MANEUVRING AN ARMY WITH AEROPLANES

NEW AND OLD METHODS OF CONVEYING INFORMATION IN WAR

THE great military manoeuvers in Picardy by the Second and Third Corps of the French army which took place early in September, probably were the most scientifically planned and executed of any of the great national war games that the nations of Europe have played as yet. In these manoeuvers the utility of aeroplanes and dirigibles for actual warfare was given its most severe test. The aeroplanes proved to be a most marvelous means for transmitting orders and unsurpassed for reconnoitering. The dirigibles were used in transmitting messages long distances. Paris was supposed to be beleaguered, and one of these giant cylindrical balloons was sent across the hills and plains and dropped safely to its appointed resting place in the heart of the French capital.

France has the greatest number of airmen employed in its army of any nation in the world. In the manoeuvers in Picardy eleven aeroplanes and four dirigibles were in use. As the result of these tests the French army's aerial fleet will be increased without delay. The military authorities already possess thirty aeroplanes, and orders have been given for thirty more to be delivered as soon as possible. They will consist of ten Bleriot monoplanes and twenty Farman biplanes, seven of which are to be capable of carrying two passengers, besides the pilot, and making a single flight of 180 miles at a minimum speed of thirty-six miles an hour. Prizes have been offered by the minister of war for machines that will fly in excess of this speed.

Never before has there been such a great contrast in mimic warfare as in these evolutions in Picardy. Moving along the highways were great automobile wagon trains loaded with supplies for the troops. Far in advance and high up in the air soared the aeroplanes. They seemed like huge-winged birds of prey hovering over the earth ready to swoop down when they sighted their quarry. In reality they were spying out the position of the opposing force which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been hidden by the contour of the country. The aeroplanes moved swiftly to and fro directing the slower progress of the foot soldiers and the cavalry and the supply trains. Because the air-men made the way sure and plain for those upon the earth, the troops lost no time or effort in aimless wanderings, but proceeded directly to their destination by the shortest route.

The first and most important principle of the art of war consists of concentrating at a given time at some point in contact with the enemy a force superior to his at that point. One eminent authority expressed it as the principle of "gittin' thar fust-test with the mostest men." The rest of the game of war is a relatively simple operation. It resolves itself into the mere question of comparative man-killing or man-scaring capacity. All other considerations being anywhere near equal, the question of being able to move rapidly is the thing that counts in war. The best of troops are worthless to a commander unless he can have them where he wants them when he wants them, and, moreover, in a condition to do what he wants them to do.

The fighting men are useless unless they can reach the place of conflict in time to take part in it, and they are equally without value if the effort to get there exhausts them. That is why the aeroplanes are so tremendously useful in spying out the location of the enemy and enabling the troops to reach that point with the very least amount of exertion.

But no matter how fast the troops may march they must be fed regularly. That is where the automobile supply trains come in—huge motor driven trucks that never grow tired. A bursting shell might disable the horses dragging the commissary wagons or the ammunition caissons, but it would take a well placed shot in a vital part of an automobile's machinery to put it out of commission. Then, too, a wounded horse cannot be repaired, but a wounded motor truck can be patched up unless it is blown into smithereens.

The problem of food supplies is one of the great things in war. It is an old and trite saying that an army really travels upon its belly. An army is a city flung down suddenly, over night, as it were, in the country. It moves day by day in such a manner as to require constant attention and changes of plan as to its subsistence. It cannot move a step faster than its food supply travels and it can maintain a position only as long as it is properly fed there. An army with a full stomach will fight every step of the way if it has to retreat. If it is hungry the retreat will be turned into a rout.

In the French army quite as much attention is paid to giving the soldiers the kind of food they have been accustomed to and plenty of it at regular intervals as to anything else. American army officers who have watched the big manoeuvers, like those in Picardy, say two Frenchmen can live well on what one American civilian cook wastes. Yet it is quite likely the French soldier can march as far and be just as fresh at the end of the journey as the American. The French are ahead of the Germans in the matter of cooking scientifically. Also the French soldier knows about as well as any in the world that his ration must be made to last for the full period of time for which it is issued, and that once it is eaten or wasted or given away the balance of the period will be a foodless one, be it twenty-four hours or three days.

