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A  
LETTER  
TO THE  
RIGHT HONORABLE  
WILLIAM WINDHAM,  
ON A  
Partial Re-organization  
OF THE  
BRITISH ARMY.

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PRICE EIGHTEEN PENCE.

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BY  
MAJOR-GENERAL J. MONEY.

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1799.

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TO THE  
RIGHT HONORABLE  
WILLIAM WINDHAM.

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SIR,

IT is not only the important situation you fill, that suggests the propriety of addressing to you a treatise, which regards the organization and discipline of the British Army: I am also, permit me to say, induced to it by the persuasion, with which my mind is impressed, that there are few men perhaps more capable than yourself of determining the degree of merit these observations may have.

In the Spring of 1795, when this country was in greater danger than it ever had been before, or has been since; when the elect of the British Forces were retreating out of Holland; when the enemy were in possession of the Dutch navy, and their vessels of every description, as well as

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all the ports opposite our coast, I wrote some remarks on the situation of our camps, with a view to ascertain how far they were capable of affording protection to the metropolis, as well as on other points that respected the security of the country. Of these remarks, after they had been printed, a copy was sent, by my direction, to each of his Majesty's ministers. The Duke of Portland, in a Letter on the occasion, expressed to me his wish, "that I should not, in the present state of things, bring the subject before the public eye;" I was not unprepared for this intimation, and respectfully acquiesced in it. I felt myself indeed gratified with an opportunity of offering to his Majesty's ministers so unquestionable a proof of my regard for the country, and of refutation of unfounded prejudices, which some, I fear, had conceived against me;—prejudices, Sir, for which only one act in my life could serve as any sort of colour. I need not perhaps say, I allude to the circumstance of my having, in the summer of 1792, accepted a commission of General in the French service; I shall, however, repeat, what I should have thought, might have at all times proved a sufficient vindication, that I received my commission from the King, and never had any from the Republic: and that I returned before the commencement of the War. I was happy to evince, that, not only my mind had not been infected



fectcd by the contagion of modern French principles, but that it had been actively employed in the service of our truly free and happy Government.

You will, Sir, I hope, allow for a spirit impatient of reproach, which, it is conscious, is unmerited; and excuse this deviation from the subject. Yes, Sir, I must repeat it, my motive for going to France and to Brabant, was, I trust, laudable in a soldier of fortune for improvement in a profession which is never thoroughly learnt. The first military character that ever adorned the annals of this country did the same. It were presumption to name him in the same page with myself.

While I am proceeding to the consideration of so important a matter, as a change in the organization of a part of our army, I cannot help feeling some encouragement from observing, that what has been adopted by Government, since the communication of my former treatise to his Majesty's ministers, coincides with, and gives no small degree of countenance to some reflections contained in it. For, though I may not be permitted to flatter myself with the merit, that the adoption arose from my suggestion; yet, from the concurrence of them with the opinion I there offered, I may at least be allowed to infer, that my remarks were not wholly unworthy

thy of the attention of those, to whom they were submitted.

From the consideration of the relative position of the camp then formed at Brighton, of which the Duke of Richmond had the command, its distance from London, and a calculation of the time required for the conveyance of intelligence thither, and for the consequent movement of the troops from thence, I endeavoured to shew, that the metropolis, in case of its danger by the advance of the enemy's fleet to the Thames, could not have derived the protection that was proposed by that encampment\*---We have now, Sir, no camp at Brighton.

Though my remarks were principally directed to the protection of London; yet, *as it was wished* that I should give a military description of the counties of Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, I offered a view of these counties severally, in that respect; marking, as I went along, the different positions, as they were favorable or adverse to the aggressions of an invading enemy. And, in this view, Colchester was, in my apprehension, from its position in the district, with the river Colne running past it, a place of more importance than it had hitherto been considered. I therefore suggested as my opinion, that it demanded the attention of his Majesty's Generals, and ventured to recommend, that a considerable

park of artillery should be stationed at this place, as the most central for its action, where occasion might require it\*---Colchester has now a considerable park of artillery stationed there, and forms the head-quarters of the General of the district.

The works erected in the American War at Landguard-Fort, I presumed to say were dangerous to the state; that facing as they did the country, they could be of little annoyance, if of any, to vessels coming into the harbour at Harwich; that too considerable a number of troops were required to man the works, &c. &c. and advised their demolition†---It is sufficient to say, that these works have since been suffered to fall into ruin.

