

timing is a mere matter of parade, useless in action. It may do for play soldiers to amuse their admirers with. In a campaign correct shooting beats volleys out of sight, except at very close quarters.

The horses should not be drilled more than once a week. They learn their duty much quicker than the men. In the spring-time, after good dry winter quarters, every regiment ought to turn out fat, strong horses, and excellent swordsmen and pistol shots on their backs.

If every general were impressed with the idea, "In winter quarters prepare for spring," his camps would be got into order much more rapidly. That is the best time to bring in recruits. One month in winter quarters among soldiers who have seen campaigns is worth a year's drilling in barracks for a recruit; and a single campaign will have taught a green cavalry corps the necessity for drill. If the men are thoroughly impressed with this the officers will have no trouble. If not, all the martinetry in the world only disgusts them and breeds mutiny.

(To be continued.)

HOUSE OF LORDS.

March 29th.—Lord Strathmairn in council called attention to the defective education of officers in the army, especially in respect of strategy. He said: The interests of the country are so intimately concerned in the unfortunate state of affairs on the Continent, and the country relies so much for the protection of its rights and position on the efficiency of the Army in the art of war, that I consider it my duty to bring to your lordships notice, with the view to their amendment, serious deficiencies in our military training and education, and especially in its first requisite—strategy. And yet it is strategy, my lords, which in the last few months has made Prussia mistress of the destinies of France, as 65 years ago it placed Prussia and her independence at the mercy of France; and we ourselves have had warnings to which we ought not to turn a deaf ear; protracted and not always successful operations in our colonies against uncivilized insurgents, reverses which checkered brilliant successes in the Crimea, and threw a shade over our imperishable recollections of the Peninsula and Flanders, and an Empire all but lost in India. Before going further I will explain the nature of the deficiencies in our training for war. They arise from our Regulation Book of Instruction which teaches the mechanism of movements but not their strategical object or adaptation to the varied features of ground for troops; they therefore are taught peace, not service, movements; they move, but do not manoeuvre. I am fully alive to the importance of skillfully executed movements: the best devised plans of strategy have often been spoilt by faulty movements. The mistake is to teach movements, but to omit their object. They should be inseparable. In the examination of officers for promotion the same error is committed. Since I held the command of a Bombay division, in 1857 to the end of my command in Ireland, I have never ceased, in reports to my superiors, and instruction to those under my command, to correct this misprision of the first element of an army's education. I stated this also fully, and other shortcomings, to the commission on Military Education, as well as their remedy, and I am glad to see in a new Book of Instruction of October last that some of them have been adopted; but these improvements are few and partial, and

they omit the great desideratum in the instruction of young officers and soldiers of combining drill from its first stages with reason and object; so that the mind once directed in the right way, an ordinary capacity may gradually become a good service officer, and a genius may wing its flight to elevations now, unfortunately, tenanted by Count Moltke and his strategical Staff. All those simple and important manoeuvres which figured in the late Prussian successes are also omitted in the new book. The last of my thoughts in bringing this motion before your lordships is to make the smallest pretension to superior capacity, but I do so under the sense of duty, which tells me that if a British Army be obliged to take the field it should do so second to none in fitness for war. I lay claim to some experience in two matters which lie at the roots of this question—strategy and the state of instruction in the Army. As regards the latter, it has fallen to my lot to command nearly every battery and regiment in Her Majesty's service. I conduct my inspections in a manner which makes my Staff and myself perfectly acquainted with the instruction of officers and men. The remarks, favourable or otherwise, are sent to commanding officers, and copies of them kept as records in the Adjutant General's office. As regards strategy, peculiar circumstances made me acquainted with it from my earliest days. My father was Her Majesty's Envoy at Berlin, where I had a military education, of which strategy was the chief element. In those days Prussia was in the full tide of noble and patriotic efforts to retrieve the disasters which a mistaken art of war had entailed on her, and the wrongs which it had done in 1806 to her gallant army and a resolute people. It is a singular coincidence that mistaken training should, but in a more aggravated form, have been the same error as our own at present—peace but not service, movements. The map and the tactics of Frederick the Great had been replaced by the plummet and pace stick. But in my days there was a reaction, and everything in Prussia was strategy. The atmosphere was strategical, and I imbibed some of its influences. In the Crimea I witnessed the results of good or mistaken strategy; and in India, if I had not been assisted by troops of whom Lord Canning and Elphinstone said, in telegrams and General Orders, "that they had marched from Bombay to the Jumna and Gawlior, from success to success, without a check, under hardships heroically borne, although seldom endured in India," and if I had not invariably had recourse to strategical precautions and manoeuvres, I could not have overcome the difficulties of overwhelming numbers which cut off my base as I advanced, of an unknown country, and a line of operations some 700 or 800 miles long, defended by forts. In 15 actions and sieges I was obliged to reconnoitre night and day, to use turning movements feints to cover a real attack, concentration of fire on a weak or given point and so forth none of which are in our old or new book. The result of my twofold experience has taught me that, as regards officers and men, the English Army is without equal they are a rare combination of ardour when it is required, and of steadfastness when it is necessary; but in consequence of the want of strategical education, they are so deficient in strategical knowledge that if unfortunately, we were involved in war, the odds would be in dangerous proportion against them in the field. I of course except officers of superior talents, with strategical instincts, and who have had other means of instruction. Nor would it be

