

The German Cavalry.

A Military correspondent of the *London Times*, writing from Welsrode, Hanover September 5, says: "Among the many Autumn manoeuvres that are now being held in all parts of Germany, perhaps the most instructive are those at present being carried out at this place. It may be said that ever since the existence of Prussia as a military nation the cavalry has been that arm in which it has specially excelled, and to which it has devoted the most unwearied attention. Ziethen and Seidlitz were probably the most able cavalry leaders that the world has known since the invention of gunpowder, and, still more, they may be declared to have laid the foundation of Prussia's greatness. To Seidlitz belongs the honor of having won the battle of Zorndorf: Apart, however, from his own brilliant successes, the principles which Seidlitz inaugurated were types that every cavalry leader copied for many succeeding generations. Kellermann and Murat, the celebrated generals of the First Napoleon, were but imitators of Seidlitz, and although for many years his principle and teaching have been allowed to fade out of memory, their real value once more is being appreciated. During the long peace after the battle of Waterloo, the Prussian cavalry, like that of every other nation, somewhat rested on the laurels they had gained in the past. In 1866, though on every occasion they displayed their accustomed bravery, they cannot be said to have come up to their standard of former years, or to that which they have since reached. Poor Captain May, in his 'Tactical Retrospect,' pointed out their shortcomings, and although during his lifetime, like many other tellers of truth, he only met with resentment, his warnings were not unheeded. Four years of incessant labor resulted in the efficiency which produced such brilliant results contributed so much to the gigantic success of 1870. Still it is felt that there remains something yet to be done—the problem for the most effective use of cavalry under the altered conditions of war has not yet been solved.

"Will it ever still play an important part in a general action, or must it rest content without post duty and with holding in check the cavalry of the enemy? If used as in former days, it must inevitably suffer annihilation, like the French cavalry in every battle of 1870 where it was engaged. So convinced are the chiefs of the German army that much is now to be learnt in the handling of cavalry, that they are now busy making experiments with it, and this is the principal place where the experiments are being made.

There are now here three cavalry brigades each comprising two regiments, and together forming one division, under the orders of Major General von Witzendorff, the commandant of the riding establishment at Hanover, where there is the great central school of instruction for the cavalry of the German army. To this cavalry division an 'Abtheilung' or three batteries of horse artillery is attached, and a party of engineers. Each cavalry regiment manoeuvres on its war footing of four squadrons—now, as in war, the fifth squadron being left behind to form a depot for sick and young horses. The strength of each squadron in the field is about 120, including non-commissioned officers, men and officers being called in from the reserve to fill up any vacancies during the manoeuvres. I shall in a future letter enter into details regarding the manner in which the Prussian cavalry is mounted, from which it will be seen that, weak as the Eng-

lish cavalry appear on parade, they turn out far more horses in comparison with their nominal strength than is done in this country. In fact, the taxpayer gets his full money's worth; but whether it is real economy to work young horses, with enormous weights on their backs, before they have attained their full strength, is quite another question, and one which may well engage the most serious attention of our military authorities.

"Prince Frederick Charles came here on Thursday, and was present at the drills on Friday and Saturday. The Prince of Bavaria, who commands a regiment of Bavarian Cuirassiers, arrived on Friday afternoon, and it is understood will remain here until the drills conclude on Wednesday next. The Duke of Connaught is expected this afternoon from Hanover, where he will be the guest of Prince Albert of Prussia. General Walker has been here since the drills commenced, and is watching their course with eager and critical interest, since it may be said that they are the practical test of a new system of cavalry tactics, introduced last year as a tentative measure, or rather resuscitated from the time of Seidlitz.

"At the present time, when military science is advancing with such rapid strides, and when all the nations of Europe are devoting so much attention to its perfection, experiments in manoeuvring are just as valuable and are just as deserving of close attention and remark as torpedo, field artillery, or other trials. This is more especially the case with respect to cavalry manoeuvres as regards the English army. It is seldom possible to collect in England a force of cavalry large enough to be manoeuvred in masses, and in point of fact, there is only one district or piece of ground—namely, the downs of Wiltshire—suitable for the handling of large bodies of cavalry. In Germany, as is well known, they have very exceptional advantages from the open and clear nature of their country, which is free from serious obstacles, and as a rule, fairly open.