In this treatise, I adverted to the importance of Yarmouth Roads, through which the greater part of your trade to the North pass; and shewed, that it behoved ministers to give attention, not only to the Roads, but to the Town, as in the British Empire there could not be a place of that consequence to the state as Yarmouth, &c. &c.‡ of which ministers seem now in part convinced. I wish they were altogether so. It were not proper to state my reasons more fully; one question only will I put, to shew to those (who are in possession of my remarks,) what I al-

\* Page 57.

† Page 61.

‡ Page 77.

lude to. What naval and land force would it require, to take or burn all the vessels in Yarmouth Roads and Harbour, when your fleet is off the Texel? This may suffice to shew that my observations were just, that more troops are required here than we have hitherto had, also more men of war than are merely necessary to watch the enemy's fleet in the Texel.

Perhaps I have trespassed too long with these remarks; but I could not suppress the satisfaction I felt, in seeing that my opinion has, in many respects, coincided with the plans of defence, which have been adopted in this part of England.

I also recommended 30,000 Militia in reserve\*. They have since been raised under the appellation of Supplementary.

This, Sir, stimulates me to proceed and persevere in advising corps of Irregulars to be properly trained in the British service; and I shall finally succeed, as the necessity of such a corps in our army is evident. I have long seen it, and often advised them: in the History of the Campaign of 1792, I made a comparison between well-trained Chasseurs and our Light-Infantry. I have always adhered to the opinion, that Chasseurs are preferable. To this proposition I again return with a confirmed impression of its utility.



My zeal, Sir, to be of use, may have sometimes carried me beyond the limits of strict propriety, and nice discretion; my intentions however were always good, and the object of them the safety of the country.

In May last, when we were menaced with an invasion; when the troops of the Republic were ordered to the coast, and were called the Army of England; I made an excursion into Kent, where, it appeared to me, it was most probable the enemy might attempt to land. My officious ardour, then, not only induced me to submit my remarks to you on parts of this County, which I thought deserving attention, were the enemy to land in force; but I also wrote and printed Observations on the use of Chasseurs, from which (as it relates to what is here recommended) I shall quote a few pages.

It is needless perhaps to observe, that I found the works on the coast well situated, and well executed, as they were done under the direction of so able an engineer as Colonel Twiss; but I saw with much concern, that the part in which the enemy was most likely to land, was most favourable to their Light Troops, and was where your Cavalry could not act, or be of much use.

Wild as the project of an invasion may be, yet, after what we have seen so enterprising an enemy undertake, we ought always to be prepared for such an event; and should it ever happen,

happen, and the enemy invade (which would undoubtedly be in force if ever they made the attempt at all) the error, in our present organization of Cavalry, and our want of well-trained Irregulars, will be soon seen and felt, though too late to remedy the evil.

It is much, Sir, to be lamented, that Officers of high rank in the British service, have not seen the great effect of Chasseurs, in the present War, in the inclosed part of Flanders, and indeed wherever the British troops have been employed, except immediately in the open country beyond Valenciennes. I refer such officers to the accounts written by the French Generals, of the great use they derived from their Chasseurs, in every action of consequence that has been fought this War, as also to Officers in the British Army, who have served on out-posts. What was termed in this country the advancing *en masse*, by the French, was nothing more than very large bodies of Irregulars, which covered the country, in the front of their Armies, like an inundation. To their Irregulars, and to their Light Artillery, are the French indebted for most of the victories they gained. Independent of these accounts, written by French Generals, I have also to avail myself of the best authority that military art affords, by calling to your recollection, that the Troops styled in France Chasseurs, are, more or less, to be met with in every service in Europe, except the

the British. The Austrians have many Regiments of them; the Prussians have them attached in a certain proportion to each corps; but the French, seeing the good effect of these Irregulars, have brought them more into the field than all the Combined Powers together; and I will venture to say, that *in a country* similar to Kent, the army supported best by Irregulars, properly armed and cloathed, will carry their point whatever it may be.

