

## THE PIVOT OF THE ALABAMA CONTROVERSY.

(From the Pall Mall Gazette.)

We do not propose to discuss the chances of Mr. Morton's declaring war against the British empire, merely remarking by the way that the bloody struggle now proceeding in Europe is not of promising omen to nations or governments who pick quarrels with their neighbors after this "lighthearted" fashion. But, war or no war, the American Minister, whoever he may be, must be prepared to find the whole group of Alabama questions discussed by the British public certainly, and probably by the British Government, in a somewhat different spirit from that which presided over the original negotiations. The subject has ripened by keeping. We have learned much from the present European war and have taken the lesson to heart. The domestic character of the struggle with the Confederates first blinded the Americans, and next in some degree our selves, to the bearing of the incidents which marked its course and close upon the public law of the civilized world.—There could hardly, in fact, be a greater misfortune for mankind than that the whole of the American claims should be successful. The one tenable pretension among them, that demands redress of the grievances founded on the alleged carelessness of the authorities in letting the Alabama escape, wears a wholly new and different air when illustrated by later passages in diplomatic history. We now see clearly that the rule sought to be enforced against us was a very modern and a very doubtful innovation on international law. The law of Nations regarded in its integrity and as a system deduced from a number of definite principles, did not in any way impose on the British Government the duty of preventing ships of war constructed by private traders from getting to sea. The general public obligation which that law created was the duty of submitting without complaint to the capture or confiscation of such vessels by the ships of the United States. Nor did the passing of the first Foreign Enlistment act alter the question between nation and nation. The new duties which this legislation established were duties of a purely municipal order, and their neglect or infringement by British citizens or the British Government raised a question, which properly speaking was of wholly domestic concern. The novelty in public law made its appearance a little later. Inensibly a number of precedents were allowed to collect which afforded some basis for a new public rule that one nation might complain if another did not enforce municipal legislation of the nature of the Foreign Enlistment acts. These precedents were comparatively few and very modern, and they derived their principal importance from the fact that some of them were set by ourselves. After we had once complained, in the year 1854, that the Russian Government did not enforce its own legislative decrees against the transit of arms and ammunition from Belgium to Russia, we could scarcely consider the Americans out of court when they made it a grievance that the British Custom House authorities had not shown sufficient alacrity in stopping the Alabama. A rule had been established which we entirely agreed with Lord Penzance in regarding as a rule full of the germs of future trouble. Although, however, the English Foreign Office had stopped itself from resisting the American claim on the question of public law, it is much to be regretted that its admissions of the principle were as broad and unqualifi-

ed as they were. The novelty of the new international obligation which the Americans accused us of violating its departure from international principals, its doubtfulness and its dangerousness might have been insisted upon; and it might, at least, have been argued that the claim to enforce it should be construed with the utmost strictness.

One of the great dangers of these American novelties consists in their contagiousness. What was the origin of that now famous doctrine of benevolent neutrality which, though explained away by its author, was not with him till it had been honored with the astonishment of the world? We believe that an American origin can be confidently assigned to it. It will be recollected that the first news the English public had of the Prussian complaints about the export of contraband to France reached us in the form of a telegraphic announcement to this effect: that the North German Minister at Washington had publicly stated that the English were interpreting neutrality in respect of the Germans just as they construed it in respect of the Americans in the Alabama case. The incident was not much noticed, but it does not seem impossible that Count Bismarck made a stroke at Washington not unlike that which he made in London with such distinguished success by the publication of the Benedetti treaty. He may be suspected of trying to utilize American susceptibility on the Alabama question just as he utilized English susceptibilities about Belgian independence. Whether the attempt succeeded nobody can say. Minute variation of topic in the habitual abuse of this country indulged in by American writers and speakers are difficult to trace; and, for all we know, the doctrine of benevolent neutrality may have its day with American journalism. However that may be, the local parentage of Count Bernstorff's doctrine is not to be doubted. The notion that an unfriendly neutral incurs responsibility through his unfriendliness produced the notion that a benevolent neutral incurs duties through his benevolence. It is time that both notions should be energetically repudiated, as fraught with every sort of risk to the permanent interest of mankind.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

*The Editor does not hold himself responsible for individual expressions of opinion in communications addressed to the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.*

## NOTES ON THE NEW FIELD

### EXERCISE, 1870.

BY MAJOR G. H. F. BARTNELL, LATE 31<sup>ST</sup> REG'T.

### SQUAD DRILL IN TWO RANKS.

Sec. 37. Men to be sized as for a company. Left file of right half squad to be centre.

Sec. 40. Cautions and commands for opening and closing ranks to be *Open order, March*, and *Close order, March*.

Sec. 45. In forming fours on the march rear rank to step short two paces (the stepping short pace being now 21 inches.) When moving to a flank in fours, each man, on the words *Half right* (or *left*) *Turn*, to make a half turn to the ordered flank, as in the diagonal march; and a squad moving to a flank by the diagonal march may be ordered to form fours to that flank, by turning into file and forming fours as when in file.

## SKIRMISHING.

The rules for skirmishing are introduced into recruit drill at this point.

Skirmishers to come to attention at the *last executive word*.

When skirmishers in motion are ordered to halt, they are to *stand, kneel* or *lie down*, as ordered, taking advantage of any cover.

Sec. 49. *Extending*. The number of paces is always to be named. The front rank man of the named file stands, kneels or lies down as ordered, remainder turn outwards, stepping off in quick time, &c.; the rear rank man of the named file continues moving to the flank until he decides the ordered interval between his front rank man and the front rank man on his outer flank, when he also fronts and moves up into the alignment. As each file gains the ordered interval the rear rank man taps the front rank man, who at once halts and fronts, the rear rank man moves up into the alignment on gaining his proper interval. A line of skirmishers in single rank is thus formed.

All corrections of interval, &c., to be made while the men are in motion.

Sec. 50. *Closing*—From the halt. The front rank man of the named file to rise and stand at ease. Remainder rise turn towards him, and close in quick time, front rank on front rank rear rank (disengaging to rear) on rear rank, each man to halt front and stand at ease as he arrives at his place.

Front rank man of named file may be turned in any direction, the remainder to form up in the named direction.

Sec. 55. Skirmishers to change front (1) by *wheeling* on the principal laid down for a wheel; or (2) by *file formation*, in which the men of the named file are first placed in the required direction, on the word *double*, the rest move across by the nearest way to their place in the new alignment.

## DISMISSING.

Sec. 5. The words to be *Right, Turn, Dismiss*. When drilling without arms, the hands not to be struck together.

## PART II.—COMPANY DRILL.

*Sizing a Company*.—Men in single rank. Right hand man to take three paces to front, next to place himself three paces in front of left, 3rd tallest man in rear of right hand man, 4th in rear of left hand man, and so on; the half companies closing on each other and dressing.

The former direction to tell off as a right (or left) company is omitted; when the number of files is odd, the right half company to be the stronger.

Companies are to be exercised with the *rank changed* during the drill. On the words *Change ranks* the company is to turn about and the supernumeraries and captain are to turn outwards and double around to the new rear. The men to be told off afresh if intended to remain in that formation. While drilling certain files or men to be ordered to fall out without re-telling off. Companies