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Military.

MILITARY TACTICS.

A Tract has lately appeared in this City, in pamphlet form, entitled "A Bird's Eye Sketch of the Military Concerns of the United States, respectfully addressed to the consideration of Congress." The author is now known to be Wm. Duane, Esq. late Lieutenant-Colonel in the Army of the United States. The subject of this Treatise being one with which we do not pretend to be conversant; and the pamphlet itself containing general animadversions and strictures on the affairs of the War Department, to which we felt no wish to give currency, unless of our own knowledge they were correct; we should not have noticed this publication, but that a reply has been handed to us for publication, to so much of it as contains a criticism on the regulations ordered for the government of the Army of the United States. We preface the Essay of our Correspondent by the insertion of that part of the Critical Tract to which it refers; that is, so much as relates to the regulations in question. Nat. Int.

EXTRACT

From a Pamphlet entitled "A Bird's Eye sketch of the Military Concerns of the United States."

"The new REGULATIONS, in reality, are no more than a very injurious mutilation of the French infantry system. I say a mutilation, because some of the most important and essential parts of the French system are totally cut out and omitted; and much matter inapplicable to our military circumstances is retained, and without any aid or instruction, such as would accommodate the French system to our habits, and to any consistent principles of organization which may be adopted.

"What is required above all things for the U. States, is an ELEMENTARY DISCIPLINE; without which all evolutions and manoeuvres, however beautiful on the parade, or however harmonious as matters of rote, like the nineteenth manoeuvres, amount only to a communication of error, which will have to be corrected whenever those who are so instructed happen to come under the command of an officer who understands his profession.

"The French system of 1791, is laboriously minute and particular in the first elements, or the drill of the infantry, and very properly so. The regulations extracted from that system rejects the greatest part of those instructions, and omits altogether what relates to the oblique or cross fires, a part of the discipline on which the French set the highest value, and with justice.

"The new 'Regulations,' in imitation of the French work, begins with the formation of the regiment; but the French treat shows the position of the regiment in relation to the big drum, and then proceeds to define the arrangement of battalions and companies. I shall, after saying that the regulations are 'adapted to the organization of the militia and regular troops of the United States,' in these regulations the order assumed is that of files of three deep or three ranks in battalion; when it is notorious that the order of two ranks is the established organization. In fact the depth of two is that which is best adapted to our country, and all other arrangements of the depth of files must rest upon the nature of the service and the skill of the commander, who will, when it may appear necessary to make or receive charges, strengthen his battalion in the manner best adapted to the occasion.

"Again these new regulations treat of the regiments in one piece as composed of ten companies forming one battalion.

"In the very same paragraph it treats of grenadiers and light infantry composing the regiment, although in the regular service we have neither the one nor the other.

"In the third column it divides the battalion into right and left wings; and in the sixth calls this wing a battalion—a battalion of five companies; not perceiving that the wings are themselves liable to an equal division into half wings or grand divisions, or whatever else the new regulations may intend to call them—so that if this battalion of five companies be equally divided, and wheeled upon its right, into columns of half wings, or half battalions, there must be a company in each wing separated into two parts, the right half of each of which will be placed on the left of the first half wing or half battalion, with its Captain on its right commanding half his company; while the left half of his company or platoon is on the right of the second half wing or half battalion, without any officer or non-commissioned officer on its right.

"Without any previous information or provision, the very next paragraph describes the battalion as composed of eight companies; and this graduated into divisions and platoons, which are to consist of half companies.

"It would be a fruitless labor to pursue this subject further. The important omissions and the unsuitable interpolations; the inapplicable, multiplied, and unmilitary words of command; the adoption of the ludicrous oblique step which the French have themselves abolished, and for which they have substituted the ingenious, simple, and efficient quarter facing or half facing, upon the general principle of oblique and direct movements; the backward wheelings and marchings which are also abolished, and in lieu of which the movements of the French are now always made without any conversion of the order, but by an actual facing and moving to the point required and facing about, a mode of movement of which in one of the actions with Cornwallis, in the American revolution, the efficacy was seen.

