

fresh and fit. The reinforcing troops would not be so brought up as to fulfil to the best advantage an important part of its function, "to instil fresh courage and emulation by their presence with their comrades."—(*Major-General the Hon. W. P. Fielding*). The force would become a chain of worn and unworn links, therefore weak as the weaker links, and not strong as the stronger. It would be like a number of laths put alternately end to end with strong sticks, instead of a somewhat strained and cracked bar, laminated up with good wood along its whole length. The fresh weight for momentum would be applied at points only, and thus give a tendency to snapping, just in proportion as it failed to give new power to the whole. The toughening, applied only in short lengths, and not along the whole length, would be comparatively useless in producing *élan*. Referring again to a celebrated saying: "A battle resembles a fight between two boxers more than is generally supposed"—(*Napoleon I*), it would be as if one could suppose fresh vigor imparted to the pugilist, not from end to end of his arm, but the weakness of fatigue passing into one section of it, and the new power into the other. The "go," the "bang" of the attack by the reinforced line would then necessarily be regulated more by the weaker than by the stronger parts. The reinforcement would be as patches in an old shrunken garment, with the proverbial result, rather than a fresh lining throughout, giving strength to make it last. It is not a transfusion, giving new life in every fibre; it is strength applied in the worst way for vivifying the whole organism.

This matter has been turned over in many ways, because it is of vital importance, and isolated similes are always liable to misconstruction, besides being generally defective as illustrations. The sum of it all is that if it be a question between the necessary confusion of our existing systems and the avoidance of confusion by attempts to close in troops under fire, and bring reinforcements into the intervals, the former, with all its serious disadvantages, would be the least of two evils. It is hoped to show that neither evil need be accepted.

But this proposal to cure the evils of "doubling up"—which the Germans had to accept in their last great war—by closing in parts of the line and bringing reinforcements to the gaps, will, if accepted, bring about another and most serious evil. Not only will it prevent the reinforcement being an infusion of new life to every part of the line, not only will it be strength interpolated, instead of brought up behind to carry the fighting instrument forward with equal power at all points, but it will not be a satisfactory reinforcement in *materiel* as well as men. It would result in a line well supplied with ammunition here and badly supplied there, which, in plain English means a line partly well armed, partly badly armed. During the fire combat a man without ammunition is exactly the same thing as a man without arms. His rifle is a load not a weapon—a hindrance, not a help. "Constant and plentiful relays of ammunition are a necessity of life for infantry nowadays."—(*Von Scherf*). "The keeping up of the supply of ammunition presents no small difficulty."—(*Colonel Gawler*). This is a very vital question. "Those in the rear must think only of the duty of supporting the front, of keeping up its *morale* by fresh men, and of seeing that ammunition is brought up."—(*Captain James*). This matter presents great difficulties; indeed it is "one of the most difficult problems to solve, and one which Von Moltke is reported to have pronounced insoluble."—(*Colonel Sir Lumley Graham*).

Now, any reinforcement which is straight from the rear, brings ammunition to every point. Any reinforcement which is by interpolation practically makes assistance in ammunition to the old line a separate and troublesome work. The reinforcing body must carry on the old line, which has borne the severe brunt of the fight with no covering, unless it be from great distances, not only by bringing them spirit, but also bringing food for their dogs, without which the spirit they could bring them would soon evaporate again. Unless they can make their old dogs bark and bite, the owners of the dogs will lose the heart that will bring them in at the death.

Thus the coming-up-at-a-side reinforcement is not fitted to bring the due infusion of both physical and moral power into the fighting line, the physical being not only valuable as physical, but being also a powerful element in producing and sustaining the moral. It thus ignores to a great extent "the moral element, so weighty and decisive in war," (*Prince Frederick Charles*) and sets aside the truth that "we must try to bring in operation everything which tends to build up the moral force of our soldiers" (*Marechal Bugeaud*), because "moral force contributes three quarters to physical success, physical force contributes only one quarter. . . . The soldier is strong and victorious or feeble and vanquished, according as he believes himself to be either." (*Napoleon I.*) Those who have seen most of war attach the greatest importance to moral as distinguished from physical considerations." (*Sir Lumley Graham*.) "Victory remains with the side whose moral force holds out longest" (*Laymann*), and surely the equal distribution along the line of battle of the elements leading to it is the only arrange-

ment consistent with sound philosophy, whether the force is considered as a mere machine or as a living organism. Panic or moral breakdown begins at points and spreads.

