

the noble Spanish language was to the cavaliers of Elizabeth, James and Charles, and that in both those tongues there is scarcely an aspirate H, it is not very difficult to imagine that the fashion of aspiration is of later growth, and that the careless or uneducated Briton only clings to an original 'sueon do parler' now long since abandoned to him by the cultivated classes, in which it was likely enough first adopted as an affectation, and afterwards as a distinction of caste.

THE EDUCATION OF THE ARMY WITH REFERENCE TO YOUNG OFFICERS.

We take from the *Journal of the R. U. S. Institution* the following report of a lecture there by Lieut. Colonel Middleton, whom many of our readers may recollect as the Garrison Instructor at Aldershot, and the Commandant of the early Schools of Instruction for the Reserve Forces held there:—

Mr. President and Gentlemen,—The subject on which I am about to address you to-night is one of great interest and importance, more especially at this time when great changes are impending in the system and organization of our Army.

So important does the subject appear to me that I feel I am scarcely qualified for the task I have undertaken, and I can only plead as an excuse for my doing so that I have paid some attention to the matter, and involuntarily had some little experience in it in my capacity of superintending officer of the now system of garrison instruction for the Army.

Before proceeding further, I wish to point out that I am labouring under some little disadvantage in having to write a paper on this subject just now when the general system of the education of the officers of the Army is undergoing a change, or rather is in a state of transition awaiting the great alteration in the organization of the Army. As you are aware, the system by which commissions were obtained with and without purchase at the Royal Military College is now in abeyance, and it is undecided whether it is to be re-opened again under its pristine form. Under these circumstances my paper to-night will treat more of the actual state of things at the present moment, and more especially of the system of garrison instruction as now carried on; and though it may not contain in itself very much, I am in hopes it may bring forth remarks and suggestions from those who are better qualified on the subject than myself; and we are to be congratulated on having, as chairman to-night, one who has had perhaps more general experience in the matter of Army Education than any other officer in the Army.

I may add here that as our idea of educating the officers of the Army generally in professional knowledge is, comparatively speaking, a new one, it is necessary occasionally to refer to the system of some other army, and for that purpose I have selected the Prussian system as the one that has apparently proved itself to be the best, though I by no means think that a slavish imitation of their system would be either advisable or suitable for the Army of this country.

In a short essay like this it is impossible to enter into the question of whether the officers of the English Army—other than those of the Artillery and Engineers, whose high professional knowledge and abilities

have never been questioned—are really, as a body, so deficient in professional knowledge as some of our friends seem to think, and which I, for one, do not believe; I shall therefore confine myself strictly as I can to the subject proposed—viz., "The Education of the Army with reference to Young Officers."

Now, the first question which naturally presents itself is, what knowledge do we require our regimental officers to possess? The answer to that is, I take it, easily given. He should have the education of a gentleman combined with the professional knowledge of a soldier.

This answer gives rise to another question. When and where should this knowledge be acquired? The Prussian military authorities unhesitatingly say, in answer, "The education of a gentleman should be acquired at a public school before entering the service, and the professional knowledge at a war school after entering the service, and though they do not yet quite act strictly up to this opinion, they do not hesitate to say that they hope to do so."

The Prussian first examination in the *Portepée Fahrrieh* examination consists of the following subjects:—

	Relative Value.
German.....	5
Latin.....	5
French.....	3
Mathematics.....	5
History.....	3
Geography.....	3
Drawing.....	1

This examination is stricter than ours, and is partly on paper, and partly *trial force*. The questions in each subject are fewer in number and more comprehensive in character than is usual in our examination.

The Prussian idea, as stated by General Von Holleben, of examining, is, I think, rather different to our system. He says that little value, as a rule, is attached to mere knowledge of detail as exhibited in the answers; in fact, the main object of the examination is not so much to show that a candidate has any given amount of positive knowledge, as that he has sufficient intellectual capacity to put his knowledge to a useful purpose; and, indeed, this seems to be generally the object in all Prussian examinations.

I may add that they often relax their rules in their examinations. Strictly speaking, candidates are only allowed two chances of passing the examination, but they frequently allow a third, but seldom more. Again, a candidate who has been spun once is not necessarily re-examined in all the subjects, but is excused those subjects at his second examination the answers to which at his first were considered satisfactory; and when I add to this the acknowledged fact that from one-half to two-thirds of two candidates fail on the first occasion, it would appear that—first, this examination is too severe, and second that the authorities know it is.

At present the subjects of our first or entrance examination are as follows:—

- Classics { Latin.
- { Greek.
- Mathematics.
- English language.
- Modern languages.
- History, ancient and modern, with geography.
- Natural sciences—i. e., mineralogy and geology.
- Experimental sciences—i. e., chemistry, heat, electricity, including magnetism.

Drawing.

The severity of this examination, which is quite comprehensive enough, of course depends on the amount of qualifying marks required to pass.

At present it is a low one. The candidates are only allowed to be examined in five of the subjects.

With regard to this first examination, or entrance one, as it is purely a civil examination, based on the standard of the public schools, its stiffness must depend on that of the public schools examination. At present I am sorry to say that the number of qualifying marks are necessarily very low. Probably now that purchase is abolished, this minimum will be raised, as I think it ought to be, but I hope it will be done gradually, as we are dependent on the public schools for many excellent officers. I also trust it will not be raised too high, for even those great sticklers for military education, the Prussians, admit that many men make excellent regimental officers without possessing very high intellectual attainments. Now, by making this examination too stiff with us, two valuable classes of men might be lost to the Army, the one consisting of men of ability, but requiring manhood to induce them to use it, the other of men possessed of the physical qualifications for an officer so generally possessed by English gentlemen above those of other nations, unaccompanied, perhaps, with any profound capacity for mathematics, languages, or drawing.

Before leaving the subject of this examination, I should like to say a word about languages, as taught in our schools.

I do not wish to be considered as advocating a class education, which I do not approve of, but I must say that I think for a lad who is going to enter the Army, so much Latin and Greek and so little French and German is not a good thing: indeed I am daring enough to think Greek unnecessary altogether.

Then, again, about geography? This study is much neglected, and it is of importance to civilian as much as soldier. It is a well known fact that a great many people who ought to know better have a very mild idea of geography beyond Europe, and even of that they probably only know the principal towns. Their knowledge of the geography of the rest of the world depends on having some relation in the Army or Navy, or some friend who travels and writes to them from some colony or country beyond the sea. I have heard people actually argue that Demerara was an island, and one of the West Indies; also that Bermuda was a West Indian island!

Some years ago a member of our upper House of Legislature gravely informed the house that there was a good coach road between Launceston, in Van Diemen's Land, and Moberna.

(To be continued.)

The Northern Pacific Railway is now virtually completed across the State of Minnesota—255 miles. A schedule of regular trains is now being arranged for the completed section. Early in October contracts were let for the construction of the Dakota Division, extending 200 miles westward from the crossing of the Red River to the crossing of the Missouri in Central Dakota. A large force is now employed on this division, which is to be finished by the first day of July, 1872. In the meantime a section of sixty-five miles is under construction between the Columbia River and Puget Sound in Washington Territory where track laying is progressing.