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LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR ARTHUR J. HERBERT, K.C.B.,
Quartermaster-General, in the Chair.

MOUNTED MARKSMEN, AND THE DISMOUNTED SERVICE OF CAVALRY.

By Lieutenant G. HAMILTON, 14th Hussars.

MILITARY authorities of leading European nations agree that an army possessing a large number of mounted men capable of being used as infantry has an incalculable advantage over one that has them not.

Of late years, whenever we have gone to war a force of mounted marksmen has been in demand. This force has always been raised hastily by contribution from the different infantry regiments on the spot, and mounted on whatever animals were available. The Officers have been furnished in the same manner. Officers and men rejoin their respective regiments on the termination of the war; there is no time for any perfect system to be worked out, and they are too short a time together to admit of much organization. Being so hurriedly got together, men, Officers, horses, and equipment look, and are, a very scratch pack. A great deal of expense is entailed in equipping this force, and regiments that contribute the men are thereby unexpectedly weakened at the most inconvenient time. Still, imperfect as is the state to which they have hitherto attained, it is acknowledged that a body of mounted marksmen is invaluable to an army in the field. A force to meet this call should therefore be raised in time of peace, when it can be properly trained, its imperfections eradicated, and its organization perfected.

The manner in which mounted infantry, as at present organized, are or should be utilized, is by advancing them (under cover if possible) on a desirable position, and when dismounted opening fire. If threatened by cavalry or otherwise, they mount and retire; harassing the enemy by repeating the manoeuvre in whatever direction it may be advisable to do so, as frequently as necessary. Their sole arm is their rifle and bayonet. They cannot be used as cavalry, because they have no swords or lances, and they are not sufficiently trained to

undertake outpost duty effectively. The horses become mere conveyances for advance and retreat, with the object of keeping the men fresh and unfatigued, and enabling them to move quickly from point to point. Generals on service, finding it necessary, besides cavalry and infantry, to have a cross between the two, have hitherto had to be content with mounted infantry, a body which is lacking in some of the most essential characteristics of both the older branches of the Service, without proportionate corresponding advantage.

This is wasted economy. By proper organization, a force fulfilling all the duties of mounted infantry, combined with the power to act as cavalry, can be constituted. To do so, the material used should be that branch of the Service which can furnish men who have already acquired the greatest amount of the necessary training, and are likely to be most intelligent. Consider which requires most training, a cavalry or infantry soldier? It takes double the time to complete the training of the cavalry soldier, and when he is trained double the amount of knowledge should have been acquired by him.

Again, for what branch of the Service is the difficulty of obtaining recruits least experienced, and which contains the most intelligent men? Cavalry. One reason is, when recruits with any self-respect, pride, or conceit (call it what you like) about them decide on enlisting, they choose regiments the representatives of which they have seen walking about in the neatest looking, most picturesque, or ornamental clothes. This is why cavalry, Guards, Highlanders, and other smart corps get, as a rule, a slightly better and more intelligent class of recruits.

Before going so far as to equip cavalry regiments as mounted marksmen, as objection to so doing would undoubtedly be raised, steps should be taken to settle the question, if it be a question, whether or not it is possible for cavalry to perform their own duties as they do now, and substitute for their present inefficient dismounted practice the duties of mounted marksmen.

This can be done with ease, and at but a trifling expense, by raising a corps, or still better two or three corps of moderate size, say 600 men each, composed of drafts from cavalry regiments. They should, of course, all be selected for general smartness and good shooting, though it would not be necessary to pick all the best men in each regiment. Obtain the horses from the same source.

The armament should be a rifle carried on the saddle, except in the vicinity of the enemy, when it should be carried on the soldier's back; a bayonet always carried by him strapped to his waist; and a sword strapped to the saddle close to the near shoe case—it would, if carried by him in the usual manner, only encumber him when dismounted; he only requires it when mounted, so why should it leave the horse?

Some Officers who have served with mounted infantry say the rifle should always be carried strapped on the soldier's back. I think this is a mistake. If they had ever tried it during a long ride at the beginning and end of a day's shooting abroad, they would have found it most fatiguing. Besides, it is useless. In any case the horse carries both, so why should it be borne by the man until likely to be wanted? The rifle should usually be carried attached to the saddle on the

off-side of the horse. In action, or even on approaching an enemy, it should invariably be slung on the man's back. The present sling used is unsuitable, being too loose, and one must be made on another principle. The sling submitted to the Horse Guards by Colonel Mackenzie, 3rd Bengal Cavalry, is one of the best in existence, it is better and more comfortable in every way than any other: it is only meant for the carbine, but I can suggest a slight improvement, which would render it suitable to a longer weapon.

It would be a question for consideration whether the trial force, once formed, should be kept up by drafts of horses and men from cavalry regiments, or whether it would be best to enlist recruits specially for it. There are reasons for and against both systems. Among those in favour of the former is that by this means you would always make sure of getting proved good shots, and having to devote no time to training recruits and young horses, more could be given to other duties. But I think it would be found, for other reasons, more satisfactory for each corps to have the training of their own men and horses.

The Officers should be appointed from cavalry regiments for the same reasons that apply to the men, namely, that they have acquired by their training a wider knowledge of many of the most important duties of mounted marksmen, and because the training of infantry Officers accustoms them to work mounted men in too contracted and slow a manner; because also, the latter would not so readily grasp the feasibility of extracting the greatest possible amount of information to be acquired with the help of mounted men as the eyes and ears of an army in outpost duty, &c.; neither are they thoroughly acquainted with that knowledge, without the pre-eminent possession of which the efficiency of a cavalry regiment is greatly lessened, *stable management*.

A fault in the generality of cavalry Officers is that they are inclined to confine their movements too much. Cavalry regiments are not worked on a sufficiently extended scale; they are constantly worked in a too limited space—a field, perhaps. You may see corresponding regiments in other countries—not only the so generally quoted Germany—taken out and efficiently worked over twenty miles of country. Certainly their horses do not look so sleek as ours, but we cherish our horses too much. Some Colonels almost have a fit if five fresh horses are reported unfit for duty after a field day. This does not clash with what I say about stable management. Let the horses be thoroughly cared for when in the stable, but when out much more work should be extracted from them, and they should be cast with greater freedom when unserviceable. Make the fit horses earn their food, and cast the cripples.

With few exceptions, whenever they have had command of a mounted force, the above-mentioned fault of too limited a scope of action applies to infantry Officers, except that instead of using a field they use half a field. I, of course, only wish to point out that the system of drill and tactics learnt by infantry Officers is not of the style to fit them generally for a command of this kind, though some few might be mentioned who are naturally cavalry leaders. One qualified infantry Officer should be appointed to each corps temporarily to

assist in the instruction of that part of the drill necessary to render the force effective when acting as infantry. The corps should acquire a sufficient knowledge of infantry drill to ensure their efficiency as infantry in the field, should they be called upon to act as such. But this instruction should be strictly confined to necessary practical movements. No time should be wasted on unnecessary parade movements, &c.

The force being constituted and armed as above, it only remains to show how they can be used, as cavalry, or when necessary, as infantry, according to circumstances.

Little need be said about their efficiency as cavalry. They are similar to any other cavalry regiment, Officers and men having acquired the same training.

They are fully qualified to act as infantry, should they be called upon to do so, at any moment, as by this time we will presume they have acquired the necessary amount of infantry drill. The Colonel, on receiving an order to the effect that his regiment is required in their capacity as infantry, dismounts the required number—half, two-thirds, or three-fourths of his force. In most cases it would be unnecessary to use more than two-thirds. One man in every three, in this case, would remain mounted, and lead the other two horses wherever directed. The number of men to be dismounted for infantry purposes would entirely depend on circumstances. One man can generally ride one horse and lead two; in some cases he could lead three, but three to lead are rather a handful if they are inclined to be troublesome. If the dismounted party should be required to act as infantry till their return to camp, the mounted party, if desirable, could return there immediately, and water, feed, and groom the horses. If their services were only temporarily wanted, the mounted portion should follow the regiment at whatever distance ordered until required.

Let us now have a look at the dismounted men. They are formed up as infantry; they have each a rifle and bayonet and sixty rounds of ammunition, and a pair of boots in which they can do as much walking as any other infantry soldier; they have breeches and gaiters and a loose service coat without any stock or padding; they are thoroughly drilled, and, having left their spurs in their wallets, forget what their horses look like, and feel as independent of them as any other foot soldier. In what manner, may I ask, has a similar number of any other infantry the advantage of them?

Little need be said to point out the facility with which they can act as mounted marksmen. They can perform all the duties mounted infantry have hitherto been required to perform with only one difference, viz., that being well organized, equipped, and mounted, and being accustomed to drill and work together under their own Officers, they will perform them with double the confidence, and consequently twice as well. Time will prove that there are other ways in which this force will be able to act as no other force can.

Suppose, for instance, there is a small position occupied by an enemy, say on a hill a couple of miles off, the approach to which is

bare of cover. Infantry attacking would be under fire a long time, and if they crossed the intervening space quickly, would be blown on arriving at the foot of the hill. In fact, it is a nasty place to approach.

