

**DEFENCE AND ATTACK OF
POSITIONS AND LOCALITIES,
LECTURES. BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF
SOME THE LECTURES DELIVERED BY
HIM AT THE COLLEGE IN 1875**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649560516

Defence and Attack of Positions and Localities, Lectures. Being the Substance of Some the Lectures Delivered by Him at the College in 1875 by H. Schaw

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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H. SCHAW

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DEFENCE AND ATTACK
OF
POSITIONS AND LOCALITIES,

BY

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PROFESSOR OF FORTIFICATION & ARTILLERY, STAFF COLLEGE.

Being the substance of some of the Lectures delivered by him
at the College in 1875.

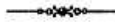


LONDON:
W. MITCHELL & CO., 39, CHARING CROSS.

1875.

231. a. 117.

P R E F A C E .



MILITARY ART, in all its branches, has been so eminently progressive during the last few years, that many works on the subject which formerly were regarded as standard, can no longer be taken as safe guides; nor is it by any means an easy task to supply their place, because the minds of men are now so earnestly directed to improving the Art of War, that new inventions are continually to be expected, each involving in a greater or less degree corresponding changes throughout the whole military system. It is, however, vitally important that these changes should be recognised and provided for as early as possible, and that each branch of the tree should keep pace with the growth of the others, and of the main stem. The present small volume is an attempt to put before the army generally, what the Author conceives to be the present necessities of Modern Civilised Warfare, as regards the uses to be made of Fortification and Artillery in active operations in the field.

Without going into questions of strategy, or into the details of the modern tactics of Infantry and Cavalry, the Author has endeavoured to point out how the altered tactics of these arms, as well as those of the Artillery,

must influence the selection and preparation for defence of a position or a post, and the manner in which the defence or the attack should be carried out. The tactics of Artillery have been more fully treated of than those of the other arms; because in the course of his duties the Author's attention has been more particularly directed to this arm, and happily the tactics which are now suited to it, appear to be more nearly settled than those of Infantry and Cavalry.

Throughout the volume, the great principles have been kept in view that in War, as in every other art, a clear understanding of the object in view, an accurate knowledge of the available means, and a wise adaptation of those means to the end, are the main elements of success.

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ERRATA.

- p. 56, line 13, for "half a mile to a mile," read "half a mile to $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles."
- p. 100, lines 9, 11, 27, 30, for "assailants," read "assailants."
- p. 105, line 23, for "21," read "2."
- p. 107, line 7 from bottom, for "shovels," read "8 shovels."
- p. 109, line 3, for "abont," read "about."
- p. 114, line 27, for "and and its," read "and its."
- p. 115, line 4, for "continental," read "continental."

CHAP. I

ON DEFENSIVE POSITIONS.

Defensive Actions may be classed under two heads—

- a. *Passive* or delaying, in which the object is chiefly to ward off a blow, either to maintain possession of ground or to gain time. Division into passive and active defences.
- b. *Active*, in which the object is the defeat of the enemy, the defender fighting in a chosen position, with the intention of attacking his adversary when the favourable moment arrives.

Passive Defence is the attitude of a force of acknowledged inferiority to its opponent, and its highest type is to be found in the defence of a fortress; but approaches to this typical form frequently occur in the field, as for instance— Passive defences. When adopted.

1. Investing a fortress. Examples—Investments of Metz and Paris in 1870-71.
2. Covering a siege or investment. Examples—Von Werder's battles on the Lisaine, 14th and 15th January, 1871; Covering the Siege of Belfort. Don Carlos at Somorostro March and May, 1874, covering the Siege of Bilbao.
3. Covering a base of operations while waiting for reinforcements. Example—Wellington at Torres Vedras.

Of Active Defence the type is to be found in most great battles, one side or the other attacking whilst the other defends. It implies some approach at east to equality between the contending forces; but Active defences.