

of one or two extra pairs of overalls upon the men, and several pound of extra weight for their horses to carry. Hessian boots can only be worn with knee breeches and as knee-breeches will not do for foot parades, or for stables, special overalls have to be kept for those occasions. Again, as the Hessian boot cannot well be worn under cloth trousers, a pair of extra plain boots will have to be kept by the Dragoon for this special wear.

On service we will venture to predict that the Hessian boot will, from its size and shape turn out a failure. These boots are all too small for the men, and the result will be at the coming Manœuvres (m) that the men's feet will swell so much as to interfere with their getting the boots on again in the morning when they have taken them off overnight. When they have taken them off—will they do so, we wonder, if there is any difficulty about getting them on again? Perhaps not: time will tell. However, the fact stares us in the face, that both our Cavalry and Infantry men have boots supplied to them which no civilian who could beg or borrow the price of a pair would think of wearing. A tight boot is torture to wear, and it would perhaps be quite as well if the authorities cast their eyes about in search of a comfortable boot for soldiers to march in as to expend all their time in looking after monster guns and improved rifles. It should be kept in mind that marching is of equal importance to fighting; so it logically follows that next to the arms soldiers are called upon to use, are the shoes or boots they have to wear when marching. The military boots should fit easily, be water proof, easily put on and off, and easily repaired. Now, we believe that in the new boot patented by Mr. Parker Rhodes these essentials are combined. This boot is a compound of the comfortable walking shoe and gaiter. To the sole proper a round heel and clump sole are attached by screws, and from the wearing surfaces, which consequently can be replaced by the wearers when necessary. The upper leathers are also fastened to the soles by screws, the sole being composed of an inner leather, an intermediate waterproof material, and an outer leather. The upper is formed of two or more pieces, so cut, that when closed one covers the other like a flap and so effectively as to keep out wet or dust entirely. When open, the whole inside of the boot lies exposed to view, which admits of its being cleaned and aired thoroughly. Over the upper a vamp shield, or cap of leather covers the front of the boot from the toe to the leg, an additional preventive to the entrance of wet or dust. The mode of fastening the boot is by a single lace passing through eyelets under the buttons, thus enabling the wearer to have an easy or tight fit at pleasure, therefore the boot can always be altered so as to fit comfortably. So readily, too, is this boot made, that any soldier being supplied with this cut pieces can make them himself into boots in an hour's time re-soleing and heeling is of course more easily done. A boot of this kind would be more serviceable to the cavalry and artillery than the neat but useless Hessian they are now compelled to wear. The advantages of such a boot as the Parker Rhodes is at once apparent if worn with cloth overalls. In fact we consider that good high-lows are for a cavalry man far preferable to the boot now worn. Cloth overalls, as we have remarked already, are the most serviceable. In the first place, they do for all duties, mounted or dismounted; and secondly,

when a pair of high lows are bored for spur bolts to go through, if a man's boots were bad or soaking wet, he could wear his high lows without any trouble, and thus be able to ensure a change which at times might be the saving of his life. So the Dragoon could not only do with fewer boots, but fewer pairs of overalls, if we were to go back to all cloth trousers; a matter of some consequence, when it is taken into consideration that, before long, Dragoons will have to go on service very lightly equipped indeed—if they are to be of any use in a campaign, that is to say.

The weapons of horse soldiers should be confined to the sword or lance and a long-barreled pistol. The sword should be nearly straight, and the Dragoon taught more about thrusts than cuts. A long barreled rifled pistol or revolver would carry and kill at 600 yards, and with it a man would, when mounted, make sure of a far better aim than he could do with the present "Westley Richard's carbine." We do not for a moment wish to disparage the weapon we have last named; far from it, as we believe it is the best gun the cavalry have ever had. We object to it, and all carbines, for cavalry, as it is impossible for any man to hold a gun with one hand, mounted, and fire with any chance of hitting the object fired at. If he rests the muzzle on the left or bridle arm, the least movement of his horse's head, at the moment of firing, must cause the bullet to fly wide of the mark aimed at, and if he holds it with one hand, the moment he attempts to pull the trigger with his forefinger, all aim he had before is at once lost, in short no one could tell where or in what direction that bullet might go. Now, with a pistol and a slightly bent arm, a very fair aim can be taken, and with a weapon capable of killing at 600 yards, we would give our cavalry soldiers an arm not only more handy and reliable than they have at present, but one that does not weigh half as much.