Attack it with cavalry equipped so as to be serviceable as infantry. Divide them into three large squadrons. The attack is made simultaneously—front, right, and left; they advance in extended order, with scouts well in advance at a gallop. Increasing their pace till near the hill, they rally and dismount two-thirds or three-fourths, as the case may be, at places chosen by the squadron leaders, who, once started, should maintain sole command until the regiment is once more combined. They should time their advance so as to arrive simultaneously; the Officer commanding the squadron of direction should watch and be watched by the others so as to accomplish this. Having dismounted, they should carry the position with a rush. The advantage in this case is that, instead of infantry having to advance two miles at a slow pace, under fire and wasting time by firing themselves, and arriving blown and tired, their effort still to be made, they would arrive fresh and keen, and having suffered comparatively slightly from being under fire. It is astonishing how easy it is to miss an object approaching at a great pace, and, remember, they are in extended order during their advance.

Musketry.—At least one Officer per troop should have gone through the course of musketry at Hythe, and the remainder should do so as soon as possible. Ranges should be erected so that the whole regiment could practise at the same time, each troop on its own range, under the troop Officers. In this manner the amount of work that usually takes eight weeks can be done in one week; and instead of cramming all the rifle practice into a limited time, it would be far better if the whole regiment were taken for that purpose once a week, or at any rate once a fortnight.

The incessant practice at ranges where the distances are known should be considerably varied by practice at unknown distances; in action men have to form their own opinion as to the distance of their adversaries, the enemy are not in the habit of carrying about placards giving accurate information as to their distance, correcting the placards as their distance varies; so men taught only to shoot at ranges where they know the distance are much at fault when they are thrown on their own resources. A difference should be made in the amount of practice compulsory for a proficient marksman and for a bad shot. When men attain a high standard of proficiency, their attendance to a certain number of target practice parades should be voluntary. Men who shoot badly should be paraded oftener for target practice.

It may be said that it will not be easy to get these men to shoot as well as if they were infantry soldiers. I beg to differ. Rifle shooting is simply a matter of practice. If you take fifty men out of an infantry regiment, and the same number out of a cavalry regiment, and let them shoot against each other, the infantry will beat the cavalry for two reasons; first, because they have more practice, and secondly, because they have a better weapon. But let them be given similar weapons, and similar training for a few months, and the

shooting will be equal. As a matter of fact, I once saw a match between a team of cavalry and a team of infantry who rather fancied themselves, which turned out very unexpectedly. The match was seven shots at 200 yards, seven at 500, and seven at 600 yards, cavalry using carbines, infantry rifles. The result was in favour of the cavalry team. The teams then changed weapons, the result again being in favour of the cavalry. I need hardly add that that team was very well trained. Of course this is exceptional; but it proves what I say, that shooting entirely depends on the system of training. Most men, before joining any branch of the Service, have never fired a rifle. Those prove the best shots who practise most. For this reason only, and because they are armed with a better weapon, do infantry shoot better than cavalry. It may be said that mounted men cannot devote sufficient time to attain proficiency in shooting. I think they can. It entirely depends on the system employed.

With regard to the best rifle for cavalry, though I do not allow that they cannot carry the Martini-Henry rifle if it is impossible to provide them with an equally effective shorter weapon, if a rifle can be made something between the carbine and rifle in length with as good shooting power as the rifle, it would be a more perfect arm for cavalry. It might be made more on the Express principle, a large charge of powder and perhaps a slightly smaller bore, say .400 instead of .450. This ought to give a much flatter trajectory up to 500 or 600 yards, and be equal to if not better than the rifle at greater distances. Perhaps if the bullet were too small or light, the wind would affect it after 600 yards; this should be guarded against.

Were it decided to-morrow to equip cavalry with a new rifle, a little shorter and consequently more portable than the Martini-Henry, in all probability, owing to the usual delay, two or three years at least might elapse before it was served out: it would therefore be advisable to arm the trial corps with the present rifle until one more suitable can be issued. It would be a great point gained if cavalry and infantry possessed the same rifle and ammunition, as by this means all complications with reserves could be avoided.

Though late wars have shown that but little execution is done at much over 500 yards, we must have 300 or 400 yards in hand in whatever rifle we use. Suppose, for instance, that because the present cavalry carbine shoots very well up to 500 yards, we arm our cavalry to act as mounted marksmen with it, how should we feel if we found ourselves opposed, say to an Austrian Army, whose cavalry were armed with a rifle as good at 900 yards as ours at 500 yards?

No! our cavalry should have a better weapon; one with which they can hold their own.

A magazine rifle with equal shooting power to the rifle I have suggested would be a good weapon. It is stated that men so armed are apt to fire too quickly, but that is a mere matter of discipline. When the Snider rifle first came out, a certain General, I forget who, used to make his men take off the nipple guard and put it on again several times between each round, to accustom them not to fire too hurriedly.

A question I leave for others to decide is whether if armed with a

magazine rifle a bayonet would still be necessary. In deciding this point all possible positions in which mounted marksmen might be placed should be considered.

Mounted marksmen might under certain circumstances be separated from their horses, and their ammunition being expended they might be attacked by cavalry or infantry; and there are other positions in which they might find themselves when a bayonet would be necessary.

To show that I am not a mere theorist in the matter of shooting, in stating that carbines are perfectly effective up to 500 or even 600 yards though they are insufficiently accurate at greater distances, I may mention that a squadron team of four of the 14th Hussars, when competing for the Loyd-Lindsay Prize in India, a few years ago, made a score of 129 out of 160 points, which is, I believe, the highest score ever made in that competition. Every shot was on the targets, no miss having been made at either distance.

Three-quarters of a mile was galloped over, two flights of hurdles were jumped, and forty shots fired, each man having fired five at 300 yards and five at 400 yards; and the team was drawn up at the starting post, having completed everything in nine minutes.

On the last target, that at 400 yards, ten out of the twenty shots on it were bulls-eyes.

The state of perfection the team attained was due to the fact that the Officer commanding the regiment encouraged shooting and facilitated the necessary amount of practice.

I can vouch for this account being correct in every detail, as I was one of the four myself, and coached the team.

Carbines are very good at 500 yards and fall off very slightly at 600 yards; I have seen a very good shot (Corporal Robinson, 14th Hussars) make 92, and another man make 91 of a possible 105, in 7 shots at 200, 500, and 600 yards each, 21 shots in all.

Ninety-two was the score made with the Martini rifle that won the Queen's Prize at Wimbledon, under similar conditions a few years ago.

The carbine is not nearly so reliable at greater distances.

Some may think I have proved too much, and rather demonstrated the sufficiency of existing carbines. But we must remember the above are exceptional performances for a carbine. We must strike an average and find a weapon suitable to the generality, and one that shoots better at long distances than a carbine.

Weight affecting Efficiency.—There could be no greater mistake than to arm this force with a carbine instead of a rifle or, in my opinion, to dispense with the bayonet. Someone is sure to suggest something of this kind:—they will perhaps say the rifle is awkward to carry, or too heavy; perhaps it may be even said it looks ugly. The suggestion reminds me of the answer we all remember given by the sportsman to the novice, who remarked that his horse, which happened to be an undeniable hunter, had a very ugly head, "True, sir, but I don't happen to ride on his head."

Lancers carry a lance, sword, and carbine: the total weight of these three far exceeds the weight of a sword, rifle, and bayonet. A rifle and bayonet exceeds a carbine by very few pounds. If it is necessary

to diminish the weight of mounted men, there are more practical ways of doing so than by tampering with their weapons or insisting on the men being very small.

When no other objection can be found, people often fall back on the statement that a proposed article, whatever it may be, "is too heavy," and considering the statement unanswerable, expect their opponent to immediately collapse.

In furnishing a soldier, the first thing to be considered ought to be what weapons are necessary; those weapons being decided on, heavy or light, they should be sacrificed to nothing. The second thing to consider is the required stamp of men, and in case of cavalry the necessary stamp of horse.

Wherever weight is to be saved it is certainly not in the weapon, which is, indeed, the *raison d'être* of the soldier. Better take a man's coat off his back than deprive him of a particular weapon because it is a few ounces heavier than a less valuable substitute.

In a flat race every pound tells, because the horses, who are trained to run for their lives, have to get over a limited distance at the greatest possible speed; but there is none of this kind of thing in cavalry work; and though every unnecessary pound should be dispensed with, the importance of using a good stamp of soldier and perfect weapons should not be sacrificed for the comparatively small matter of lessening the total weight the horse has to carry, and that so slightly as not to benefit the horse materially. Very small men have not sufficient endurance and stamina.

What stamp of men do you generally see in at the death after a hard run? Who are the best polo players? Who are the most successful pig-stickers in India? Four-fifths of them are men from 11 st. to 13 st. 7 lb., or heavier. In theory they ought to be men from 8 st. to 10 st. 7 lb., but such is not the case.