I am perfectly aware, Sir, that what I have just observed, tends to prove only, that Chasseurs are trained and employed in other Armies; and that it will be expected from me to shew, why I conceive the British Light Infantry are not, in every instance, equal to the service performed by Light Troops, distinguished as they are by the various appellations of Chasseurs, Tirailleurs, Tyroliens, Yagers, Sharp-Shooters, &c. &c.

### I. *Of their Arms.*

Irregulars, in most services in Europe, are furnished with a rifle, either long or short, with which they are taught to fire with great exactness, insomuch, that some of them are expert enough to hit a dollar at a considerable distance. Will any British Officer, who knows the use of fire-arms, say, that, with one of the muskets used by our Light Infantry, he could fire as accurately at a mark, as with a park-keeper's rifle? Would

any park-keeper use one in preference to his own rifle? Certainly not. But rifles, it may be said, have no bayonets. No: not indeed to kill deer with; but in the Austrian service the *Régiment des Loups* has bayonets, as well as several corps in the French service, but not those regiments which use the short rifle, of which there are some amongst the Germans.

## II. *Of their Organization.*

The officers are trained to know their duty, and the particular service required of them; they look for promotion solely in their own corps, like our artillery or marines. With our Light Infantry, no sooner has an officer learned a little of his duty, than he is removed to the battalion or grenadiers. Chasseurs, in foreign service, have no tents allowed them; in general one third of them are kept on duty; the officer commanding is, with the remainder, in a village as near as possible to his advanced post; the men are taught never to waste a shot, and whenever they do fire, it rarely happens but a man is killed or wounded: they are taught to conceal themselves as much as possible; to creep from bush to bush, and if pressed to run off, for retrograde motions are not deemed disgraceful to Chasseurs: in short, a true Irregular is, or ought to be, in every respect an Indian, except in *scalping*. A Light-Infantry Man fires where he sees smoke, and continues firing



firing till he has wasted all his ammunition. This is nine times out of ten the case. All this proceeds from his not being trained as a marksman; for if he were, he never would think of venturing a shot, but at some determined object. When a Light-Infantry Man hears a ball pass him, which he has the good luck of having escaped, he turns directly to the quarter from which the shot appears to come, and fires at random; instead of concealing himself, as a Rifleman would do, and looking for the man that fired at him. This proceeds solely from a want of confidence in his own skill; and the same want of confidence may make him quit his post. A man who trusts not in the arms he fights with, or in his own skill, must feel himself half beat.

### III. *Of their Cloathing.*

The consideration of this article has been stated as futile, and as not worthy of attention; a brave man will, it has been said, fight well in any coat. No doubt of it; but the plain question is, whether your men, who are to be exposed to the enemy's experienced marksmen, should be clothed in a colour so conspicuous, as to render every movement you make obvious to an enemy? Or, whether any other colour would better tend to conceal your movements, and to save your men? Surely every General Officer would be glad to conceal his movements from the enemy, and surely it

is the duty, as well as it must be the inclination, of every General to save his men, and not expend them but in cases of absolute necessity. A sentry becomes, in a scarlet coat, a complete target to Riflemen. A grand guard, or any advanced post in scarlet, are easily distinguished, and their numbers nearly ascertained at a great distance, even if they are posted in a wood; on the contrary, if they are clothed in green, or dark brown, they are not discernible, but at a very short distance. Patroles have received a fire from, and been very near sentries and corps in green, when they have imagined an enemy was not near them by many miles. Not only the scarlet coat, which is the cloathing of our Light Infantry, but their white accoutrements, may be objected to for the same reason; they ought to be black. Their arms should not be bright, nor any glittering ornaments, no plumes of feathers, should appear on men destined to be employed on the advanced posts of an Army, particularly in an inclosed country. The Austrians are in dark grey; the French mostly in green; the *Infanterie Legere* in grey or mixed colour. In Canada, during the American War, we had two companies of Woodsmen in dark brown, nearly the colour of the bark of trees, which in that country was decidedly the most eligible.

It is asserted, and on the authority of persons, certainly of great and deserved reputation, and  
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of long experience in service, that the national weapon is the bayonet; and that, by its furious and incessant attacks, the final destruction of the enemy will be certain. But have the enemy no troops that carry bayonets? It is certain that all of their troops, except some regiments of Chasseurs, have bayonets. Or are we to understand by this, that charges with the bayonets is all we must depend upon? If that were proved, and the native bravery of our men our sole dependance, the people with pikes, and without discipline or order, would equal any of our high-dressed regiments. No, Sir, were the enemy to land in force, and Britons to trust solely to the bayonet, we should soon see our error. The bayonet is to be resorted to in partial and in desperate attacks alone: if two armies were to decide the fate of battle by the bayonet, why teach our men the use of fire-arms? Long pikes and javelins would answer full as well, and would never have been abandoned by our ancestors.

