



The Recent changes in the Drill of the German Army

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Wednesday, April 3, 1889.

GENERAL G. ERSKINE, Chairman of the Council, in the Chair.

THE RECENT CHANGES IN THE DRILL OF THE GERMAN ARMY.

By Colonel LONSDALE HALE, Ret. R.E.

IN the year 1872, shortly after the termination of the Franco-German War, the latest changes made by the Prussians in their Infantry Drill Book formed the subject of a lecture delivered in this theatre by the late Major E. M. Jones. In 1876, a new edition of the Infantry Drill Regulations of the Prussian Army and officially called a "reprint" of the old Regulations which bore the date 25th September, 1847, was issued to the Army. The leading features of the "reprint," and the alterations it introduced are given in a paper contributed to the Occasional Notes in the 88th number of the Journal,¹ by Lieutenant-General (then Colonel) E. Newdigate, now commanding in Bermuda. The Council of this Institution, when arranging the programme of lectures for the current session, had before them the desirableness of bringing the information on this subject up to the present time. They consider that the lectures delivered here should not only deal with matters of passing interest, but should be standard sources of reference in future years. Inasmuch then as a fresh edition of the Drill Regulations was issued in September of last year, and moreover the publication of this edition drew on it the attention and criticism of soldiers all over Europe, the Council determined to include in their programme a lecture on it. Most unfortunately, however, owing to causes to which it is unnecessary to refer, difficulties arose which resulted in the withdrawal of the lecture. Strongly impressed with the desirableness of this particular subject being brought before the members of the Institution, I undertook to obtain another lecturer. But the difficulty of finding one was very great, for English Officers who really understand technical military German are few and far between. It so happened, however, that I was aware that a brother Officer, an old friend of mine, who is a thorough master of the German language, had most carefully compared the old and the new Drill Book, and had reduced that comparison to writing. On stating my difficulty to him, he, whilst declining to lecture himself, most generously placed the results of his labours at my disposal, and those I am about to lay before you. I, gentlemen,

¹ See vol. **xx**, p. 719 *et seq.*

am this afternoon merely the mechanism of the telephone: the utterances are those of "one who knows," but for the correctness I, with perfect confidence, hold myself responsible.

At the outset it is necessary to impress on your minds the marked distinction between the edition of the Drill Book which we are considering to-day and the editions which preceded it. The earliest of the latter bears the date 25th September, 1817. In the German Army there exists, side by side, a keen desire for progress on the one hand, and on the other hand a clinging to the traditions of the past. Hence the edition of 1876, necessitated by the altered conditions of warfare, as shown in the campaign of 1870-71, was officially called a "reprint." It resembled a tree planted some thirty years before, on which had been grafted cuttings which would bear fruit suited to the military tastes and desires of later date. Consequently, that edition was full of anachronisms and modern ideas in strange juxtaposition, the former predominating, and the result being contradiction and consequent confusion. Practically, it contained two antagonistic and irreconcilable systems: one based on the war experience of bygone days, the other on that of modern war. Of the many illustrations of the predominance of the old ideas, one will suffice, that of the retention of the battalion directed by the battalion commander's word of command, as the tactical unit. Reference to the table of contents (Appendix No. 1) shows us that out of 195 pages dealing with the instruction and training of the individual soldier, the squad and company, the battalion and the brigade, 89 pages or nearly half are devoted to the battalion.

The retention of the battalion as the principal fighting unit was due to close formations being still regarded as fighting formations, and suitable for employment within reach of the enemy's fire. This becomes apparent from the numerous evolutions in close formation laid down for the battalion, many of which carry us back to the days of the Great Napoleon and the Peninsula, when, being admirably adapted to the tactical conditions of that period, they produced excellent results.

The much needed reform was initiated by the late Emperor, who did not, however, live to see the fruit of his labours, and it was reserved to his son, the present Emperor, to complete the work by the issue of a book which is not a reprint, not even an improved and revised edition; it is an entirely new creation, differing from its predecessors in many essential points and in most minor details. The statement of the Emperor's views regarding it runs as follow:—

"Berlin, 1st September, 1888.

"I issue to the Army these new Infantry Drill Regulations, in grateful memory of His late Majesty, my father, to whose initiative their production is due. Their object is to produce a larger scope for war training, maintaining at the same time the discipline and order which have been handed down to us.

"The advantage gained by the simplification of many of the formations must on no account be nullified by any one, either by verbal

or written additions to the Regulations for the purpose of obtaining increased outward uniformity, or for any other reasons.

"The freedom purposely conceded in the training and its application should in no way be limited by any restrictions affecting the principles of these Regulations.

"I am firmly resolved to punish with dismissal any contravention of this my will.

"Any infringement of the provisions of Parts I and III will meet with severe censure, while any misapprehension of Part II should be rectified by means of instruction.

(Signed) "WILHELM.

"To the War Ministry."

It is interesting to notice the influence of the national spirit in these Regulations. Having effectually shaken off the yoke of their enemies, the Germans are determined to get rid of the last trace of the French domination by purging their language of all germanized French words, thus carrying into effect the spirit of these German lines:—

Willst du ein echter Deutscher sein
So sprichst du deine Sprache rein.

freely rendered—

Wilt thou be a German true
Cleanse thy language thro' and thro'.

There is even a marked progress in this respect, since the issue of the "Field Service Regulations, 1887."

The following are some instances of this change:—

Old word.	New word.
Honneurs	Ehrenbezeugungen.
Attacke	Sturm.
Avertissement	Ankündigung.
Engagement, action ..	Gefecht.

There is one word of foreign sound and curious application still retained—i.e., "chargiren"—in the words of command for firing.

Most striking also is the systematic and logical recasting the work has undergone. Its arrangement and teaching are as lucid, simple, and concise as those of the old book were complicated and diffuse. It moreover numbers 57 pages less.

But if one thing more than another shows the completely new departure taken, it is the relative amount of space allotted to the drill and exercises of the several units in the book of 1876 and that of 1888. A brigade consists of 3 or 4 regiments, a regiment of 3 or 4 battalions, a battalion of 4 companies, a company of 3 züge, the company being about 200 strong. Look now at the comparative statement in the table:—

	No. of Pages.	
	Old.	New.
Individual Training	35	31
Zug	0	22½
Company.....	37	17½
Battalion.....	89	10
Regiment	0	7
Brigade	35	5½

In itself the table is a revelation. Leaving out of consideration the item individual training, which remains as before, we see that to the regiment a few pages are given, but the brigade retains but one-sixth or one-seventh of its former importance, the battalion only one-ninth. The reason of this is that henceforth the company is the only fighting tactical unit, and battalions, regiments, and brigades are regarded on the battle-field merely as concentrations and assemblages of the fighting units, the companies, whence they may be drawn for the purposes of the combat. And the reduction of space allotted in the book to the company, as a whole, is more than made up by that given to its third, the zug, the lowest unit under an Officer's command, and consisting of some sixty-four men which, hitherto unrecognized, now springs into the first place.¹

The subjects connected with the forming, handling, and legitimate employment of the soldier are divided into three parts:—I, The School; II, The Fight; III, Parades, &c.

Out of a total of 169 pages, he is taught his lessons in "The School" in 80 pages, he is shown how practically to apply these lessons in "The Fight" in 52½, and in 27½ pages Part III provides for the few necessary show parades inseparable from the profession of arms.

Part I, "The School," is further subdivided into six sections, one for each link in the military chain, that may be called upon to bear the strain of war and act independently as a fighting unit. These are—A, "The Individual Soldier;" B, "The Zug;" C, "The Company;" D, "The Battalion;" E, "The Regiment;" and F, "The Brigade."

The training of the individual soldier consists of instruction with and without the rifle, and as a unit of the fighting line. That of the zug and company, in which everything connected with the actual fighting is done, consists of instruction in close and extended formation.

The key to Part II, "The Fight," lies in the number of pages respectively taken up by the three subdivisions composing it. The total number devoted to "The Fight" is 52½. Of these nearly three-quarters are allotted to the first subdivision dealing with "General Principles." The second subdivision treats of the fight of the several tactical units, "The Company," "The Battalion," "The Regiment," and "The Brigade," and is contained in 13½ pages, each unit taking up about the same amount of space, the company having the largest

¹ By "unrecognized" is not meant that the zug itself did not exist, but that as a fighting unit it was not recognized in the Drill Book.—L. A. H.

number with 4 pages. The "Concluding Remarks," not the least remarkable part of the book, occupy 3 pages, and form the third and last subdivision of Part II.

Even Part III, "Parades, &c.," which bears a certain resemblance to its obsolete predecessor, has not been left untouched by the hand of the reformer. It comprises four parts: (A) The Parade, (B) Taking out and replacing the Colour, (C) Bugle Calls, (D) Brass and Reed Bands.

The Preface, the three Parts, and the three Appendices, No. 1 Bugle Calls (21), No. 2 Drum and Fife Marches (12), No. 3 Sundry Calls on the Drums and Fifes (12), make up the contents of the German Infantry Drill Regulations, 1888.

The object throughout these Regulations, which becomes particularly apparent in this part, is not to seek to provide for every conceivable contingency, thereby burdening the memory with numberless details, but rather, thoroughly to furnish the mind with sound principles of general application. That is the clue to 36 pages of 56½ being devoted to the general principles, in this most important part of the German soldier's instructions. There is no "Rule of Thumb" work here. Here we find nothing but living principles, deduced after much thought and labour from real modern war, not by the theorist, but by the practical soldier who has proved his quality in field and cabinet, requiring the exercise of reasoning powers and application of judgment and common sense.