This, perhaps, may be partially misleading, should it not be remembered that many very heavy weights chiefly maintain their position in the field by buying more expensive animals than their lighter brethren; but this does not completely nullify the argument. However, certain articles carried by our cavalry might, I think, be carried otherwise than by the horse, or dispensed with, if necessary to make way for an increase of a few pounds of weight in an improved weapon.

A cavalry soldier parades in marching order with a valise on his saddle containing a complete change of underclothing, gloves, hair brush, comb, &c. I do not remember ever seeing a man use any of these things until the tents were pitched. If it is dry he does not want them, and if it is raining and he is wet through he has work to do in the first place which generally occupies him until the baggage arrives; and secondly, if he has done his work he has no cover under which to undo his valise and change until the tents are pitched. He may go inside and change then if he likes; but if it has been raining heavily he will very likely find the kit in his valise as wet as that on his back. However, dry or wet, why should it not be carried in the same conveyance that brings his tent, &c.? In cases where the

transport runs short he can carry it and other things if necessary; but all this useless dead weight should be avoided whenever possible. Again, what is the use of a man, when on active service, carrying about a brush and comb? Is it not far simpler to remove his hair by running a clipping machine or a pair of scissors over his head, as I have often seen done. It is most comfortable and healthy. An Adonis chary of parting with his love-locks might console himself by the reflection that his hair would only grow the thicker after trying the treatment I recommend during a campaign. He will find it a most successful hair restorer. A cloak, instead of being so generally carried on the saddle, should only be carried in case of wet weather, or the probability of having to bivouac for the night. All the kit it is necessary for a soldier to carry is, a set of shoes for his horse, his horse's food, picketing kit, a dander brush, a horse rubber, his own rations, and an oil rag; everything else should accompany his tent.

Clothing.—I would suggest it might be well to try what I think will be found an improvement in the system of clothing the British soldier. The efficiency of an army depends a great deal more on perfection of dress and accoutrement than can be imagined by superficial observers. It has been gradually dawning on us during the last few years that the uniform of our Army is not sufficiently comfortable; the consequence is that efforts have been made to make it more so, without detracting from its smartness. The results have proved more or less failures. Uniforms are certainly becoming more comfortable, but the smart dress of the British soldier is gradually disappearing; and if we go on much longer at this rate it will be difficult to distinguish a soldier from a policeman. Now this won't do at all. There never was a truer saying than "Fine feathers make fine birds." Do away with gaudy dresses in time of peace, and feats like the charge of Balaclava and other corresponding gallant deeds will only be read and sung of, if not forgotten.

It is hardly necessary to prove the advantage of attractive uniforms. Anyone who has tried to follow up the question must see it. Give a man a uniform he is proud of, and it makes him twice as good a man as he would be without it. Proud of his uniform he becomes proud of himself. He goes on to question himself as to whether he deserves that pride; he then determines to deserve it; his character and sentiment improve; he emerges like a butterfly from a chrysalis; from a heavy-brained, sottish lout, to become a smart, intelligent, dashing soldier, a something nearer deserving the term—a gentleman; a summit of perfection we all endeavour to attain. Now it is almost an impossibility to combine fully a smart soldierly appearance with comfort and utility in any garment. Appearance must be kept up for the sake of the Service, and comfort and utility must be remembered when we are on a campaign.

In most regiments the men are in possession of two tunics. Instead of this I think it would be found better if they were provided with one tunic made very ornamental, to be worn at reviews, on Sundays, and on all occasions when a very smart turn-out is neces-

sary, and one marching-order coat, something loose and comfortable and devoid of ornament, to be worn on marching-order parades, night guards, &c., and whenever appearance need not be considered.

Cavalry should have two distinct dresses. One should be as ornamental and attractive as possible, and fit like a glove, tunic, breeches, and boots, to be worn on all show occasions. The other dress, a loose Norfolk jacket, breeches, gaiters, and ankle boots, should be devoid of ornament; comfort in it should be considered as much as ornament in the other. When going on service the ornamental dress should be put into store, the marching-order dress only being taken. The men should, of course, retain the smart cap and jacket now in use in uniform in all cases except when on service.

I will now venture to digress for a few moments, and say something on a matter allied to, but not identical with, the subject of this paper:—I refer to mounted infantry.

When the system of training cavalry as mounted marksmen has been thoroughly worked out, but not till then, I would make a desirable and important improvement in infantry regiments.

It would prove in many ways most advantageous to infantry to have at the disposal of each battalion a small proportion, say one company per regiment, taught to ride; these I would arm with a rifle and a bayonet only.

This training should be carried out in the following manner. There are those who hold that infantry do not require much care in teaching them to ride sufficiently to perform their duties as mounted infantry, and that small and indifferent horses will serve their turn well enough: but this appears to me a half-hearted principle. If men have to be taught to ride it is almost as easy to do it well as ill, and will prove much more satisfactory in the long run. A cavalry *dépôt* should be formed at Aldershot or some equally central place, the instructors of which should be well versed in the training of mounted marksmen, and thither regiments should send companies to go through a course of instruction. Horses supplied from cavalry regiments should be kept there for their special use. The course should last about six months. During the course the men should ride at least about one hour or one hour and a-half in the morning and one hour in the afternoon. They should not only learn how to ride a horse, but also how to groom and otherwise look after him, how a saddle and bridle should fit, and all similar necessary details. A few should be taught as much farriery as possible in the time, and some should learn how to stuff a saddle, &c.

Too much time should not be wasted in letting them jog round a riding-school, but as soon as they begin to feel at home they should be taken out and hustled over a few fences. Meanwhile they should be thoroughly instructed in the duties of mounted riflemen and outpost duty; as soon as they are sufficiently advanced they should be practised in the following manner, under experienced Officers the first time or so, and afterwards under their own.

I. Information having been received that a small force had encamped the previous night, 10 miles off at an indicated place, the

mounted riflemen are sent out to find them, and if suitable engage them.

II. On another day, a position, say 6 miles off, is mentioned, and the mounted riflemen are sent to attack it. Thence acting as a rear guard they should fight their way back to barracks.

They should on these occasions be taught the principles of advance and rear guard, flankers, &c., so as not to be caught napping.

On other days they should be sent on outpost duty.

On these duties they should be taken across country to a certain extent.

They need not practise ball firing during the course: presumably they are all good shots.

At the completion of the course, the Officers and non-commissioned officers should be required to pass a limited examination. They then should return to their regiments, dismounted as they came. Having returned to their regiments, to enable them to keep up their training they should occasionally be mounted on the necessary number of horses provided for them by a cavalry regiment, should there be one at the same station. Here you see the advantage of the men having been trained properly to ride cavalry horses.

For instance, suppose the 3rd Hussars, 4th and 5th Regiments, are stationed together at Colchester. At 6 A.M., 1st January, the trained companies of the 4th and 5th Regiments will march to the stables of the 3rd Hussars, saddle, bridle, and turn out the horses told off for them; then form up and march off. On the completion of their manœuvres, they return, water, feed, and groom the horses. They then march back to their own barracks. This may be done once a fortnight, if possible, but even an occasional day would prove sufficient to prevent them getting too rusty.

Should a regiment with a trained company of mounted riflemen be where no cavalry are stationed, they must wait for an opportunity. I can almost fancy I can hear one theoretical objection to this system: "The horses are too large for infantry generally, not sufficiently quiet, and the men would take too long to mount."

This is nonsense! If a man is taught, he can ride a big horse, and if he can ride a big horse, he can ride a little one; the men having been trained on cavalry horses can ride them, or cobs, or ponies, or whatever they may come across in a foreign country.

As for such an objection, if we have to wait for every tinker who may choose to play "bob-cherry" with his stirrup when ordered to mount, we shall never get on; he would get his foot in and be off fast enough if a few bullets were whizzing about him.

We must have smart men for this kind of work, not dawdlers. Besides, infantry and cavalry men are much the same size, and can ride the same sized horses, and if they were not, after all it matters little. One way often unnoticed by superficial observers by which the British soldier shows his pluck is, that he will somehow or other generally manage to do whatever is expected of him. If men are told they can do a thing, *they will*. But if they are told they can't, *they won't*.

On service these mounted companies, having been fairly well trained in England, will take a very short time to adapt themselves to whatever animals may be provided for them. They will be found most useful as marksmen in action, as scouts, as mounted orderlies, for outpost duty if necessary, for reconnaissances, and for other purposes. I should say at least three or four companies could be trained in a year at Aldershot in a moderately large establishment, by two companies at a time, six months each two companies. If a greater number are required to be trained, increase the establishment; if more companies still are required, then organize a similar establishment elsewhere.

These men should have slightly better pay, as they will have more work, and be a little more scientific. A good class of men being required, their position should be made attractive and popular, both by dress and pay.

An increase of pay might, perhaps, prove more beneficial to the men if, after being put into one pocket, it were not taken out of the other.

"Ha! what familiar memory in mine brain dost stir,
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind."

