

THE BRAVE OLD PLOUGH.

A song to the plough, the brave old plough,
That hath ruled the wide world o'er,
For life and good fare on his strong steel share
Shall depend for evermore;
There is strength in his beam, as the tolling team
Turns the furrow so long and deep,
While it mellow the sod, we have trust in God
That His promise he will surely keep.
Then a health to the plough, the brave old plough,
Who hath fed all nations gone;
And glory as now to the brave old plough,
When a thousand years have flown.

Thou hast seen the time when no pealing chime
Was heard the world wide through;
When the king's broad hall and the cottage small
Of a Christmas never knew;
And many a day along the highway
Have hundreds striven vain;
They are dead—they are gone, to earth's bosom
borne.
But the plough, it still doth reign.
Then God speed the plough, the brave old plough,
Who hath fed all nations gone;
And glory as now to the brave old plough,
When a thousand years have flown.

Thou hast seen the times, in many a clime,
When the bread was hard to win,
When great and small, at hunger's call,
Were led into deadly sin;
But thou ne'er canst say thou hast seen the day
When want bowed the strong man's head,
The righteous man's seed in his greatest need,
Ever begg'd for the daily bread.
Then God speed the plough, the brave old plough,
Who hath fed all nations gone;
And may glory as now encircle the plough
When a thousand years hath flown.

TACTICS.

(Continued from page 51.)

The tactical position of field artillery in modern war does not seem to have been understood by the French, who laboured in the late campaign under the disadvantage of possessing a gun which was too heavy, and yet carried too light a projectile. The Prussians brought light galloper guns (4-pounders) into the field, as well as 6lb. guns capable of throwing a 15lb. shell. In all the early battles the Germans outnumbered the French in guns in a larger ratio than in men. Up to 1866, the artillery of the Prussian Guard alone fired shrapnel with a time fuze. In 1870 shrapnel was fired from the guns of position even, and the time fuze could be set to explode at 2,000 odd paces. No solid round shot were used, and we may here remark that this fact facilitates the growing habit of diminishing the distance between infantry lines of attack. The German percussion shell was conical; and even when it did not burst on striking the soft ground, there naturally was no "ricochet." This seems a disadvantage. The Napoleonic idea of massing artillery is a thing of the past. Battles in the open country, such as the latter ones of the campaign, when the relief of Paris was attempted, commenced with an artillery duel. The defending army is more or less hidden from view; the attacking force has to face the fire of a hidden skirmishing line, at a manifest disadvantage. The gun possesses a longer range, than the rifle, therefore artillery passes to the front, and, at 1,200 yards range, searches and shakes the infantry position. For this purpose the guns of the division, as it were skirmish by batteries properly escorted. Horse artillery, with a cavalry escort, probably makes an effort to turn or enfilade the unascertained position, and whatever movement the assailant makes the defender counters. After a time the infantry forges ahead, and the disposition of the artillery must needs change; it establishes itself on heights, in order to fire over the infantry, or it takes ground to a flank, so as to sweep obliquely across the front. The great want is an escort, both mobile and effective, to give guns freedom of action away from the main army. A certain number of guns may

be employed in disturbing the comfort of the reserves, but artillery on the flanks can alone give material assistance to the attacking line. The Prussians have one Jager battalion to every corps. A company of these men, lightly equipped and trained to rapid movement, makes an admirable artillery escort. Dismounted dragoons were not thus made use of; but although a complete system of cavalry reconnaissance was the great hit of the campaign, German cavalry is sadly behind the age in many respects. The material is excellent, but by no means made the most of; for instance, the dragoon was armed with a breech-loading carbine; on outpost duty, the lancer, with a pistol, was equally, if not more formidable. What did this fact prove? Certainly not that a lancer is a serviceable *vidette*; but that the dragoon neutralized the advantages of a breech-loading rifle fire arm, by a total ignorance of the way to employ it. In the first place the weapon is a very poor one, and in the second it was fired from off the horse's back. It does not require very acute perceptive power to discover that a dragoon's horse, in the present day, ought to be frequently used as a locomotive, designed to transport marksmen with the utmost rapidity from place to place. The proper defence for artillery will be the dismounted light dragoon. A dragoon should never fire without dismounting, except to give a signal. This fact calls for no demonstration. If it were not the writer's intention to devote a chapter exclusively to modern cavalry, the German giant, in shot-proof armour on his sixteen hands of undefended horse flesh, should find his cuirass a poor protection against the pen, even though it may have turned half a dozen spent bullets during a six month's war.

