

Observations on and directions for the practice of Bayonet fencing, arranged by CAPTAIN W. S. McLEOD MOORE, (late 69th Regiment) Commanding Pensioner Force in the Ottawa District.

The discussions of late years on the efficiency and practical use of the "Musquet and Bayonet," having in a great measure introduced the Bayonet Exercise into fencing rooms, and finding that Bayonet Fencing was much practised in the continental armies, induced me some time back, when on Foreign Service, to devote my attention to its practice and utility, and to arrange for the amusement of the men of my company the following instructions.

At this time I was not aware that Mr. ANGLO, "Inspector of Sword Exercise," was endeavoring to introduce a Bayonet Exercise, to be officially recognized in the service, and which he had many years before recommended for adoption by the authorities, as a most useful means of defence for the soldier and sailor.

The following instructions are on the same principle; but the system is that of the late Mr. BUSHMAN, formerly of the 2nd Dragoon Guards, well known to the fencing world of London, as also to the garrison of Woolwich, as one of the most expert swordsmen of the day, and who, had he lived, purposed giving publicity to his improvements on the exercises of the "Sword and Bayonet" of ANGLO.

To Mr. BUSHMAN's former pupil, Ensign and Adjutant J. Colpoys, of the 43th Regiment, I am indebted for my principal knowledge of the Bayonet Exercise, and also for much valuable instruction in the practical use of the broad sword.

Mr. Colpoys' proficiency as a Broad Sword Player, as well as admirable skill in the use of Musquet and Bayonet, has practically proved the many advantages of the simple system of BUSHMAN over that of the authorized code in present use; and it is now admitted by the best swordsmen that the Musquet and Bayonet in the hands of an expert player, who is also a swordsman, has the advantage in single combat against the sword.

With the Musquet and Bayonet, styled by one of our ablest Generals "The Queen of Weapons," the skirmisher is taught to know and feel that, individually, a man on foot is a match for any horseman; the introduction, therefore, of an exercise which teaches a perfect knowledge of the efficient use of the weapon for the defence of the Infantry soldier cannot be disputed.

The following exercise is submitted as one calculated to give confidence and skill in the use of the "Boarding Pike," of the sailor, or the "Musquet and Bayonet" of the soldier, either at close quarters, acting independently as securities; or in extended order, when taken by surprise. The motions are few and simple; pointing out the best mode of defence, as all attacks against the "Musquet and Bayonet" can be ward off, its weight requiring but a slight effort to turn a cut or thrust aside, and the Bayonet can always reach the swordsman, when the latter is considerably out of distance, and unable to use his weapon with effect. It also shows the attack in all situations by varying the thrust, according to circumstances, either *High, Low, or Straight Forward*; and can be exercised with either side of the body opposite an opponent, thus giving greater facility and firmness in wielding the Musquet; it being a well known fact, that with very little practice no inconvenience is felt from its weight.

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BROMPTON BARRACKS, Chatham,
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BAYONET EXERCISE.

PART I.

Previous to commencing the following instructions, it is necessary that the soldier should have completed his drill, and have been instructed in the extension motions and positions of the Infantry Sword Exercise.

The engaging, or *guard* position is that which, while affording defence for the moment, is the readiest and firmest, either to attack or defend, and is similar to the 2nd position of the Infantry sword exercise; it is called either *right*, or *left engage*, according to the shoulder and foot in the rear.

RIGHT ENGAGE.

Being in the position of shouldered, or ordered arms, throw *back* the right foot about 21 inches; heels in line; right foot pointing to the right, and left foot and shoulder to the front; knees well bent and apart; weight of body *equally* on both legs; the musquet thrown into the hands and grasped as in the charging position; right wrist on the upper part of the hip, and left elbow close to, and in front of the body, with thumbs round and grasping stock and barrel of the musquet; the point of the bayonet directed to the height of a man's breast; the chest well *drawn in*, and body *bent down*.

LEFT ENGAGE.

Is formed precisely similar, with the exception of the *left* leg being to the rear, and right foot and shoulder to the front: the right hand grasping swell of the piece, and left hand *small* of the butt on left hip.