With a long-barreled pistol would disappear the pouch and belt which our Dragoons are now compelled to wear. The pouch could be fastened on to the sword belt by loops, so that it could be shifted behind when not required. The sword should be in a leather scabbard with but one ring to it, and but one sling to the belt. Of course, we would do away with the lower ring of the scabbard and the long carriage of the sword-belt—a change that most cavalrymen would welcome. The sword itself should be as light as possible; a light weapon would not only be equally efficacious, but much easier used than the heavier one. The late Captain Nolan, in his excellent but now almost forgotten work on "Cavalry Tactics," describes his astonishment at finding a squadron of Irregular Horse in India armed with swords made from old Light Dragoon blades, that had been cast, and sold as unserviceable for our troops. As he also strongly advocated the one-sling system of supporting the scabbard, we will give the extract referred to in full:—

"The sword-blades they (the irregular cavalry) had were chiefly old Dragoon blades cast from our service. The men had mounted them after their own fashion. The hilt and handle, both of metal, small in the grip, rather flat, not round like ours, where the edge seldom falls true; they all had an edge like a razor from heel to point, were worn in wooden scabbards, a short single sling held them to the waist-belt, from which a strap passed through the hilt to a button in front; to keep the sword

steady and prevent it flying out of the scabbard.

"Thinking the wooden scabbards might be objected to, as not suitable for campaigning, I got a return from one of these regiments, and found the average of broken scabbards below that of the regulars, who have steel ones. The steel is snapped by a kick or a fall; the wood, being elastic, bends. They are not in the man's way, when dismounted they do not get between his legs, and trip him up; they make no noise—a soldier on sentry on a dark night might move about without betraying his position to an enemy by the clanking of the rings against the scabbard. All that rattling in column, which announces its approach when miles off, and makes it so difficult to hear a word of command in the ranks, is thus got rid of, as well as the necessity of wrapping straw and hay round the scabbards, as is now customary, when engaged in any service in which an attempt is to be made to surprise an enemy."

We might continue for pages adducing fresh facts against the uselessness of the present steel scabbard and heavy sword, but our space will not admit of this. However, the objections are so evident that we believe no sane soldier will contradict them; so we pass on to the accoutrements, &c., which cavalry horses are overburdened with.

The first article we would dispense with is the *Sheepskin*, which is of no earthly value, except by its colour to attract the sun's heat in fine weather, and to hold after a shower the rain in wet weather. Examining its inutility further, we find that it for five minutes effectually prevents the Dragoon from getting to his cloak, valises, or valise, and as in that time he might either be thoroughly drenched through with rain, or have picketed his horse, the unserviceableness of the sheepskin will be more and more apparent. The same remarks apply equally to the *ornamental shabbarque*, which, serving no purpose whatever, is a torment to both steed and rider. Substitute a waterproof cape—not, however to cover the saddle but the Dragoon, in wet weather when mounted, and the ground on which he has to rest in camp or bivouac—and a useful article would take the place of a useless one; an article that has lightness as well as other advantages in its favour. The valise should also be done away with, the valises being made large enough to hold a woollen shirt, extra towel, and two pairs of socks additional to what they now hold. The saddle to be almost a plain hunting one, with strap in front and a highish fork, to secure cloak and valises to. Shoe cases to be attached to rings at the cantle of the saddle, the mess tin fitting on the near-side, and the pistol holster on the off-side shoe case. Heelropes, pegs, and waterproof cape to be fastened being, in a similar manner to the way the valise is now. We would do away likewise with the crupper and the breastplate which only prevents a horse from jumping or moving freely, while they add more weight for him to carry. The headstall and big bit could be made much lighter as well, and if the useless collar chain was discarded for good, a great gain would result. In the field against the enemy, or when practising sham battle at home, collar-chains are never used to fasten the horses with; therefore, in the name of common sense, why should they be tolerated at other times? Let them and their accompanying cast iron logs disappear, and likewise shabbarques, sheepskins, valises, carbines, foragenets, breastplates and cruppers, and we will guarantee that the British Cavalry will not only be more efficient, and be able to turn out on any

(m) This paper was written two months since.