Let us suppose a case in point:—The enemy landed in force, and advancing on one of our turnpike roads in one column (which, by them, in an invaded country, would be preferable to two) suppose they were preceded and flanked by three or four thousand Chasseurs, and *Infanterie Legere*, they would of course find us in position somewhere; their column would then halt; cannon would then be brought forward, and the Light Troops instantly commence a fire upon our  
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out-posts ; should we order our men not to fire, but to charge with their bayonets ? If so, great numbers of our men would be killed in the first attack ; and the Irregulars of the enemy would fall back on their second line ; that is, the next hedge row : by this time our men would be so exhausted, so breathless, that they would be shot as fast as they came up and attempted to form ; but this mode of fighting could never happen, for Englishmen would fire ; we have taught them to fire, and fire they will, or face about. Should we order in all our advanced posts, and trust to our cannon and position, the enemy in that case would examine our weak points ; and the weak points are where we have most wood and small inclosures in our front ; for there the enemies *Tirailleurs* could approach within musket-shot of our men formed in battalion, and with impunity ; that is, if we have no troops of the same description to oppose them, *and to fight them in their own way*. Would any General charge and pursue these scattered Irregulars in our front, and give up his position ? Certainly not ! For if he did, and his men were thrown into disorder during the pursuit, he would so far commit himself, that when returned to his position and pursued, which is probable (finding men drawn up ready to receive him, with cannon and troops of the line) it is to be feared his men would not *be easily persuaded* to halt *exactly* where he wished them.

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The conclusions to be drawn are;

1. That the bayonet alone, though it may be the national weapon, is not to be depended upon, where a great battle is to be fought.

2. That powder and ball must decide the fate of the day, not forgetting a little military skill.

3. That as large a proportion of Irregulars is necessary in our front, as it may be conceived the enemy *will bring into the field*.

The county of Kent, it is true, abounds in strong positions; but not in one, except that on the Medway, that may not with ease be turned: hill succeeds hill, and generally covered with wood, and hop-grounds fill up the valley: all which is much in favour of the enemy, unless we are superior to them in Irregulars, in quality as well as in number.

I have now given what I consider to be solid reasons for the opinion I have long entertained of the great use of Chasseurs, in preference to gaudy and high-dressed corps of Light Infantry; I proceed now, Sir, to mention some circumstances that occurred to me, and which fell immediately under my observation, in order to corroborate and strengthen my arguments in favour of Irregular Corps, which I have uniformly maintained as being necessary to our armies.

In the German War in the year 1760, I was sent with a small patrol of Prussian Hussars to explore a wood, in which it was supposed the enemy

enemy had a post of Light Troops ; in this wood, I passed within thirty yards of a sentry of Fischer's Corps, but fortunately saw him at the instant of passing ; not daring to notice him, I rode on, as if unobserved, and repassed at full speed : an Hussar who followed was not quite so fortunate ; his horse was wounded ; cautious, as Hussars generally are, this sentry was not observed, being in green\*.

To the American War I look with a heavy heart for examples of the great use of Irregulars ; for what was the army that captured General Burgoyne's but an army of Irregulars ? What other appellation can be given to Militia untrained to any species of evolution, and undisciplined, but that of Irregulars ? At Saratoga the finest army in the world, as to numbers, laid down their arms, to what Mr. Rigby in the House of Commons called an "undisciplined rabble:" but they were all Woodsmen ; that is, marksmen. In the action on Freeman's Farm, the 62d regiment that charged four times with the "national weapon," and furiously too, quitting their position each time : the conflict was grievous to behold ; the contest was unequal ;

\* In that war the French had only one corps of Irregulars with their army commanded by Fischer, and we had only one commanded by Colonel Shitzer ; the use of them was not then so well known : a position now taken according to the fashion of those days, with a wood on its flank, would be inevitably turned.

