

THE HISTORY OF GRENADES AND GRENADIERS.

(The Grenade is the official emblem of the Engineers. Officers and Sappers of the E. T. D. should therefore find the following historical sketch regarding the significance of their insignia of especial interest at the present time.)

The trite saying that "history repeats itself", is especially applicable to military history, and the use of the hand grenade as an infantry missile in the present war, affords us a striking illustration of its truth. The re-introduction of the grenade, and the rehabilitation of the Grenadier, arise from very much the same causes which led to their first inception in the armies of the European Powers, towards the latter end of the 17th century.

The hand grenade,—(the name derived from "grenada", the Spanish word for a pomegranate, from a fancied resemblance of the projectile to the fruit),—was a Spanish invention, dating from the middle of the 15th century, at which period the Spanish Royal Standing Army, held the place of the Imperial German Army of yore, facile princeps among the armies of Europe. Its use, for a long time, was confined to the scientific branches of the Artillerists and Engineers, who were then counted as civilian auxiliaries to the three combatant arms of the service, Horse, Foot and Dragoons. We find the hand grenade mentioned in a military treatise as early as 1472, and meet with occasional mention of its use in siege operations during the course of the 16th and 17th centuries.

Glass Grenades.

Great quantities of glass grenades were used by the Venetians in the famous siege of Candia by the Turks (1667-69), which lasted without intermission for three years, and in the course of which the resources of attack and defence were developed in a manner hitherto undreamed of in Europe.

In the year 1667 King Louis XIV, decreed that four picked men in each company of every regiment of French infantry, should be trained to use hand grenades. These trained men were assembled for tactical purposes in a provisional company under picked officers, but were mustered and paid in their own companies. This arrangement did not last long, and the Grenadiers of a battalion were soon formed into a permanent company. Some 10 years later Grenadier



—"Tribune", New York.

companies were established in British regiments of Foot. Evelyn in his memoirs, speaks of "a new kind of soldiers called Grenadiers, wearing furred caps with coped crowns like Janizaries with long hoods hanging down behind, as we picture fools, their clothing being likewise pybald, yellow and red." Grenadier companies were soon instituted in all the infantry regiments of all the armies of Europe, their special function being to act as a forlorn hope in the assaults upon the fortresses which at that time constituted the main objective of an invading army. For this purpose the men carried hand grenades to search out the ditches and covered ways, and hatchets to hew down the palisades which then served the purpose of war entanglements.

Origin of Fusiliers.

The Grenadiers were armed like the rest of the infantry with muskets and bayonets and with short swords, writes Lieut.-General F. H. Tyrrell in the "United Service Magazine". Their officers and sergeants carried fusils,—(a lighter and shorter description of musket),—and bayonets instead of the half-pikes and halberts carried by the similar ranks in the battalion companies. Fusilier regiments were so named from their being originally armed with these fusils. When the halbert was dis-

continued, the sergeants of regiments of foot, were armed with fusils. The light infantry regiments of the Madras Army, carried fusils up to 1860. A musket was invented with a cup-shaped projection at the end of the barrel, from which a grenade might be thrown, but it never came into general use.

"Horse-Grenadiers".

In 1678, a troop of Horse-Grenadiers was added to each of the three troops of the English King's Life Guards. They were equipped and armed like the Grenadiers of the infantry, and dismounted to fight, linking their horses and leaving them in charge of some of their men. The second Royal North British Dragoons (Scots Greys), were also created a Grenadier corps, but no further formation of mounted Grenadiers was proceeded with in the French and British Armies.

The improvement in fire tactics, due to the suppression of the matchlock by the flintlock musket, was probably mainly responsible for the abandonment of the grenade, which ceased to be carried by the Grenadier as part of his equipment, and was only occasionally used in siege operations.

It was used with good effect by the British Grenadiers, in the combined naval and military raid on the French port of St. Malo in

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