Drill and Training.—No better introduction to the drill and training of the German Army could be found, than that given in the book itself, from which the following is an extract:—

1. The object of drill is to train and prepare both Officers and men for war. All exercises should therefore be in conformity with war practice. The most important requirements of war are strict discipline and order, together with the utmost exertion of physical and mental powers. The development of these qualities to such a degree that they become a second nature to the men, is one of the principal objects of all exercises at drill and field practices.

It is only by simplicity that results are ensured in war. It therefore becomes merely a question of mastering and practically applying a few simple formations. These, however, should be practised with strictness, and directed with certainty and precision. The provisions of the Regulations deal solely with normal formations, and are unconditionally binding in their spirit and letter, in peace as in war. All artificial elaboration is prohibited.

2. All commanders of troops from the Company Commander upwards, are responsible that the training of the units under their command is carried out in accordance with the Regulations, and they should therefore be restricted as little as possible in the choice of means. Their immediate superiors are *in duty bound* to interfere the moment they notice any errors or shortcomings.

Each section of Part I we shall now deal with in succession, commencing with Individual Instruction, and taking then the *zug*, the company, and then leading on to the brigade.

PART I.—A. *Individual Instruction.*

The spirit of the training imparted is aptly described in the last clause of the concluding Remarks to Part II: "The training of troops may properly be considered as successfully accomplished, when they are capable of performing what is required in war, and when no part of what has been taught on the drill ground has to be laid aside on the battle-field."

In the old Regulations the instruction of the individual soldier was scattered over Parts I, II, III, and IV; the whole of it is now embraced in Part I, Section A. Every section and subsection that requires it, is preceded by pithy "General Remarks." These shall be given in full.

§ 1. "The careful and strict individual instruction which should be conducted concurrently with the physical training prescribed in the Gymnastic Regulations, is the foundation of the soldier's training as a whole. The requisite combined action of numbers can only be attained by the thorough instruction of the individual. The faulty and incomplete instruction of a recruit, as a rule, affects him prejudicially in the performance of his duties, during his entire service. Faults which are allowed to creep in during the initial stages of the instruction, are rarely completely eradicated. It is likewise impossible to remedy defective instructions by means of combined practices."

These words, together with the amount of space allotted to this subject, give us an inkling of the importance attached to this first moulding of the young soldier,¹ and a further examination will convince us as to the soundness and practical character of the instruction imparted.

Appendix No. 2 shows us what has been abolished in this portion.

With a view to lessening fatigue on the march, the command "Ohne Tritt," or "Out of step," is given. The men are thereby relieved from the necessity of accurately keeping the Regulation step. The normal distance (from back to breast) between ranks is then increased from 0.64 to 0.80 m. (25—31½ inches). The men, however, maintain the regulated pace, an orderly bearing, and their proper places in the ranks. On the command "Tritt gefasst," or "In step," the ordinary step and distance is resumed. In marching off "out of step" the command is "Ohne Tritt—Marsch," or "Out of step—March."

With regard to instruction in "Firing," the most important portions of the Musketry Regulations bearing upon the effective use of the rifle in action, with which it is essential the soldier should be perfectly familiar, are inserted bodily in the new Regulations.

In peace-time, bayonets are no longer fixed, and it is considered sufficient that the soldier should be instructed in "fixing" and "unfixing;" the object being doubtless to save the rifle. On all occasions, however, in which bayonets would actually be fixed in battle, the order to "fix," either by command or bugle-call, should invariably be given, without its being carried out by the men.

The most important part of the training, being that for the fight in

¹ See "The Training of the German Recruit," in No. 147 of the Journal.—Ed.

extended order, let us hear what the "General Remarks" have to tell us as to the methods adopted:—§ 61—66. "In order to render the recruit familiar with the rudiments of the independent use of the rifle, it should be placed in his hands a few days after he joins and before being instructed in the manipulation. The instruction on the several parts of the rifle and their combined working, should go hand in hand with that in loading, the firing positions, and aiming.

"After the soldier has made some progress in loading, the firing positions, and in carrying the rifle at the slope, and after he has obtained a clear grasp of the first principles of subordination, the instruction in extended order fighting should be proceeded with.

"For this purpose, he should be made to acquire the rudimentary notions of the nature of fighting in extended order, by affording him opportunities of observing the working of small parties of older soldiers, over easily accessible ground.

"His zeal for, and powers of understanding the highest objects of his calling, should then be stimulated and sustained, by making him take an active part in representations of the simplest phases of the fight.

"His duties in the attack and the defence, and the manner of turning the nature of the ground to account in increasing his own fire action and reducing that of the enemy, should be taught him by means of an opposing force, at short ranges to commence with.

"These exercises can be carried out at all times of the year, on the field-practice ranges and on the drill ground. After the recruit has served two or three weeks, he should be taken out for this purpose into the country at least twice a week. This is a decidedly beneficial change during the period of formal drill instruction, which can best be furthered by the recruit bringing with him a certain insight into the practical application of the extended order formations practised on the drill ground.

"In regulating and directing these field practices, the difference of the demands made upon him in the formal exercises principally connected with close formations, and those connected with extended formations, should be explained to him.

"Plenty of time should be allowed for the careful and thorough training of the soldier, as it cannot be effected if the course of instruction is unduly hurried over and repetition is to be avoided.

"It will soon become apparent which men are particularly smart. The greatest attention should be devoted to the training of these men with a view to appointing them *zug* and section leaders in due course. Awkward men must not be permitted to retard the progressive instruction of the class they belong to."

It is laid down, that the men should be practised in surmounting obstacles of all descriptions, and be thoroughly trained in taking advantage of cover. They should, however, be taught that in the majority of cases the straight way is the best way, and that a considerations as to cover should give way to those regarding fire action.

Theoretical musketry instruction and judging distances should go

hand in hand with this part of the instruction, followed by blank and ball firing.

PART I.—B. *The Zug.*

Now, for the first time, the zug is given its legitimate place in the Drill Regulations. It is recognized as a real fighting unit, and assumes its duties and responsibilities. On the completion of the individual training of the recruit, say the General Remarks, § 81, he is formed up with several others in line, files, sections, and is prepared, by being exercised in züge, for taking his place in the company, in close as well as extended formation. In the zug as well as in all larger units, the same certainty and order should prevail, whichever rank may be in front or whichever flank is leading. The zug should also be able to execute all regulation movements in perfect silence even when in an unusual order, with files intermixed (termed "unrangirtes exerziren" or drilling in "mixed order"), "in step," and "out of step."

The zug, formerly the half (in close formation) is now the third of a company, and is commanded by subaltern Officers, called zug leaders.

It is now formed in two ranks instead of three, both sized from the right, the tallest man of each file in front. The lateral space occupied by the soldier in the ranks is not laid down. It is merely stated that he should in all cases, even on parade, have a light touch of the elbow with his right and left-hand men. This will enable him to fire and execute all his movements in the ranks without constraint.

A zug of sixteen files and over is divided into half-züge, and the half-züge again into sections, which in extended order are called groups. A zug of fifteen files and under is not subdivided into half-züge. In either case the section should not consist of more than six or less than four files. The sections are numbered from the right of the zug. The zug leader stands in front of his zug when working alone. A flank non-commissioned officer is placed on either flank of the front rank, the remaining non-commissioned officers two paces from the second rank, standing in rear of the last file of the section they command in extended formation.

The evolutions performed by the zug in close formation are shown in Appendix 4.

The dressing is always by the right (unless specially ordered otherwise). The men are practised to form up rapidly on points (the flank non-commissioned officers) or on files. A good advance of the zug in line over considerable distance, is considered the foundation of all movements in close formation. In file marching, the front rank directs. Marching in file is used for short distances only, as it entails great exertion, having to be executed "in step" so as to retain the proper distances.

There are two new terms, "Ziehen," to denote the diagonal march, and "Hakenschenkung," a change of direction in column, each component part wheeling in succession on reaching a given spot.

The Zug in Extended Formation.—(General Remarks.) “In training men for fighting or extended order, it is likewise not expedient to pass suddenly from individual instruction to that of the zug. Practices in files and groups should rather precede it. By them the soldier is first taught his functions as a unit in the fighting line, in which he has not only to respond to the leading of his group leader but also to consider the men on his right and left in his movements.

“Whereas a single soldier moving freely over the country will be able to find plenty of cover and is permitted to do so, the zug and still more the larger units, are only able to avail themselves of this advantage under certain circumstances, which it is the duty of the leaders to make the most of. Considerations regarding cover should on no account interfere with the uniform movement of the whole. For this reason alone the successive and connected movements of fighting lines form a very important subject in the training.

“The difficulty of execution increases with the extension and density of the line. At the commencement these exercises should be carried out with shorter lines at greater intervals of extension.”

Movements in extended formation are performed, as a rule, at the ordinary pace—only exceptionally at the double. In the advance by rushes, the space covered each time should rarely exceed 80 m. (87 yards).

The movements of a zug in extended formation are:—

1st. Advance and retirement of the zug or portion of it.

2nd. Moving to a flank by the diagonal march.