"Upon the rest of these regulations, the subject being rather technical, and therefore dry to the general reader, I shall forbear further comment at this time. The book, as a regulation, is calculated to confound rather than inform, as the introductory section is at variance with the rest of the work. The plates are good, being copies of the manoeuvres in the French system, with the exception of the first plate, which is denominated the formation of the line; but in the French system it is called the formation of the regiment in order of battle; a distinction very necessary to be made; because the line technically signifies more than one regiment. In the plate the adjutant is also represented as dismounted, which is an error that in a book intended for a regulation ought not to have been overlooked.

"It will appear, therefore, if there be any just foundation for these animadversions, that the book called regulations is not adapted to any of our established military institutions, nor susceptible of application to any of them.

"It is evident, that to render your system accordant, you must fix the maximum of the regiment for the war establishment at some uniform number; and let the minimum be the peace establishment.

"It appears that no provision is made for the organization of brigades nor divisions; and that the seeds of discord are established in the disproportion between the pay of officers of the same grade performing the same duties. It appears, by the attempt to form a system of regulations, that the want of regulation is felt, though the attempt to provide them was proved impotent; and that the course which ought to have been pursued first, will be necessarily resorted to at last; that of consulting those whose experience and capacity fit them for organization, discipline, and command of armies."

From the National Intelligencer.

TACTICS.

A system of discipline has been prepared by order of the Secretary of War, approved of by the President, ordered to be observed by the army, and submitted to Congress, who alone can prescribe the system of discipline for the militia.

This system is a brief, plain, intelligible imitation of the French system, as settled in 1791, which has remained unaltered by the French government, adapted to the organization, and in some respects to the usages of the army of the United States.

The author of this book tried with his own hand every motion of the manual exercise, as described in the American, French and British systems; tried as an instructor the company drill; tried on the field of exercise, with battalions of eight, and of ten companies, very often almost every evolution of the French battalion drill, before he wrote the descriptions of them which appear in this work.

This system goes less into detail than the French system, which is in many parts tedious. It is comprised in about one hundred and sixty pages; whereas the French system, as translated by Mac Donald, consists of more than four hundred pages of equal size: Steuben's

"Military men will readily perceive, that the French exercise is described with a minuteness that might be deemed tedious, were we not to consider the nature of the description of men who must acquire it."—Mac Donald.

system might make about thirty such pages.

A criticism on this work has appeared. It is not material what the critic's motives were. His objections can be refuted, and it will be done with calmness.

The writer having commenced with the regulations, immediately departs from them to criticize the acts of Congress; and informs us that the three regular armies of the United States, and the militia, are differently organized. This was generally known before. It is admitted that the organization ought to be the same throughout: But an officer must be very destitute of genius who cannot apply the "company drill" in the regulations to a company of either sixty, six y-eight or one hundred men. He must be destitute of talents if he cannot apply the "battalion drill" to a battalion of either five, eight, nine or ten companies.

If the system now offered was really so defective as the critic would make it appear, objections might have been made to it founded on truth: But they are founded on error, or misrepresentation. It is much in favor of the "regulations" that such means to undervalue them should be resorted to. The objections urged will be stated, and briefly answered.

OBJECTION 1. "The regulations had not the constitutional sanction of the Congress of the U. States."

ANSWER. That is true: But the President has power to prescribe the discipline of the army. It is not a proper question for a legislature to answer, in what manner an army shall manoeuvre. The "regulations" are offered to Congress, that they may, if they think proper, prescribe them as the system of discipline for the militia, according to an express provision in the constitution.

OBJ. 2. "The regulations omit altogether what relates to the oblique or cross fires."

ANS. That is very incorrect. "The captain will sometimes 'to the right (or left) oblique' after 'ready' a d before 'aim.'" (p. 29.)

"The instructor will command the fire, direct, oblique, by files, as before" (p. 30)

OBJ. 3. "It is notorious that the order of two ranks is the established organization."

ANS. The order of formation prescribed in Steuben is two ranks: But no military man, whose object is not misrepresentation, will denigrate that "established organization."

Let us see what the regulations say on this subject.

"The formation by three ranks is deemed the most perfect and effective to oppose disciplined troops."