fair to place the responsibility of our system on present proper names or Governments. It dates from our forefathers, and in fact it has its origin in our insular position, habits and distaste for preparations for Continental wars. I beg your lordships indulgence while I adduce a few illustrations of the want of strategical education of a simple description from the first to the last pages of the book. In consequence of no object being assigned, the young officer or recruit is not acquainted with the reason of the numerous points and parries in the bayonet exercise, nor does he learn that a part of it makes him more than a match for cavalry. He is equally untaught as to the advantage of early or the danger of delayed fire. As regards evolutions of a regiment, when I ask an officer the object of a change of front, as a rule he assigns any but a service one, and I have to explain to him that the service object is to oppose an attack on his weakest point, his flank, or *vice versa*. He is equally uninformed as to firing which should cover the movement, and I show him that early and successive fire from the company of formation will check the enemy and cover the formation, while delayed fire may cause its destruction. A first rate artillery officer of long standing performed a diagonal change of front on the two centre guns of his brigade, but delayed his fire till the flank guns were in the new alignment. I told him the mechanism of the movement was perfect, but that I could not say as much of its strategy; that, if he had opened fire from his guns of formation he might have killed a general, or thrown his assailant into confusion, as well as covered his defenceless guns, throwing up and retiring into the new alignment. And, my lords, when we hear of batteries captured and formations cut up by cavalry, it is only too often caused by delayed fire. And yet this single instruction and these words "early and delayed fire," are not in the book. On another occasion, for the sake of practice I requested an officer of forty years standing, commanding a regiment during the Fenian period in Ireland, when constant depositions and intercepted letters showed intentions to attack barracks, blow up their garrisons, and burn them with Greek fire, to defend his barracks against an attack by the road. Two loopholed defences, with banquette, gave a cross fire on the road. The officer threw his battalion into order; the skirmishers with their face against a wall, 20ft high, with no means of defence, but did not place a man in the loopholed defences. As regards field-days, and movements of large bodies in India or in Ireland. The general officer stationed at the Curragh informed me that he had never heard of a second line, and yet an order of battle for attack or defence without a second line is forbidden by every principle of war. It invites a disaster. The field-days were characterized by constant changes of front a too large an angle against a supposed enemy, so constant that no power of locomotion could have enabled an enemy to change to such distant positions. Flanks were exposed, and as there was no combination between the three arms, collisions and firing into each other ensued. All arms, individually and collectively, frequently took up position on the top of a height or rising ground, which exposed them. Instead of in the rear of it, which would have covered them. And if in former days defeat often, and loss of life always followed on neglect of cover, or of turning movements, use of ground is now indispensable in these days of improved arms. In England I have seen field-days in which the same defects occurred, and we all read in the newspapers an account of a re-