There will be no difficulty in selecting the necessary number of smart Officers and men for this work, there is abundance of material of this sort in most regiments; of course they must be all skilful shots and intelligent. The Officers should be selected for their knowledge of musketry, horsemanship, and above all keenness. There are many infantry Officers with a very good knowledge of horses and horsemanship, learnt before their entrance into the Army and after. The companies should never be allowed to forget that they are mounted marksmen, pure and simple; they should not be armed with a sword, or taught to fight mounted. It will take them all their time to learn their work as mounted riflemen, and if they do that well they will prove most useful.

This scheme, I believe, is what is required: it is a plain, uncomplicated, simple, inexpensive method of training any required number of mounted infantry, without necessitating their permanent maintenance.

I now return to my original subject.

If one corps of cavalry prove capable of efficiently performing their duties as cavalry without deterioration, and also those of mounted marksmen equally well, what is proved?

Does it not stand to reason that all our cavalry regiments can do the same if equally well instructed? Of course Household Cavalry and regiments armed with a lance must be excepted, but with those exceptions every cavalry regiment in our Service should substitute for their present dismounted service the duties of mounted marksmen.

After all, I propose no such very great change, but simply a re-organization of our dismounted service.

If any falling off in the efficiency of their mounted work is detected under this change, we may be sure there is a screw loose

somewhere in the system employed. The weak point should be immediately sought for and strengthened.

It is acknowledged that cavalry should be trained to fight on foot. I do not propose any great addition to their work, but simply that instead of being trained to fight well when mounted and badly on foot, they should be so trained as to be able to perform both duties well. Why ignore such a valuable part of their duty?

It is because of their inefficiency in this respect that the demand for mounted infantry has arisen.

Captain Lumley, of the 13th Prussian Uhlans, a distinguished Officer of experience, in a very interesting paper on Mounted Infantry, from which I mean presently to quote certain paragraphs, states that mounted infantry should on no account be used as cavalry. I entirely agree with him. But it does not at all follow that cavalry should not on occasion be used as infantry.

What, may I ask, is the meaning of the present dismounted service of cavalry, and why have they carbines?

To enable them to fight on foot.

What are mounted infantry?

Mounted men who can fight on foot.

Why are mounted infantry more efficient for fighting in this manner than our cavalry, who also are trained to fight on foot?

Because they shoot better, because they have a better shooting-iron, because they are more suitably dressed, and because they are more suitably trained.

Is it not evident that if our cavalry are armed, trained, and dressed properly, they can do this work instead of their present dismounted practice?

Captain Lumley, in his paper, recommends that England should raise a large force of mounted infantry. It may be advisable for nations like Russia, with her hordes of Cossacks, to organize large forces of mounted infantry, but the system would never prove satisfactory for England; and I doubt whether it has proved so successful as expected even in Russia.

For England, with her compact but expensive Army, to organize mounted infantry on a large scale, or to carry out more than the limited company training, would not be judicious even were it possible.

But, by simply making a very slight alteration in her cavalry, England can in that branch of her service practically possess 15,000 riflemen.

How it is I know not, but British cavalry seems the last thing people care to meddle with. If they are closely criticized, the cry of *Noli me tangere* is so loudly raised that the critic has to beat a speedy retreat.

The present dismounted service of our cavalry is like a bad tooth that must come out. Pull it out then and have done with it, and no, we will not put in a *false one*, but let a second fill up its place.

This second good sound tooth is the service of mounted marksmen, and a very sharp tooth all those who try it will find it to be.

As an example of the extent to which the feeling that our cavalry

are not to be touched, for good or bad, sometimes goes, I may mention that whatever may be done in practice, though the cavalry carbine exercises have been assimilated for uniformity of drill to the infantry rifle exercises, neither the kneeling nor lying position in firing is recognized in that manual for cavalry.¹

It is even within the memory of man, that it was held as an article of faith that the only legitimate use of the carbine was to be employed as a *pop-gun* when a vedette had to give an alarm. Well, we have improved since those days; but we must not shut our eyes to the fact, that though our present state may be considered good in comparison to the past, there is yet room for great improvement.

Many authorities say that mounted infantry should, on no account, be armed with a sword or taught to consider themselves cavalry; at the same time it is stated that cavalry should always attend them.

During the Crimean War, Europe watched with interest the performance of the Russian Dragoon Corps, numbering 16,000, half of which were cavalry and half mounted infantry; they were trained to act in concert.

This corps had no good opportunity of acting in combination and was not considered a success.

At the termination of the war the mounted infantry were converted to cavalry.

Now, again, the whole of the Dragoon Corps of Russia are armed with the long rifle and drilled as infantry when on foot; but I do not, by any means, quote them as an example, as they are but poor troops, their system and training being imperfect.

Mounted infantry in large numbers attended by cavalry in proportion are too unwieldy a force and will never satisfy expectations.

On the other hand, cavalry trained as mounted marksmen can watch their opportunity and act according to circumstances.

Napoleon, in speaking of mounted riflemen, simply expressed the opinion that "an army of 10,000 men, which could cover on an average 20 miles a day, would conduce as much towards the success of a campaign as one of 20,000 moving only 10 miles a day."

In reconciling this opinion with the fact that he did not use mounted infantry, it may be presumed that he did not consider a corps trained only as mounted infantry sufficiently remunerative to employ it, and that he did not organize his cavalry to absorb these duties, as he was otherwise too much occupied to devote sufficient attention to a subject requiring such great care in detail, perpetual supervision, and one that can only be undertaken in time of peace, starting with the material of first class cavalry.

It may be said, cavalry are so much required for mounted work that they cannot be spared for the work of mounted marksmen. Cavalry are never required to act in more than one way at once: they should be capable of acting either to attack as cavalry, for outpost

¹ See footnote, page 43, "Manual and Firing Exercises for the Martini-Henry Rifle and Carbine," para. VII, Firing Exercise, 1891. (The preceding edition contained instructions for firing kneeling, the direction to "bring the weight of the body on the right heel" being of course omitted.)

duty, or as mounted marksmen, with equal efficiency: and a good cavalry leader will always see at a glance in what manner to use his men with the greatest effect.

Cavalry Officers, as a rule, dislike the idea of using their men as infantry. Men who only understand thoroughly the use of their own branch of the Service are inclined to be bigoted and think it is the best, forgetting that each branch of the Service, as at present constituted, is only capable of utility in its own way. Besides, cavalry Officers have no opportunity of using their men effectively as dismounted men, as their arms, equipment, and training are at present very imperfect for that purpose; and yet no men are more capable, if properly trained, of performing the duties of infantry. The training of cavalry soldiers improves the nerve and brightens up the intelligence in a wonderful degree.

Many cavalry Officers think the present dismounted service of their regiments superfluous, unnecessary, and valueless; and little wonder, for they feel they cannot, with confidence, hold their own against any decent force. But let them find themselves thoroughly efficient as infantry when they are required to act as such, and birth will be given to a very different feeling.

There existed until recently an opinion, stated with confidence and supported by many adherents, that cavalry should be taught to despise the rifle, and that an intimate acquaintance with it would be calculated to make them lose confidence in their own powers; in short, it was thought that to ensure reliance in the sword it was necessary to encourage contempt for the rifle. "Where ignorance is bliss," &c., has occasionally perhaps proved true, but more often it is likely to prove a snare and delusion. If there ever was any merit in this opinion is a question, but whether so or not it is too late to use it now. Since the Franco-Prussian War, when France employed 40,000 cavalry and Prussia 54,000, all European nations, England included, have been making decided strides towards the end that will ere long be attained of combining the duties of mounted marksmen and cavalry. In all armies cavalry are considered imperfect unless they are trained to fight on foot. English cavalry go through an annual course of musketry with a Martini-Henry carbine sighted up to 1,000 yards, and are taught to fight on foot as skirmishers, &c. Their musketry training is continually being increased. Quite recently an order has been issued from the Horse Guards that cavalry Officers are to go through a course of musketry at Hythe; all this tends in one direction.

Taking into consideration the knowledge of musketry that cavalry already possess, it is evident that it will not prove in any way to their disadvantage to substitute for their present training as skirmishers the duties of mounted marksmen.

Mark how little is the alteration required to enable cavalry to perform the duties of mounted marksmen. Strap the sword to the saddle, as has already been advocated so often, supply a rifle instead of a carbine, and with a few slight alterations regarding boots, &c., the only addition necessary is more musketry instruction and a bayonet.

I wish particularly to draw attention to the fact that in consequence of the advance of the breech-loader the value of the cavalry has been generally acknowledged to have deteriorated; this decrease in value can only be counterbalanced by making them absorb the duties of mounted marksmen, instead of perpetuating their present dismounted practice.

In again referring to the erroneous popular idea that a knowledge of musketry deteriorates cavalry, how is it that though cavalry of the present day have a much deeper knowledge of musketry than either cavalry or infantry had thirty years ago, they ride as straight when required as ever they did?

Those cavalry of old who were unarmed with any sort of carbine or rifle did not ride with greater gallantry; and I am sure they did not know their duties so well as our cavalry do now.