3rd. Change of direction by the indication of a new point to march on.

Movements to a flank, in file, should be avoided. A rigid adherence to dressing and intervals should not be required.

“The men are to be distinctly instructed to close up or open out for the purpose of availing themselves of cover.”

“The only thing to be considered with regard to dressing is, that the several portions of the fighting line do not interfere with one another in their movements and fire.”—(Part II, 26, 27.)

The extension may be at the halt or on the move. When extending, the rear rank men move up on the right of their front rank men. The interval of extension, unless specially ordered otherwise by the zug leader, is from one to two paces. Units in extended order march by their centre.

An extension, during a movement to the rear, is performed at the halt and facing the enemy.

Each group is commanded by a non-commissioned officer. The zug and group leaders place themselves in front of their respective charges, and, if possible, one or more non-commissioned officers are kept in rear of each zug, to superintend its movements.

Fire is only opened by a fighting line, when in position. It is only in exceptional cases that firing is allowed on the move. The instructions as to fire action, fire leading, fire discipline, the different kinds

of fire, and the observation of fire effect; are all extracts from the Musketry Regulations.

Sights should be adjusted with the greatest care during all practices.

The extended zug, when closed, forms up in line. If the zug leader continues to advance, the closing is carried out on the move.

The change of front of extended lines, by wheeling or on files, is abolished, and a change of direction is effected by indicating a fresh point of direction. The relieving of a fighting line is no longer provided for.

PART I.—C. *The Company.*

Instead of 37 pages in the superseded Regulations, the Instructions on Company Drill and Fighting only take up 17½ pages in the new book. Its independence as a training and fighting unit has, however, been largely increased. The preface says, in para. 3: "The mastering of the actual drill should be accomplished in the company." The simplification this drill has undergone, has been most thorough and practical.

The company is composed of three züge, and each zug into two half-züge. The züge and half-züge are numbered from the right of the company. A footnote states that it is advantageous if this subdivision of the company into züge, half-züge, and sections is adopted and maintained, for purposes of interior economy, and if the men of a company are as much as possible of the same size.

As to its capabilities, the "General Remarks" say (§ 143): "The company should be so thoroughly trained, that it may remain under the control of the company leader under all circumstances, and that by paying proper attention to his orders, it may be able to carry out even what it may not have practised previously." The two normal close formations of the company are given in Diagram No. 1. (See Plate.)

The distribution of the Officers to the züge, is left to the Company Commander. The movements of a company in close formation are of the simplest description, as will be seen by referring to Appendix 4.

The distance between züge in company column, and between companies in battalion column is always seven paces.¹ In half-zug column, the full distance of seven paces should be gained when moving outside the sphere of the enemy's fire. When required to reduce the depth of the column, it is reduced to four paces.

All changes of formation into and out of company column are executed "out of step."

The dressing is always by the right, unless otherwise ordered. When two züge are marching in line, the dressing is by the centre zug leader.

In dressing up or taking up an alignment, the points given are two zug leaders and the outer flank Officer.

Company Square.—This company square is formed at the halt. The leading zug is halted, the next zug wheels outwards and forms the

¹ Measured from front rank to front rank.

side faces, the 3rd Zug closes up and forms the rear face. It is the last vestige in European tactics of a formation, which the Germans consider so well calculated to delay and restrict the development of the highest fire action at the most critical moment, and to co-operate with the enemy's cavalry in its endeavour to provide a good target for its artillery.

The Regulations say: "Complete regularity in the formation of square is not to be required, but prompt readiness to open fire in any direction must be insisted on." This condition of promptness in forming square and opening fire is more easily attainable in this comparatively small unit, which, moreover, forms a relatively small target for guns.

The ordinary movements in square are provided for. The occasions on which the square may be used are laid down in para. 50, thus: "The adoption of the square formation can only be considered suitable, when required by special circumstances, such as when the troops have expended their ammunition; when they have been severely shaken by heavy losses during the fight; or when compelled to retreat over open ground, in the presence of threatening cavalry, superior in numbers. Infantry engaged with cavalry should bear in mind, in all other cases, that the latter are justified in counting it as an advantage gained, as soon as they succeed in compelling them to discontinue their movements and to assume formations which will interfere with the development of the most effective fire-action."

The firing of a company in close formation may be delivered in line, company column, and in square. Volleys are delivered by companies or by züge. The zug leaders place themselves in rear of their respective züge, and call out their numbers before ordering them to fire. A company column at the halt may close up, so as to fire four deep. In square, volleys should, as a rule, be used, the side of the square required to fire being named.

Bayonet Charge.—The instructions commence with these words: "Should the company be required to charge in close formation," as if to indicate the unlikelihood of such a proceeding. The company comes to the charge and breaks into the "Storm March." At a distance, dependent on the circumstance of each case, the company is ordered to double and cheer. The drums beat the "Storm March" (the fifes do not play). After securing the position, the leading züge make ready and wait for the command to open fire on the retreating foe. In an unsuccessful attack, the troops in close formation and the fighting line retire simultaneously, the former in the strictest order and "in step."

The Company in Extended Formation.—The training and movements of a fighting line are fully dealt with in the zug instruction. Those for the company are limited to (1) Extension, (2) Reinforcing, (3) Support, (4) Assembly, and that only briefly.

Unless otherwise ordered, entire züge move out on the command "extend." In company column the leading zug, in line any named zug. The remainder of the company forms the support in line or column, and does not move off until the fighting line has gained the requisite

distance. An interval of seven paces is maintained between züge in the fighting line.

The fighting line is reinforced by command of the company leader, either by the insertion of fresh züge into the line itself, or by prolonging it. In the former case, the zug ordered to reinforce extends at once, and makes direct for the interval between the züge or any existing space in the züge already extended. An intermixing of züge is here candidly acknowledged as unavoidable, and, as far as possible to mitigate this evil, it is directed that the company should be practised in assuming fresh subdivisions, the zug and group leaders dividing the line between them.

How different from the unbending spirit of the old Regulations! These say (page 68, § 39, Chap. VIII): "For the sake of preserving unity of command, in reinforcing and reducing the skirmishing line, the original züge and sections should not, where possible, be separated, they should not, in any case, however, be intermixed." The same principle in other words is enforced on page 143, § 103, and page 187, second paragraph.

The Support.—"The portion of the company remaining in close formation serves for the extension of the fighting front, the support of the firing line and the protection of its flanks." These considerations regulate its position.

Its distance from the fighting line depends upon circumstances. No fixed rule can be given. The main consideration is the timely support of the fighting line.

For practices in which the nature of the ground is not taken into account, the distance should be about 150 paces.

The support, formed in column or line, marches without keeping step, and conforms to the movements of the fighting line. When under the enemy's effective fire, it marches "in step," and every change of formation is avoided. At the halt, the support lies or kneels down.

On the company leader's command to assemble, the züge, having rallied on the zug leaders, assemble in company column in rear of that portion of the company still in close formation. The company is to be practised to assemble in company column, line, and column of sections with silence and rapidity at any appointed place.

The principal alterations are shown in Appendices 2 and 3.

PART I.—D. *The Battalion.*

The 89 pages devoted to the battalion in the Regulations of 1876 are reduced to 10. This includes the instructions in Part II for procedure in action. This reduction is due to several causes: 1st. The individual instruction and that of the company are relegated to their proper place. 2nd. The relative position of the battalion in the chain of military units has been modified considerably. It is, of course, still one of the most important "units of command," but its character as a "fighting unit" has been changed. The former duties in action of the battalion as a whole, now devolve on the four companies of

which it is composed. Their actual handling when in the fighting line, is taken out of the hands of the Battalion Commander, and rests entirely with the company leaders. This is expressly stated in the last three lines of this section, page 82, § 219: "The direction of the fight in the extended fighting line, rests with the companies." The Battalion Commander's duties are very clearly defined, and he has ample scope given him to make his influence advantageously felt in action, without interfering with those who have actually to do the work.

The Preface says: "The battalion is the training school for the fight. The whole system of infantry fighting is based on the co-operation of the several companies with one another in the various phases of the fight:" and again, "Battalion drill, now only embraces close formations."

The Battalion Commander now tells his four company leaders *what* he requires to be done, giving them each their share of the task, but he refrains from telling them *how* to do it. In fact, if that were habitually necessary in any particular case, the Officer concerned would not long be allowed to remain in the German Army. These are the "General Remarks," § 197: "The battalion, composed of four-company columns must be able to execute the simple formations required in war on the command of the Battalion Commander, under all circumstances, with regularity and certainty."

The Battalion Commander delivers either both the cautionary and executive words of command or only the former. Cautionary and executive, when simultaneous execution by the companies formed up in either of the three normal battalion formations is required. In all other cases, the Battalion Commander delivers only the cautionary command.

The change from one formation to another is executed, as a rule, at "the slope." If not otherwise ordered, the companies at once "order," "Stand at ease," and take up their dressing on reaching their places.

On the drill ground, the movements in the normal formations and the change from the one to the other are executed in step. The deployment for the fight takes place either with or without keeping step at the Battalion Commander's discretion. All other company movements are executed out of step. When under the enemy's effective fire the marching is to be in step.

The natural consequence of the battalion having practically dropped its character as a unit in the fighting line, is that battalion drill has been completely revolutionized. Battalion fighting formations no longer exist. The formations of a battalion are simply close formations intended for the convenient assembling of large masses of troops. Appendix 5 contains a complete list of battalion movements.

