

The appearance of the Canadians ought to put our men on their mettle. We are quite aware that the former are picked men and are picked, moreover, in a way in which it would never be possible for us to pick a team to go to Canada or any other colony. But even allowing for this we must say that we have seldom seen such a body of soldiers as the Canadian artillerymen, who have just left Shoeburyness. Nobody, we think, who saw those clean-limbed giants performing the 'shift,' for the governor-general's cup will ever forget the sight. Their march past later in the day, in full panoply, was equally good in a different way. And they, or a great many of them, show by their medals that they can do, and have actually done more trying and important work than par-buckling a 64-pounder up to its carriage or marching past the adjutant-general. They will return home, indeed, laden with the spoils of the recent peaceful campaign. Our men have prevented them, not without serious difficulty, from carrying off the Queen's prize, but by their prowess with the Armstrong they have recovered the Montreal cup, which Colonel Ray and his men brought back from Canada two years ago; they have taken away the Londonderry cup from the best team we could bring against them, and they have refused even to let the prize given by their own governor-general, for excellence in repository work, remain among us. Moreover, they have won a first prize for shell-firing and a certificate in the ordinary repository competition, so that there will be rejoicing, fully justified in Canada."

Common Sense on Parade, or Drill without Stays.

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A real change must come.

It is admitted on all hands that both among the Germans and ourselves the spirit of the barrack-yard doggedly resists the spirit of the combat. Not in the matter of strict drill; this is as dear to the spirit of the combat as to her rival. It is obsolete, useless, injurious forms of drill, and the demand for the wooden performance of these as tests at inspections, by which all proper development of drill to meet modern necessities is held down. The military Prometheus, who has made fire the true ruling power of war, is an offender against the military gods who have been accustomed to men processionising before them, and countermarching, wheeling on pivots, and dressing in imposing solid bodies. Accordingly, he who says he has such fire as to make all this ridiculous, and proposes to adopt the ways of men in training for war to the exigencies of fire, is seized and made fast to the primeval rock of unbending form by the chain of custom, while the old devouring vulture of inspection takes the life out of him. Hence the piteous groans that go up to the military heaven crying out for deliverance. It must come. No Jupiter could have remained obdurate for ever against the man who brought fire to the earth. He would have had to accept the fact. If there ever had been a Prometheus he would have received a free pardon, and been promoted to a high office in Olympus, as the Controller of Fire, long ago. It is incredible that it should be otherwise in the councils of the Dii who presides over war. "Time is required before old views are modified by modern fact. I have been much struck in wandering over the battle-fields of the Franco-German war to see how much they have obtained *to the detriment of the troops bound by them.*"—(Captain James.) And it is still so. No doubt drill books of all nations have made some advance, but the spirit of the barrack-yard holds on in preference to the obsolete parts of the drill books. Our own Field Exercise urges the use of unequalized companies, frequent changing of ranks, the dropping of men out of the ranks and going on with the drill without retelling off, &c., &c.; but such things are not done. Equalizing, countermarching, retelling off, and adherence to arbitrary fronts, with a view to the "objectless repetition of purely parade movements,"—(Lieut.-General Sir Frederick Roberts) are still the order of the day. The training in flexibility and prompt execution is sacrificed to the production of mere uniformity of appearance. Perpetual dressing at the halt, instead of exercising in recovery of order on the move, still obtains. It is the same abroad. Regulation books say that "the position of the soldier should be easy and unrestrained,"—(Austrian Regulations) but barrack-yard practices in preparation for antiquated inspection "get him into an unnatural and almost ridiculous attitude, cramping and straining his body from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet."—(Field-Marshal the Arch-duke John of Austria.) And while it is true that "military opinions in Prussia openly declare that excessive drill and the worship of forms must sooner or later disappear," (Ibid.) and although it is laid down as a principle that "a few simple forms suffice for all purposes of field service,"—(Prussian Drill Book) the parade is still too strong for the drill books. Any one who has seen a German drill parade knows how utterly contrary its practice is to the spirit of these maxims. The result in all coun-

tries is that what is done in the field, either in peace or in war, offers an absurd contrast to what is done in the supposed training for it. "We devote too much time to mere parade movements in close formation."—(Major-General Sir Gerald Graham.) Locking up was cut out of our own book, but inspection parade soon forced it in again. And in Germany "slow march and its barbarous cousin, the balance-step, are unknown to the 'Reglement.' In spite of this the slow march still lords it almost unopposed over the whole of the infantry,"—(Koppel) and this notwithstanding the distinct order that "at the instruction of infantry all the drill will be practised on the parade ground exactly as if the troops were before the enemy."—(Prussian Drill Book.)

