

or protection. His attacks during the battle were ill-planned:—Infantry alone in one part of the line, and cavalry alone in another part, were sent to attack infantry, cavalry and artillery combined.

Nor were these the entire of Napoleon Buonaparte's military errors:—At the battle of Marengo, he committed the following great error:—When Melas contracted his front upon his centre, Napoleon Buonaparte, instead of manœuvring in mass upon his adversary's centre, weakened his own centre to strengthen his wings, with the intention of surrounding the Austrian army. As soon as Melas observed this movement, he advanced his centre rapidly in mass on the weakened centre of the French, and rapidly wheeling to the right and left, advanced on both the French wings, seeing their centre in flight, followed its example. The battle was alone saved by the advance of the divisions of Lemonnier and Dessaix at the critical moment, and Napoleon Buonaparte, having been joined by the fugitives, he formed the whole into two close columns, and rushed impetuously on the victorious Austrians before they could again form in mass, or assume any available attitude of defence. In his Russian campaign also he committed a series of errors and blunders which were at variance with the great principles of military science. His inaction after the battle of Borodino was reprehensible in the highest degree, and may be considered one of the principle causes of his discomfiture.

But the errors which prevailed in Napoleon's system of tactics were not confined to himself; they extended to his generals. The plan of attacking posts and positions which might safely be turned or passed, and which would have followed the fate of the day, was, instead of making one well-combined simultaneous effort, put into execution at Fuentes d'Onor and Albuera. Had the troops employed in obtaining possession of the first mentioned village been called into action on that part of the field on which the fuller brigade determined the fortune of the day, the issue of the battle of Albuera might have been otherwise than it was.

The impolicy of this system of modern tactics, especially where it is not possible to arrest the progress of the attack on the main body of the army, as was the case at Waterloo, Fuentes d'Onor, and Albuera, is self-evident. You need not uselessly sacrifice your men, but you waste time, and present your adversary with the chance of availing himself of the occurrence of some of those freaks of fortune which occur in the course of battles, and often frustrate the best and wisest plans and combinations. To assailants, therefore, partial actions and the capture of particular points are not of so much importance as to him who acts on the defensive. The defence of posts and positions, situated on his front or flank, is, to a weak or dispirited enemy, of the highest importance. To him the advantages of walls and barricades are great, he is enabled to resist the heavy columns of his adversary with a small number of his forces, and the loss of the enemy must be great before those positions, if they be well and obstinately defended can be carried.

But for the errors just stated, Napoleon Buonaparte made large compensation in his deviations from the routine methods of warfare. In his invasion of Italy, he not only deviated from the established rules of tactics, and disregarded the practice of supplying his army with the usual *matériel* and equipments of war—with stores, a commissariat and a military chest—but he even deviated from all his predecessors in his method of invasion. Instead of penetrating the country by some of the passes of the Alpine range, and encountering the difficulties which would thereby have presented themselves to his ill-provided army, he made his irruption by the comparatively level country—namely the narrow pass, called the Boscetta.

Another inducement to adopt this line of invasion was the probability of enabling him to intersect and separate the Austrian and Sardinian forces; as from the point he intended to debouch, it would be as practicable to march upon Milan, which the Austrians were interested to defend, as on Turin. In the execution of these operations, the Italian campaign commenced, of which the battle of Montenotte was the precursor.—General Williams' *British Battles*.

Military Items.

—A lately published return of the strength and composition of the Austrian army on the 1st of January of the present year shows that on that day there were in its ranks 229,947 German-speaking officers and men, and, classified according to the language spoken by them, 149,694 Hungarians, 157,865 Czechs and Moravians, 64,916 Poles, 31,458 Croats, 24,526 Serbs, 1,011 Bulgarians, 48,483 Wallachians, and 5,846 Italians. The heterogeneous character of the material which thus fills the ranks of the Austrian army has always been a source of weakness.

—It is to be regretted that the deportment of officers is not more studied in the British army as a concomitant of instruction in drill. How strange and varied are the attitudes of officers "fallen out" to drill a company, battery, or battalion on foot! Not unfrequently we see the officer with his sword held in both hands across his body. Why should it be deemed less essential to stand erect and in the posture laid down in the Field Exercise, &c., when exercising supreme command than it is when in the ranks, or rather acting as a guide or "captain"? How rarely is the saluting of officers marching past, that most difficult of performances, satisfactorily

got through, and how rarely is fault found! These points need but a little attention on the part of commanding officers, but it would appear that custom with some other obstruction stands in the way, so rarely do we see attention paid to the matter.

—Considerable hilarity has recently been excited in Austro-Hungarian military circles by an incident quaintly illustrating the rigid strictness with which Magyar non-commissioned officers are wont to carry out to the very letter the instructions contained in the Imperial Royal Military Code. A few days ago a private soldier died in the barrack infirmary at Kaschau, and his body in due course was consigned to the grave with the customary military honors. It was observed, however, by a superior officer present at the ceremony of interment that the firing party following the coffin marched into the cemetery with fixed bayonets, contrary to the established military usage in similar cases. As soon as the burial rites had been concluded, he sent for the sergeant commanding the party, and asked him, with some asperity, "Whether he did not know it was contrary to regulations for a funeral escort to march with fixed bayonets?" Standing stiffly at the salute, the conscientious sergeant replied: "Yes, sir; I am quite aware of that. But I beg respectfully to report that the deceased during his illness and at the time of his death, was under arrest. It was therefore the duty of his escort to fix bayonets?" "Very well, you may go, was the rejoinder, and the model disciplinarian retired with the proud consciousness that he had triumphantly proved his case.

—From returns lately prepared in the German Ministry of War it appears that the class of recruits of the year 1878, who were incorporated in the army in October last, numbered 295,924, being 9,817 men more than were inscribed on the lists of 1877, or some 25,000 more than the average strength of a class before the late Franco-German war. On the revision of the lists 33,545 of the men inscribed were declared unfit for military service; 141,797, or 47 per cent. of the whole number of names, were directed to be drafted into the Army or Navy, and formed the year's contingent of recruits, 45,410, or 15 per cent., were excused actual service with the colours for various reasons, as being the only support for families and so forth; 26,906, or 9 per cent. were found to already entered the service by voluntary enlistment, or as one year volunteers, or by having had their names placed in the maritime inscription; and 27,955, or 8 per cent., were put back for one year. In addition to the 141,797 men of the class of 1877, who had been previously put back, were also in October last drafted into the ranks, so that the total strength of the contingent of 1879 amounted to 151,620 men, and of these 5,827 were allotted to the Navy. Of the 295,924 recruits, 41,067, or 12 per cent., could neither read nor write, 52,679, or 18 per cent., could read and write, 167,352, or 61 per cent., had received more advanced elementary instruction; 947, or 0.32 per cent., had obtained a diploma in the higher elementary classes, and 3,385, or 1.14 per cent., had completed their college course. The proportion of those who can neither read nor write has, it may be added, decreased by 47 per cent. since 1869.

—The reports of the general officers commanding corps and divisions, and of the officers commanding the artillery, which took part in the volunteer review at Brighton on Easter Monday, have been issued. Prince Edward of Saxo-Weimar, the general commanding the Southern Division, in forwarding the reports to the Duke of Cambridge, states that he has every reason to be satisfied with the manner in which the "general idea" was carried out. He notices most favourably the "extraordinary punctuality" of the whole proceedings, the steadiness of the volunteers, their great improvement in order and discipline and their deliberation in firing. The mistakes of the officers, noticeable in moving their men in too close order under fire, and in the confusion which prevailed when the op-