Companies in battalion columns are invariably formed in company columns. The battalion is drawn up in mass or line of company columns according to the space available and the object in view. The order of the companies is immaterial. They move into column by command of the company leaders, by the shortest way.

Dressing and Covering.—At the halt, the dressing is by the right;

on the move, by the colour, in broad and double column; and by the right in deep column.

In broad and double column the "Points of formation" are the colour, the zug leaders of the leading units, and the left flank non-commissioned officers. In deep column, the zug leaders and the left flank non-commissioned officers.

In broad column, files must maintain their own covering; in double column, the zug leaders and left flank non-commissioned officers look to the covering. In deep column, the zug leaders cover.

Motions with the Rifle.—The motions with the rifle and loading are not practised when the companies are formed up in battalion columns, except when it becomes necessary for the sake of uniformity.

Deployment of the Battalion for Action.—The manner in which the companies enter into action may vary considerably. Generally the companies will be inserted into the fighting line as required, the remainder being kept in hand by the Battalion Commander. But circumstances may require the simultaneous deployment of all the companies from the very commencement. Such deployments to the front occupy the shortest time when performed at the halt. The order for the deployment should indicate the company of formation as well as the intervals and the relative positions of the several companies. As a rule greater depth than breadth will be given to the original deployment, the fighting line will be reinforced gradually, and at least one company will be retained in reserve.

The movements of a battalion when deployed for action are regulated by indicating a common point of direction. A company of direction should only be named, when there is no point of direction. A change of direction is effected, by indicating a fresh point to march on.

If a change of front is to be effected, the new front will be pointed out, and the companies wheel up independently into the required direction. The relative position of the companies is thereby changed. This may be regulated by further orders.

The companies are reassembled in battalion, as a rule, on the march, otherwise at the halt, in the shortest way, on a named company, in one of the normal formations suited to the occasion.

The adoption of fixed formations to meet given cases, is prohibited.

A complete list of the changes made in battalion drill is given in Appendices 2 and 3.

The principal formations, &c., laid aside are—

1. Battalion line and linear tactics.
2. Columns of various distances.
3. Battalion fighting formations.
4. Attack in close formation.
5. Battalion square.

PART I.—E. *The Regiment.*

The old Regulations contain no instructions for the regimental "unit of command." In the new Regulations, it is given its proper place, and takes up seven pages.

To quote the preface, "Regimental drill embraces merely formations of assembly," and "The uniform education necessary for undertaking the duties connected with the training and leading of troops is imparted in the regiment. Regimental exercises are a preparation for the duties of higher commands."

General Remarks.

A battalion should be able to perform all the regulation battalion movements with precision, not only when alone but also in combination with other battalions. This is attained, by practising the regular and prompt forming up from column of march, into assembly or fighting formation, as well as those movements which are carried out with larger units. It should, however, be borne in mind, that uniform movements in close formation but rarely occur in war, and only admit of uniform execution within the battalion. They should therefore be restricted to the simplest description.

The Regimental Commander only gives cautionary words of command or orders, on which the Battalion Commanders deliver the necessary commands.

Assembly Formations of the Regiment.—Battalions are as a rule formed up in one or more lines of double columns.

If the regiment is composed of three battalions, and is formed up in two lines, one battalion is placed in the centre of the interval, either in front or in rear of the two others. If composed of four battalions, the battalions in second line cover those of the first. In the normal formation, battalions are placed in numerical order in each line, but any order is admissible. The intervals are twenty and the distance thirty paces (clear space). Whenever required for any special object, the battalions, in any of the three normal column formations, may be drawn up in any manner desired.

Movements in Assembly Formation.—These consist of simple movements to the front and rear, wheels and marching to a flank, and will be executed in accordance with the instructions laid down for the battalion.

For the initial movements, a battalion of direction will be named. The leading *züge* of all companies abreast should retain their dressing; this is not required in the case of the succeeding *züge*.

When the movement is carried out "in step," each battalion keeps its own step.

Changes of front (not greater than one-eighth) are carried out on a named battalion, which after wheeling up, advances column depth and halts. The remainder move into position by the shortest way. If the regiment is formed in two lines, the first advances the depth of both lines after wheeling, and the remainder take post in the shortest way.

Deployment for Action of the Regiment.—The fundamental consideration in the deployment of a regiment for action is the retention of the deep formation. The manner of deploying may vary considerably.

The battalions retained in closed formations are placed in echelon

in rear of one or both flanks. The narrower the original front taken up, the further away from the flanks should the units in echelon be posted, for the purpose of commanding the whole extent of front required. The prolongation of the fighting front, is effected by means of fresh battalions. In the advance, the deployment is carried out on the leading and in retiring on the rear battalion. When the deployment takes place from column of march, the several battalions avail themselves of a suitable opportunity for closing up into column formation previous to deploying.

If the regiment is in assembly formation, the deployment may be carried out before advancing. In all cases the battalion on which the deployment is to be made must be named. When the deployment is made on the move, the battalions forming the rear lines halt so as to gain their proper distance and place.

The distances depend upon circumstances. The intervals between battalions in first line, depend upon the task imposed, the object to be attained, and the nature of the country. In the original deployment the intervals should be ordered. The deployments are carried out, in or out of step, by the shortest way.

The movements of the regiments when deployed, are directed by giving the several battalions points to march on. A new front can generally only be taken up, by the deployment of the units echeloned in rear, in the required direction. If necessary, the original first line forms up in echelon in rear of the new front.

A unit of direction should not be named; on the other hand, whenever expedient, troops should be ordered to keep up connection with the centre or a flank.

When on the move, the regiment is re-formed, as a rule, in the direction of march, otherwise on a given line, in the required formation, on a specified battalion, by the shortest way.

The deployment of the company column, rests with the battalions.

PART I.—F. *The Brigade.*

The fate of the battalion, has overtaken the brigade even to a greater degree. The preface states that "Brigade Drill embraces merely formations of Assembly" and "Brigade exercises, more particularly, are a preparation for the duties of higher commands." As a fighting unit it has been disestablished, and as a necessary consequence the space allotted to its drill and other instructions has shrunk down from 35 to 5½ pages. Nevertheless, the duties that are still left to it are of great importance, and can only be efficiently performed by an educated practical soldier.

The "General Remarks" state briefly that "The instructions for the regiment are applicable to the brigade. The cautionary commands of the Brigade Commander are passed on by the Regimental Commanders."

The brigade is formed up either in wings or lines. In wings the regiments formed in mass of battalions, are placed side by side. In

lines, the junior battalion is in front line when in the normal formation. But any other order is admissible.

When the several lines are composed of the same number of battalions, these cover each other, otherwise the battalions in second line are placed in rear of the intervals.

The distance between lines and the intervals, is the same as with the regiment.

The positions of single battalions and batteries attached to the brigade are specially indicated.

The movements of the brigade in assembly formations, are to be restricted to the simplest description, and correspond generally to those of the regiment.

The Deployment of a Brigade for Action.

The issue of instructions for the execution of independent tasks in action to the subordinate units of command (regiments and independent battalions) within its fighting front, forms the basis of the deployment of the brigade for action. The execution, however, depends upon circumstances.

If the Brigade Commander is able to indicate to the several regiments, simultaneously, points of direction situated close together, the circumstances are the most favourable and normal for the deployment.

If only one regiment has been originally deployed for action, the most suitable place for the deployment or assembly of the remaining units of command, is in echelon in rear of one or both flanks.

All the movements of the brigade should be regulated by giving points to the several units of command to march on. A brigade composed of two regiments only, may at once place one battalion in reserve.

Everything else is carried out in accordance with the instructions for the deployment of regiments for action.

The deployment of the battalion for action rests with the regiment.

So far we have dealt with the School. Now comes Part II, The Fight, three quarters of which, it must be remembered, deal, as has been already stated, with general principles.

The principles contained in this part, once branded by many, and still by some in the military world of Europe, as the fanciful notions of theorists, now bear the official endorsement of the most experienced, practical, and enlightened soldiers of the age.

To be fully appreciated, every word of Part II should be carefully read, marked, learnt, and inwardly digested. It is so concise as scarcely to admit of further condensation. Want of space, however, compels us to deal with it in a more or less summary fashion. Those who wish to study it fully, I would refer to the translation of it by Captain W. H. Sawyer, Royal Lancaster Regiment, Brigade-Major, 1st Infantry Brigade, Aldershot, and published by Messrs. Stanford f Cockspur Street. This translation I have most carefully compared

with the original, and I can bear my humble testimony to the closeness of the two. It is an excellent shillingsworth.

These instructions for guidance in training and in battle, qualify Officers and men for the intelligent and effective application in the field, of the lessons they have learnt in peace-time, by giving them sound principles to work on.

We must turn to para. 125 to ascertain the real scope of this part of the Regulations: "The more advanced practices with mixed units and even tactical exercises in which the presence of the various arms is supposed, produce tactical situations and call forth decisions which are far beyond the scope of these Regulations. They in no way exhaust tactical instruction, but confine themselves to dealing with fundamental rules. The troops will, however, be able, even in action, to cope with any possible task, if they have, by practice, mastered the rules contained in these Regulations."

