

But the article which perhaps carries with it the life and living interest of the day to a greater extent than any other, is Lieut. Col. Denison's "Moral of the Autumn Manoeuvres." Of course his remarks tend most to the elucidation of cavalry problems, but these also necessarily bear on other branches of the service and are of the highest interest to all military readers. We will not spoil the pleasure to be derived from the perusal of them by a single quotation, merely remarking that the results of certain observations on cavalry charges during the late Franco-Prussian war are such as to astound even the most implicit believers in the powers of breech-loaders. Of course Col. Denison sums up against heavy cavalry.

His last paragraph is pregnant with weighty words of warning, and we most earnestly commend it to our readers and to all classes of the community. A nation in whose legislature has been advanced the proposition that the mere existence of British territory to the north of them is an aggravation and an obstacle to friendly relations, will put to the test all the patriotism we may possess whenever a favorable opportunity occurs.

The Book Reviews and Literary Notes are interesting—one painfully and agreeably so—as showing the rapid progress made in defining the purity of the English language by the teeming productions of numberless vulgarisms, each one viler than the last, originating across the line, and thence oozing in streams of contamination to the Canadian side of the border. Nevertheless, apart from this view of the question, Dr. Schile de Veris' "Americanisms" is doubtless an amusing as well as instructive work.

The poetical morceaux are some of them above the average of merit of such productions. "Love in Death," a quatrain from Catullus, is tender and graceful. A translation from Lucretius has the always acceptable merit of perspicuity. Mr. J. Reade's "Paolo and Francesca" is not ungraceful and is not wanting in force. We would here take the liberty of cautioning Mr. Reade, who has a more than an ordinary share of the divine efflatus, against his propensity to imitate Tennyson in his worse point—his tendency to a misty and sometimes almost meaningless verbiage.

"Marching out" is spirited and the sentiments appropriate, but we confess to liking Chas. Sangster's "Mocking Bird" better than all the rest put together. It is a perfect gush of melodious imagery. Altogether we heartily congratulate the managers of the "Canadian Monthly" on its first number believing that it will supply that great desideratum in the new Dominion—a really first class magazine.

Baron Rothschild is by far the largest winner of stakes in 1871. With three of his horses alone he has won £22,230, made up as follows: Hannah, £13,370; Favourite, £5,590; and Corisande, £3,510.

## TACTICS.

It is very difficult to wean old soldiers from a system they have been nurtured in; and when the practical test of system has resulted favourably, old soldiers carry out the conservative principle of letting well alone.

The British Army made rapid progress in military art at the commencement of the present century. It may be said that we took a step in advance of Continental armies. Line formations were probably first introduced in consequence of the numerical weakness of British forces; but, thanks to the splendid physique, coolness and bravery of our infantry, it became the regulation order of battle; more than that, by Sir John Moore's advice, ranks were reduced from three to two deep. Now, if firearms in the day alluded to had possessed long range or accuracy, Continental nations must have either copied our tactical order or have met British troops at a great disadvantage: but fire-arms could only be relied upon at very short ranges, and from their want of accuracy men were trained to fire "straight to their front." British infantry was more renowned for reserving its fire till in contact with its enemy and charging with the bayonet, than for a quick, well-directed fire from its deployed line. This increased development of fire was by no means thrown away; on the contrary, it was husbanded by keeping up perfect alignment and regulated intervals, so that no shot might stray from the intended direction—viz., the imaginary line at right angles to alignment—or be lost by the overlapping of battalions. Still if a position had to be "carried," the bayonet was the only weapon believed in by British commanders. Hence it happened that our great instructor and master, the Duke of Wellington, was averse to the introduction of rifles. Sir Charles Napier predicted the ruin of the British Army if men were taught to trust in the efficacy of fire-arms, and lost the habit of closing with their enemy; and still more recently a great tactician, Lord Clyde, was with difficulty brought to believe in the superiority of a highly-finished firearm of precision over the rough smooth-bore—so hard it is at an advanced age to eradicate the impression of a life's education. But in justice one must remember also that the rifles first invented had their weak points.

It is a strong reflection that the first blot in our soldiers' education was hit by a tribe of savages, and that a severe lesson, learnt at the Cape of Good Hope at a heavy loss, was actually repeated by another tribe of savages in New Zealand. In each instance for a time British troops entirely lost their prestige, their education was at fault. The individual soldier was a perfect piece of mechanism, but the machine had to be disintegrated—in other words, the serried rank had to revolve itself into intelligent skirmishers, and till these could be trained the savage triumphed.

At the Cape, as usual, men rose equal to the occasion. Notably Sir W. Eyre introduced a most enlightened light infantry drill in the 73rd Regiment, but radical faults are not to be corrected in a day. Subordinates, when once taught to obey, mechanically understand that their mental energy is purposely restricted. To call on them suddenly to think, is like calling on the bed-ridden to walk. The reverses met with in New Zealand are not so easily accounted for, but the vital want was intelligence on the part of company officers and men. In a bush fight the best armed and the most intelligent skirmishers should win the day. The

British did not always win the day, though decidedly the best armed.

Of late years the introduction of breech-loading small arms, and a marked improvement in artillery, has obliged our Army, in common with Continental armies, to look upon skirmishing as a most important exercise; also especial attention has been paid to musketry instruction, after the model of France and Prussia; and in 1870 the Regulation Drill book was revised and simplified.

The Prussians and Austrians in 1864 joined in a military promenade against the Danes, who, of course, could only make a faint show of resistance. On this occasion the Prussians tested their needle-rifle. The old conservative officers of Austria did not acknowledge its superiority to their firearm; on the contrary, they voted it too delicate. In 1859 the Austrians attributed their signal defeat by the French to their having placed too much reliance on musketry fire. They, therefore, drilled their infantry to move rapidly in columns and charge with the bayonet. The Prussians arrived at a very different conclusion, and they slightly modified their battle order to develop small arm fire. The rival systems were tried in 1866, and in six weeks the Austrian army was annihilated by the Prussians. The Prussians still attacked in columns theoretically; but practically they gave full scope to the power of their needle-rifle, by a lateral extension exceeding that of the British line-formation.

The tactical order of battle was a first line in company columns, a second line in quarter-column of double companies, and one or more reserves. On parade the company columns (250 strong, with five officers) stood in three ranks, the rear rank consisting of picked men for skirmishing. The rule in peace-time was that about a quarter of the rear rank should skirmish with the rest in support, and the skirmishers were to be reinforced as occasion required. The company was commanded by a captain, who was mounted, except when under serious fire. The men had been carefully instructed in musketry.

The three recognized modes of firing were—first, skirmishing, in which a man took deliberate aim from behind cover; second, by volley-firing by word of command, which was for ranges between 800 and 300 yards; thirdly, quick fire for point blank range. Volley-firing was believed to be most effective, and precautions were taken to prevent waste of cartridges.

The captains of companies in the first line were as independent as commanders of ships. The company line advanced, covered by skirmishers more or less according to regulation, but when the enemy was within range, in place of the skirmishers being recalled in order to fire volleys, by instinct the first line resolved itself into a swarm of skirmishers; the regulated supports even were in the general line: more than this the tendency of the advancing line was to outflank rather than make a front on any point or points held in force by the enemy, and the whole extended laterally. About this period, the columns of the second line suffered loss from the Austrian fire; and we are told that by companies it filled up the gaps in the first line, till the officer commanding the first line found his strength doubled, whilst nothing but his staff remained with the officer commanding the second line. The latter could now do no more than form stragglers and the superabundance of troops into supports, as opportunity occurred. But with a reserve intact, and strongly posted the battle is not lost; the discomforted skirmishing line may fall