

Again, "Major, have you anything like this?" introducing Weyman's score. At that time Pearce was only Captain. The highest score and the largest majority in the history of the Kolapore Match was that of the Mother Country last year, when the team put together the extraordinary total of 741 against 696 made by the Canadian representatives. Of course, this was with the Martin Henry, and at Bisley.

A word as to the Major's "presentiment." Of the two thousand competitors in the Queen's competition, a very large percentage annually give expression to the presentiment that they are to win the prize, but they all fail to materialize, except one.

Respectfully yours

JAS. H. SIMPSON.

Toronto, April 23rd, 1894.

Attack versus Defence.

In the unavoidable absence of Field-Marshal Sir J. Lintorn, A. Simmonds, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., Colonel Trotter, Commanding Grenadier Guards, presided on Tuesday last at the Royal United Institution on the occasion of a lecture, displaying much originality of thought, being delivered by Captain F. N. Maude, late Royal Engineer, on "Attack or Defence Strategically and Tactically Considered."

The lecturer first argued that, given two armies equal in all other respects, except in the national conception attaching to the word "duty," then that Army in which duty is most highly developed will be ready for action first, and to utilise the gain of time must become the assailant.

In connection with the Cavalry, Captain Maude drew attention to the consequences that the pursuit of duty—for duty's sake—entails in this arm. Men fighting on their own feet may make up in a variety of ways, by fanaticism, innate personal bravery, etc., for neglect of minor details of duty in peace time; but with the mounted Services, particularly the Cavalry, the horse reflect with mathematical accuracy the precise degree with which these minor duties have been carried out, always provided that the system on which these details are based is a correct one. Given equally good systems, the more punctilious discharge of duty will ensure superior condition, superior mobility, and, finally, superior cohesion in the charge.

Assuming that the Cavalry of the attacking force has demonstrated its superiority, and in proportion to the degree in which that superiority has been proved, the defender cannot tell precisely, on which two miles of his front out of the available twenty the shock is about to fall. He, the defender, must therefore be equally prepared at all points, and the bulk of his reserves are consequently constrained to a central position.

The defender's Cavalry having been decisively beaten—as the lecturer demonstrated they would be—the assailants can start boldly out to the front, screened and protected against possible ambush or surprise by their own horsemen. Choosing

their own positions, within limits, and practically simultaneously, some twenty miles of batteries (twelve to the mile) unlimber and the Artillery duel commences.

The defender must either renounce his position and come out and attack himself, when the gunners simply limber up and trot out of the way, or he must stand still to be pounded at, when it becomes more or less a case of machines against human nerves.

Here another dilemma is reached by the defender. Either he has constructed his epaulements before-hand, and his guns are ready in position, when it may happen that the assailant appears in an unexpected direction, necessitating a change of front and the abandonment of the works constructed—a case that has frequently occurred in war—or his batteries are held back in hand under cover till the intentions of the other side have disclosed themselves, and then are compelled to come into action under fire—a proceeding which can hardly be undertaken without heavy loss. Of course, the same applies to a considerable extent to the assailant, only the latter enjoys as a rule a far wider choice, both of time and position, and is therefore more likely to effect his purpose without serious injury.

Both sides will now soon be engaged in a heavy cannonade, and, under cover of the confusion, the assailant masses his forces for the decisive blow opposite the point of his own choice, the bulk of the Infantry being retained far back to the rear, and under cover. The corps Artilleries of the two Reserve corps trot up to the front. As they near the guns already in action the latter raise their fire to the utmost intensity possible, and whilst the enemy's front is hidden by the smoke and dust of bursting shells the new arrivals sound the gallop, dash through the intervals in the first line, away down the slope, unlimbering some 1,000 yards closer in. There is now on a front of some two miles a numerical superiority of two to one in guns, and, assuming anything approaching equality of skill in the gunners on either side, the result cannot long be doubtful.

Even leaving the Artillery out of account altogether, allowing the two Infantry to fight it out without interference, and assuming the conventional glacis-like slope, and making any further allowances that may be desired, only assuming equality of armament as the one essential element of the problem, it is perfectly certain that the attacking side will not be stopped at the extreme range of the rifle. They will not check for the first men who fall, or for the second. How far they will go will depend on their discipline, which again is a product largely affected by the factor of "duty." Ultimately, for a given standard of discipline they will reach a given limit of distance, still preserving the power of controlled fire. Then they will halt and reply to the enemy, and it must be obvious that the nearer they get, and the greater the control, the more effective will that reply be.

In proportion as this reply is more or less effective the enemy's bullets will come in less numbers and with less accuracy. If, therefore, the percentage of loss with which the limit a was reached by them

was, say, x , then a following line will reach the same limit with a less loss, x' than x , a third line will suffer less still, and so on. So that, ultimately, given a sufficient number of lines, the attainment of a fire superiority is a mathematical certainty. Of course, the other side can feed up troops in the same way, but it is evident that since he cannot know at what point to hold his reserves in readiness, the feed will not work with the same regularity and precision as on the side which has enjoyed the option of choice and the power of pre arrangement.

Regarding "formations," Captain Maude, after examining some practical experiences, observed that to keep the man in hand, the best formation is the column; but to develop the maximum fire power, that column must deploy, and deployment means loss of time at the most critical moment, with consequences familiar to all students of the Peninsula and Waterloo. Is it not better, Captain Maude asked, to take the mean and employ the line? For the regimental officer, everything hinges on bringing the men he personally commands up to the shortest possible range compatible with controlled fire. That range need not necessarily be the final range, and, in so far, it is not the decisive one. But it is the decisive one in fact, notwithstanding, for if one does not attain the first fire superiority, one will certainly never survive to reach the subsequent stages.

In the old days when men went to the wars as regularly every summer as we now go to the manoeuvres, many things which are dark now to us were clear to them. Experience had taught them that in the few weeks at their disposal steadiness could not be overdone; if by chance it was, then the bullets of the next campaign soon restored the equilibrium. But when the conditions altered, and war became the occasional—the very occasional—pursuit of the soldier, and peace his chronic employment, and as the experience of the battle field ceased by lapse of time to influence the conduct of the drill masters, this over-smartness became a positive danger, and Captain Maude declared that he for one was not disposed to throw stones at those who, twenty years ago, revolted against the pedantry of the barrack-square martinet, though he considered we had gone further than was wise in this direction, and that it was the highest time we copied the Germans again; and braced ourselves up.

If in the Napoleonic era *la morale est pour les trois-quarts*, then in these days of smokeless powder and long-range weapons it counts for more, and hence the chances of success are markedly the greater.

An incompetent commander may neutralise by his blunders the qualities of his troops, but these qualities, mainly the product of their national sense of duty, can extricate the commander; and, moreover, in proportion as the sense of duty is more or less developed in the race, the probabilities increase that incompetency will not be found in the higher ranks.

Finally, under existing conditions of society, and for many generations to come, duty and loyalty are practically synonymous terms. The average man requires a concrete symbol on which to concentrate his attention, and that symbol for us is, and remains, the Crown; and in the era of warfare which is inexorably moving towards us, Captain Maude ventured to predict that victory in the long run would incline to that nation which had remained true to a monarchical form of government. Philosophers may reason about and sacrifice themselves for abstractions, even for Humanity with a capital H, but the rank and file of the nation requires something more tangible.—*United Service Gazette*, April 1.