Formations only Normal.—Part II refers to the formations laid down in Part I, thus (§ 1): "The thorough mastery of the simple formations laid down in Part I forms the basis for a careful and uniform training of infantry. This training would, however, fail in its main object, were it not to go hand-in-hand with an intelligent application of these formations to the requirements of war." § 4. "The normal formations should be given up without hesitation whenever the varying circumstances require it." § 5. "The formation selected should be such as would be ordered in war to ensure the highest fire action, and which would be permitted for the purpose of reducing the effect of the enemy's fire. Whenever these two conditions are fulfilled the practice is in conformity with the requirements of war." § 121. "It should be borne in mind that the formations and principles laid down only deal with the simplest cases, and, owing to change of circumstances, will frequently experience modification when applied in the presence of the enemy," and "adherence to certain formations should never be allowed to divert attention from essentials."

These few extracts show us clearly what careful precautions have been taken to prevent the action of the "executive" from being in any way hampered by the misdirected efforts of mischievous formalism.

Spheres of Action of Commanders.—The chance of a breakdown of the military machine in the strain of war and stress of battle, has been reduced to a minimum by a judicious subdivision of labour and responsibility amongst all ranks. The exact duties and spheres of action of each leader have been carefully defined. The subordinates are thus left alone to do their own work in the fighting line, whilst the higher commanders, relieved from minor details, are able to turn their minds to the larger problems of strategy, &c., a wrong solution of which cannot be compensated for by any amount of hard fighting. The following concluding paragraphs to the Brigade, Regimental, and Battalion Instructions in Part I are significant and of very considerable importance.

§ 229 { "The deployment of the battalions for action rests
F. Brigade. { in the hands of the regiment."

- § 225 { "The deployment of the company columns for action
E. Regiment. { rests with the battalion."
§ 219 { "The direction of the fight in the fighting line rests
D. Battalion. { with the companies."

They are very fully borne out by the following paragraphs of Part II:—

Commencing with the lowest ranks, we find the possibility of the private soldier having (§ 61) to assume the leadership of his comrades in action, after all his superiors are incapacitated, taken into consideration, and provided for by the special training he now receives. § 21. "It is the Officer's duty to develop the judgment and self-reliance of the soldier;" and, "He should ever be ready to take rapid, well-considered, independent action."

The Group Leader.—§ 56. "He assists the zug leader, and is responsible within his own sphere for the placing of the men, for the adjustment of the sights, the proper handling of the rifle, the consumption of ammunition, and the replenishing of the magazine."

The Zug Leader.—§ 55. "He should take up such a position as will enable him to superintend the fire action of his men. He arranges the disposition of his zug in the space allotted to it, and decides on which objects the fire is to be directed, either in accordance with his instructions or on his own responsibility. He follows closely, the measures taken by the enemy and endeavours, according to his ability, to co-operate with the adjoining züge in the fighting line. He endeavours to ascertain, previous to a further advance, how the fighting line, or portions of it, could be brought up closer to the enemy; whether or in what manner a turning movement could be initiated; or whether advantage could be taken of any exposed point in the enemy's line. The zug leader in the fighting line will be best able to observe any opportunity of seizing an advantageous position, or of gaining an advantage over the enemy. He should then make up his mind how far he should, on his own responsibility, turn such advantage to account."

The Company Leader.—§ 95. "He should retain control of his company during the fight. He conveys his intentions to the zug leaders in the form of concise and clear orders, and takes up such a position as will enable him to direct his company. He arranges for the supply and distribution of the ammunition brought up from the rear, with all the means at his disposal on the battle-field."

The Battalion Commander.—§ 96. "The method adopted by the Commander in working his battalion in action, is to assign tasks to the several companies. Direct interference with the züge of individual companies is only permitted when evident misunderstandings or mistakes threaten to divert the course of the action into improper directions. It is the duty of the Battalion Commander, at the commencement of the fight, to impart his orders briefly, clearly, and with precision to each one of the company leaders—if possible in the presence of them all—leaving the manner of execution to them. He should be guided by this principle throughout the course of the action. His endeavour should be to maintain the co-operation of the

several companies with one another during the fight." § 101. "It is with regard to the troops placed in rear of the fighting line, either in echelon or in rear of the centre, that the Battalion Commander selects his own position, which is only quite exceptionally in the foremost line, nearly always with the troops in rear, but in any case in some place whence he can exercise supervision over his battalion in action. He will frequently only be able to affect the fire action of the companies, by directing the fresh supplies of ammunition to those points in the fighting line, where it may be most needed."

The Regimental Commander.—§ 103. "He appoints separate tasks to the several battalions, leaving them perfect freedom as to the manner of execution. Interference with the conduct of individual companies should be restricted to rare exceptional cases, and is only justifiable when the action of subordinate bodies threatens seriously to interfere with the execution of the Commander's general intentions, and there is no time to issue the necessary orders through the proper channel." § 109. "For the due execution of the tasks imposed upon him, the Regimental Commander should take up a properly selected position. At the commencement this will be in front. His presence is principally required there in the case of an encounter between troops in motion. During the fight, he can generally direct his troops to the best advantage from the vicinity of the troops echeloned in rear, that is, whence he can exercise the best supervision over the employment of his regiment. Should his regiment be fighting in brigade, he should select such a position as will enable him to keep up communication with the Brigade Commander."

The Brigade Commander.—§ 112. "The rule should be adhered to under all circumstances, that each regiment is to be allotted its own separate task, and that the Brigade Commander should confine himself to delivering his orders to regiments only." § 114. "The selection of the Brigade Commander's position is of great importance and should be changed as rarely as possible. The commencement of an action should find him at the head of the brigade; for neither reports, nor information, nor maps can take the place of a personal inspection of the enemy's position, that of the neighbouring troops, or of the ground. In that position he is best able effectually to direct the initial deployment, on which the course of the action so greatly depends.

"It likewise enables him to seize advantages over the enemy, by arriving at timely decisions, to ensure his troops taking the shortest routes, to direct their action into proper channels, and finally to prevent any irregular action on the part of the Commander of the advanced troops. During the action, however, the Commander remains sufficiently in rear to enable him to exercise supervision over the several parts of his brigade. This will generally be in the vicinity of the troops he has retained at his disposal. It is only from there that he can still control the course of the fight. He delivers his orders, as a rule, to his immediate subordinates. Should circumstances compel him to deviate from this rule and to give in-

dividual battalions direct orders for the execution of urgent measures, he should at once inform the Regimental Commander of the fact with whom he should maintain uninterrupted communication."

The next two extracts are applicable to all Commanders alike, § 124. "The larger the scale of the fight, the greater the scope for individual action. The attention of Commanders should be devoted more to carrying out their special task as a whole, than to the supervision of details. . . . But the scope allowed subordinate leaders should never be permitted to interfere with the plans of the Commander, and under all circumstances the maintenance of tactical order and the internal cohesion of the troops should be insisted upon." § 54. "The exercise of independence within these limits is the foundation of great results in war."

Fire Action.—At page 148 of the old Regulations we find the old Regulation view of the value of fire action. "The possibility of concentrating fire action on particular points for a short time invests it with an offensive character. It may under certain circumstances be absolutely annihilating, and may consequently of itself produce a decisive result, in any case an attack following immediately after would thereby be greatly facilitated." How different is the position accorded to fire action in the new Regulations! Part II, § 13. "The infantry fight will as a rule be decided by fire action." § 30. "The action of infantry consists primarily of the fire of the extended fighting line. It is able, solely by its fire, not only to repel the enemy and prepare the attack, but also under certain circumstances to decide the issue."

The Germans now classify all formations under two heads: 1st, the fighting (or extended) formation, the only one possible under modern fire; and 2nd, close formation, the only way of concentrating large masses preparatory to assuming this fighting formation. Linear tactics are completely excluded, as having no place in modern tactics. They are impossible in the first and useless in the second formation. Battalion, regimental, and brigade formations all come under the second head. The company is the only unit with a *close* as well as an *extended* formation. As to the proper rôle of close formation on the modern European battle-field, the *old Regulations* say, page 147: "The bodies in close formation should lay the greatest value on the retention of the troops in rank and file, the interior cohesion, the firing in mass and on the bayonet charge." *New Regulations*, § 13. "The delivery of fire by bodies in close order is the exception." § 18. "Fighting in extended formation and the correct application of its various movements, passing from extended to close order and *vice versa*, require therefore to be practised more thoroughly than the application of close formations, in which the infantry fight was formerly conducted, extended order then taking merely a secondary part." § 19. "The extended formation is the one now principally employed in action. The fight is commenced and in most cases carried through to the end in extended order. The extended line becomes, therefore, the principal fighting formation of infantry." § 20. "Close formation nevertheless still retains its full use in the

case of troops held in readiness for action and for reserves and supports to the fighting line."

The Three Arms.—The new Regulations speak with no uncertain sound as to the action of infantry against the three arms.

The proper application of fire action, in all and every case, is the burthen of its teaching.

Infantry.—§ 47. "In the case of infantry *v.* infantry, the result depends, apart from moral factors, on the musketry training, fire discipline, and the direction of the firing. The Commander's task is to bring as many rifles as possible into action, or to gain the upper hand by concentrating the fire effect of extended lines on decisive points."