I have in this paper tried to show the most effective and most economical manner in which to create mounted marksmen; and I may here assert that when this branch of the Service is used on the Continent, small numbers will be found insufficient; and it is only by the method I propose that England can ever have large numbers. It entails hardly any expense, and practically does away with the objection of recognizing a third branch of the Service, an objection so strong that no European nation will approve of it, though Russia is now making some attempt that way, and England is talking of it. They all are rapidly approaching the end I point out, by teaching their cavalry to perform a great part of these duties.

Some day we shall see no cavalry considered sufficiently valuable who do not fulfil the duties of mounted marksmen. It cannot be a matter of indifference whether England sets the example or not: those who have practised longest will perform best.

To ensure a fair trial it will be necessary to appoint to the trial corps carefully selected Officers.

It may at first be offensive to cavalry to use a rifle and bayonet instead of a carbine, but such feelings as they possess on this subject have already been trampled on by the great increase of musketry practice that has necessarily been of late years required of them, and we must risk raising a little more indignation; this will subside when in future warfare it is found that this branch of the Service is of greater utility than they have ever been.

As we are racing with other nations we should not be satisfied to merely march with the times, but whenever we can, get a step in front of them.

The term "Mounted Infantry" will be soon considered as much a misnomer as that of "Horse Marines" is now.

Our cavalry are good men well mounted. In teaching them to absorb the duties of mounted marksmen, if good results are not obtained with such good tools, *the carpenters will be to blame*. Once the system is thoroughly inculcated, good results should not be merely expected of Commanding Officers, but should be insisted on.

The fact is, the thing has never been tried in a manner to ensure success, and until it is so tried it will never be believed in.

Many systems have been tried: the reason they have all partially failed is that this sound principle has been lost sight of,—that the men employed should be *equally* efficient as cavalry and marksmen, and equipped so as to perform those duties equally well. Neither has use been made of the only material that can be depended on to accomplish the requirement thoroughly, viz., very efficient cavalry.

If bad cavalry are used they will not answer; if they cannot do one kind of work well they certainly cannot increase their work without deteriorating.

I refer to the systems tried by Russia, Germany, and America at different times, to which I have no space to allude fully.

In Russia and Germany the equipment generally used was a rifle, sword-bayonet, and pistol. The men were taught to consider their work on foot of greater importance than their cavalry work.

In America, though they were armed with a rifle, sword, and revolver, the men started without any knowledge of cavalry training, never were good cavalry, and never had good cavalry opposed to them. At the beginning of the war there was not a brigade of cavalry between the two armies, North and South: before the end of it 150,000 were employed. They were the most useful soldiers employed in the war, their performances are well known; but it must be remembered they never had to oppose good cavalry.

There has always been a bias on one side or the other; a perfectly sound system has never been worked out.

In spite of the faults in their previous organization, it is well known how mounted riflemen have turned the scale in many battles. For instance, Peter the Great's brilliant victory at Pultova, and its subsequent results, were owing to the masterly way he made use of this arm. I quote Captain Lumley:—

"The Czar covered his advance with 1,000 dragoons, who, coming upon the enemy, dismounted and opened the engagement, but on the infantry coming up they were ordered to form up in *ordre de bataille* alongside of them, on the flanks. A severe struggle took place, resulting in the defeat of the Swedes, who were closely followed up by Prince Menzchikoff with a large body of dragoons and cavalry, with infantry mounted *en croupe*. Coming up with them on the banks of the Dnieper, which they were unable to cross, he compelled General Lovenhaupt to surrender with 14,000 men."

Such a result could never have been obtained with infantry unaided, no matter how fast they marched.

Another example of what can be done by a combination of the horse and rifle mutually assisting each other, are the operations of General Sheridan, which "materially contributed to the surrender of General Lee's army at Richmond, and to the termination of the American War." Referring to this Captain Lumley quotes:—

"On the 29th of March, 1865, General Sheridan set out with 10,000 mounted men to carry out his great turning movement of the right flank of the Confederate Army. A severely contested fight occurred on the 31st, when he successfully resisted a combined attack of all three arms with his dismounted horsemen, at Five Forks, while,

on the 1st of April, he stormed and carried the enemy's position with three of his brigades. General Meritt, with the reserve brigades, taking up the pursuit, captured 6,000 prisoners, and caused a total loss of 13,000 men to General Lee's army. This battle of Five Forks virtually decided the fate of the war; for General Lee evacuated Richmond, and retreated in the direction of Danville, vigorously pursued by Sheridan's cavalry, who, seeing that the Confederates' force was too great for him to defeat by a direct attack, swept round its flank, crossing Sailor's Creek before it, took up a position across the road on the far side of the stream, and dismounting, disputed General Lee's passage of the stream. Operating in like manner at Lynchburgh, he got the Confederate Army between his and General Grant's forces, and thus brought about the surrender of the whole Confederate Army at Oppomattox Court House on the 9th of April."

Here 10,000 mounted men, armed with a sword, rifle, and revolver, were enabled to perform, by their adaptability to circumstance and mobility, what 40,000 otherwise organized could not have achieved.

Again, in speaking on this subject, Captain Lumley says:—

"In my opinion, the Battle of Mars-la-Tour, if compared with Sheridan's movements after the engagement at Five Forks, speaks greatly in favour of the employment of mounted infantry. Although the object in view was obtained in the former battle, by the noble sacrifice made by the Prussian cavalry, still, although a cavalry Officer, I cannot help admitting that the same result would have been obtained at a very much less expenditure of life and money had mounted infantry been employed."

It is evident in this case that if those cavalry had possessed rifles and had been trained to perform the duties of marksmen, they would have been much more valuable than either cavalry or mounted infantry by themselves, or the latter attended by cavalry. How often on service, when nothing but cavalry are available, is it said, "Oh! if we only had some infantry handy." And how often when infantry only are present is it said, "Oh! if we only had a few cavalry." But it is not only in pitched battles that cavalry would find the enormous advantage of being armed so as to act efficiently on foot. I take for instance one of the many brilliant performances of General Morgan in the American War:—

"Starting from Knoxville on the 4th July, 1864, he reached Medway on the 12th, having marched 300 miles in eight days; such was the extreme mobility of his flying column that the enemy were unable to obtain any correct information of his intentions or whereabouts. The result of this raid I had better describe in his own words: 'I left Knoxville on the 4th July, with about 900 men, and returned to Livingston on the 28th with nearly 1,200, having been absent just twenty-four days, during which time I had travelled over 1,000 miles, captured seventeen towns, destroyed all the Government supplies and arms in them, dispersed 1,500 home guards, and paroled nearly 1,200 regular troops. I lost in killed and wounded about 90 men.'"

Here we see an example of what splendid execution a smart cavalry

brigadier should be able to do with cavalry able to act efficiently on foot when necessary. Nothing but first class cavalry would answer for this work in Continental warfare, as they would always have to be on their guard against good cavalry. They should usually be used solely as cavalry, and only when absolutely necessary, and when good opportunity occurs, should they be called upon to act on foot. When so employed they should be able to act with equal confidence and efficiency, if they are not, better never use them at all than put them in a false position.

It seems that though the solution to this difficulty has been always staring us in the face no nation has the energy to grasp it.

This is not a matter to be shirked by theoretical assertions: there is only one way to test it, and that is by trial. And no superficial trial will do.

Three corps should be organized, great care being taken that the Officers are carefully selected. These corps should be stationed in different parts of the country and constantly inspected.

It will be found that this will produce emulation, and the greatest possible results might be expected. After a long fair trial, it will be within the power of the Officers commanding those corps to answer the all-important question satisfactorily. Can cavalry be so trained as to perform with equal efficiency the duties of cavalry and marksmen?

I trust that I may not be regarded as a bull in a china shop in handling this matter, and that it may not be thought that I thoughtlessly "rush in where angels fear to tread." Some may consider that, with insufficient experience, I suggest too great an increase in work for cavalry; but this is not so.

I am enabled to venture an opinion as to the amount of work men can do, and the most judicious manner to work them, as I have had the advantage of serving five years in the ranks of a regiment, the discipline of which I have not only never seen surpassed, but never seen equalled, the 2nd Life Guards, in which regiment I enlisted at seventeen and a-half, and from which I was promoted to a Sub-Lieutenancy in my present regiment seven and a-half years ago. I have no hesitation in representing that it would prove of the greatest advantage to all Officers if on joining their regiments they were obliged for the first six months, or year, to do a private's work, to groom their horses and clean their arms and accoutrements, in fact almost everything short of associating with the men in their barrack-room.

This might be limited to the time they are learning their drill, &c., with the recruits of their regiments, at which they should be kept at least eight months. It would prove of lasting benefit to them to be subjected to this training. They would thus possess knowledge of the details of a soldier's life that cannot be gained in any other way, and which go far to constitute the difference between an amateur and a professional. Officers passed by the medical board as physically fit for Her Majesty's Service should not find the work injurious in any degree, but entirely the reverse.