This is an important thing for the soldier to realize, for the gross weight of one day's rations for an army of 150,000 men is 520,141 pounds. It takes more than 100 automobile trucks, such as those used for the French army, to haul a day's supplies of food. But all this vast machinery is necessary. Napoleon once said: "According to the laws of war every general who loses his lines of communication deserves death." For if once the foe successfully interrupts the flow of food to his opponent's firing line his victory is practically assured.

These great manoeuvers of large bodies of armed men are a common thing in Europe and are beginning to be common in this country. Civilians often wonder wherein is the sense of spending hours, days, weeks, teaching a man to stand in a certain fashion, to step in a certain way or to carry a gun in a certain manner. They ask themselves what difference it makes whether the soldier faces to the right or to the left about, or whether he rubs shoulders with the same man or a different one day after day. To these people it seems like a waste of time training large bodies of men to step a pace this way or that and to do it instinctively, automatically, always just the same, so they could not do it in any other way to save their lives. Yet although all this may seem trifling and purposeless it is like the interminable polishing and oiling of a delicate mechanism. It is the process by which is manufactured a human machine that will work cheerfully to exhaustion, starve without a murmur, or march up to the cannon's mouth merely because the voice they have been trained to recognize tells them to. It is the means by which the hallmark of proficiency is placed upon the professional soldier, and that is the ultimate end of these great manoeuvers.

"The Black Death"

The plague, or Asiatic cholera, or as it used to be called, "the black death," has been spreading of late in Europe.

In Russia, where the people are dirtiest and most superstitious, the plague thrives best. Seventy thousand persons are known to have died of this attack in Russia already.

This is not surprising, for the inhabitants, instead of cleaning their wells, cleaning their bodies, and using their brains, get out the little ikons or images which the Greek church sells at a considerable profit, and to these little images superstitious peasants pray—the prayers being interrupted in thousands of cases by death from the plague.

There is nothing more tragic in all the history of man than the record of "the black death" in Europe.

In the fourteenth century one epidemic after another spread among the people. Twenty-five millions of human beings are believed to have perished in this single series of epidemics.

The rich and the poor alike were affected. In Oxford two-thirds of the student population died.

In Constantinople the people died at the rate of 10,000 a day.

Charms, incantations, fear, filth, ignorance and superstition fed the disease.

Curious results came of the long period of panic and of dying.

The famous "dance of death," in which desperate human beings parodied and made fun of the plague, illustrating the "dance of death" with grinning skulls and skeletons, was one feature of the epidemic.

Another, curiously enough, was in England, the tremendous rise in the cost of labor. The workmen died so fast that there were few left to do the work, and, following the law of supply and demand, the few that could work were offered extravagant wages—although laws were passed to keep the wages down. And it is said that this sudden rise in wages laid the foundation of the emancipation of working people in England.

The plague in Europe appears now in the old familiar way—breaking out here and there, always in filth and in ignorance, spreading gradually.

The disease is not thoroughly understood now. But the method of fighting it is understood. The people must be well fed—a strong man may have the disease germs with him, resist them and rid his system of them. The weak, half-fed man dies—that is why the plague was often so violent in the old days just after a famine.

As far back as the fourteenth century Gabriel de Mussis observed that those who escaped the plague gave it to others with whom they came in contact.

They gave it to others because they had the plague within themselves; their essential tract was infected with the disease, and this disease they scattered.

It is some comfort to know that the disease can only be acquired by actually swallowing the disease germs. The man who will be sufficiently careful need not get the plague.

If you will drink only water that you know to be clean, and only from vessels that you know to be clean; if you eat no fruit that has not been carefully cooked, or carefully peeled with an absolutely clean knife, and if all the food that you eat is well cooked and eaten when freshly cooked, you will not get the plague.

The main thing is not to worry about it in this country. There is little chance, probably no possibility whatever, of a plague of the old kind among us.

The work that is not done by the little sacred images of the Russian peasants is done very well by good sewers, plenty of disinfectants, plenty of soap and hot water, and a little common sense.

Does Opposition Create Love?

There is one thing that parents and guardians never seem to learn, and that is, how opposition fans the flame of love.

Charley is not rich enough to satisfy their ideal of the man who shall marry pretty Molly—or James, perchance is too young, or too something else to their minds.

Forthwith one or the other young man is criticised, sniffed at and generally belittled—with the inevitable result that Molly becomes his champion and loves him a thousands times better for every sharp word or snub that he receives.

