

CHAPTER III.

ON THE USE OF THE CARBINE AND PISTOL ON HORSEBACK.

SECTION I.

When the Recruit has attained a degree of proficiency, the Exercise of Arms on Horseback should often form a part of each riding-lesson ; by this means he will acquire such dexterity in the use of his fire-arms, as will enable him to load and to discharge them, while his horse is in motion, without annoying the animal, or being disturbed in his seat.

Although it is desirable that the horseman should be habituated to the use of his carbine at speed, few occasions can arise for his using it against an enemy at any pace beyond a walk ; and notwithstanding he is enjoined, while skirmishing, to keep his horse in motion, in order to avoid becoming a fixed object for the enemy's marksmen, he cannot reasonably calculate on his shot being effective, unless he halts for the moment of firing.

It is found that the fire of the carbine to the left, and of the pistol to the rear, are the most effective ; and that to the right with the carbine, and to the front with the pistol, is the least so. It should, however, be remembered, that although the fire of the carbine be most certain to the left, the turning of either flank to the enemy exposes both man and horse in the greatest degree.

The fire of the cavalry soldier is never to be had recourse to but in skirmishing ; and firing with the carbine to the front is generally to be preferred, because in that position the horse presents the least mark, and the rider is most covered from the shot of the enemy.

The pistol is ill calculated for skirmishing against the enemy : the carbine is preferable on most occasions.

There are, however, situations of emergency where the horseman may find the pistol useful ; as when his sword is broken, or his sword arm partially disabled ; if under these, or similar circumstances, he should be compelled to make a