MY LOVED ONE ON THE SEA.

The storm his ranging loud to-night,
And darker grows the sky;
And like a giant in his might,
The wild March winds sweep by.
My heart is with the good, the brave,
Who ride the billows free;
With one whose home is ocean's wave,
My loved one on the sea.

Would I could bid the tempest cease,
That hath the sky o'ercast;
And soothe to gentleness and peace
The wild and stormy blast.
How can I fear its strength to mark,
That death to him may be—
A wanderer in a fragile bark,
My loved one on the sea.

We were a happy household band,
In childhood's sunny hours;
Our pathway Hope's own rosy hand
Strewed with the fairest flowers.
But now a change hath o'er us passed:
The grave hides two from me,
And far away his lot is cast—
My loved one on the sea.

Oh! Is it strange that I should weep
To hear the tempest rise,
And know that o'er an angry deep
His rayless pathway lies?
O, God! my eyes with tears are dim,
To Thee I come, to Thee;
Hear Thou my earnest prayer for him,
My loved one on the sea.

Through every danger safely guide,
The watch care round him thrown;
Grant that his bark unscathed may ride
High o'er where wrecks are strewn.
But oh! if there his own must lie,
If there his grave must be—
Grant I may meet again on high
My loved one on the sea.

LECTURE.

(Royal United Service Institution.)

Thuesday Evening, February 27th, 1873.

Major General WILLIAM NAPIER, Director of Military Education, in the Chair.

CHANGES OF TACTICS CONSEQUENT ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF WEAPONS AND OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.

By Lieutenant Colonel F. MIDDLETON, Superintendent of Garrison Instruction Aldershot.

GENERAL NAPIER AND GENTLEMEN.—My subject to-night is "Changes of Tactic consequent on the improvement of weapons, and other circumstances." This is, as you all know, an extensive subject, my remarks therefore must naturally be of a sketchy nature, owing to the shortness of the time at our disposal. As the most important arm of the service, and as perhaps the most suitable one for my present audience, I shall confine myself *almost* wholly to the infantry in what I am going to say.

Calling infantry the most important arm, may sound like military heresy to some, especially since our artillery has brought itself so much to the front lately, but there can be little doubt in the minds of most men that now more than ever, infantry is the decisive arm by which all battles are won or lost.

And now before proceeding further, let us endeavour to understand what is meant by "tactics." It has been said that a thoroughly comprehensive and clear definition of the term has never yet been given, as it is closely allied with other parts of military art. One simple definition is often given of it, which is this, "tactics is the art of moving large bodies of troops in presence of an enemy." This definition though a fair one, is hardly definite enough for the military student. Troops might be moved to a great extent in presence of an enemy, without a knowledge of tactics at all. Again, being in presence of an enemy, does not always in a military point of view, mean that he is staring you straight in the face. Movements of troops might be made actually out of sight of an enemy on purely tactical grounds, in fact it may be some times difficult to define the exact line between tactics and strategy.

If we refer to the origin of the word "tactics," we find that it is derived from the Greek work "taxis," meaning, "an order of the battle," and I think the following expresses what is generally understood as "tactics," viz.: "the art of moving large bodies of troops on a field of battle, by such combinations of manœuvres, as shall give you the greatest advantage over your enemy."

The earliest system of fighting-tactics, of which we have any reliable information, is that of the ancient Greeks. They, of course, used only two kinds of soldiers, infantry and cavalry. The latter were not considered of much importance. Their principal infantry carried usually two weapons, viz., a sword and long spear, 21 to 24 feet in length, and they fought in large, deep, and consequently unwieldy masses, the formation being known as the Phalanx, which against unorganized masses of men, such as the Persian hordes, was irresistible owing to its momentum.

The Romans are the next warrior nation of whom we know anything reliable. They at first, according to Niebuhr, used the Phalanx-formation, but they soon gave it up and adopted the legionary formation. And here we find an instance of an alteration of tactics and organization, and arms together, with a view of obtaining greater rapidity of movement. The pilum, or heavy spear, was reduced to seven feet, and nearly all the infantry was supplied with throwing javelins which would have been useless in the Phalanx.

