while yet beyond or at long range."

In connection with this is what may be called the modern order of battle. "The single rank formation," necessitated by the range and precision of modern small arms, and our author lays it down as a rule that "In the offensive we should have all the rifles in action and no more which from the nature of the ground can be brought effectively into play," this can be attained by assigning "one man to every pace

and a half of the front of attack. In this connection the recommendation of General Sir F. TUNSTON, which has already appeared in the VOLUNTEER REVIEW, is noted, and Major General MACDONALD's rules "Infantry must advance under fire in open formation."

"The same Infantry which has so advanced must be able to resume instantaneously and without confusion their normal close formation before collision" is quoted. The rules adopted by the United States military authorities are as follows:—

(a) "The front of battle of any tactical unit shall always bear a fixed proportion to the number of its component files.

(b) "When men are launched against an enemy in whatever formation the action of each individual man shall be directly to his front.

(c) "If an engaged line requires to be reinforced it shall be reinforced directly from the rear.

(d) "If an engaged line requires to be prolonged to a flank this shall be accomplished by fresh troops from the rear prepared for such eventuality, so that the men employed to prolong such line may themselves act individually to the front.

(e) "That the main line of battle in attack however formed shall invariably be preceded by skirmishers.

(f) "A company advancing under fire in open formation shall be so many lines deep, that the front covered by the open formation shall be the same in width as that covered by the company in its usual close line formation."

"The single company is taken for convenience of illustration and the principle may be extended to a front of attack composed of any number of companies."

Major LYMAN had previously pointed out the danger of extending to a flank, under fire, the method of extension from the rear in a great measure obviates the danger arising. Since publishing this pamphlet the gallant author has had the opportunity of practically testing the value of the rule as laid down in the United States *Army and Navy Journal* of 31st October, under the caption of "A Fight with the Comanches and Kiowas"—is a despatch from Major LYMAN detailing a hard fought action with those savages which will be read with interest, especially as the opportunity has been afforded of testing the value of the *Terraille* system or rather formation, and it appears to have answered all ends claimed for it.

We cannot part with our gallant author without expressing a wish that his little book will obtain the full consideration it so richly merits, and we should like to see it in the hands of all our officers capable of appreciating its contents. As an exposition of applied tactics it is the best we have ever read.