And even more apparent is the result when a mother and sister strive to turn the current of a son and brother's love. Every chivalrous impulse carries him to the side of the girl who is abused, and drives him, perhaps, to the very end against which his family is struggling.

BREEDING PEDIGREE STOCK IS HIGHLY PROFITABLE

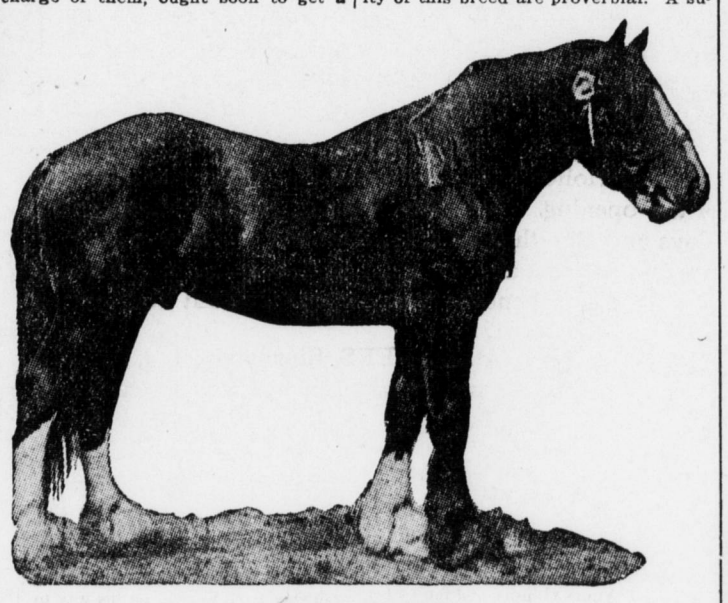
Man Must be Lover of Animals and Possess More Than Ordinary Amount of Patience if He Is to Become a Prosperous Breeder.

Perhaps of all branches of farming breeding pedigree livestock is the most interesting, and, in addition, it has the further recommendation that when properly conducted it is profitable. I know that many persons have dropped money, and some large amounts, over pedigree stock; but I could name several tenant farmers who have weathered bad times and are today in a prosperous condition, thanks mainly to this industry. A man must be a lover of animals and possess a more than ordinary amount of patience if he is to become a prominent breeder, says a writer in Country Life. Furthermore, unless he is able to place a large amount of capital in the business he must be prepared to lock his money up for some years. Those who can afford to buy the best-bred and most typical animals of any breed as foundation stock, and who are content to pay good salaries and wages to competent men to take charge of them, ought soon to get a good return for their investment. Persons with limited means must be satisfied to start with a few animals less perfect in type and conformation or with aged individuals which can be picked up for comparatively little money, and then gradually breed up a stud herd or flock. The latter plan, unless one is a good judge of stock and a practical farmer, is the one I should advise. Clever and experienced breeders are apt to make mistakes in buying, mating and rearing their stock and a novice is sure to purchase his experience very dearly if he starts breeding on too large a scale.

The situation and soil of one's farm should govern, to a great extent, the variety of stock which it is decided to keep. Lincoln sheep, for instance, would not pay to rear on the mountains where the Scotch black-faced mountain or the Herdwick breeds exist. Or, again, the hardy Southdown thrives on the short, scanty herbage that grows on his native hills, where larger sheep would starve. Many breeds of livestock appear to be specially adapted to the locality in which they are born, and one always runs a risk when introducing a fresh variety of animals into any county.

Not only does it take some time for a breed new to the district to become acclimated, but it is always difficult to dispose of one's surplus stock in a neighborhood where it is not the fashion. It is true that some breeds seem to flourish almost anywhere, notably shorthorn cattle and Shire horses; but an owner of Shires who brings them up on light, thin-skinned land is severely handicapped when his horses come into the show-ring. He then finds that his rivals who occupy stiffer and richer soil can produce animals with more bone and hair than he can. Large, well-shaped feet, plenty of bone and good joints are absolutely necessary nowadays on a first-class animal of this breed.

