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### ORGANIZATION OF THE PRUSSIAN ARMY

By C. V. H.

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#### VII.—YEARLY COURSE OF TRAINING.

THE 1st of October is the New Year's day in the Prussian army, when the reserves are dismissed and the recruits arrive. Drill and instruction of the recruits commence immediately. The "drill sergeant" and the necessary number of non-commissioned officers, under orders of a lieutenant of the company are permanently detailed, and excused from guard and other duties. Three months are allotted for the school of the soldier, including the rudiments of skirmish drill and some target practice by way of introduction. Recruits drill between four and five hours a day. Most garrisons are provided with a drill house, built for the purposes of drilling in winter. In the evening the recruits receive theoretical instruction from the non-commissioned officer of the squad. The older men do the necessary guard duty, by way of repetition, and have additional target practice for the poorer marksmen. In cavalry and artillery the instruction in riding of course commences at once, along with the drill on foot. The best riders among the old soldiers are placed in charge of the young re-mounts, of which each squadron receives about the same number, ten to fifteen a year; they are five-year-olds, and are not placed in the squadron until they are thoroughly broken. The old men ride their horses in the *manège*, built on purpose at each cavalry or artillery garrison, formed in riding classes, not only for the purpose of exercise, but for improving men and horses in every respect. No horse is permitted one day, Sundays excepted, to go without his forty-five minutes' ride in the school. After three months the recruits are inspected by the battalion and regimental commander in the school of the soldier and theoretical instruction. The company is then formed, and about six weeks are accorded to the captain to drill his company in the school of the company and formal skirmish drill, to be inspected at the end of this period by the colonel in a very strict manner. The discipline and efficiency expected in the school of the company are very great. If it happened twice during the

drill that a man should be late in bringing the hand down at "carry arms," the company would be considered to be poor in the manual.

With the cavalry the period of recruiting embraces six months, but the movements of the squadron are taught on foot during these months in order to have the men perfectly well acquainted with the school of the squadron towards the coming of the better season, when the squadron is formed and drilled mounted. Company and squadron inspections—which always mean inspection in regard to efficiency in drill and discipline as the main thing, but which are never confined to an inspection of cleanliness of dress and arms only—being over, the battalion commander takes his battalion in hand. There is never less than a battalion in a garrison. The battalion drills about one month in school of the battalion, and the same precision is expected by the general commanding the brigade, who comes to inspect it, which is exacted from the companies. The slightest neglect at any drill is visited by extra drill in the afternoon of one or two hours, when non-commissioned officers drill the backsliders under the supervision of the officer of the day. Captains of cavalry drill their squadrons about six weeks, and in regard to artillery it ought to be remarked that their duties are very arduous, because every man must be efficient in the different parts of duty, and not all the pieces of the batteries being provided with horses in peace times, it is hard work to put all the men through. In garrisons where more than one battalion is stationed, as in large cities or fortresses, some time is given to dulling the regiments and brigades. The four squadrons of each cavalry regiment get concentrated about this time of the year for a ten days' drill by regiment—not a very difficult matter, as the stations of the regiment are seldom further than one or two days' march from each other. The division general and the general commanding the army corps at this time visit each regiment or battalion.

The infantry in the beginning of May commence the "summer term;" that is, they begin skirmish drill in the woods, outpost duty, one company against another, and the regular course of target practice. Every Prussian soldier fires at least 100 rounds a year at the target, every single shot being recorded. It is a general rule that everything is to be looked after by the officers in their respective commands. Skirmishing and outpost duty are in their turn inspected, and the target practice winds up with a prize shooting.

Engineers and the administrative branches,

especially the train battalion, go yearly through a course of training adapted to their different duties, and they turn out at the end of the year the regulation number of men trained for the exercise of their duties if called upon in case of war. In the latter part of August the field manoeuvres commence. The artillery, after having gone through their target firing, are detailed to the infantry divisions, which unite for drilling by brigades first, and ultimately a day or two by division, just to keep the hands in for handling their commands, and several days follow, when one brigade of infantry, with cavalry and artillery, has its little campaign against the other, a campaign resembling a veritable one almost in every thing except the bullet. The troops bivouac, execute heavy marches—in short, everything is tried which may occur in war. For these occasions the reserves are called in their turn, and with the 1st of October the new year commences again.

Two army corps every year do these field manoeuvres on a larger scale, the King being present in person. Then the reserves, up to the number of 1000 per battalion, are called in for about four to six weeks, and the corps manoeuvre against each other. Of course there is some damage done to the fields, though the thing takes place after harvest; but a board composed of representatives of the county and of the government is on the spot to apprise and adjust damages to be paid for.

Just to show how the standard of efficiency is kept up, it may be permitted to narrate a little anecdote. In 1861 or '62 the great fall review took place on the Rhine, the Seventh and Eighth army corps against each other. General von Brinard, an old knight of the Iron Cross, and a distinguished officer, commanded his Eighth corps. One of the brigadiers conducted his brigade improperly, in a manner which in earnest would have led to its destruction. A French officer present—and the French officers always muster in considerable numbers on these occasions on the Rhine—remarked to General von B.: "Monsieur Dieu, Général, cette brigade-là est perdue!" "O non," replied the General. "ce n'est pas la brigade, c'est le général qui est perdu." Next morning the brigadier received the King's order retiring him from the service with his pension.

It is a great mistake to believe that officers and men of the Prussian army are idlers. The duties are very hard all the year round; the officers fulfil them as teachers of this great school, and the men are subjected to this sharp training for the purpose of getting them into the habit of enduring hard-