

[Written expressly for "THE REVIEW."]

ALTERATIONS IN DRILL.

Altho' there can be little question of the superior simplicity of "sections of fours" to the present formation, as regards *fours* alone; and I think but little doubt of the general utility of subdivisions and sections except for the formation of square from column, yet it must be confessed that there is a difficulty. Not in the formation of a four-deep square, which was shown in a previous article to be simple and free from liability to confusion; much more so indeed than by "sections outwards." But in forming a two deep square there is a difficulty in adhering to the one formation of fours, and in securing at the same time an even division of the company for wheeling outwards.

The following sketch of an imaginary portion of instructions for proving a company, will both point out the nature of the dilemma and also a mode of obviating it.

I am sensible, however, that this method, although the variations involved in it would be a greater tax on the proving officer than on the men, is open to the charge of unnecessary, or at all events inconvenient, complication, and I append it as an illustration rather than as a solution of the difficulty.

It would, no doubt, be an admirable arrangement if companies could always be made to consist not only of perfect multiples of four file but of even numbers of such multiples; but as this could scarcely ever be the rule there appears to me at present to be only the following ways of simplifying the proving of a company as shadowed out in the appended memorandum.

First—to withdraw into the supernumerary rank all men beyond perfect sections, who would stand less than three file in front, which would leave one sub-division one file less only than the other, as is frequently the case now.

Secondly—to withdraw into the supernumerary rank such men as would stand less than two file in front, making the two centre sections three file each if the company should consist of an uneven number of perfect sections besides the odd two file, or also to withdraw such file if they should stand between equal numbers of perfect sections.

There is, however, an unsatisfactory amount of complication about either plan, and perhaps after all the simplest way would be to tell off in subdivisions as now, for the purpose *only* of forming two deep square, and then number off in fours.

We should thus at least get rid of "sections," which are far more puzzling to the men than subdivisions. But even if both should be retained, I trust to see the wheel of sections of fours substituted for the present mode of forming fours.

I cannot help thinking also that the Facings might be made more easy of acquirement by separating them into two classes, and by treating the Right Face, Left Face,

light-half-Face, and Left-half-Face somewhat in the American way. The reason why I advocate this is that experience has convinced me that the three different degrees in which the foot is drawn back or advanced, tend more to confuse raw and not over bright recruits, than decided differences would. The mind is, I think, more impressed with contrasts than with gradations. It is certainly so in music. The uncultivated ear and crude taste which might readily enough pick up "Dixie" or "Johnny comes marching home," would be utterly insensible to the soft modulations of "Ah! che la morte."

It might be worth consideration whether some such instruction as the following might not render those facings before mentioned easier to the recruit and to the Instructor; especially as no pauses of time are involved.

To the Right—Face. On the word Face—keeping the weight of the body well over the forepart of the feet—slightly raise the forepart of the right foot and turn a quarter circle to the right on the right heel, raising the left heel slightly from the ground at the same time, and assisting the turn by a slight pressure on the ground of the toes of the left foot. The whole to be done in one motion.

Similar instructions, reversing the feet, would teach the Left-Face; and, substituting the right for the quarter-circle would be all that would be required for the half-faces, and if any will try it it will not take long to convince him of the perfect ease, rapidity, and simplicity of the motions.

A certain liability to unsteadiness from the greater swing required to face to the Right about &c., deters me from advocating the extension of the single-motion facing further; the other three, viz: Right-about, Right-about three quarters, and Left-about three quarters, (for Left-about need never be taught) might therefore continue to be taught as at present, and would lose nothing of their effect by contrast with the first four.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very obediently,
G. W.

PROVING A COMPANY.

Some care on the part of the Instructor or the Officer telling off a company is requisite to meet the requirements of forming a two-deep square by the outward wheel of the two halves of a company, which for this purpose, will still be denominated "sub-divisions." To this end the company will first be numbered from Right to Left in order that the proving officer may know the number of files with which he has to deal.

If the company be found to consist of an even number of perfect sections (of fours), say four, or of three perfect sections, and one with a blank file (which will be considered a perfect section) no difficulty will be experienced.

An imperfect section, if an odd section, will be made the centre one. If not an odd

one it will be made the left centre section. A blank file will be left in the nearest place to the centre of which the formation of the company will admit.

Similarly—if the imperfect section (not being an odd one) consist of three, or of two and a half file, it will wheel with the left sub-division, which, in either case, will be only one file less in front than the right sub-division.

If the company consist of an uneven number of sections, say five, the centre section (perfect or imperfect) will be instructed, on the command "sub-divisions outwards"—to wheel its front rank to the right, and its rear rank, when clear, to the left, and to form respectively in rear of the right and left faces, thereby reinforcing the sides of the square, and being in readiness to repair casualties.

But if it consist of an uneven number of perfect sections, and a section which stands less than three file in front, it will require a different arrangement.

Thus, if the imperfect (the left centre) section, be two file, or one and a half strong, the two centre sections will be made to consist of three file each in front, instead of four, which will equalize the subdivisions.

An odd file, or a blank odd file, will be the centre file in a company composed of an even number of sections.

In a company composed of an even number of sections, it will move and reinforce the sides of the square with the centre section, its front rank man to the right, its rear rank man to the left.

When the number of sections is even, an odd or odd blank file will move similarly, the front rank man to the rear of the right face of the square—the rear rank man, if any, to the rear of the left face.

In reducing a two-deep square, the men of an odd section or of an odd file, will double independently into their position in column on the caution, taking up their dressing as nearly as they can for the outer sections to wheel back upon.

(After which the proving would continue as might be laid down.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

HEAD QUARTERS,

10th Royals, Toronto, Oct. 8th, 1868.

To the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR:—My attention has been attracted to a paragraph in your paper in reference to the system of drill adopted last June for the Regiment which I have the honor to command, and I crave permission to point out two or three errors into which you have apparently fallen.

You speak of a memorandum issued for the guidance of the officers and Drill instructor of the regiment, as the introduction of changes in the Infantry Drill originated by myself.

Had you read the Note by which the