Cavalry.—§ 48. "The individual infantry soldier should realize the fact that he is more than a match for a cavalry soldier even on open and level ground; if on encountering him he is in immediate readiness to open fire. He need not even hesitate to engage several at a time, if he retains his calmness and presence of mind and uses his rifle correctly as a repeater without taking his eye off his opponent. Infantry should remain convinced that it has nothing to fear from cavalry, even in superior numbers, if it retains its coolness and firmness. Every formation is suitable for repelling cavalry, which admits of its being opposed by the well-aimed fire of masses at the halt. The most effectual manner of receiving cavalry is to bring the greatest available number of rifles to bear upon it. Only those formations (*i.e.*, changes of front) which favour this need be executed against cavalry."

Artillery.—§ 51. "In engaging artillery, it should be remembered that to this arm belongs superiority of fire at long and medium ranges. It is only at 1,000 mètres (1,094 yards) that the relative conditions become equalized, and at the shortest ranges the infantry gains the superiority. Infantry should endeavour to get as close as possible to artillery, by availing itself of the formation of the ground. Infantry fire should first be directed on any teams that may be visible and then on the gunners." Long-range fire is discountenanced as a rule.

Intrenching Tools.—§ 52. "Artificial cover prepared at the right time and place renders the troops and their leaders services, which are important and at times indispensable. It should, however, be subservient to the leader's plans, and should in no way govern them."

"The premature strengthening of ground is positively detrimental and restricts freedom of movement. Tactical training is required on the part of Commanders, in order to know when and where, as well as how to intrench."

Extent of Fighting Front.—With regard to the extent of "fighting front" taken up by infantry on a peace footing, it is interesting to notice how the Germans have solved the point in their own practical manner. § 25. "Even during tactical manœuvres, a normal front of 100 mètres (the approximate fighting front of a war-strength company) should be allowed for a company in extended order. This extension, as compared with the strength of a company, is greater

than that adopted in war. This, however, is equalized by the fact that the fighting line is not thinned by casualties as in war."

So much, then, for Part II. Little need be said of the last, the third, Part—Parades, &c.—in which are, however, many points of interest, showing, as they do, how complete is the reform throughout. It will suffice to say, that complicated show movements and formations for the edification of spectators, requiring much time and trouble in getting up, exist no more. 12½ pages contain all the necessary instruction for the smart and soldierlike performance of all parade duties.

Bugle Calls.—The bugle calls have likewise been most carefully revised. They numbered twenty-nine. Of these, thirteen have been abolished, and five others have been introduced. These are shown in Appendices 2 and 3.

Those abolished include all those, by means of which the Battalion Commander was wont to handle the skirmishing line, which duty has now been removed from his hands to those of the company leader.

During exercises, the Commander may use calls to break off the fight, to continue the fight, or to assemble the Commanders or their Aides-de-Camp.

In action, the only bugle calls allowed are—

Rapidly forward,
Fix bayonets,
Attention.

Of the drum and fife calls, three have been abolished and one introduced, leaving a total of twelve.

Common sense, combined with a sound military training, will find a free hand left it in every part of these Regulations. There are, however, four things, and only four, distinctly prohibited.

Part I, § 104.—Leaders are forbidden to use preconcerted signals with the whistle.

Part I, § 219.—The laying down of fixed formations for the deployment for action, to meet special cases, is forbidden.

Part II, § 82.—Any further systematizing of the procedure of attack is prohibited.

Part II, § 120.—Practising particular representations of the fight is prohibited.

These prohibitory clauses are doubtless inserted with a view to guarding against the stiffening effect of time, and effectually to prevent the letter from ever gaining the ascendancy over the spirit, in the application of these Regulations.

And now in conclusion let me give you *literalim* and *verbatim* the last "note" of the friend to whom you are—as I am sure you must feel yourselves to be—under a great obligation for the information he has enabled me to put before you. That "note" runs as follows, and how far you concur in the sentiments it so eloquently and concisely expresses, the discussion which I hope will now take place, will show.

"A careful consideration of the German Drill Regulations, 1888, cannot fail to convince us that the Germans have indeed cleared their deck for action and thrown all useless lumber overboard! Nothing has been retained but what will be of use in, and stand the test of war. All the cherished, truly national and traditional rigid linear tactics and spirit, inherited from their great King Frederick, for ever relegated to History! Simplicity and uniformity introduced into their drill and training, all non-essentials eliminated, enabling increased time and attention to be devoted to essentials, and thereby facilitating and expediting the re-incorporation of the Reserves in time of need; constant and immediate readiness for war at all periods of the training. Such are the principal advantages secured.

"Great as has been this wave of military reform, we may rest assured that now letter and form have been effectually subjugated by the spirit, wave after wave will succeed it in proper time, continually readjusting the military fighting machine and fitting it for the performance of its ever-changing work."

If this be correct, as I personally believe it to be, the lesson before us English soldiers is, in all departments and branches of our profession, to "go and do likewise."

APPENDICES.

- No. 1. Comparative Table of Contents of Drill Regulations, 1876 and 1888.
 No. 2. Obsolete Movements, &c.
 No. 3. New Formations, &c.
 No. 4. The Company.
 Normal Formations.
 List of Zug and Company Movements.
 No. 5. The Battalion.
 Normal Formations.
 List of Battalion Movements.
 No. 6. Organization. War and Peace Establishment.

APPENDIX I.

German Infantry Drill Regulations, 1876.

Total 296 pages.

Pages.

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Part I. Individual Instruction.	1. Instruction without the rifle.	35
	2. Instruction with the rifle.	
	3. Motions with the rifle for N.C.O.'s, Carrying the colours and the sword, and salutes with the same for Officers.	
Part II. Squad and Company.	4. The squad.	37
	5. Formation, telling off, and dressing of a company.	
	6. Motions with the rifle and company firing.	
	7. Movements of a company.	
	8. The company column and fighting in extended formation.	
	9. Formations for special objects.	

APPENDIX I.

German Infantry Drill Regulations, 1888.

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Preface	3	
<hr/>		
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	Close formation	
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	C. <i>The Company.</i>	13½
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	E. <i>The Regiment.</i>	4
	F. <i>The Brigade.</i>	2

Chapter.	Pages.	Number of pages.
Part III. The Battalion.	10. Formation in three ranks; dressing motions with the rifle; firing and movements of a battalion in line. 11. Formation of column from line. 12. Movements of column. 13. Formation of line from column. 14. Formation in two ranks (fighting formation). 15. The square. 16. The assembly.	36 The several units in action— The Company..... 4 The Battalion..... 3 The Regiment..... 3 The Brigade..... 3½ C. Concluding Remarks..... 3
Part IV. The Battalion in action, with special reference to fighting in extended formation and the use of company columns.	17. Individual and squad instruction in extended fighting formation. The duties of Officers and N.C.O.'s. 18. The battalion in action. The use of skirmishers and company columns in general.	28
Part V. The Brigade.	19. Assembly and deployment. 20. Movements of a deployed brigade. 21. Parade and march past. 22. Taking out and replacing the colours. 23. Bugle calls, marches, and sundry calls for drums and fifes.	35 32
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Appendix No. 1. " " " "	Bugle calls 21 Marches for drums and fifes 12 Sundry calls for drums and fifes. 12	21 12 12

APPENDIX II.—*Obsolete.**a. Individual Instruction.*

1. "Schliessen." Closing to flank by side step as a practice. Incidentally mentioned § 11.
2. Manual exercise.

{	Advance arms. Support " Shoulder " (ride and colour). Slope from the advance. Advance from the slope. Inspecting arms.
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Note.—Only the order, present and slope are retained.

3. All exercises "by numbers."

b. Company.

1. The "three-rank formation."
2. Subdivision of company into two züge.
3. Open and close columns.
4. Wheeling of extended fighting line.
5. Relieving of extended fighting line.

c. Battalion.

1. Battalion line and line movements.
2. Battalion columns at different distances.
3. Battalion fighting formations.
4. Attacks in column and line supported by skirmishers.
5. Battalion square.

d. Bugle Calls.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advance and rear guard. 2. Supports. 3. Skirmish. 4. Cease fire. 5. Half right. 6. Half left. 7. Left wheel. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Right wheel. 9. Forward. 10. Unfix bayonets. 11. Rapid retire. 12. Slow retire. 13. Form column. |
|---|--|

Drums and Fifes.

1. Rapid firing.
2. Cease firing.
3. Reveillé.

APPENDIX III.—*New.**Individual Instruction.*

1. "Strecken." { Salute by a sentry at the order. The rifle is grasped by the muzzle, and the arm extended to the right, the butt resting on the ground.

2. During the bayonet charge, the rifle is now held at the short trail instead of the trail.
3. The ordinary pace has been accelerated from 112 to 114 paces a minute. At the double the pace is now given as 165—170 a minute, measuring 1 metre (39·3 in.).
4. In marching "out of step" (*ohne tritt*) the distance between ranks from back to breast is increased from 0·64 to 0·80 in. (25 to 31½ in.).

Company.

1. The two-rank formation.
2. The subdivision of the company into three züge.
3. The company wheel, always executed at the double and out of step.
4. All interior movements of the company executed out of step.
5. Normal column distances of seven paces.
6. The company leader is mounted, when the company forms part of a larger unit.
7. The handling of the company in the fighting line rests solely with the company leader.

Battalion.

Normal Formations. { 1. Double column.
2. Deep "
3. Broad "

Bugle Calls.