"Nevertheless as two ranks will be a sufficient depth to oppose to undisciplined enemies, who deal chiefly in fire, the commanding officer will always determine whether the formation shall be in two or three ranks." (p. 48)

The order of formation in the French armies is three ranks. The order of formation in the British armies is three ranks. Would it be safe to oppose only two Americans to three French or British soldiers?

Let us see what other modern writers have said on the proper depth of formation?

Col. McDonald. "A line two deep wants consistence and strength; and a third part of its fire may be deemed lost. The use of the bayonet is becoming daily more general."

Col. Duane. "The order of formation of Steuben is two ranks. For infantry line of battle, it is not to be depended on; and this defect increases as the enemy employs cavalry." (Page 108)

"The primitive habitual regulation of infantry should be three ranks, in line of battle, and in order of parade" (Page 135.)

"We have laid down the order of three in depth as the proper order of battle." (Page 134)

"The established depth should be three ranks." (Page 137.)

OBJ. 4. "The regulations treat of the regiment of ten companies as forming one battalion."

ANS. The expression is, "A regiment of ten companies will be formed as a single battalion."

In Steuben's system, it is directed that a regiment, reduced in number, shall be formed as a single battalion.

Col. Duane in his military work says, "Every regiment which is reduced below the number of a battalion, may be formed as a battalion."

The author of the regulations found it necessary to direct in what manner regiments composed of eight, ten, or eighteen companies, should respectively form on parade or for exercise. He was of opinion that eight or ten companies ought not to be broken into two small battalions, with an interval be-

tween them, but ought rather to be formed in one body. He therefore directed that regiments of eight or ten companies should form as one battalion without an interval, and that the regiment of eighteen companies should form in two battalions with an interval between them. Thus the field battalions, whether of the first, second or third armies, or militia, would consist of nearly the same number of companies.

The plates represent battalions of eight, nine, and ten companies. The latter are worthy of particular notice as exhibiting the form for a militia regiment, having eight common companies and two flank companies, which will form a division on the right. (See plate 13, 15.)

The militia battalions of five companies have separate musters, and the regulations direct in what manner these five companies should be placed. To this the critic has made an objection that is curious and novel.

OBJ. 5. "If this battalion of five companies be equally divided, and wheeled upon its right into columns of half wing or half battalions, there must be a company in each wing separated into two parts."

It is the first time I have heard of a column of "half wings", or "half battalions." Whether this sentence is attributable to ignorance, or a desire to impose on ignorance, I cannot say.

The 13th and 15th plates exhibit three divisions on the right, and two on the left of the colors; the right division is composed of the two grenadier or light companies. The officer commanding the militia battalion of five companies would place his colors in the centre of the common companies, two on each side, with the flank company on the right, and he would form his columns of companies or platoons.

OBJ. 6. "Inapplicable, multiplied and unmilitary words of command."

ANS. The words of command are brief, expressive and uniform where the movement is the same, with this exception; that those in the drill of the recruit are more full than those in the drill of the company or battalion.

It may be truly affirmed that the words of command in the regulations, are superior to those in any other work the original French system excepted.

In Mac Donald's translation of the French system, the words of command are rather explanations of the movement, than commands fit to be delivered loud and quick on the field.

The decided superiority of the regulations in words of command, will appear on comparison.

Let us take five examples from the French system, the regulations, and Mac Donald's translation.

1. French. Prompte manoeuvre par le flanc droit.

Regulations. Prompt manoeuvre by the right flank.

Mac Donald. The rear companies will file, in quick time, into the new direction, from the right flank.

2. Fr. Face en arriere en bataille.

Reg. Face to the rear in line.

Mac. The column will form line on the first company and fronting to the rear of the march.

3. Fr. Trois derniers pelotons, en avant en bataille.

Reg. Three last companies to the front in line.

Mac. The three rear companies will form in lines by an echelon movement.

4. Fr. Prenez les distances par la tete de la colonne.

Reg. Take distance by the head of column.

Mac. The column will take wheeling distances, by opening out from the head.

5. Fr. Changement de front sur le cinquieme peloton, le aile gauche en avant.

Reg. Change front on the fifth company, the left wing thrown forward.

Mac. The battalion will change position on the central fifth company, by advancing the left, and retreating the right wing.

OBJ. 7. "The adoption of the ludicrous oblique step, which the French have themselves abolished."