If the modern horseman requires, "as triplex circumpectus," in addition to the covering already afforded by his horse's head from projectiles fired at a lower level, let no time be lost in the composition of a cavalry dirge.

That German cavalry will be handled in a different manner in the next campaign, the writer feels confident; but in 1870 their only marked success was outpost duty and Cossack manoeuvre. It was achieved under the most exceptional circumstances, never likely to recur. Greek did not meet Greek. The result is, therefore, unreliable, and must not be quoted as a precedent for war. The writer is aware that this is not the generally received opinion. In high places an opinion has been expressed favourable to heavy cavalry; and, unquestionably, a finer body of men and horses than the Cuirassier regiments of Prince Frederick Charles's army never were placed in the field. In the first place, the horses were well up to the weight of the enormous men on their backs; their condition was admirable all through the winter campaign—thanks to the quadruped having enjoyed luxury designed for bipeds. If a German horse soldier could find no stable, he made use of a "salon" on the ground floor; but, except under unavoidable circumstances, the horse was neither exposed to damp nor cold. This care, added to a liberal supply of grain, will all ways keep up condition. Then, again, except when in contact with men whose proper position was on land ship, what resistance did the German cavalry meet with after the capture of Sedan? There is no reason to suppose that the cuirass was anything but an encumbrance. It was a case of handicapping a horse for a walk over. The writer by no means joins in the popular outcry for light men on swift horses. A dragoon should be a strong, muscular, long limbed

man; and his horse must be able to carry him. Hussars may be lighter men; but the light man must trust to his fire-arm more than to his sword; and his sword should be made exclusively for pointing. The writer remembers an instance of a "light weight" on a thorough-bred making a laudible effort to diminish the number of mutineer Sepoys by one; he delivered "cut one" on the head of a receding black-skin, and was rewarded by a sardonic smile. The result would have been different (may be, in this instance less satisfactory,) had the point of a straight sword been directed towards a fifth nigger-rib (for the writer had always a shrewd suspicion that the thick head belonged to an officer's servant or a mess cook.) The German cuirassier has a magnificent straight sword, and his great muscular strength and long reach would make him a very formidable antagonist, if he had only left his armour at home. The writer was informed that the captured Chassepot carbine was served out on the field to cuirassiers, but he is unable to vouch for the fact. At the battle of Vionville, the 7th Cuirassier regiment charged and took a French battery by surprise. With admirable dash and presence of mind, the regiment passed on over an escorting battalion of infantry, and was afterwards checked by a fire of a mitrailleuse battery. Out of 490 sabres, 147 only live to boast of the exploit. The captured battery and the spread-eagled battalion took ample revenge on the retreating horsemen.

The shot-proof cuirass was found wanting and even the long sword had but a momentary triumph. What a very harmless thing a charge is, even of heavy cavalry? Did the heaviest kill thirty men at Balaklava? Certainly not more. It is sure they killed ten? Peradventure, not more than five died. Cavalry will only form part of the tactical line of battle in small numbers; and as a rule, a single regiment should attack by wings, or in open columns of squadrons. A single line of cavalry, advancing without one or more supports, may be called a false movement. The future tactics of cavalry in the general line of an action will partake of the nature of hide and seek. Theoretically, cavalry will be well placed in echelon on the exposed flank of an army (on the defensive) near enough to be brought to they front by signal, when the enemy's fire waxes weak.

Did the cavalry in any early action of the campaign engage infantry without sustaining a loss out of all comparison to advantage gained? The French 8th and 9th Cuirassier regiments made a supreme effort in the retreat from Woerth; but where are they now? Prussian cavalry headed back Bazaine's first effort to escape from Metz, without severe loss; but how many Cuirassiers survived Sedan! No! Cavalry must not be used as in those fabulous good old days. Their presence is no less needful on the battlefield, but the revolving bolt is a most propitious but effectual suppressor of dashing heedless chivalry. Cavalry must be handled with intelligence. To make a *vidette* or skirmisher of a lancer in a close country would not be a proof of intellect, if riflemen existed.

But, as regards the more important tactics of infantry, 1870 afforded an instance of columns facing columns. The Germans, with all their experience, adhere to column attacks. The French, who after all, were once good soldiers, and will be so no doubt again, also adhered to their columns. As we, inexperienced English, justified in blindly preaching the doctrine of deployed lines! The British was once the ly soldier with son