Though to me a novelty the only conspicuous alteration that I observed in myself when going through my training as a cavalry

recruit was that my muscle and appetite alike increased perceptibly, the latter sometimes to an inconvenient extent. In a certain cavalry regiment young Officers are made to go to their regimental farrier's shop and carefully learn the rudiments of a farrier's work. Practical knowledge of this kind is never thrown away. It cannot be stated that this is no work for gentlemen; they must be poor gentlemen, and would prove poor Officers, who thought such work beneath them when told it is for the benefit of the Service.

The author of "German Home Life" quotes the speech of a German General which contains a sentence that clearly points out the secret that ensures success in all undertakings of the description I propose in this paper. The sentence to which I refer runs as follows:—"Great results can only be expected when every demand of duty and honour shall first have been complied with, when, under all circumstances, the strictest discipline, and the most untiring industry, an industry which undervalues nothing, and thinks nothing trifling or insignificant, shall form the firm foundation without which the superstructure can avail us nothing."

Nothing is good unless it is perfect. Half measures never answer. Mounted infantry may be thought sufficiently effective when we have to contend with unscientific masses of Afghans, Zulus, Boers, and Egyptians, such as have been our opponents of late years; but when we are let in for the European war that will probably come sooner or later, cavalry equipped as I have tried to describe will, I think, be found more practical, and must be, I believe, *the force of the future*. The sooner we make them *the force of the present* the better.

I think this is the answer to the mounted infantry riddle which has been found difficult to solve.

In concluding these few suggestions, I would venture to express the hope that England, having seen in her last few little wars the use of mounted infantry, will not wait until other European nations have perfected the mounted branches of their service, and then by her own loss perhaps learn to appreciate their real value. No nation produces finer riders or better shots; combine these two in our cavalry, and you will shortly have a *corps d'élite*, unrivalled in smartness and efficiency, of which any country might well be proud, and of which all countries will surely be envious.

I thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the kind attention with which you have listened to me.

The CHAIRMAN: Lieutenant Hamilton has given us, I think you will acknowledge, a most interesting lecture, though probably the views that he has expressed are different from those which would have been brought forward by Lieutenant Piggott. It is very advantageous that both sides of this question should be heard. I am sure many Officers present will not quite agree with Lieutenant Hamilton in all that he has said; and if they will be kind enough to express their opinions we shall be very glad to hear them.

Colonel GONNE, late 17th Lancers: There are many Officers present more fitted and more able to speak on this subject, but I will offer a few remarks just to raise a discussion. From what I have understood of the very able and interesting paper to which we have listened, the writer is in favour of meddling with our cavalry as to its equipment. As a cavalry Officer I object to that, because we own only a handful of

cavalry, which has done its duty fairly, though perhaps it might be improved. The writer also proposes to change the weapons of the different descriptions of cavalry except the Lancers and the Household troops. Now I consider that the Lancers and the Household troops ought to be the first "meddled with," because they are less useful for what I call general purposes. The Lancer is handicapped with three weapons—the carbine, the lance, and the sword, and it almost renders him inefficient. The Household troops are very good for special purposes. There are few of them, and they have been very usefully employed lately; but it is a question whether troops of that description could have stood a long campaign. If any cavalry requires alteration it is first the Lancer and then the Cuirassier. However, we have only got a small force of cavalry, and I object *in toto* to the cavalry being meddled with. Let us, therefore, rather turn to the question of how we are to supplement them. The greatest mistake would be to allow the infantry to suppose that they can be expected or intended to work as cavalry. I should give them, on emergency, a horse, which never could be called a charger. I should give them a horse of such a height that it would not be difficult to mount rapidly. I should certainly not give them a sword, and if the mounted infantryman had a sword the last place to which I would fasten it would be the saddle. The Russians have lately added fifty per cent. to their cavalry strength—they have turned the bulk of their cavalry into dragoons. They intend to have a strength of over 20,000 with which to make a raid. Dragoons will be armed, as the writer stated, with a rifle, not inferior to that of the infantry, and a bayonet. These men, when they parade before the Czar, dismount before they come to the saluting post, and march past as infantry. They are trained as infantry, and are going to be equipped as infantry, but they will not forget that it is necessary to have "overalls," which admit of the leg being thrown over the saddle—that is, not too tight. Our soldiers would probably suffer greatly unless we changed the equipment of the infantryman to make him able to ride. I have seen the Russian dragoons, and I have had the honour to report that they are about as useless a force as exists in that fine army. I have been also with infantry, during a sham fight between Russian dragoons and infantry, and the infantry Officers have turned to me and remarked, "I think, on service, that we should be able to get some horses for our men to ride"—meaning that the dragoons were never able to protect their horses, which were led by a few mounted men. If there is any kind of reverse, the horses fall a victim to the more skilled manœuvre of infantry. I do not think I need take up any more time. I sum up my remarks with the expression of hope that our small force of cavalry will be left as it is, and that in forming mounted infantry we shall use stuff which is proved good for the purpose. Let us train the infantryman to take care of the horse in time of peace, and to be able to ride him in time of war; and let us improve, more than anything, his powers of shooting, so as to make him a good marksman. Then, I think, we shall find that the fifty mounted infantry—I do not think there were more—who were so usefully employed in the Egyptian campaign, will have set a good example to a larger force, destined, perhaps, to perform great feats of arms in our campaigns of the future.

Colonel MIDDLETON: I am one of those many infantry Officers alluded to by Sir A. Herbert, who object to, or rather disagree a great deal with, what the lecturer has told us, and I feel rather inclined to begin by demurring to his assuming such superiority of intellect for the cavalry soldier over the infantry soldier. He certainly has arranged a very nice little sliding scale of intelligence, based upon the lace of his coat; but that would place, I am afraid, the Royal Engineers rather low in the scale, and the cavalry soldier very high indeed. I do not also agree with the idea that the infantry Officer is not equally qualified, if selected to carry out the duties connected with mounted riflemen, as the cavalry Officer. What the lecturer has been really advocating is the re-introduction of the old dragoons, a force which was tried many years ago, but which turned out to be excessively bad infantry, and very much worse cavalry. It was found whenever they were working that they had an irresistible inclination to work backwards towards their horses, which they were never happy until they had mounted, and then they generally got out of the way. The result was that they were gradually abolished. What I take to be the real want of the day is mounted infantry, and there I agree with the lecturer that the term "mounted" is rather a misnomer. I do not know whether it will ever be

quite as obsolete a term as a "horse marine," but it gives a wrong impression of the duties that are required from mounted riflemen. I do not exactly know what term should be used. The word "flying" was once used with regard to artillery; very light artillery was called "flying artillery"; but whatever they are called, they should be selected from infantry pure and simple. Not the slightest change should be made in their uniform; there is no necessity for it. The mounted infantryman should be simply taken off the parade ground, and put on to a cob, or a horse; not a button of his uniform should be changed, no lines should be given him to hold on his cap;—that is a peculiarity I have remarked, that whenever infantry soldiers are put on horses, the first things they want are cap-lines to hold on their head-dress, and then they want spurs, &c. The infantry soldier should be taken off the ground, as it were, and put on his animal, and he must be made to understand that he is not a cavalry soldier at all. The simplest way of making mounted infantry would be for every infantry regiment to have so many horses in peace time, and that the men should be selected as being picked shots, and if possible as knowing something about horses, and not simply for their smartness. I object to that word "smart," because you find sometimes an awkward-looking fellow who is a good shot and can ride, and I should select that man in preference to a much smarter-looking man of perhaps less intelligence, and who is not a good shot. These men should be taught by their own Officers. I would not allow a cavalry Officer to have anything to do with mounted infantry. There are lots of Officers in every infantry regiment who are perfectly competent to teach men how to ride. I do not want the infantryman to ride as the cavalryman does; I want him to ride decently, and to be able to go at any pace required, and that he shall fully understand that the animal he bestrides is simply a mode of locomotion,—that a bicycle or tricycle would be a much better one, only that it would not go over the ground which he might be wanted to travel over. It cannot be too much impressed upon his mind that he has simply a horse to convey him from one spot to another. The fact is, we have been using our improvised mounted infantry in our little wars as cavalry, to supplement our usual deficiency in that arm; and under the command, generally, of infantry Officers, they seem, I think, to have done even that work remarkably well. The lecturer, in the early part of his paper, referred to a question that would have to be put as to whether it was possible for cavalry to perform their own duty as they do now, and to substitute for (what he dislikes very much) the dismounted drill of the present, the duties of mounted riflemen, and he proposed certain experiments to ascertain this. I do not think myself that any experiment is necessary; and I think that when we consider the extra duties that will be demanded in future wars, and that have been demanded from cavalry, those duties being clear and quite distinct from those of mounted infantry, there is no doubt that they will require the greatest intelligence on the part of the cavalry, and I think most cavalry Officers will agree with me that the cavalry will have quite enough to do to accomplish that work alone (without calling upon them to perform other duties unsuited to them). If they do that perfectly and intelligently, I think it will be as much as any arm can be called upon to do, especially when we consider the fewness in number of our cavalry, and we never shall have a very large force of cavalry whatever happens. What we want is simply to be able to move a certain number of infantry rapidly from spot to spot. The want of this mobility is constantly felt on service. Even the young, untried Officers who have attended war-games must have remarked how the unfortunate slowness of the movements of infantry upsets the arrangements of the Officers who are conducting the war-game. I should say that every regiment should have at least thirty or forty horses in peace time; that a certain number of the best shots and most intelligent men should be selected and taught to ride those horses. Riding and stable management will be quite sufficiently taught by Officers who would always be found in every regiment. There should not be a button altered in the man's dress; he could ride perfectly well as he is. There is nothing better for riding in than gaiters, and he should be constantly drilled on foot just as much as the other men. Though I would form a company of selected men as mounted infantry, there is no reason why nearly the whole regiment should not gradually be instructed in riding in this rough way, so as to be able at once to fill up any casualties. I would have no swords or spurs, or anything of the sort. If the man

