

**CONSIDERATIONS ON TACTICS; MORE
PARTICULARLY ON THE COMBINATION
OF THE THREE ARMS OF WAR, IN
CAMPS OF EXERCISE AND IN BATTLE.
PART. II. OBSERVATIONS ON STRATEGY**

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Considerations on Tactics; More Particularly on the Combination of the Three Arms of War, in
Camps of Exercise and in Battle. Part. II. Observations on Strategy by An Artillery Officer

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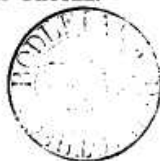
AN ARTILLERY OFFICER

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CONSIDERATIONS ON THE COMBINATION
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CHAPTER I.
THE THREE ARMS OF WAR.

ARTICLE I.—INFANTRY.

British infantry is acknowledged to be pre-eminently good; but we are instructed by our late great opponent Napoleon, that “plus l’infanterie est bonne, plus il faut la menager.” Such infantry ought invariably to have the support of artillery and the aid of cavalry. It is, as it were, the body of an army; but without the two arms, it could neither open access to victory, nor gather up the fruits.

Infantry, as occurred at Hof, near Eylau, might have to succumb to cavalry combined with artillery. It is true that the infantry at Hof were intercepted on a plain. Admitted, that the Numidian horse would have failed against the Roman foot, had the defiles of Casilium been the battle-ground, instead of the plains of Cannæ and

- Chap. i. Thrasymenus, yet it must be recollected, that plains rather
 Art. i. than hills are productive; that infantry having always to
 keep amongst hills and broken ground, could neither sub-
 sist nor be of use.

King George *The charge in line is the mode of attack peculiarly suited to*
 IV. *British infantry.*

EXAMPLES.

Lord Castle- "The conduct of Lieutenant-General Sherbrooke has
 reagh to the entitled him to the King's entire approbation. His Majesty
 Duke of has observed with satisfaction the manner in which he led
 Wellington. the troops to the charge with the bayonet, a species of
 attack which accords with the dauntless character of the
 British soldier."

At Busaco, the "volley and charge" of the British
 infantry on the French columns, which had been shaken
 by fire of artillery and infantry, was irresistible. And
 when at Vimiero the 36th, 40th, and 71st regiments,
 supported by three other corps, charged, "so dreadful was
 the execution of the bayonet on this occasion, that the
 whole front line of one of the French regiments went down
 like grass before the scythe."

Napier.

It must, however, be observed, that officers of experience
 never charge from a distance; this would fatigue their
 men, subject them to too destructive fire, or bring them to
 the final struggle out of breath.

Bulletin des
 Sciences
 Militaires,
 tome ii. p.
 557.

Captain Fisher of the Austrian service has written a
 sensible work on this subject, deprecating distant charges,
 and recommending, in fact, the Wellingtonian system of
 combined attack and defence.

British infantry is secure in column against cavalry when not provided with a superior force of artillery. Chap. i. Art. i.

EXAMPLE.

General Picton, when returning from El Bodun to the entrenched camp at Fuentes Guinaldo, was opposed by fifteen squadrons of French cavalry under Montbrun, followed by artillery. When the cavalry advanced, with the view of detaining the British infantry until the French artillery could come up, the gallant Picton merely put his hand up to his eyes to secure a better view: "No! it won't do," observed the veteran, and moved steadily but rapidly on, in column, prepared to wheel into squares. Presently the 3rd dragoon guards were observed advancing to the support of the British infantry; the regiment halted, and dismounted to tighten girths; the French cavalry withdrew. Had a less determined commander halted in squares, the French artillery would have come up and breached them

Steady disciplined infantry can repel cavalry.

EXAMPLES.

At Minden the British and Hanoverian infantry repelled all attempts of the French cavalry; and at Waterloo the French cavalry rode round the British squares, but could not break one of them.

Baron Jomini makes the following apposite remark:— Précis de
 "Cependant les carres Anglais n'étaient que sur deux rangs à Waterloo et malgré les heroïques efforts de la cavalerie Française il n'y eut qu'un seul bataillon enfoncé." Art. 44.
 This was probably the particular battalion caught in line under peculiar circumstances described by Siborne.

l'Art de la Guerre, Chap. vii. Art. 44. Vol. i. p. 140.

Chap. i. It will be seen that the 30th, 42nd, and 44th regiments
 Art. i. repelled cavalry charges, even when those regiments were
 only partially formed. Hamerton's regiment by facing about
 See Siborne, and giving fire of the rear-rank. On occasions of rear
 vol. i. p. 119. attacks of cavalry, a regiment well practised in forming
 squares, rear-rank in front, would have great advantages.

Examen General Okounef observes, "Infantry cannot be good,
 Raisonnée which fails to resist cavalry, if the infantry is in squares,
 des Propriétés des Trois or in column prepared to form squares, and the squares be
 Armes. not overpowered by artillery."

It is this capability of modern armies to form moveable fortresses, that has rendered lines of frontier forts of less importance in war, except as Depôts and Points d'Appui.

Infantry may protect cavalry.

EXAMPLE.

In 1795, Soult, in command of a light division of three battalions and five squadrons, was, on one occasion, suddenly enveloped near Herborn by 4,000 Austrian cavalry. He formed his cavalry between two columns of infantry, and marched steadily on, and after repulsing seven charges joined the main body without loss of standard or gun.

Alison, chap. xxi.

Infantry may, under certain circumstances, run down cavalry.

EXAMPLES.

Cours d'Art Militaire, par Lavillard Fallot, p. 40. The gallant Archduke Ferdinand, in 1805, having cut his way through the French forces at the head of his cavalry, a corps of grenadiers marched after them at the rate of fourteen leagues daily, giving the cavalry no time to rest or feed, thereby facilitating to the French cavalry (fewer in number) the task of making most of Ferdinand's horsemen prisoners.