1. 4th Battalion.
2. Commander's call.
3. Aide-de-camps' call (orders).
4. Rouse.
5. Retreat.

Drums and Fifes.

1. Rouse.

APPENDIX IV.—*The Company.*

Normal Formations.

1. Company column { seven paces from front rank
to front rank.
2. Line.

Movements.

a. Zug—

1. Marching in line { advancing.
retiring.
diagonal march.
2. Wheeling in line.
3. From line into { file column
section column } and back.
4. Changing from one column into another.
5. Column changing direction.

b. Company—

1. Marching in line { advancing
retiring.
diagonal march.
wheeling (at the double and out of step).
2. From line into { file column
section column } and back.
company column
3. From company column into { file column
section column } and back.
4. Company column { advance and retire.
movements to a flank in { file
sections } and back.
change of direction.
wheel.
5. Company column, reducing its front by half-züge and back.
6. Square. (Movements in square.)
7. Bayonet charge.

APPENDIX V.—*The Battalion.**Normal Formations.*

Companies in battalion columns are invariably formed in company columns.

1. Double column .. { 1. For purposes of assembly and
2. For movements outside the sphere of the enemy's fire.
2. Deep column ... { 1. For purposes of assembly, when a narrow front is
required.
2. When a march is to be commenced from the place of
assembly.
3. Broad column .. { 1. For parade purposes.
2. Only to be used when broad front is required.
3. Not suitable for battalion change of front.
4. For reassembling after an action.

Movements.

1. Changes from one column into another—

From double column into { Deep column.
Broad column.
From deep column into { Double column.
Broad column.
From broad column into { Double column.
Deep column.

2. Movements in column:—

Changes of direction by { a. { wheeling
diagonal march } by word of
command.
b. Indication of point to march on.
c. Wheeling up by sections.
d. Wheeling in { double column.
deep column.
broad column.

APPENDIX VI.

Strength of German Units (Combatants).

Unit.	Peace strength.				War strength.			
	Officers.	N.C.O.	Buglers and Drummers.	Privates.	Officers.	N.C.O.	Buglers and Drummers.	Privates.
Company	4	27	4	110	5	44	4	202
Battalion	16	506			22	1,002		
Regiments { 3 Battalions	58	1,709			68	3,017		
Brigade.....	76	2,263			90	4,019		
..	..	(Two or three regiments.)			138	6,037		

Colonel Sir LUMLEY GRAHAM, Bart. : Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I wish to make a few remarks on the very interesting lecture which my friend Colonel Lonsdale Hale has given us. I understand from what he said that the substance of it was communicated to him by a friend to whom we must be very much indebted for the trouble he has taken. I would first of all remark that I think there has been some slight exaggeration by the writer of that paper with regard to some of the minor details of change, which do not matter much, perhaps, but still they are of some importance. For instance, any one who had heard that lecture without knowing anything about the tactics of the German Army would suppose that it was a new thing to form the company into three züge, but that is not so. Ever since I have known anything about the German Army, which is more than twenty years, and I do not know how long before that, the company was originally formed up on parade three deep and in three züge, but as soon as it was prepared to drill or manœuvre, by a complicated arrangement the third rank was done away with, and the two züge, of which it was originally composed (what we should call half companies), were divided into three züge. I gather that the three-deep formation has been done away with altogether; if so, I congratulate the German Army on the change. It always seemed to me a most extraordinary thing that practical soldiers like the Germans should retain their three-deep formation even for parade, entailing as it did the change into the two-deep formation before the company began to manœuvre. I am glad that they have done away with this complication, and I think we may reflect with some pleasure upon the fact that we in England who are not, as a rule, looked upon as leading the way in military matters should, at any rate, have been far before the Germans and others in this instance. A very long time ago, at the beginning of this century, we adopted the two-deep formation as a normal formation, and no doubt that led to the great development of fire which we used with such effect in the wars of that period, and which gave us great superiority over our enemies. There is another little detail which the writer of the article refers to in a manner which would lead me to suppose it was something new, but it is no novelty. I refer to the "marching without step," what we should call "marching at ease," which has always been practised in our Army and in that of Germany ever since I can remember, not, however, to the same extent by us as by the Germans. They call it marching without step. We used to, and I believe still, expect the men to keep step even when marching at ease; and indeed they generally do so of their own accord, because they find it pleasanter to keep step than not, but we allow all the other relaxations permitted by the Germans when marching without step; these are, however, trifles. The great point brought out by the lecturer is the spirit which inspires the changes now made in the field exercises of the German Army. The inspiration, by-the-by, does not come from above, it comes from below, dating from the year 1866. During the war of that year, although the leaders of the Army adhered to a great many of the old rules, to which they were wedded, and were averse to changes, there were, nevertheless, enlightened spirits in the Prussian Army who saw that many of those rules were obsolete, and ever since 1866, down to the year 1889, there has been a constant conflict between the Reforming and Conservative parties in the Army, the former, as a rule, comprising the younger Officers, the latter, those of a higher degree. A great many of those changes which are now officially adopted in the Regulations of the German Army had been practically in use before. There is no doubt that the battle before Metz taught a great lesson, and proved the necessity of great tactical changes which had hitherto been resisted by the chiefs of the Prussian Army. The principles which thus recommended themselves were to a certain extent recognized by authority, and were carried out by the more enlightened Officers during the remainder of the war. From that time onwards there has been constant fretting on the part of the military reformers to work those changes, which have at last made their way, and which are now recognized and authorized by the present Regulations. But I do not think there is a single point mentioned by the lecturer amongst the more important changes in German tactics which had not been strongly advocated for years by one or other of their military writers. I think we may apply this lesson to ourselves. We have not had the same advantages as the German Army in having to fight against civilized troops, so that we have not

learned by experience how necessary many of the reforms were sometimes; and, moreover, what fighting our Army has had, and perhaps is likely to have for some time to come, has been against an enemy to whom the scientific methods of modern warfare are not always applicable. This is bad for us in some way; it leads us rather to neglect the modern scientific mode of fighting and to adhere to our old forms, which under certain circumstances, against the sort of enemy that we encounter, are more advisable. Therefore I think it is most important that the attention of our soldiers should be frequently called to what is really the scientific mode of fighting, and the mode that we should have to practise if we ever engage against a European enemy. I think on that account the way in which Colonel Hale has summarized the authorized changes in the German Army is of very great importance, and I hope that those in command, the higher authorities of the Army in this country, will take notice of what has been done abroad by a nation which has had the best possible opportunity of judging of what is really useful in war, and that we shall not lag behind. At the same time, Officers who command our troops in action against Zulus or Soudanese, or any similar antagonists, will, doubtless, have the intelligence to modify the process which they should use against a civilized enemy to what is required for engaging savages.

Colonel LONSDALE HALE: There is a junior Officer present whom I may venture to call on, Lieutenant Ellison, of the Staff College, who has spent most of his vacation lately in Germany. I dare say he would be able to give us some practical information as to the working of these Regulations, and how they are accepted in the German Army.

Lieutenant G. F. ELLISON: General Erskine and gentlemen, the only thing which induces me to take a part in this discussion is the fact that since the introduction of the new Drill Regulations into the German Army, I have had opportunities during a recent visit to Germany of hearing German Officers discuss them, and also of seeing something of the training of the recruits under the new system. I may first of all state that the opinions which I have heard expressed by German regimental Officers have been entirely favourable to the new Regulations: they like them, and they say so. They thoroughly realize that the increased demands on the intelligence of the individual soldiers have by no means lightened their task in training them. Every company commander realizes too that increased responsibility is thrown on his shoulders, not only in having to train his men up to a higher standard of individual excellence, but also in the fight itself, as the company, as stated by the lecturer, has now practically taken the place of the battalion as a tactical unit. The German regimental Officer is accustomed to and welcomes responsibility. It has been remarked in England that the present Regulations with their broad general principles make great demands on the personal intelligence of the regimental Officers, but I think that any one who knows German Officers will feel convinced that they will fully justify such demands being made on them. Indeed, under a system where it is an absolute certainty that, unless they can satisfy such demands their services will be dispensed with, it cannot be otherwise. And I think it is just that responsibility which really was the main cause of the change, for, as Sir Lumley Graham said, these changes have been brought about by the lower ranks. The regimental Officers have a responsibility and they feel it, and it is they, to a great extent, who have called for the simplification of the drill. They are the men who really feel the evils of the old order of things, and having the responsibility, they were ready to say what they thought. It certainly is, to a great extent, the lower ranks of regimental Officers who called for, and have now got, these changes in the drill, because it is on them the responsibility falls. With regard to the training of the men, I should like to say a few words. The works on which the German company commander has to base the training of his recruits are: (1) Drill Regulations; (2) the Musketry Regulations; and (3) the Gymnastic Regulations. The German recruits join in November, and by the following March they have to be what we should call "trained soldiers," as far as these subjects, namely, Drill, Musketry, and Gymnastics, are concerned. Added to this is also the fact that under the new Regulations each recruit must be thoroughly grounded in the theory and practice of the soldier's duty in modern warfare, that is to say, in fighting in extended order. To attain so much in so short a time, a proper distri-

bution of time and daily tasks is one of the foremost problems for those on whom the responsibility falls, namely, the company commanders. That some Officers do find a difficulty in doing this is evidenced by the fact that there have appeared in Germany various short works published by Officers who have worked out a system for themselves; these works being for the use of their comrades who find a difficulty in bringing their men up to the given standard in the given time. To show what the aim of such books is, let me quote the words of one of these writers, Captain von Busse, a German Officer.¹ He says: "The task of those to whom the training is entrusted increases in proportion as more is expected of the individual soldier. They have to work on a material differing in its quality to no considerable extent from that of former days, when what was expected of it was substantially less." In speaking of the increased demands now made on the intelligence of the soldier, he is referring to what the Germans call the independent use of the rifle by the soldier in the fight, a term which one constantly sees in German books. He says that he has been induced to publish this work as "it cannot be otherwise than advantageous for the training staff to have at its disposal a definite plan on which the young Officer and non-commissioned officer can confidently continue to work without having to make experiments for themselves, experiments which are doubtful and not always accompanied by success." In conclusion, I would only point out what in the German system above all strikes an English regimental Officer. Those points are: (1.) The absolute and unqualified responsibility of the company commander for the training and discipline of his men and also in the fight. (2.) The marvellous intelligence brought out by theoretical instruction in the non-commissioned officers and men. (3.) The individual training, the *Einzelausbildung*, of the recruit. In all these works on the training of the men, that is the term which one so constantly sees employed. In musketry drill, and everything else, the recruit is first of all trained individually and singly. And (4) the complete concentration of the training, that is under the new Regulations, on the objects of the fight, on that end for which the soldier exists, namely war.

