

"The field exercise book should, I think, be remodelled at once, not so much by instituting a new system of drill generally, as by wiping out from it the drill-sergeant and barrack-square peculiarities that render our present system of drill unsuited for war.

"All our movements are made upon points: now the use of such points on the day of battle would be impossible. We, therefore, during peace, pursue a system of movements that we could not practise in presence of an enemy, and we rely for executing them accurately upon aids which we are necessarily deprived of when these movements have to be made for a real purpose.

"The movements that are performed in war are few: when those are practised in peace, they should be carried out as nearly as possible in the same manner as they would be in presence of an enemy. The foreign officers who had recently come from the actions of a great war, must have laughed to themselves as they saw our infantry, during the autumn manœuvres, deploying under an imaginary fire with a slowness and attention to dressing that was more suited for the stage than for actual warfare."

We give the following extract from the essay of Lieut. C. Cooper King, Royal Marine Artillery, written to the same effect and in competition for the same prize:—

"The basis of all strategical and tactical dispositions is the study of ground. No fixed rules can be laid down for the minor movements of a regiment. All we can hope to do is to utilise the drill the men have had in the broadest and freest sense, according to the topographical peculiarities of the field, and it is in this more than all else our military system fails. We convert the civilian into a drilled machine, we teach him habits of obedience and discipline, we make him move with regularity at the word of command, and there, at the very point where his true education should begin, we leave him. How to utilise cover, how to occupy a village or a wood without the risk of being cut off or captured, how and when to make the rush forward that brings success, or the retreat that prevents disaster, is, to the mass of the English soldiery, a sealed book. We have taught him how to spell, not how to combine his words, his details of drill, when the time arrives. The true soldier's art only begins at this point, never ends there. * * * Mere drill, the details of a simple movement, are of no great moment in the field. In rough, broken ground the accurate deployment of a line, or the actual continuity of the regiments, are even now recognised as impossible. But the deployment is still carried out in a very rough practical way, probably, and the men recollect only the general principles, not the details, of the drill-book. Thus all mere parade-work is equally valuable for training the soldier to combined movement, equally valueless if pedantically insisted on in the field."

On reading this, our Minister of Militia will no doubt stand aghast and say,—But if all foot-drill and parade movements are useless, what are we to do? How can I spend the money voted without resorting to fraudulent practices? I have so many *Field*