ANS. It is denied that the French have abolished the oblique step. It is denied that the best trained battalion in the French service could advance in line obliquely fifty paces, by half facing and preserve the alignment. On the contrary the French regulations say of the oblique step, "It is extremely useful in movements of setting up the recruits, and of habituating them to maintain the direction of the shoulders."

Mac D. p. 22.

The French do not use the oblique step in columns of march. In like manner the regulations direct that—"In obliquing when on a march by the route step, the men turn their shoulders, and oblique by echelon of files." (p. 44.)

The critic pronounces ludicrous what the French regulations declare extremely useful and excellent. Which shall we believe, the "private citizen" or the Marshals of France?

OBJ. 8. "The backward wheelings."

ANS. There is not a backward wheeling in the book of regulations. This misrepresentation made by a critic who offers his remarks to Congress is very remarkable.

OBJ. 9. "The first plate is denominated the formation of the line"—the line, technically, signifies more than one regiment."

ANS. Here again the critic is incorrect. The first plate is denominated, Formation of a regiment in line. Even a single company may be formed in line, or column.

OBJ. 10. "The Adjutant is represented as dismounted."

ANS. This is true. The Adjutant is to act on foot.

The French regulations say, "The Adjutants Major and Adjutants shall be on foot." (Mac D. p. 5.)

The regulations say, "The Major will be mounted, the adjutant will be on foot."

The Major was originally the Adjutant Major, and should be brought back to duties of that kind. Otherwise there are none for him if the Lieutenant-colonel is present.

"The plates," says the critic, "are good, being copies of the manoeuvres in the French system, with the exception of the first plate."

Even here the writer is incorrect.—The first plate, which he says is not a copy from the French system, is an exact copy, with the addition of some small figures representing sergeants.

Fifteen of the other plates, which are affirmed to be copies, are not copies. In representing the evolutions of the line, the French plates exhibit six or eight battalions. The plates of the regulations exhibit four battalions. They are imitations of those in the French system.

"The course," says the critic, "which ought to have been pursued first, will be necessarily resorted to at last; that of consulting those whose experience and capacity fit them for the organization, discipline and command of armies."

I have looked into the order books to enable myself to judge what kind of regulations might have been expected from the experience the critic probably had in his mind. And I find that truly the army has been "STULTIFIED."

It is a pleasing consideration to the friends of justice and humanity, to find in the regulations, that the President has thought proper to order, that "Soldiers shall be treated with humanity and kindness; they shall never be wronged or injured; their superiors shall be beneficent friends; the punishments, sometimes unavoidable, shall be strictly conformable to martial law, and the feelings of humanity; and that "all superiors, of whatever rank, are strictly forbidden to injure those under their command, by harsh, abusive and unbecoming language, or by overbearing, unjust and tyrannical conduct."

AN OFFICER OF THE ARMY.

GOOD COFFEE. J. GALES has on hand several Casks of a late Consignment of Coffee, which, if applied for immediately, will be sold in parcels of not less than 25 lbs. at the low price of 20 cents a pound. April 23.

THE SUBSCRIBER, BEING desirous to remove into the country, offers the HOUSE and LOTS which he now occupies in Germanon, for sale. He deems it unnecessary to give a particular description, as he supposes any person inclinable to purchase, will view the premises; suffice it to say, that the advantages which this property possesses, either as to local situation or convenient improvements for a Store or Tavern, are equal, if not superior, to any in the place, and perhaps not surpassed by any in the upper country. Cash or Negroes will be expected in payment, and possession given whenever required.

ANDREW BOWMAN. Stokes County, April 10, 1812. 6:52.

STRAYED OR STOLEN, FROM the Subscriber living about 10 miles north west of Raleigh, on the 25th March last, a tolerably DARK BAY MARE, about 4 feet 10 inches high, 8 years old, has a small star in her forehead, and several white spots between her fore legs; she has what is called a roach back, and is shod all round. If strayed I expect she is making her way towards Fredericksburg, Virginia, where she was raised. If any person will give information, or return the same to Jesse Hayes, in Wake county, North Carolina, they shall receive full reward for their trouble. HENRY HAYES. May 2, 1812. 3:59.