The Romans fought in three lines. The first two lines armed with two light javelins, a pilum, and the straight Roman sword. The third line was formed of picked veterans armed with a pike and sword. These lines were loosely formed among themselves, at least a yard between each man, and consisted of so many maniples or companies with a maniple distance between each. The second line was formed so as to cover the intervals of the first and third line, sometimes covering the intervals of the second line and sometimes continuously. Their mode of attack was this. The enemy having been attacked by their light troops, bowmen and slingers, the first line closed on the enemy, and if it did not succeed in forcing them, the second line advanced in the intervals, and the third line only came up in case of necessity. Like our modern system of skirmishers, attacking parties, support, and reserves; but the lines were composed of maniples or companies of about 16 file, 10 deep, there being no artillery in the way then.

In the early Roman wars, cavalry seems to have been, as with the Greeks, of minor importance, but their wars with the Carthaginians soon taught them that skilfully handled, they could be used with terrible effect.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, military, as far as tactics are concerned, seems to have, if anything retrograded. Cavalry, or, as they were called in the days of chivalry, knights and men at arms, became of the most importance, though good infantry was not to be despised even in those days. Witness the stout English bowman who was able at a fair range, to send his cloth yard shaft clean through any but the best proof armour. The Spanish infantry also of the middle ages were no despicable enemy even to the armoured knights. Then occasionally mounted bowmen were used, but they were cross-bowmen.

In the fourteenth century gunpowder was first introduced into Europe; that "villanous" compound that was destined to work such changes in the art of war. It would appear that it was the first used for cannon, which were of very rude construction and difficult to move, and were used to batter down gates and walls in place of the old battering ram. It is said that the English used cannon at Cressy, in 1346, at any rate, powder was made in England in that year. It is even averred by some writers, that cannon were used in 1327, by the English in Scotland.

The hand gun was not invented until the beginning of the fifteenth century, and at first was a very rude weapon and of little use or effect, the bowman being by far the most effective. The hand gun was fired by means of a slow match held in the hand. Already (though not on account of the introduction of fire-arms) the great estimation in which cavalry had been held was beginning to be shaken; the knights and men at arms having sometimes to dismount and fight on foot to save their horses; and a great blow was struck at their prestige by an action fought at Morat in 1476, when the Swiss defeated the flower of the Burgundian cavalry with tremendous loss. About this time, bands of mercenaries formed themselves under partizan leaders of note, and by adopting a sort of rude organization and tactics, became so superior to troops fighting without any, that their presence on one side was often sufficient to turn the day.

At this time a very small part of the infantry are yet armed with the hand gun; but an improvement was made in it about 1480 by giving it a match lock, similar to that used by Asiatics to this day; and soon more of the infantry were armed with the hand gun, which in its new form was called a "harquebus." At the end of this century a general appeared, who has not, I think, had the credit he deserves, in the history of the rise of military art. I mean Maurice of Nassau, who commanded the Dutch army of Protestants in the wars between them and the Spaniards. He it was who first introduced camps of instruction. He not only armed half of his infantry with fire arms, but he gave them also to his heavy cavalry. He is also said to have had the harquebus made with a butt end to place against the chest. He still kept his infantry in ten ranks, but the artillery of that time was almost immovable, and therefore could do little damage to them. He also first exemplified the use of tactical points, by using woods and villages as defensive posts. He, however, made no attempt to move his troops with greater rapidity.

During the 16th century, fire-arms gradually came more and more into use as the weapon became more and more perfect. The harquebus received an improvement in 1517, by the substitution of the wheel lock for the match lock.

The pistol was also invented about this time, and soon became a cavalry weapon.

Another improvement on the wheel-lock was made towards the end of this century, called the snap-haunce, which was a near approach to the more modern flint lock.

These improved fire-arms seem to have been at first given only to the cavalry, the infantry still keeping the match-lock.

At this time a part of the infantry were still armed with the pike to keep off the