

disaster, and this at a risk and loss of life made needful only because they are suddenly embodied, equipped, and thrown headlong into the struggle without the exercise of that knowledge and preparation which would have fitted them for their task and guided them in it. Surely, if we spend so much time and money in training our infantry soldiers for their duties, it is worth while to train a portion of them for duties which certainly are more arduous and varied and require greater intelligence and qualifications; and if this be true of the men it is manifestly much more so in the case of the officers. It is as unreasonable to expect a corps of mounted infantry to be efficient without special training, as it is in respect of any other description of force. But much that is unreasonable is expected under our system. For instance, when the Afghan war broke out, a regiment at the station where the writer was quartered was warned for service, and with it came an intimation that each officer's total baggage was restricted to 160 lbs. and each man's to 40 lbs. The writer inquired if they were told what this baggage was to consist of, and was told "No!" Such a detail was unworthy the attention of those who issued such an order in those days. Yet in France, let alone in Germany, it would have been laid down to every article, and the necessity for such detail is obvious. The most highly disciplined army is not that which is most precise in its movements and drill, though we are far from underrating their importance but that in which everything which conduces towards making the most of the soldiers in the field is most thoroughly carried out.

If mounted infantry be necessary, and that it should have been resorted to by so consummate a soldier as Napoleon and so practical a people as the Americans, forms high authority for saying that it is, and, if its use is becoming more thoroughly appreciated, for it was successfully used in the Canadian rebellion expedition against Riel the other day, we must recognize the fact and be prepared for it. We have indeed recognized it in the Sind war, the mutiny, and the Soudan. To say the least of it, we should be prepared with a rational scheme for its organization when required, varied to suit any country in which it may be called to act. Thus far the preparation would consist in a careful study of the subject and record thereof and the instruction of some officers therein, costing next to nothing. But we go further, and say that a part of our army should be kept specially trained for this particular duty, as they are more the less fitted for ordinary infantry service in consequence.

There are two regiments in the army which seem to be pointed out by circumstances to be trained for this purpose. These are the two so-called rifle regiments—the King's Royal Rifles and the Rifle Brigade. These regiments have four battalions each, with their headquarters at one place, Winchester, and they are not local regiments. They have been considered special light regiments, and looked on as intended rather for skirmishing and detached duty than to fight in the line, though in war this has not been carried out. Their name of rifles has become a misnomer now that the whole army is provided with rifles, and if they were to be trained as mounted infantry some suitable name should be given them. Mounted infantry is too long. Dragoon is in our language now so identified with cavalry that it would be misleading. Ranger is the cherished name of the Commaught Regiment. Scout is too distinctive; would not indicate sufficiently the nature of the corps, and would probably be disliked. If we were to borrow a name from the French—and we have borrowed many military terms from them—the best we can think of is Chasseur, but perhaps some more ingenious person might hit on a suitable English name. It is required to be short, indicative, and military. Training these regiments for this special purpose would make the least possible change in our present military arrangements, and the cost would be trifling, as it is not required to mount more men in time of peace than are necessary for the proper training of the whole. If four of the battalions were kept at home and four in India, ordinarily those in India should all be mounted, two on camels and two on horses; those at home would all be trained with the horse. In India there are parts of the country where the elephant would be used, but no special training is required for the men so mounted. Indeed, ordinary infantry would do equally well with the elephant. But the four battalions in India would be always ready for service, as those at home would require a little time to be mounted when the order was given.

We have already expressed an opinion that the men should be selected from the line for this service. They should be taken as volunteers for long service and be entitled to pension, but be liable to be removed back to their own regiments if they became unfitted for this particular service and yet were not subjects for invaliding. While with these battalions, but only while serving with them, they should have higher pay, for they would be selected men, and their duties be generally more arduous. The officers should be selected as well as the men, be seconded, and, like the men, be returnable to their regiments if found

unfit for this service from any particular disqualification which did not disable them for line duty. The officers should be chosen for their taste and aptitude for this kind of service, the men for being light, active, intelligent, and good shots. There is an opinion gaining ground among the officers of the army that our present system of musketry training is not what it should be. It is contended that there is not only a too exclusive attention towards making men individual shots, but that their training does not make them as good military individual shots as is desirable, and that those who shoot best at a target are not necessarily the best in the field. Most regimental officers think the fire of bodies of our men is by no means so effective as it might be, and that their training does not conduce altogether towards this end. The ordinary line soldiers' opportunities of showing his individual skill as a marksman are few indeed in proportion to the occasion on which he is required to fire effectively from the line upon bodies of men, and therefore the latter kind of training is unquestionably the more necessary to him. But in a corps of mounted infantry the men cannot be trained too carefully to every *bona fide* military use of their weapons. When on detached duty, as they often would be, individual shooting may be of very great importance, and their efficiency in volley firing should be at least as great as that of any other kind of soldiers. These battalions might, at moderate expense, be made most valuable experimental schools of musketry, but, to make the most of them, they should have a liberal supply of practice ammunition, and the commanding officers should be free to try such ideas of those under their command as might seem to them worthy of experiment, and not to be tied down to the rigid system of a departmental school of musketry. That is not an institution likely to encourage progress, or ready to be convinced of its own mistakes. Its head will usually have been brought up in its system, or perhaps he may be the inventor of it, and he must be a man of more than usual impartiality and breadth of view if he can judge fairly of the ideas which have brought him promotion and distinction, when compared with those of others who assail such ideas. Besides the most thorough training in infantry drill in all its branches, and a careful and exact discipline, the Chasseur should be exercised in abstinence and self-denial. He should be at times for several days in succession marching, camping, and feeding on rations carried by himself, and he should be accustomed to husband them, and, while he should not be stinted, he should be required to make them last a given time. He cannot be a thoroughly trained Chasseur without this. Failing here, he will find himself inferior in that respect to many soldiers he may be called upon to encounter, and it is a point which very soon tells on the marching powers of a force. We do not think so ill of military discipline that it cannot bring the British soldier up to this mark if really undertaken.

The arming and equipment of the men are points of very great importance. We have not that experience of repeating rifles which enables us to express an opinion whether they should be adopted or not, but we prefer the bayonet to the sword-bayonet, as being handier and less weight, and we are decidedly of opinion that, as these men are to be equal to anything infantry may have to do, their weapon, with the bayonet fixed, should be of the full length. When mounted, the soldier should carry his rifle slung on his back, for a soldier and his weapon should never be parted, and he may fall or be thrown. Besides these weapons each man should carry something else, an axe or an entrenching tool, and, when there were enough in a company for all necessary purposes, such men as had nothing else to carry might take a Nepalese kookric, an admirable wood and grass cutting instrument, and no mean weapon at close quarters—*Colburn's Magazine*.

To be continued.

THE NEW ARMY RIFLE.

The results of the labors of the committee appointed to provide a new and improved rifle for the army, which have just been published, show that the future weapon of the British army will, as regards most considerations, be far in advance of the service arm of any other nation. In the new weapon the Martini breech action has been retained, the alterations being in the barrel and the weight of the projectile, the combination being called the Martini-Enfield. Taking the Martini-Henry as a standard of comparison, the diameter of the bore has been reduced from .46 inch to .40 inch, the weight of the new bullet being 384 grains, as compared with the 480-grain bullet of the old rifle. The powder charge, however, of 85 grains remains the same, with the important result that the muzzle velocity of the bullet is increased from 1315 feet per second up to 1570, thus lowering the trajectory to such an extent that while the Martini-Henry bullet in travelling 500 yards rises more than eight feet and a half above the line of sight, the improved projectile would scarcely go over the head of an infantry man if