General Sir ARTHUR HENNER: Generally I approve of the system which has been so carefully explained by the lecturer, but before we follow the plan adopted by the Germans, the organization of our battalions must be changed. If the companies are to become quasi-independent units, the number of companies in the battalion must be reduced. This has for years past been advocated by many Officers, but the change has been seriously objected to by many others. If the company is to become a tactical unit, and if the Captains are to have the great individual responsibility given by the German Regulations, the strength of each company must be considerably increased. The Battalion Commander could not equally well give the necessary instructions relative to the mode in which the attack was to be conducted to eight company leaders as to four. If he did, greater confusion would result, as there would naturally be a greater difference of opinion as to the manner in which the instructions should be carried out by the Captains if there were eight than if there were four leaders in each battalion. Therefore, so long as the present organization continues it would be very unadvisable to go as far as the Germans have in delegating authority to company leaders. Let anyone carefully read our new drill book, and he will find that a great quantity of the so-called top hamper has been thrown overboard, and that a long step has been taken in the right direction. For the present it appears to me we have gone far enough, and I hope we may move on gently. The Germans advanced very slowly in their reforms; twenty years have elapsed since the agitation for changes in the drill commenced, and they have only recently been officially approved of. I entirely agree that it is impossible to lay down any regulations which could be carried out in action and which would prevent companies and even battalions becoming mixed together when attacking in extended order. What is required is to accustom both Officers and men to work when mixed with other companies, and when an opportunity occurs to rally and re-form on their own Officers. This I and other Officers have endeavoured to do. When I commanded the camps of instruction at the Curragh, I made a point of mixing up the companies and even battalions in attack formations; both Officers and

¹ See *ante*, p. 572.

men soon became accustomed to move and manœuvre even when intermingled with other companies, and when opportunities occurred to rally on their Officers and get into order. It will therefore be seen that we also have tried many manœuvres before they have been officially adopted. It appears to me a mistake in the German drill, even in company formations, to adhere to the *touch*—on rough ground the touch cannot be maintained, and as battles are not fought on parade-grounds, what cannot be carried out on service should not be practised in time of peace. So long, therefore, as our battalion remains the tactical unit it would not in my opinion be desirable to delegate to company Commanders the powers and responsibility confided to them by the German Regulations.

General Sir LINTON SIMMONS, G.C.B. : There is very little I can say in addition to what has been said. The lecture is one of extreme interest and one which must be beneficial in inducing Officers to study the system in vogue in Germany. I quite agree with Sir Arthur Herbert in what he has said as to the present constitution of the battalion ; years ago in this theatre a lecture was read at which I think I presided, or at any rate was present, in which the question was discussed as to the formation of the battalion, and I felt convinced at that time as I do now that the best constitution of a battalion for manœuvring in the field is one in which it would be divided into four companies. It has many advantages in other respects. I believe if properly carried into effect it would simplify the system of promotion, as I stated before Lord Penance's Commission, by establishing a better proportion between the number of Majors and Officers of inferior rank. It has this great advantage in the field, that when the lines of skirmishers are extended, their support depends upon the Officers commanding the companies, the men of which are in the most advanced line, and thus men who are accustomed to work together and belong to the same company, get mixed up in the first instance in the fighting line, not as strangers ; I believe it would be of very great advantage that the supports should be formed from the company which furnishes the fighting line. I do not know that I have any further observations to make except that having been at the German manœuvres five or six years ago I was very much struck by the facilities afforded by their system of command, by which the details of attack are left to subordinates for changing the direction of the movements of very large bodies of troops, and transferring them from one part of the field to another, thus illustrating the advantages of their organization for the transmission of orders, an important but by no means easy object to attain when in action.

Colonel LONSDALE HALE : First of all with regard to the question of large companies ; I remember about eight or ten years ago discussing the subject with a distinguished Officer, who asked me not to go in for four companies, because he said if once you take four companies you will have the British taxpayer reducing your Captains by one half, and it is important that we should keep as many Officers as possible. It is perfectly certain that if you publish to the world that you will only have four companies, the next radical movement in the House of Commons will lead to a reduction of Officers. I greatly agree in what Sir Arthur Herbert has said, but I have never advocated it because I believe the loss of Officers would be a very serious thing. With regard to the lecture which I have been proxy for to-day, while most cordially agreeing with it, I think I ought to remind you the system which it describes is purely an ideal and untried system. It is not like the system which many of us described after the war of 1870, which had been proved by the results. We have to wait for a campaign to see how this extreme individualism and excessive subdivision of command will work. We have never seen anything tried in war like the ideal, and may I say the somewhat Utopian system which has been put before us in this lecture. My friend who was unable to give this lecture is, I think, a great believer in general principles. He has, however, never taught, and I have taught all my life, and I can only say this, it is easy enough to make men get hold of a certain amount of rule of thumb and to apply it, but give me a man who can grasp principles, especially young men between twenty and thirty, and can apply them properly, and you give me a man of more than ordinary ability. There is nothing so difficult as for young fellows to learn to apply principles to practice. From great experience in examinations I may say that if I want to stop Captains' promotion or Lieutenants' promotion, I merely have to give applied questions on

general principles only, and few will answer. If I combine the two, everybody answers the rule of thumb question, and only the best men, and they are few, answer the applied general principles. In order to apply general principles you must have a great amount of practice. In the German Army they are always practising and therefore they can be constantly trying to apply these principles to practice and be corrected by their older soldiers. In an army like our own which has no opportunity of practising in the field, to throw anything like this at their heads and say, "Here are principles for you, you must go to principles," I am afraid would lead to disaster. We must not give up altogether rule of thumb as well as the inculcation of general principles. It is usual to give a vote of thanks to the lecturer, but I have General Erskine's permission to alter the custom on the present occasion. I will therefore ask if I may be allowed to convey the thanks of this meeting to my friend who has furnished the material for this lecture.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, Colonel Hale in the first part of the paper to which you have been listening stated that it was the intention of the Council of this Institution to have a paper included in the programme relative to the recent changes which had been authorized in the Drill Regulations of the German Army, but some unfortunate difficulties occurred, and Colonel Hale very kindly undertook to get us out of them, and the present paper is the result of what he undertook to do. You will observe that in the paper he describes himself as simply the mechanism of the telephone. Well, I think he must find himself in a very novel position if that is the case, because any person more unlike a piece of mechanism in this world I cannot imagine than Colonel Hale. As far as my observation goes whenever he appears in this theatre he gives us the result of the working of the very fertile brain with which Nature has endowed him. I am quite sure it would be much more consonant to his feelings to come here and give us an original paper of his own than one of another person, and I hope before long that he will find an opportunity of doing that. With regard to the concluding parts of his lecture, wherein he points to the German Army as an example to ours, and calls upon us to follow their example, I have only this to say, that it seems very good advice. I should strongly advocate it myself, but at the same time we should not proceed to act upon it without great circumspection, for we must recollect that what may work very well in the German Army might not be at all suitable to ours. With this reservation I think his advice is very reasonable, and I think it must be a satisfaction to him, as I am sure it is to myself and to most of us, to find that our War Office has anticipated that advice in the manual of drill which they have recently put forward. Whether in the compilation of that manual the work of excision has been carried to the full extent that was required, I am not quite prepared to say. Personally, I should have liked to see a few more things eliminated from the old book, but at all events the new book is a great advance on what we have been accustomed to. I quite agree with Sir Lumley Graham that the reform which has taken place in the German Army has worked from the lower ranks up to the higher ones, and what holds good with them I am quite sure holds good in our own Army. I will not detain you further. We have already thanked the unknown gentleman who has helped Colonel Hale in this lecture, and we ought not to omit to thank Colonel Hale himself for coming here and giving us the benefit of it.

NOTE.—I think Sir L. Graham misunderstood my reference to the *zug*. The *zug* has assuredly existed for years, but its training as a unit appears in the exercise for the first time now. The marching "*Ohne Tritt*" is not that also of former days.—L. A. II.