

lines at distances of 300 yards apart. This would certainly be the best formation in which to advance under cannon fire.

On arrival of the leading battalions within musketry range or 700 yards, of the enemy, the two flank companies should run out, extending from their outer flanks lie down at 300 yards to the front and fire; Nos. 2 and 7 companies should run out, each company in line, and lie down at 150 yards to the front; and the remaining four companies should lie down in line. The second and third lines should continue their advance. The skirmishers would then be at 400 yards distance from the enemy; the supports and reserves at distances of 150 yards to the rear; and the second and third lines would be closing up.

There should be as little delay as possible in the advance of the brigade. The object is only to get within charging distance of the enemy; to waste the enemy by fire is the proper duty of artillery, both before and during the attack. The skirmishers should gain ground by short runs, and always lie down to fire. The supports, advancing always at the double, and always lying down when not advancing, should gradually draw nearer to the skirmishers and reinforce them when they need reinforcement. The reserve, advancing always at the double, and always lying down when not advancing, should gradually draw nearer to the supports and replace them, and then reinforce the skirmishers. The second line should draw nearer to the first line, and the third line nearer to the second line, both lines lying down when not on the move. The third line should form double company columns on its passage out of the zone of cannon fire. All the formations in rear must conform with the operations of the skirmishers; and, at any time during the advance, every formation in rear should be near enough to support the formation next in front.

Before the arrival of our skirmishers with in charging distance or 50 yards of the enemy, the whole of the first line should be in skirmisher swarm. When the skirmisher swarm is within charging distance of the enemy, the advance of the second and third lines, at distances of fifty yards, will cause the skirmisher swarm to get up and lead the charge of the brigade.

What is urged against this method of attack is that the leading battalion, sent up to the front in successive detachments to spread along a line of 400 paces, would be a confused swarm, out of hand of the battalion commander, out of hand of the captains, and not to be trusted to lead the charge. To this we reply that there is no other practicable method of advancing a brigade through the open, to bring it into contact with the enemy; and that men can be trained to act in a skirmisher swarm as well as they could act in that formation which, within fifty yards of the enemy, should represent what on parade is a line. The impulse to charge when at close quarters can not be communicated by word of command of battalion commander or of captain, nor by sound of bugle, but only by the sight of a wavering enemy, or the resolute advance of a good support. The skirmisher swarms, leavened by its officers, would act, not by word of command, but of its own impulse. It is vain now to talk of any better line in front. No line could be marched up to the enemy; and if a perfect line could fall from the skies to find itself near the enemy, it would quickly assume the shape of a skirmisher swarm. The disorganisation of companies in the leading battalion must not be held to be an insuperable objection to the

only practical method of advancing a brigade to attack the enemy.

Again, it is objected that the skirmisher swarm would not be able to manoeuvre. To this we reply that the skirmisher swarm would have only to advance, and that it could reform at leisure when its work was done. Infantry have very little manoeuvring to do in battle.

The objection that to drill for a loose method of fighting would be injurious to discipline, seems almost unworthy of refutation. Much discipline is no doubt imparted by steady drill, and our soldiers may still be drilled to approach perfection, but both officers and soldiers may be taught how to fight. A logical deduction from this objection is, that the discipline of our soldiers is partly dependent upon their stupidity.

VI. Double Company Columns.

By double company columns we mean quarter columns of four half companies. A battalion in line would form four double company columns on the right half companies of right companies; or two central double company columns on the right half companies of Nos. 3 and 5 companies, the two companies on each flank remaining deployed, or double company columns in the right or the left wing only, the other wing remaining deployed. The change of formation could be made on the move, at the halt, or with the right half companies of right companies lying down. The columns would usually remain in line at deploying intervals, under the direction of the battalion commander; but a senior captain should command each double company column much as, in cavalry, a captain commands a squadron.

We advocate the formation of double company columns in third line not under cannon-fire. This formation would undoubtedly be the best for the first and second lines to rally upon should they be repulsed in attack or defence. We could usually form one third line in double company columns when it had arrived within 300 yards of the enemy; for the cross cannon fire of the enemy could seldom be brought to bear on us so close to him. Covered by two lines in front the third line would always suffer less from musketry fire when in company columns than when in line.

VII. Conclusion.

The order of battle of a brigade being as we have stated above, brigades would be placed side by side, not one in rear of another, in defence. Artillery would be placed in the front line in the intervals of divisions, so that guns would be separated from guns by intervals of two battalions, or about 800 paces. Cavalry, and the reserve of artillery and infantry, would be independent of the general order of battle.

In attack, brigades should advance one in rear of another, on a front of 400 paces, rather than side by side. A rear brigade would advance, at 300 yards' distance from the rear of the brigade in front, in three lines, with distance of 300 yards; and close its lines and lessen its distance from the brigade in front during the advance. An attack should always be prepared by artillery, and then supported by artillery well advanced on the flanks. Deep attacks on a narrow front are the most favourable to the action of the artillery of the attack; and by deep attacks only can we reasonably hope to bring a superiority of force to bear upon the enemy. Two or more divisions attacking together would advance on a front of one division, or 800 paces; but 800 paces is

the limit imposed upon the breadth of an attack, by the necessity of having artillery firing inwards across the flanks, in supports, and the necessity of arising in superior force upon the enemy in his lines.

AN AUSTRIAN OPINION OF PRUSSIAN TACTICS

One vaunts the skill of the Prussian in adopting, even during the course of a campaign, new methods of fighting which have been acknowledged as practicable. If this is on the one hand a proof of the great suppleness of the Prussian army; if it shows as clear as daylight that it is capable of conforming its actions and its tactics to its adversary of the moment, one may also on the other hand ask oneself, if this aptitude for rapidly substituting new formations for those which are allowed to be impracticable or bad, is really a science peculiar to the Prussian generals, or whether these discoveries should not to a great extent be attributed to chance.

In making a closer examination of this question, one may see that halo of glory which crowns the helmet of the Prussian generals fading. Let us admit that up to the present, favoured by good fortune with a precedent far be it from us to desire on that account to deny their real merit, and that that magical initiative which they have always known how to make use of, has not been one of the least items connected with their success. According to all the information which has been collected up till now, chance has been just as much a helping genius for this brilliant army, as fortune has been a smiling goddess to it.

But this does not take away one atom of the merit which the Prussians incontestably possess of finding out with marvellous perspicuity the advantages of the good things which chance reveals, and of taking advantage of them when they have recognized them as practicable.

The great good fortune of the Prussians may be partly attributed to the fact, that their superior officers, whilst having the firm determination and the energy to carry out unflinchingly the orders which have been given them, nevertheless reserve the right of judging the advantages which formations other than those in accordance with and prescribed by the regulations may, according to circumstances, present, and that they never have that narrowness of mind which, whilst aware that there is something better to be done, still prefers to stick to that which is mediocre or bad simply because it is the regulation, as is the case elsewhere — *Nach Zeitung*.

The tramway between Lisbon and Entra is to be opened to public travel in a fortnight.

The master printers throughout Germany to-day (March 8.) locked out all their employees who are unionists.

The Pope, replying to an address presented to him to-day, said that reconciliation with the Italian Government was impossible; God would punish the invaders of his dominions. As Catholic men are unshakable in their faith, he had the utmost confidence in the ultimate triumph of the Church.