wants to make his horse go, let him take a stick and make him go. He wants to get to a certain spot, and when he gets to that spot he has to get off his animal at once. If this plan were carried out, every brigade on service would have 300 mounted men, and the divisional commander would find himself in possession of a very good force of not less than 700 men, who would be available and might be massed as in the old days, when they used to mass the flank companies. In this way the divisional commander would mass his 700 men, and he would have very little difficulty in finding a Commander, Majors, and Adjutant for them. There is one thing that has, I think, been overlooked, and that is, that the saddles should be made so that the man may take up another man *en croupe*. The lecturer mentioned one case in which a large force of men were sent forward by being taken *en croupe*. If some arrangement were made in the construction of the saddles, then on a pinch these 700 men could take each a man behind him for a short distance, and so the force of 1,400 men could be sent forward to seize a certain point in advance. Such a movement could be carried out with rapidity and with perfect ease. There would be very little trouble in holding the horses, because there would be few men required. The horses would not be very high-spirited horses, and I daresay they would stand quietly, almost by themselves. There is no doubt that being able to take a man easily *en croupe* would be a great advantage. I saw one remarkable instance of this myself during the Mutiny. I was then with Sir Henry Havelock, who was commanding a party of cavalry and some of the 10th Infantry. We were sent out to stop some Sepoys who were crossing the plain with elephants. The cavalry was not very good; it was improvised cavalry, and it did its best. We galloped on ahead, but found we could make little or no impression on the Sepoys: they formed square and killed a number of our men. We went through a part of them, but the troop Officer was badly wounded, and we had to halt. We then galloped back and met the 10th Infantry, who were coming on, and each took a man up behind him, Sir Henry Havelock and myself included, and of course, as you may fancy, though it was a short ride it was rather an unpleasant one, especially for the infantry. I remember well that I had the breath squeezed out of my body by a big corporal who held on like grim death, gripping me like a vice. The end of it was we rode up, turned round, dismounted the infantry, gave a very good account of the Sepoys, and captured the whole of the elephants.

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE: I have seen something of mounted infantry, both at home and abroad, and I hope you will allow me to say a few words. I listened with great interest to what the lecturer said as to the absolute necessity of improving the shooting of our cavalry. No doubt they will be all the better for it, and, armed with a better weapon, it will then rest with their own Officers as to how much they will be employed for dismounted service. I do not think a corps of picked marksmen from cavalry regiments would in any way take the place of a mounted infantry corps. Mounted infantry I look upon purely and simply as *bonâ fide* infantry, and nothing else; and their horses simply should be a means of conveying them from one point to another in the theatre of war more quickly than they could go on their legs: that is the only reason that they are mounted at all. Part of the lecture points to the assumption that it would be a good thing to start a mounted infantry corps in time of peace. The British public, seeing the success of mounted infantry in Egypt, assumes that we ought at once to start a mounted infantry corps at home. I am thoroughly opposed to that. I think the result would be simply this—that you would raise a second-rate cavalry corps. Directly the infantry soldier gets on his horse his tendency is to forget he is an infantry soldier, and it is the same with the Officers. You want to keep them as purely *bonâ fide* infantry and nothing else, and I should be very sorry to see an attempt made to establish a mounted infantry corps at home. I think the success of the mounted infantry that we had in South Africa and in Egypt was chiefly due to the rough and ready manner in which those corps were started to meet the emergency of the moment. I am quite ready to say this, that if any corps had been thoroughly equipped in England, mounted on English ponies, and sent out with no end of paraphernalia, I would back the mounted infantry we had in Egypt to beat them out of sight in their performances. I am quite certain that a rough and ready corps mounted on the ponies of the country would always beat any corps we might send out with a large establishment of home-

bred animals. As to Officers, I must very much differ with the lecturer about the proper Officers for mounted infantry. Certainly the infantry Officer is the one to have, and the infantry Officer who has been accustomed to horses. There are plenty of them who are good riders, and understand stable management, and are fond of horses; they are the sort of fellows to have. If you employ cavalry Officers you only increase the danger of turning your mounted infantry into a cavalry corps. One thing that we found very useful in Egypt was this: we applied for a good non-commissioned officer from a cavalry regiment to assist us in stable management, and we found that he was very useful; but as regards the Officers in a mounted infantry corps I should stick as much as possible to infantry Officers. The subject of equipment is rather too long to go into now, but it seems to be generally assumed that mounted infantry should be supplied with a bucket for carrying the rifle. This is very doubtful indeed. Certainly the Namaqua bucket is a very good way of carrying the rifle, but it is very difficult to stop the men from dismounting and leaving their rifles in their buckets; besides, you may be taken by surprise, and there are your rifles in the buckets instead of in the men's hands. In Afghanistan a good number of carbines were lost from the horses falling on the carbines while in the buckets, and the men could not get them out. For mounted infantry the best place for the rifle is in the man's hand. In Egypt the men always had them in their hands; a few of the men who had been in South Africa had the means of slinging their rifles, but they never did it. I do not think that our experience in our late campaigns points to the necessity of raising a mounted infantry corps, or a corps of mounted marksmen, in time of peace.

General Sir GEORGE WILLIS, K.C.B.: I do not propose to take up much time, but I think those who have criticized the paper have been a little hard upon the lecturer. I think we ought to thank him for having brought the subject before us. I believe there is no disputing the value of mounted infantry, but they must be infantry,—there must be no confusion about it; they must be mounted infantry, who simply require horses as a means of locomotion that they may suddenly take up a position and hold it in advance of the troops and infantry. The cavalry have enough to do in their own particular line, and I hope there will be no half-measures, such as having half mounted infantry and half cavalry. As far as equipment goes the soldier simply requires to have gaiters and to carry a rifle in his hand, with the alternative of slinging it over his shoulder to rest occasionally, but it would not form part of the horse attachment in any way. Neither do I see that the mounted infantryman requires a sword; the weight on the horse would be much better taken up by carrying the reserve of ammunition which they ought to have. During the Egyptian war there was difficulty in keeping the mounted infantry supplied with ammunition when they were away at a distance; therefore, whatever weight can be saved from equipment I would give them in the shape of a reserve of ammunition, to be carried on the horse. I think if you give him a sword at all it should be simply a sword-bayonet, because that might be useful in clearing obstacles sometimes and making his way occasionally; but I think there should be no mistake whatever that he should be purely and simply an infantry soldier, armed with a rifle and mounted on horseback.

Captain Sir JAMES SETON, Bart.: I think the balance of opinion seems to be, with all due deference to the lecturer, that what is wanted is mounted infantry rather than that dismounted cavalry should do the duty of infantry. It is a curious thing that we have in the service a portion of our infantry differently clothed though armed the same as the rest of the line generally. Formerly, there were the old 60th Rifles and the Rifle Brigade, and to these have been added the Scotch and Irish Rifles, making in all twelve battalions. The 60th and the Rifle Brigade had their *raison d'être* in the Peninsular War. They were the only infantry trained for effective skirmishing besides the light companies of regiments. They used to do the light work of the army, and occasionally, from necessity, companies were combined into light battalions, as has been pointed out to us. Another point in connection with this subject is that the organization of the British division contemplates there being an additional battalion, sometimes called the rifle battalion, which remains outside of the brigade organization. My suggestion would be, as I believe the authorities look with favour on suggestions made in this theatre,

that the battalions of Rifles should gradually be experimentalized on, with a view of forming them into a permanent order of mounted infantry, and, as has been suggested, great care should be taken to prevent their degenerating into an inferior sort of cavalry. That would suit the financial views of the Government, inasmuch as there would be no necessity to horse the whole of them. If enough horses were provided to allow one company to practise at a time, and the foreign service roster allowed six battalions, there would be no greater increase to the Estimates than 600 horses on the home establishment. A certain number of battalions would be in India, and care should be taken that these should be quartered near the frontier, where there would be more likelihood of their getting practice in large assemblies of troops; and in the constant little frontier wars that are breaking out the military authorities would get experience in the use of that arm. I will not say a word about details, because I have not had the same experience myself as previous speakers, but I would just throw this out as a suggestion.