CHANGING ARMS.

This is done when it is necessary to change from one engagement to the other, to give equal facility in using the musquet, either with the left or right side to the front, to ease the arms, and derange opponent's attack.

CHANGE ARMS STANDING.

If in the position of *right engage*, at the command *change arms*, bring the right foot up to the left, in position of attention; the musquet upright in front of the body without changing the hands; then throw the left leg back, to position of *left engage*, at the same instant changing the hands in grasping the piece; the whole performed as one continuous motion: but for practice should be shown in two distinct movements.

THE ADVANCE.

From the *right*, or *left engage*, the advanced leg is carried forward six or eight inches in a straight line, at the same time bringing up the rear leg to about the same distance; the position of the body in no way to be altered.

THE RETIRE.

In retiring, the advanced leg is moved *first*, taking the place of the rear one, which is moved back to the proper distance, retaining the correct position.

CHANGING ARMS—ADVANCING AND RETIRING.

CHANGE ARMS ADVANCING.

This is done by bringing the *rear* leg to the front, and changing the hands from one engagement to the other. Thus:—if in the position of *right engage*, bring the right foot and shoulder to the front, to the *left engage*, and then again the left shoulder and leg to the front, to the *right engage*; thus gaining on each change of position one step to the front. In *changing arms retreating*, it is just the reverse; the advanced leg and shoulder being thrown back, and the engagement changed to the right or left at each step.

THE "POINT," OR "THRUST," WITH BAYONET.

The *point* is delivered either by thrusting the musquet forward with the extension of the body only, from the *engage* position,

or with a *lunge*, as in the 3rd position of the sword exercise, directing the bayonet high, low, or according to circumstances.

VARIATIONS OF THE "THRUST."

From the *right*, or *left engage*, at the command, *straight*, (extend) *point*, brace up the rear leg, pressing the hip well in, and bending the advanced knee over the instep; thus throwing the body forward, without moving or raising the feet, at the same time thrust the musquet to the front, the height of a man's breast, as far as the arms can reach, without quitting the hold; or losing the balance, (which must be particularly attended to in all thrusts,) the head lowered, looking along the barrel, — if taking aim.

RESUME POSITION OF ENGAGEMENT.

High, (extend) *Point*. Elevate the musquet with advanced hand until the point of the bayonet is sufficiently high for a horseman; then extend the arms as before, but upwards.

RESUME THE ENGAGEMENT.

Low, (extend) *Point*. Depress the point by lowering the advanced hand below the hip; raising the other about two inches, but do not shift the musquet from the side, or turn the barrel down. Musquet pointing downwards to the front. Extend the arms as before.

RESUME THE ENGAGEMENT.

Above, (extend) *Point*. Bring musquet perpendicularly in front of the body, with sling to the front: the butt between the legs, and lowered to the full extent of the arm; looking up, thrust the musquet upwards to the full extent of the arm holding the butt; at the same time letting go the other hand, (which falls to the side), and raising the body until both arms are straight; then immediately return to the former position, preparatory to delivering this point.

This thrust is intended to be used against an enemy who is almost directly above, and nearly out of reach, and is the only one in which the musquet is held (although only momentarily) by one hand.

THE LUNGE.

Is made from the engagement, by carrying the advanced foot about a pace forward; the heels directly in line, and the remainder of the position the same as in the *extend point*, and is the 3rd position of sword exercise.

BACK LUNGE, OR THROW POINT.

Deliver the point to the front, as before, at the same moment stepping back to the *lunge* position with the rear leg, and instantly bringing the front one back to the engage position.

THE DOUBLE LUNGE.

Is the two former continued, by first delivering the *back lunge*, or *throw point*, then advancing one step, lunging, and recovering again to engage position.

The *throw point*, or *back lunge* will be found useful to repel the sudden rush of an opponent, and the *double* to become the assailant, by following up the attack.

In teaching the foregoing movements, much must be left to the judgment of the instructor.

It is good practice to perform them slowly in two or three motions, repeating the number; this will enable the instructor to see that each is correctly performed.

When the soldier is sufficiently instructed in the above movements, the following practice should be adhered to.