

He would make it a *sine qua non* that the mode of working adopted should give the best chance of rapidity and certainty in rallying into order after the crisis.

With these general objects in view, how would the practical man proceed in detail—what would he reject and what would he retain of the present infantry drill detail, and in what respects would he modify the parts retained? Would his mode of dealing with the existing system require to be drastic, or will slight modifications satisfy the demands of well-considered theory? The best way to bring up such a question for practical reply will be to suppose that no such thing existed as an infantry drill book, and that one who had studied the modern combat, but had never seen any drill apart from war operations, was to set himself to devise a drill detail to fit men for the combat. Is it likely, is it conceivable even, that he would produce anything the least resembling what is contained in the greater part of our present Field Exercise? Is it credible that he would devise a scheme in which all the preliminary training of the soldier in movement and evolution would tend to convert him into an automaton, moving by close contact, and having no free use of his limbs? Would he seek for "perfection of the soldier as a military machine," his drill having for its sole object that "through the habit acquired by constant exercise, a certain action shall instantly and almost mechanically follow on a certain word of command," (*General Macdougall*), and that his accuracy in carrying out movements should depend on a mechanical clinging by contact to a pivot, and never on intelligent and personal self guidance by the eye? Would he ignore the fact that while "under the old conditions of fighting, the general had to handle a machine, now he has to lead and guide a body which has become infused with a mind and a spirit of its own?" (*Home*.)

It is absolutely incredible that in the supposed case any such course should be followed. Let it be observed that it is only the principle of the work of movement that is being spoken of here. Exactitude, both as regards time and action, during drill training, and in exercises with the weapon and in many minor details, is essential to regularity and smartness, and the drill necessary to accomplish its attainment is an aid both to general steadiness and the acquirement of a spirit of discipline. But this does not imply an exactitude obtained by reducing the action to a mechanical mode. Rather the very opposite is the case in practical military movement under modern conditions. All movement in actual warfare is now the opposite of mechanical in its principle. Exactitude is to be obtained by application of intelligence and not by its abnegation. The actual work is in its very essence individual. Its discipline depends upon the development of intelligence and not its suppression, upon the reasoning creature being trained and exercised to carry out the superior's direction and to follow his leading with brains; the brave and loyal obedience of intelligent action, as distinguished from the equally brave and loyal, but now, in modern warfare, non-efficient obedience of the man-machine. If even in the old days the warning of the philosophical soldier had to be expressed against the idea of a force "held together merely by the glue of service regulations and a drill book," and the truth told that "these things have a certain value, but must not be overrated," (*Von Clausewitz*) how much more necessary is it now not to trust to a glueing system, which cannot give a cohesion that will stand the wrenches to be expected under modern conditions? If we will proceed as if the description of infantry as "a solid and close body, which sustains itself by the density of its several parts," (*British Military Library or Journal*, 1779) were still accurate; if we cannot or will not realise that it is now a body which must work in a style exactly the reverse of this, "solid and close and dense;" if we persist in ignoring the fact so well expressed that "in the present condition of warfare we have a great amount of teaching to instil in the soldier to make a really valuable man in the field," as distinguished from a valuable brick in a wall; if we go on in a course in which "very often we seem to forget what it is indispensable we should know and try to teach them complicated movements, which are very pretty in Hyde Park, and amusing to nursemaids there, but which are of very little use in war" (*Viscount Walsley*), and are carried out in a manner contrary to the principle necessary in movement in actual warfare, then we shall be acting as no prudent or sensible man would act in the conduct of his own private affairs. We shall do exactly the same thing as a trainer would do, who should attempt to make a horse into a fast trotter by exercising him with his head hauled in tight by a bearing rein, and his fore-legs hobbled. We shall commit the same folly as if a man were to endeavor to educate a hunter, by exercising him in the operations of the circus *haute école*. We shall violate a rule of common sense thus ably laid down: "The preliminary training must form part of what we expect to see performed, or what constitutes the subject of the training, and not something totally different." (*Field Marshal Archduke John of*

Austria.) It is undoubtedly true that "the basis of all excellence in bringing an army into action, is drill" (*General Macdougall*), but such an axiom becomes an absurdity when stated baldly, and divorced from its complementary axiom, that the basis of all drill must be the conditions of warfare for which it is a preparation.

Is it not certain that if pre-conceived and engrained ideas could be set aside, the course of procedure in devising a drill system would be to settle first the mode of action for warfare in submission to its imperative conditions, and then to adapt all detail training to develop to its fullest capacity the powers and skill, both mental and physical, of officer and soldier for the combat. Would not everything be rejected which might tend to cause expenditure of time and energy on the drill ground, in learning a mode of movement, and in moving into formations and executing evolutions, which would never be used, and the performance of which did not give practice in anything likely to be of use in actual warfare?

Still more, would not everything be carefully shunned which could give a false impression of, or inculcate habits unsuitable to, the conditions to be met with on service? Would not the undoubted fact that drill has a double object, to teach and make handy in war manœuvres, and to inculcate discipline, be held to be in every respect consistent with another and as certain fact, that the practical usefulness of manœuvres does not detract from their fitness to inculcate discipline?

(*To be continued.*)

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ENGLISH VOLUNTEER MEDICAL SERVICE AND FOR THE UTILIZATION OF VOLUNTEER MEDICAL AID IN WAR.

BY SURGEON-MAJOR G. J. H. EVATT, M.D., ARMY MEDICAL STAFF.

(*Continued from page 355.*)

Such men as we need are to be found by the score in those active young surgeons newly qualified who fill the important and trusted posts of house surgeon, and like appointments in the civil hospitals throughout the country, in the specially selected demonstrators and assistant teachers in our medical schools, in the young men who have obtained their double medical qualifications, and who having in their view to succeed to special practices are anxious to spend a year or two in seeing the world and gaining experience of life before finally casting anchor in a country practice.

They are the young men whom we find going on voyages to see the world, travelling as physicians in charge of special cases, visiting various places in yachts and such like, and from young medical men of this class we can develop a temporary reserve for war as good as any country could provide.

But I do not propose that we should accept such aid haphazard, untaught and untrained in our own special work and by mere chance; we need to define what we want, what special qualifications we need, what rewards we propose to hold out for special devotion, what the penalties shall be for neglect of duty. They must not come without training, without passing some examination, without knowing the way in which military laws will affect them, and all such rules should be openly and fully laid down in peace, circulated freely in the medical schools of the country, and the system of mobilizing them for war fully understood. It is needless to say that such a body of aid for war could not be a permanent body.

It would have to be recruited yearly, and the young officers would only be available from year to year as they registered their names for the work.

But as the older men passed off the mobilization list, and settled down in civil practice, the younger men would be coming up and taking their places, so that at any one time in any one year such aid as we needed would be available.

With this introduction I will now discuss how to form such a reserve for war as I suggest.

XXV.—MEDICAL CADET COMPANIES AND THE TRAINING OF MEDICAL STUDENTS IN AMBULANCE AND FIELD HOSPITAL DRILL IN THE CIVIC MEDICAL SCHOOLS.

During the Crimean campaign, and at various times since then, we have in our emergencies sent out civil medical men to assist in our wars.

As to their special training, their status in the army, their discipline, their subordination to authority, their uniform, practically nothing was laid down.