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LESSONS OF THE DECADE APPLIED.

No. II.

BY A VOLUNTEER CAVALRYMAN.

(From the United States Army and Navy Journal.)

LIASSO DRILL—THE MITRAILLEUSE.

THE LIASSO will be forty feet long and fastened to a ring on the off side of the surcingle, the coils hang on the same side of the saddle within reach of the hand. To use it the instructor commands, after proper explanation and illustration, *Open—LIASSOS*. Take up the liasso with both hands. Open the noose and gather up several coils in each hand. The noose is held as follows:—After opening to about six feet across, take one side of the noose on the palm of the right hand, with the line of the liasso itself also laid thereon, the eye or loop of the liasso in front of the hand, about six inches therefrom. Close the hand and gather up the coils of the liasso.

The men will be exercised singly by galloping in a circle past a post, at the word: *By file—SWING LIASSOS*. At the word "liassos" the first man starts on a canter, swinging the open noose round his head. As he passes the post, he liassos it if he can. To help carts and artillery the men will ride up singly, and drop the nooses of their liassos as directed by their officers. To start a heavy load, always keep the liasso in the right hand at first, to avoid breakage by sudden strains. In turning to the left it must also be taken in hand, or it will get under the tail and frighten the horse. In narrow roads take it up short to turn corners, etc., and let out when in free space, to avoid crowding horses together. Colonels should practice putting fifty or sixty men to ammunition waggons or heavy siege guns, to accustom the men to difficulties. Liasso drill should be taught to green cavalry to be used in the field, even before sabre drill. It is always useful in campaigning. Recruits unfit for other duty can be made useful to help trains and heavy guns, etc.

The Gatling gun or American mitrailleuse will be issued for cavalry service as follows: To every brigade one section of two pieces with a caisson to each piece, provided with spare parts to replace those lost or disabled. The ordnance officer of the brigade will be a captain of artillery, and besides issuing ordnance stores will command the section. Regimental ordnance sergeants shall be detailed from the artillery and command pieces and caissons, besides helping regimental ord-

nance officers. The latter shall replace the captain according to seniority in case of death or disability, unless the brigade commander shall otherwise direct. All the men of the regiments shall be successively instructed in the school of the piece, and twelve men with a corporal shall be assigned to each gun and caisson to draw it with their liassos. These men shall be detailed in rotation, and shall not be required to do picket duty till the second day after their tour of liasso duty.

When the road admits, they shall march in column two guns abreast, each followed by its caisson. If not, guns and caissons shall march separately and not together by piece and caisson.

To go into action the battery leader commands—*In battery to the* (wherever it may be front, rear, or left)—*MARCH*. At the word "march," the drivers gallop up, following the wave of the leader's sabre, and wheel the guns around, one to the right, the other to the left, leaving them pointed at the enemy and within ten feet of each other. The corporal dismounts together with the ordnance sergeant. The corporal unlimbers, the sergeants points and trails the piece. The men being numbered previously from 1 to 12, 1, 2, and 3 dismount. The horses are held by the next men to each. Men on artillery duty may put their sabres on the limber for convenience.

The limber is taken back ten feet, and the drivers all dismount. No. 1 commences to hand out cartridge feed-cases. As he takes them from the limber he hands them to No. 2, who carries them to the corporal. The corporal feeds them into the hopper, and removes each feed case as it becomes empty, receiving a full one in exchange.

No. 3 turns the crank. The sergeant attends to the pointing. The limber should be filled with feed cases, all filled with cartridges. The caisson contains loose cartridges. Caissons will halt and wheel round behind their guns. The caisson sergeants will send Nos. 1 and 2 back and forth to the limber with full feed-cases, to fetch back empty ones. He fills them himself.

It becoming desirable to limber up, the battery officer commands, *Cease firing! Limber to the*, etc. The corporal limbers up. No. 1 closes the lid. The rest mount and the gun is taken off.

Mitrailleuse firing is most effective at 100 to 500 yards. With the half-inch gun, the practice is inaccurate beyond 500 yards, but with the one-inch gun fair shooting can be made beyond it. The gun should be considered as a good piece inside of 500 yards, and as a rule not used beyond that distance. The sparing use of ammunition must be insisted on by brigade commanders; a section

getting out of ammunition in a crisis betrays a poor officer at its head. To repel a charge at close quarters, the American mitrailleuse is invincible, if in good hands. To storm it in the enemy's hands, charge in open skirmishing order, and get to the flanks of the battery. The instant a piece is taken, liasso it and gallop it off at full speed.

MR. CARDWELL'S RECRUITS.

A disheartening letter on this subject, signed by "A Deputy Inspector General," has appeared in the *London Times*. The writer says:—"I do not suppose our War Minister condescends to consult his medical department as to the worth of boy recruits. His confession that under his management the service can command no others should be regarded as an admission of his utter failure. We are about to get a sham army at a cost of sixteen millions. This is the real honest truth. I will give you the history of such recruits, hundreds of whom have passed through my hands. The very sergeants who present them are ashamed of them. I remember asking an old Kaffir War man. 'What is the use of that lad as a soldier? Do you suppose you could ever get him to the banks of the Kee?' The reply was, 'Lord! no, Sir; we should leave him in a roadside ditch long before we got that length.' Such recruits are with difficulty got through their drill; they are too weak for it, and for their musket and accoutrements. They drink to keep up their strength, they get palpitation of the heart, they are shipped off, say, to the Mediterranean or India, either die like flies or get invalidated after a year or so, stay best part of another year in hospital, and are then discharged penniless, to give the service a bad name far and wide. There is no regimental surgeon who will not tell you that it is ruinous folly to send lads to soldier in India. The expenses first and last of recruiting such weeds far exceed what would enable us to command first-rate men, but the public only looks to the first cost, loses sight of the recruit, and never thinks or knows the mode of tracking the sums paid for his passage out and home, pay while ineffective, medical treatments, diet, wine, &c. The country hears with satisfaction that bounties are not now given, that pensions are dodged, that men are done into giving you the ten best years of their life without adding to the 'dead weight,' but only wonders the more how sixteen millions sterling can be spent and yet leave us without any reliable force, with, in fact, a paper army. It is like the great dockyard mystery to the public, but