NOTE.—When I rose I had it in my mind to say that the men should be trained also to break young horses, so that, on our having to send an expedition abroad, the mounted infantry might be horsed on the theatre of war, and thereby sea transport be saved. I had also meant to express the hope that the remarks made by the lecturer as to his early career in the service might go forth as an encouragement to young men of good social position, who have strong military instincts, but find it hard to get through competitive examinations.

Lieutenant HAMILTON, in reply: We have been fortunate in hearing good specimens of the opinions held, to a great extent, by cavalry and infantry against the measures I propose. Colonel Gonne has represented the disinclination held by cavalry to be used on foot; Colonel Middleton and others have represented the disinclination of infantry to part with or even share with cavalry their *bonne bouche*. Colonel Gonne seems to think I wish to change cavalry to infantry. That is not so. I think they should do their cavalry work as efficiently as at present, simply improving their dismounted service. Colonel Gonne also does not approve of the lance. It is well known that many hold that the lance is the queen of weapons; in several cases of cavalry charging cavalry, during the Franco-Prussian War, wherever they met the sword invariably went down before the lance. With all due deference to him, neither can I agree that the Household Cavalry should be interfered with. A sufficient reason is simply that they are *Her Majesty's Body Guards*, and being the finest in the world should be left as such. As to their not being so useful as other cavalry, it is a curious though undeniable fact that, whenever they happen to be proved on service, to say the least of them, they are not found wanting. As I have previously stated I quite agree that mounted infantry should never be used as cavalry, and also, as I have said before, that I do not quote the Russian dragoons as an example for us, in any improvement we may make in our cavalry. I cannot think, with Lord Melgund, that the rifle should be carried by the mounted infantry soldier in his hand, dispensing with both bucket and sling; on many occasions these are almost indispensable; in cases of successive long marches and of a forced march it would be found most wearisome and unsatisfactory. It will be found that most of the objections made to the improving the dismounted service of our cavalry as I propose have been already dealt with in what I have previously said, so I will not occupy your time by further alluding to them. I wish to read a few remarks which have been sent to me—quotations from the *Times* and the *Saturday Review*. Mr. E. Maxwell Grant, in a letter to the *Times*, sums up his argument in favour of the system proposed by me thus:—"The speediest, cheapest, and best plan for providing the mounted infantry of the future will be to change armament and drill of the existing cavalry regiments into a homogeneous mounted force, which will combine all the useful features of the old cavalry organization with the new duties of the force universally admitted to be necessary for the armies of the present and future." The *Saturday Review* says:—"The equipment of cavalry will probably have to be modified in conformity with the requirements of modern war. The use of the carbine increases, while that of the sword diminishes. At present, as everybody knows, the trooper wears the sword while the horse carries the carbine in a leather case attached to the saddle. The result is, that if suddenly dismounted, the man retains the sword which is useless, while the horse

goes off with the carbine which is useful. Before long this will have to be reversed, on service at any rate. Whether 'the bold dragoon, with his carbine, saddle, and bridle,' will find as much favour with the fair sex as his predecessors who carried 'a long sword,' is a point which the rapid march of military improvement forbids us to discuss." I am sorry no one has said anything as to whether it would be advisable for cavalry to use the bayonet for their dismounted service; but I wish to add one reason why they should. Without quoting the many circumstances under which a bayonet is necessary to soldiers armed with a rifle fighting on foot, I would keep the bayonet for the fact that, though it may justly be said that the number of men killed with it, in comparison with the casualties otherwise caused, is small, its moral effect is incalculable. Men fighting on foot, armed with a rifle only, doubly invite the attack of an enemy. They at the same time find themselves deprived of a weapon which naturally inspires men with confidence: thus the enemy are emboldened while their *vis-à-vis* are disheartened. The situation is enough to make the boldest cavalry look over their shoulder for their horses. This is the very thing that we want to prevent. The reason cavalry do not often appear to advantage when fighting on foot is because they are encouraged to consider themselves dismounted cavalry; they should be taught complete independence of their horses when on foot. They should be taught when mounted to trust to their sword, to remember only the rôle of "the Dashing Hussar." Once on foot they should leave their sword with their horse, and grasp with confidence the arm *par excellence* of the foot soldier—the rifle and the bayonet, breech-loader or muzzle-loader, magazine rifle or smooth-bore; a soldier, cavalry or infantry, fighting on foot, should always see a glistening piece of steel at the end of his shooting-iron, and be taught how to use it when opportunity offers. As one of the objects of the meeting is discussion, I should be very glad if some Officers would give us their views on that subject.

Colonel MIDDLETON: As far as the bayonet is concerned, there can be very little doubt, if cavalry are to be armed with the rifle and fight on foot, they should also have the bayonet,—that, I think, there can be very little doubt about.

Colonel MALCOLM GREEN, C.B.: I should like to say one or two words on that subject. The awkward time for a cavalryman is after a charge has taken place against footmen, and the latter, though broken up as a body, do not happen to run away; the trooper then finds it difficult, with his sword only, to prevent himself and horse from being mobbed by half-a-dozen men armed probably with sword and shield (in the East). He cannot, under these circumstances, use a long rifle from horseback to keep the fellows off, but he can easily manage and do considerable execution with a short breech-loading carbine. I am therefore an advocate for keeping the latter weapon for cavalry.

The CHAIRMAN: In asking you to thank the lecturer, I will make a few remarks. As an official, you will understand that I must consider the financial aspect. The lecturer proposes to establish three corps, taken from the cavalry, of 600 men each, 1,800 men in all—a force equal to four of our cavalry regiments on the peace establishment; 1,800 picked men, taken from the cavalry regiments, would destroy the efficiency of far more than ten regiments. What will the Officers of the cavalry regiments say to such an arrangement, taking at least a squadron of picked men from each regiment? Therefore I do not think such a plan could possibly be adopted. As for the Government authorizing the raising of three more strong cavalry regiments, any one who knows the economical view of a Government, whether Conservative or Liberal, will be perfectly sure that scheme would never be carried. I think the lecturer is quite right in upholding his branch of the Service—the cavalry. There is no doubt a great deal more may be done by cavalry Officers instructing their men in dismounted duties. I have, however, seen cavalry regiments myself, when in command, which drilled remarkably well dismounted, and did everything our lecturer wishes them to do. They certainly did not kneel to fire, of which he complains; the paragraph to which he alluded was inserted in the Regulations because the cavalry wore spurs, and it is very awkward to kneel, resting the body on a heel which has a long spur in it. It is not intended the cavalry should not when firing take the same aim as the infantry, but the cavalry soldier wears spurs which he cannot take off when he dismounts, and therefore

some alteration in the position was required. It would be invidious to mention regiments, but one regiment that I saw drilled and skirmished excellently on foot. They did everything an infantry soldier could be called upon to do, and certainly as much as cavalry can be required to do dismounted. I entirely agree with Lord Melgund in what he said—that we do not want what we may call bastard cavalry, fellows who cock their hats on one side and strut about, neither real cavalry nor infantry; though I do not agree with Colonel Middleton that you should take the infantryman from the ranks, and put him on his horse at once.

Colonel MIDDLETON: I say he should be taught to ride.

The CHAIRMAN: I mean to say in his infantry clothes; for I should like to know what his feelings would be if, without a pair of drawers, he was taken and made to ride for a long day in a pair of infantry trousers and highlows. He would feel very sore and uncomfortable, I imagine. The mounted man must have breeches or something of that sort; he must have a dress in which he can ride. I do not think a man will put his spurs in his wallet when he dismounts, as some one has suggested; if he has spurs, he must dismount and skirmish with them. I know the American army pretty well. The American cavalry, so called, were nothing but mounted infantry extemporized. They were mounted troops: they rode—not very well. Americans are not like Englishmen, who are always accustomed to riding: these men had been drilled but a short time, and yet they were able to move in large masses; they fought as often on foot as mounted. We must have a nucleus of mounted infantry in England, if we wish to have them ready for war. I mean that we must have a certain number of men who are trained to ride, and they must know some little about stable management. The greater part of the mounted infantry in Egypt had a short training at Alexandria before Lord Melgund joined them. When they were at Alexandria they worked hard and learned something: the men who knew a little about horses were selected. What has been advocated by the authorities is to have a few horses, or ponies, or mules—anything that can carry a soldier,—at Aldershot, and at the Curragh, in order that the men can be taught to ride—taught just to move more sharply from one place to another, dismount and fire, and leave their horses in charge of a very few men. That, I believe, is all that is required, and that is all we are trying to get at the present time. I do not think the principle our lecturer advocated, of borrowing horses from the cavalry regiments, would at all suit the cavalry Colonels—to see an infantry regiment march into their stables in the morning, take possession of their horses, knock them about all day, and bring them back saying, “Now, gentlemen, there are your horses.” Imagine the Colonel’s feelings! I am afraid it would not answer. I think, however, we ought to be very grateful to our lecturer for having brought this subject before the public. He is quite right to uphold his branch of the Service, and to try and make them as perfect as he possibly can. I beg on your behalf to tender him our very best thanks for his very interesting paper.