"It is necessary for us to consider everything that affects the minds and spirits of our soldiers."—(*Maurice's Wellington Prize Essay*). And this becomes more important every day. "The tendency of tactics is to become less and less mechanical, and to give more and more value to moral considerations."—(*Colonel C. B. Brackenbury*).

Contrast finally the old writer and the new, and see how this element is an unvarying one. "Fighting is the trial of the moral and physical forces by means of the latter, and that the moral cannot be omitted is evident in itself, for the condition of the mind has always the most decisive influences on the forces employed in war."—(*Von Clausewitz*). The object of the leader of bodies of men, whether great or small, should be to inspire those under his command with the greatest moral force before the action to preserve the moral force during the action."—(*Home*).

This last passage goes to the root of the matter. It is of no use comparatively to launch the soldier into the fight in good heart. He must be kept in *morale* to the end. "At this last supreme moment it is moral force which will most prevail."—(*Colonel C. B. Brackenbury*.

Can anyone say that to reinforce at the side and not up to the fighting unit that has borne the first severe brunt of the struggle is the best way to sustain *morale*? It brings neither fresh faces nor fresh cartridges, no stimulant either for weapon or mind.—*Colburn's Magazine*.

(To be continued.)

### The Revolver and its Use.

AT the Royal United Service Institution, on Wednesday afternoon, under the presidency of Major-General Sir Frederick Middleton, a paper on this subject was read by Major H. C. Kitchener, of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. The lecturer dwelt upon the importance of revolver training, maintained that the weapon should be carried on service, and strongly urged the necessity of training officers in its use. The Americans depended very much on the revolver in war, and maintained that it was the cavalry weapon *par excellence*. Russia had adopted an American revolver, and in the infantry all officers, sergeant-majors, drummers, buglers and clerks were armed with the weapon. In the French army officers and men were supplied with double action weapons. In Germany there was a regular annual course of instruction and practice. To his mind it was a question of very serious consideration whether our cavalry, armed as at present, would in a cavalry action be any match for an enemy armed with revolvers, as the Russians now were. Many officers in our army were good revolver shots, but there were a great number of officers who knew little of the weapon, and some who knew nothing at all. At Sandhurst the young officer was taught to command a brigade, to build a fort, to survey a country, to ride a horse, and to climb a pole, but the only authorized course of personal defence or offence was ten short lessons in sword exercise. Unlike continental armies, we had no course of revolver shooting for officers, and, therefore, officially, an infantry officer could hardly be expected either to defend himself or assail a foe. In the course of his remarks Major Kitchener gave the results of a series of independent experiments carried out by Capt. B. Barter, Lincolnshire regiment, one of the best revolver shots in the army, and Mr. Kelly, R.E. He remarked that:—Cogswell and Harrison, 0·476 bore, Colt action: very full sight required, which for rapid firing is an advantage, as most revolvers throw high; when in a hurry the firer is apt to take a full sight, in such cases this revolver would therefore carry point blank. Too full a sight, however, is required for very accurate shooting. Enfield service revolver: the pull-off is good, the weapon appears to me inaccurate and clumsy. Wilkinson: a splendid weapon, with very good sighting and pull-off action, rapid and very easy to load. Sighting, point blank with fine sight. On the whole the most accurate and satisfactory revolver tried. Colt's frontier: too long in the barrel; trigger too narrow, and stock short and uncomfortable; only one action, and that clumsy. Kynoch's: do not like the action of this revolver. There might be a chance of a piece of the flesh between thumb and forefinger being caught and nipped. Found this revolver apt to miss fire. Lancaster's four-barrel pistol: has only one action—continuous, very hard pull-off. The sighting of this pistol is very serviceable. Lancaster's two-barrel pistol, bore 0·577: continuous action, only very hard pull-off, and a very heavy weapon. The kick is very great. Webley: very good action, pull-off too light (when cocked) for service. In continuous practice the pull-off is just right. The revolver fired with carried slightly to the left. Silver, 0·450 bore: The safety action is useful (unless it be liable to get out of order). The sight has a white head which removes the liability of losing the