

SOME NOTES
ON THE
Minor Tactics of Trench Warfare

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
THE CO-OPERATION OF INFANTRY AND ENGINEERS

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

One of the most deeply rooted traditions of the British Army is that battles are won more by the strong right arm of the British fighting man than by mechanism and genius. In emphasizing this, we have perhaps underestimated the value of mechanical invention and scientific organization. It is, however, the duty of the tactician to ensure that the British soldier shall at least meet his opponent in hand to hand conflict on approximately even terms, and having ensured this much, the British soldier armed with bayonet and fired with the traditions of his race and the grandeur and justice of our cause can be safely entrusted to do the rest. The more recent development of trench warfare has introduced so many new conditions and surrounded us with an environment so entirely novel and unexpected that ideas tend to become fogged and the most nebulous and contradictory opinions exist with regard to the minor tactics of the form of warfare. Many who by their training and experience are fitted to make valuable deductions from these experiences, can only by the very nature of their duty obtain them at second hand; while of those who do obtain this experience at first hand, many are unable to make any such deductions, while of those who could so few return to tell the tale that little or no progress is gained towards the general elucidation of these problems.

Several weeks enforced idleness accompanied by frequent discussions with other similarly placed regimental officers has provided ample opportunities for thinking over these problems. The following notes originally prepared for lecture purposes comprising a preliminary attempt to crystallize some of the ideas and lessons of the last six