

How different is the case now a days? The skirmishing order must be the order under fire in these days of paramount and overwhelming artillery practice. The infantry must be spread out, the men must be at considerable intervals, it will be necessary to give a much more extended front to the battalion than it showed formerly. The result must be that, as cover depends upon the inequalities of ground, no regular line, no unbending formation, can be maintained.

Such are the plain, undeniable facts of the case, and the Prussians, in preparing for their grand martial epiphany, took good care to accommodate their tactical unit to the requirements of modern warfare. In their army the company is the tactical unit; and in battle it is a semi-independent command. Thus the difficulty before mentioned is readily met and disposed of, and all know how well the Prussian plan succeeded.

But here arises another difficulty on our side. Almost every subaltern in the Prussian Army can take the place of a field officer at least, at a moment's notice; and it may be safely averred that no Prussian subaltern, certainly no Prussian captain of a company, was ever ignorant of the general plan of an action about to be commenced, or was over at a loss as to what he had to do in any emergency. We have, therefore, not only to adopt this change in our organization, but we must take steps to insure that the officers commanding companies shall be competent to assume such a grave responsibility.

Perhaps those who were bold enough to abolish purchase before securing an adequate system to it efficiently, will be bold and good enough to lose no time in training the efficient officers who are to be insured to the service by that great revolution in the Army.

In the meantime, however, no time should be lost in introducing into the infantry a more elastic, pliable, and manageable formation.

The requisite training should be applied both to officers and men; and as all is now to be settled by merit, natural competition alone will doubtless stimulate our young officers to such efforts as may enable them to compare favourably with the patient, submissive, indolent, bloated subaltern peddlers of the Prussian Army, who being competent to command an army corps, contentedly spoke their pipe, wondering if they will ever be promoted! Doubtless, it is "a fine time coming" for young British officers; and, fortunately, even intelligent privates—since any of them may find a marshal's baton in their brain and character. In our previous number we detailed the Prussian method of training their officers. We commend it to our administrators, perfectly assured that some such method resolutely pursued will soon reassure those who tremble for the efficiency of the command of our Army, in the abolition of one mode of its officering before securing another—namely, promotion by merit, throughout the Army—as an adequate preparation for the abolition of purchase at the time when it would have had the character of a revolution.

The adoption of the Prussian company system would secure other advantages. As the responsibility of each company leader—in independent action—would be increased, less superior supervision would be required, and thus the three field officers now attached to every battalion could, without risk, or rather, perhaps, with advantage, be reduced to one.

Secondly, this change would enable us to discover the weakness of companies in every battalion, as discovered by the Prussians in

theirs, establishing the fact that a small number of large companies is more effective in the field and more economical in garrison.

In advocating these changes in our military system, it is impossible to omit calling attention to existing evils, which, if continued, would, neutralize all the advantages that might be secured by the increased mobility or rapidity of movement of our Army. The equipment of the British soldier is not adapted for rapid locomotion. We must considerably diminish his impedimenta, the appropriate name given by the Romans to "baggage," clearly pointing to its effect on the feet of the soldier. It has been truly observed that, when exposed to the privations of war, our infantry soldiers are forced to bear a burden which would handicap any pedestrian in the height of training out of any chance of successfully meeting his engagements. That the cruel absurdity has always existed, and still exists in other armies, is no reason why we should not take the lead, for once, in effecting a sensible military reform. If modern campaigns will not necessarily be so short that the soldier will not require any change of raiment during their progress, at any rate, it is pretty certain that continuous active operations will never be maintained for more than a few days consecutively, and after a few days of rapid movement a halt must ensue, when the soldier may have recourse to his knapsack, which it is certain, he rarely opens during the course of operations. Let the knapsacks be then brought up by the army transport. Of course, lines of railway will frequently do this service in future, since lines of operation must always follow lines of railway.

It is certain that Napoleon had the strongest objection to baggage, and animadverted on any excess beyond the limits which he prescribed.