Not only is the parade behind the drill books, they themselves are behind the time. "A general change of front, as made by an army, is so different from the methods perplexingly described and geometrically illustrated in text books, that it presents a curious instance of the difference between theory and practice"—(General Morris, U. S. A.); or rather it presents a curious instance of theory lagging behind instead of being ahead of practice whenever the show parade is left for the field of practical work. Thus, by an unconscious process, we have arrived at the absurdity "that there are two distinct drills taught, each on a separate principle from the other"—(Colonel Gordon Ives), and are found ignoring the universally important maxim, "qu'il faut tabler sur un ordre de combattre, pue la variete des lieux change a la verite, mais qu'elle ne doit pas detruire."—(Marechal Saxe.) Such a state of things must infallibly lead to results tending in case of success to too great loss, inability to follow it up and to reap its fruits (which means further loss unnecessarily on some future occasion), and, in case of defeat, disastrous loss. For "in an army, the less there is of harmony between its regulation tactics and the tactical requirements of the age, the greater will be the confusion attending its infantry attack" (Lord Wolseley), and the greater the confusion, the greater will be the loss. In all time the creation of avoidable confusion in your own ranks, has been, and will be, the playing of the enemy's game. "To bring up troops in imperfect order," that is in less perfect order than circumstances permit, "is to lose every advantage discipline proposes, and to present them to the enemy in that state that after his best efforts he has hope to reduce them"—(Rules and Regulations of British Army—Beginning of present Century. And that this has been the result in recent wars, where troops had been mainly trained on the old geometric and solid block system, is admitted. Speaking of what happened, it is said that on going into action "the organic unity of the troops is sundered at once" (Frontal Attack of Infantry), necessarily causing undue loss; and we hear on high authority of "disorder and pell-mell" (Prince Frederick Charles) as the necessary consequence of repulse, while the latest theory accepts the idea that pursuits by the successful troops "are extremely difficult now-a-days from the confusion. . . . The defeated troops have been able to retire without serious pursuit" (Lieut. Mayne); which just means this, that victory is only partial. All this arises from the fact that "too much of the school exercise," that is, the parade-style school exercise, "was retained in the fighting exercise, from which the latter must, with the progressing development of tactics, ever recede further" (Frontal Attack of Infantry); in short, that the test of the training of troops has ceased to be exact motion in exact forms, and has come to the acquirement of the power, while maintaining "the one principle," as laid down by Saxe, of "adapting the formation to the exigency of the moment, rapid rallying, maintaining connection between the tactical units" (The Fighting of To-day—R. v B.—German), and keeping in view that "we have now to consider how to adapt our tactical formations so as to retard and minimise the inevitable disintegration and confusion" (Major-General Sir Gerald Graham).

To effect this three things are necessary: that the nature of inspection should be changed, so that it shall not hold back troops, as it now does, from training in real "field aptitude;" that the character of the infantry work shall be changed and the detail minimised and simplified and adapted to the modern combat; and that persistent and perpetual inculcation of fire discipline be made of the essence of all training.

As regards inspection, it is lamentable how the general character of it affects the training of troops. The whole efforts in preparation for it are concentrated on doing nothing that will shake their formal steadiness and prevent their presenting a mechanical precision in external exactitude of formation, bearing, dressing and movement. It is generally a show and not a test. The starch of ceremony and not the firmness and toughness and elasticity of business is the principal mark of distinction. This is inevitable, as long as inspecting officers, and the book which regulates their proceedings, demand that it shall be so. "The first thing alluded to (in miscellaneous subjects in the Field Exercise) is the inspection of a battalion, which one would naturally think would lay down some sort of standard for a general to go by in ascertaining the fitness of a regiment for active service, but in the seven pages devoted to this most important subject, the only exercise alluded