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LESSONS OF THE DECADE APPLIED.

No. I.

BY A VOLUNTEER CAVALRYMAN.

(From the United States Army and Navy Journal.)

ACCOMPANYING the articles on cavalry, the publication of which was completed last week, is a second part, applying the principles laid down in the first part to squad, carbine, skirmish, sabre, and pistol drill, to horsemanship, troop, and regimental drill, lasso drill, and mitrailleuse practice. Without undertaking to publish this in detail, we propose to make some extracts from it, commencing with

SABRE EXERCISE AND TOURNAMENTS.

The sabre will be the ordinary Ames blade of the present United States pattern, to be issued as sharp as a razor from the factory. It will be worn in a scabbard of single black or brown leather, kept soft and supple and without any wooden lining. Near the mouth of the scabbard will be an outside sheath, to hold a small flat tablet of soapstone with a wooden handle to act as a whetstone. The sabre will always be drawn slowly and individually before exercise, and returned in the same way after it. It will be worn in a frog at the waistbelt, like the infantry sword, and not slung. In dismounted firing it will be taken out of this frog and left on the saddle in the same bucket provided for the carbine when mounted. At every halt after a long march, and every evening and morning, the sabre will be drawn and tested. If not sharp enough to cut hairs from the head or shave some off the bare arm, it must be carefully whetted until it will do so.

Dismounted sentries shall never mount guard with sabres drawn. Either they shall carry carbines, leaving the sabre in quarters, or they shall take it from the frog and carry it sheathed, and at the port (*cide post*). The point, whether bared or sheathed, shall never be allowed to rest on the ground.

Inspections of sabres and pistols shall be held daily, to keep both weapons in condition.

Officers should constantly impress on their commands the value of sharp sabres which will gash, even in the hands of a child, if kept like razors, and cut men in half at the waist in hands of soldiers of ordinary strength.

The men being perfect in drill, the instructor commands as follows, explaining and illustrating as he goes on. Attention to sabre exercise! *From the right—CORPS*

FOURS! Fours—Right! The movements are executed as in dismounted skirmish drill. The instructor then passes along the columns and designates the alternate sections as "right" and "left."

Returning to his post, he commands, "*Right and left—FILE!*" The alternate sections will file off in opposite directions, the instructor counting paces aloud. At five paces the last man of each file halts; at ten paces the next; at fifteen the next; at twenty the file leader, when the instructor commands, "*HALT! FRONT!*" when the odd sections pass to the front. The men are now stationed in a body, the breadth of a squad in line, and about forty paces deep, all under the instructor's eye, and having ample room to use their weapons.

The instructor now commands "*GUARD!*" One motion. At the word "*Guard*" carry the right foot two feet from the left, heels on a line, toes straight to the front, feet parallel. Bring up the left hand opposite the belt plate, and about six inches therefrom (bridle hand). Grasp the sabre fully with the right hand, and drop the flat of the blade on the left forearm, edge to the front.

NOMENCLATURE OF EXERCISE.

The hand can assume just two positions in fencing, *carre* and *tierce*. All others are modifications of these two. When the back of the hand is turned to the right or down, leaving the nails up or to the left, the hand is said to be in *carre*. When the nails are down or to the right, the back of the hand up or to the left, the hand is in *tierce*.

There are four kinds of sword movements, to be taught in the following order: 1, points; 2, cuts; 3, guards; 4, parries or moulinets. Each of these movements can be given on either side, and in *carre* or *tierce*. The last three may combine both positions in two motions.

The instructor explains as above, and then commands, first illustrating the order

Carre—POINT!—Three motions. 1st. At the word "*Point*," place the hand against the breast, the sabre held horizontally, the edge up, the hand in *carre*. 2nd. Thrust out the end of the arm and draw back the elbow instantly to the first position. 3rd. Come back to guard.

(N. B. This point against right or right rear, not much use on the left. Best on right front. To be directed on all these points, the instructor explaining it as a fine but not a strong thrust.)

Tierce—POINT!—Three motions. 1st. At the command "*Point*," carry the sabre, horizontally and edge upwards, opposite the right ear, the hand in *tierce*. 2nd. Thrust

out to the end of the arm and instantly draw back the elbow to first position. 3rd. Come back to guard.

(N. B. The strongest point. Available all round the body. The men are cautioned to draw back the elbow on making the point, to avoid being disarmed in action.)

Carre and tierce cut and—POINT!—Five motions. 1st. At the word "*Point*," extend the arm to the right rear as high as the head, hand in *carre*, the flat of the blade resting on right shoulder, edge to the right. 2nd. Cut horizontally from rear to front. At the end of the cut turn the wrist in *tierce*, and bring the back of the blade to the left side of the neck. 3rd. Cut horizontally back again. At the end of the cut bring the sabre back to the *tierce* point, by drawing back the elbow. 4th. Make *tierce* point. 5th. Come back to guard.

Tierce and carre cut and—POINT!—Five motions. 1st. At the word "*Point*," carry the back of the blade to the left side of the neck, the hand in *tierce*. 2nd. Cut, and come to *carre* on right shoulder. 3rd. Execute *carre* cut and draw back the elbow to *carre* point. 4th. Make *carre* point. 5th. Come back to guard.

(N. B. The men must be cautioned not to let the hand turn so as to cut with the flat of the blade, a common fault. The first of these cuts is the most useful, as it ends in the strongest of points, a *tierce*. The second is used if you can gain your adversary's left rear, as his defence is powerless against *carre* points at that time.)

Circle—DEFEND!—Three motions. 1st. At the word "*Defend*," carry the hand to the right front in *carre*, the sabre perpendicular, edge right front. Carry the guard along the whole right to the rear, turning the body to face right rear. 2nd. Turn the wrist, throw the hand above the head, and drop the point to the left rear, the hand in *tierce*, the sabre protecting the left rear. Carry the guard along the whole left down to the left leg, and rise again to cover the horse's head, ending by clearing it and guarding the right leg. 3rd. Come back to guard.

(N. B. This guard is impregnable all round against cuts. It must be carefully taught.)

Carre—PARRY!—Four motions. 1st. At the word "*Parry*," raise the hand in *carre*, the body being turned toward the right, the elbow drawn back, the blade perpendicular, edge to the rear. 2nd. Describe a sharp quick circle from rear to front downwards, the back of the blade leading, returning to first position, and turn the body to the left. 3rd. Repeat the *parry* on the left side. 4th. Come back to guard.