Shire horses are especially adapted for town work and for hauling heavy loads, and one can judge from the photograph of this strong, heavy and yet compact mare how suitable this breed is for that purpose. The Clydesdales are not such massive horses as are the Shires, neither are they so large in the bone, but the strength and slope of their pasterns and the activity of this breed are proverbial. A superabundance of hair on a Clydesdale's legs is not considered necessary, as it is on those of the Shire; this can be seen by glancing at the illustration of Royal Guest, the champion Clydesdale stallion at this year's Royal. The Suffolk horse is preferred when quite clean-legged, i. e., with no long hair on his legs. It is a very active, quick animal, with any amount of pluck and endurance, and no breed is better suited for farmwork. Suffolks, like Clydesdales, are also suitable for working in towns, where strong, quick-moving horses are needed. Suffolk horses have been known to live to a great age, and longevity is claimed to be a special feature of this breed.



Champion Clydesdale.

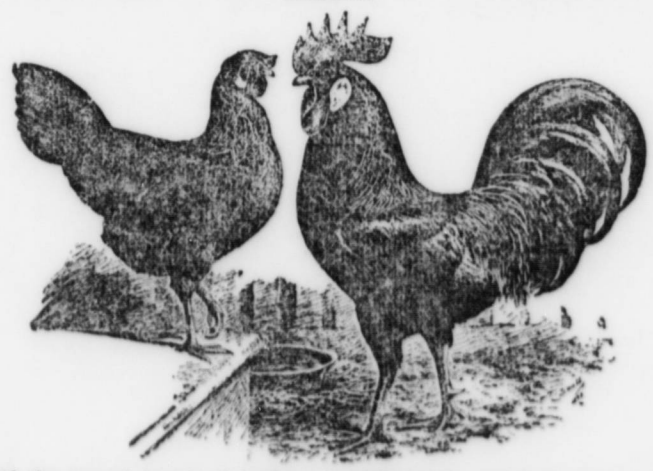
Horseflesh Consumption.

Horseflesh is very generally advertised in the German newspapers, especially in those of the large industrial centers, and most German cities have at least one market which makes it a specialty, claiming for it a higher percentage of nourishment than that of either beef, veal, mutton or pork.

Water Sprouts.

Do not neglect to cut off the water sprouts on the trunks of young apple, pear and plum trees.

SEVERAL KINDS OF LEGHORN



Of the several breeds of Leghorn, the white is the most popular and the brown next, says the Farm Poultry. The Buff Leghorns of the best strains have about all the good qualities of the white variety and are fast gaining popularity, the color being more attractive to some tastes. The Black and Dominique Leghorns also have their advocates. Each of the Leghorns, although naturally having single combs, are bred also with rose combs. The rose comb is obtained by introduction of Hamburg blood, and the result is in general a tendency to smaller bodies and smaller eggs in the rose comb varieties. The single combs vary greatly in size and weight, according to strain. Some of the larger strains are almost equal in size to the average of some of the medium weight breeds, and it is claimed that the size is not obtained at the expense of laying powers. The Leghorns, like most of the breeds, need to be bred with care to prevent the tendency to smaller sizes. Small bodies, pinched or cramped in shape, are considered undesirable, as tending to small eggs and lack of constitution.

Eight or ten years ago Leghorn cockerels were in considerable demand for crossing. The Leghorn and Brahma cross, Leghorn and Wyandotte, or Leghorn and Plymouth Rock were preferred by many poultrymen to breed crossbred chickens for broilers and roasters, and of late years the tendency of the poultry plants seems to be toward the use of one or another of the pure breeds. Cross breeding is more trouble and results less uniform than from the pure breeds.

At the One Horse.

Jere L. Sullivan, the head of the Hotel and Restaurant Employees' International alliance, said in Cincinnati, apropos of Labor day:

"Our American hotels are better than they used to be, and for this betterment my organization deserves no little credit.

"We have today no such hotels as the One Horse of Tin Can, where, if you asked for a bath, they used to give you a shovel and tell you to go down to the hollow and dam the creek.

"An English earl once visited the One Horse hotel. The landlord without ceremony led him outside, pointed to a window on the fifth floor, and said:

"'Thar's yer room.'"

Schurz Was Sure of Him.

Carl Schurz was dining one night with a man who had written a book of poems, so called, and who was pleased with himself.

The poet was discoursing on the time-worn topic of politics of the men who take office.

"I consider politics and politicians beneath my notice," he said. "I do not care for office. I wouldn't be a senator or cabinet officer, and I doubt if I could be tempted by the offer of the presidency. For the matter of that, I would rather be known as a third-rate poet than a first-rate statesman."

"Well, aren't you?" Schurz shouted at him.