Again, the preparation of tents or camp equipments is absurdly profuse, seeming to infer that our troops will find no towns or villages to shelter them. It was a long time before the Germans received tents during the late war; and they fared very well without them—besides being in better condition, by the diminution of burdens, to derive all the advantages of their mobility secured to them over their hampered antagonists. Camp equipment, excepting for distant wars, as in China or Abyssinia, is unnecessary, expensive in itself and in its conveyance. It is found that the camp equipment of a battalion on a war footing would require twelve waggons for the carriage; and thus the total transport necessary for that item in an army of 60,000 men would be of enormous and unwieldy bulk.

Surely, it will be advisable for our administrators to take this matter into consideration. The abolition of the abuse will not only "save money," but will also promote that mobility which is now found to be the essential and indispensable guarantee of success in armies.

The altered requirements of future battle fields must certainly tend to simplify our field exercises and drill. Much less will be henceforth required; but the little to be retained must be thoroughly well done. In this department, however, there is one

*Nine years ago (in the *Volunteer Service Gazette*), the writer of this article advocated the leading principles now again in vogue, after their sanction by Parliament. In the late war, especially the necessity for efficient independent command in companies, owing to the extended sphere of battle-field, consequent to the introduction of arms of precision and the more effective employment of artillery; and most of the suggestions have been since incidentally reproduced by him in the *United Service Magazine*.

thing which may be abolished with great advantage, with reference to the acquisition of mobility—we mean the rigid holding of the left arm steady at the side in marching. Of course, in a campaign this "regulation" will not be attended to, why hamper the soldier with it in the time of preparation for warfare? It is certain that it intensifies the physical distress of evolutions, and destroys that sense of equilibrium or aplomb which is an essential aid to rapid locomotion.

It is different with the regulated step. This should be accurately acquired since it is an aid in calculating distances to be gone over in a given time—which is all-important in warfare. Napoleon said that "in battle men are nothing, minutes are all." This may be questioned, but the Prussians in the late war demonstrated the importance of certainty as to time in their operations.

In conclusion, let the uniform of the British soldier be adapted to the increased rapidity of motion which will be required of him in future service. If we must still fondly cling to the objectionable scarlet, at any rate let the soldier's garments be shaped with a view to freedom and comfort in locomotion and in action. The notions of pipe-clay etiquette and elegance should be discarded, whilst an appeal may be made to the wiser principles of physiology and the Army Medical Department, rather than continue to submit to the dictates of the tailor-martinet in authority.

The *Paris Figaro* gives the following method of obtaining light instantaneously without the use of matches and without the danger of setting things on fire: Take an oblong vial of the whitest, and clearest glass, put in it a piece of phosphorus about the size of a pea, upon which pour some olive oil, heated to a boiling point, filling the vial about one-third full and then seal the vial hermetically. To use it, remove the cork and allow the air to enter vial and then recork it. The whole empty space in the bottle will then become luminous, and the light obtained will be equal to that of a lamp. As soon as the light grows weak its power can be increased by opening the vial and allowing a fresh supply of air to enter. In winter it is sometimes necessary to heat the vial between the hands to increase the fluidity of the oil. Thus prepared the vial may be used for six months. This contrivance is now used by the watchman of Paris in all magazines where explosive or inflammable materials are stored.

A large lynx was lately killed after a sharp contest with the dogs, by Mr. Jas. Cooper of Luther, on the town line between that township and Proton. Another was killed shortly afterwards on the town line between Egremont and Proton, by Mr. William. McPhee, of Egremont. These animals have been doing considerable execution among sheep and fowls in the townships named.

The *Chatham Planet* now says it makes no difference, as the Ontario Legislature is only a big County Council anyway!

Mr. Edgar has been formally nominated for the Commons by the Reformers of Monck and has accepted the nomination.

A consignment of 85 cases of butter, weighing over 5 tons, was shipped from Carleton Place to a firm in Brockville by rail on Saturday last.

The *Collingwood Enterprise* comes to us in an enlarged form and in a new dress.

The Queen has sent three pounds stg., to Mrs. Seals, of Toronto, who gave birth to triplets last January.

The Montreal Drill Shed has caved in