"In this neighborhood the land partakes of the usual characteristics of North Germany, with the exception that there are numerous plantations, which are strictly preserved, troops being on no account allowed to enter them. Probably, however, on account of the claims that would be made for compensation, the cavalry here do not manoeuvre over the open country, but confine themselves to about 5,000 acres of waste land that lie about a mile and a half to the south of his town, and are also the only available spot for extended exercises in the district. In my next letter I shall endeavor to describe in detail some of the leading principles of new cavalry tactics."

Russia the Menacing Power.

In the new number of *Macmillan* Colonel Chesney offers an altogether new solution of the so-called "French scare," which will, at any rate, be found a useful supplement to, or corrective of, the well known *Blackwood* article, by those whom the latter interested. The writer's main design, however, appears to be to do away with the common impression that because France was still very weak last May, therefore there could be no truth at all in the report that Count von Moltke, and others who thought with him, strongly urged war counsels at Berlin.

Colonel Chesney asserts roundly that France was quite as backward as the *Blackwood* writer has represented, and is positive that her exact condition was at least as well ascertained in what he calls "the giant

bureau on the Thiergarten" (Count von Moltke's new office, which is, in truth, a sort of military palace) as it could possibly have been to any writer for an English magazine. But then he points out forcibly and in great detail that it is not France as the possible ally of other first class powers, that makes Berlin strategists uneasy. In fact, putting her aside as being altogether unable to play the leading part in the new military future of Europe, Colonel Chesney declares that Russia or Austria must be the real cause of that German uneasiness which not long ago caused very serious disquietude as to the maintenance of peace. Discussing somewhat in detail the position of each of these two great empires, Colonel Chesney finally clears the ground by dismissing Austria from consideration as as affording, of herself, no real cause for uneasiness, and turns to "the formidable Muscovite Empire" as the one power in Europe which Germany has any ground to fear. In both the great motive powers which make for war are astir, and Russia is busily occupied in preparations for the ultimate realization of her dream of military grandeur. But, single handed, Germany is, according to the views put forward, more than a match for her gigantic rival. And the true secret of the longing lately shown to crush France out of sight altogether, so to speak, and certainly without any real provocation on her part, lies in the fixed belief, held at Berlin, that, if this be not done, when once France is again fully equipped, and Russia has completed the reorganization which her Czar and people alike consider necessary to her greatness, a combined attack from either flank will certainly be made on Germany.

Colonel Chesney gives a brief, but clear, outline of what this Russian reorganization is intended to do, and the means for doing it; and, if the authorities (Austrian, apparently, chiefly) that he follows be correct, it seems that Russia will ultimately have, besides a field army numbering a million and half (reserve men, ready at call, included), at least another half million troops, in the form of reserve battalions and garrison regiments, to be formed from the present depôts. These two millions of her fighting line are to be supported by the Opoltscheni, or Lansturm, of another million, "a mature force intended to occupy a position between that of the German Landwehr and Lansturm," and very suitable, in fact, for frontier service. And these three millions of men, who would be constantly under arms in the event of any hostilities, would be backed, in the event of invasion, by two millions more of local Opoltscheni, formed out of the older classes of discharged soldiers.

It is not easy to grasp all the details of this vast project. As the *Macmillan* article truly states, the system adopted under the new Russian law is more complicated and varied than the German, or, indeed, that of any other great nation. Still, broadly speaking, it is quite certain that Russia intends, before many years are passed, to be able to throw on a neighbor a million and a half of soldiers of the first line, closely followed by a reserve, or second line, of half a million more, and then leaving another million to guard the frontiers and cover their rear, with two millions to be called out (making five in all) if war roll back within her holy territory. And it is certain that all this is perfectly known and carefully studied at Berlin, and that the chance of having to grapple with such an antagonist, whilst France strikes her old blow across the Rhine, is not a pleasant contingency.

Colonel Chesney finally points out that