the rebels fled at every charge deeper still into the woods ; but when the British troops returned to their position, they were slowly followed, and those who had been the most forward in the pursuit were the first to fall. Night, long wished for, at length arrived, and put an end to this bloody action. An army destined to make war in America, should be composed one half of Irregulars ; and in the county of Kent not less than one fifth ought to be trained, armed, clothed, and disciplined, as Chasseurs ; that is, one fifth of this army ought to be Irregulars. The hop-grounds are every year rendering these corps more and more requisite ; and it is but too true that the country is daily increasing in impediments to Cavalry\*. This county is as much against them as any other in England, owing to the smallness of the inclosures, the thickness of woods, the strength of hedge-rows, and, lastly, though not the least impediment, the hop-grounds.

It is true, there are many large inclosures in parts of this country, where Cavalry could act in

\* It is by no means my wish to give offence to Cavalry Officers ; I think Cavalry of *every description* necessary with all armies ; but I would be glad to ask the youngest Cornet of Dragoons in the British service, whether an open country is not the best for Cavalry to act in ? His answer must be surely in the affirmative ; and it must follow, *vice versa*, that the more inclosed the greater the impediments are to Cavalry.

partial attacks ; but it is not likely that the enemy will be such idiots as to come upon ground so evidently disadvantageous, expressly to give you an opportunity of charging them. No man will think this for a moment who has common sense ; if it can be shewn that an invading enemy has, in this country, a plain to pass between the coast and London in any direction, as wide and as extensive as Newmarket Heath, or Salisbury Plain, and was *unavoidable*, then no man would contend we had a single squadron more than was required. If the enemy *had such ground* to pass over, an invasion need not be feared ; for then nothing but an army of Cavalry could reach London, and such an army could never be transported from the continent.

I make no scruple of declaring, that not less than 3000 Chasseurs are wanted in Kent to meet troops of that description, which the enemy will undoubtedly bring over, if they come ; and as many are wanted in Essex, which is equally as inclosed.

Let us for a moment look at the country that has been the theatre of the present war, to shew the use that was there made of Irregulars. Our operations were there carried, in the spring of 1794, into an open country near Cambray ; the enemy then felt the superiority of our cavalry, and saw that their Irregulars, with which their army abounded, were useless, and would conti-

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nue so, unless they could force us to make war in an inclosed country ; and this they effected, by obliging us to return into Flanders to protect our magazines, and cover our communication with them : here the country is much inclosed, and here all their Irregulars could act. From that hour we were constantly losing ground, holding only those points we thought proper to cover with works ; and in the short space of a few weeks, it may be said in a few days, those armies which had been acting offensively, were actually obliged to act defensively. Was that army diminished by slaughter or sickness ? No ; but the enemy's armies, it is said, were increased. --- True, and with what ? Irregulars ; requisition men, or volunteers, without discipline, yet not without ardour to fight : and from the moment we commenced our sad retreat from Tournay, till we arrived near Breda, nothing was to be seen but the enemy's Irregular Troops : this was owing to our having only small bodies of Irregulars to meet large ones, and to the countries being inclosed, which favoured their operations.

To this cause, and no other, may be ascribed all our disasters in West Flanders, viz. a deficiency in Light Troops, and of that particular description called by the French *Chasseurs a pied*, and *Chasseurs a cheval*.

It does not follow from these few remarks, that discipline is here meant to be held cheap. No

man considers it more indispenfably necessary than I do, but not with *Irregulars*; all required of those corps should be strict subordination, obedience to orders, sobriety, and soldier-like behaviour.

When I commanded in the Gorge of Clermont 5000 French, I had two Light Corps under me very weak, one commanded by the present General Grenier, then a Lieutenant-Colonel; the other by a Colonel Ranfonné: these were on the skirts of the forest, on each side the Gorge; the breadth of which was more than a mile; no patrolle night or day dared to approach them either in the Gorge or in the forest; the enemy had no Irregular Corps with them. In an attack upon this part, a column of the enemy was observed in the forest being in white, endeavouring to turn the left flank, and which they would have effected, had they been cloathed in green, and been Irregulars.

At the siege of Namur, in November 1792, I commanded a corps at Dinant, on the Meuse, to cover the siege, and protect our communication with Givet: the enemy had a post of Riflemen in a wood on his right, when we did not imagine there was a man in it; and but for a deserter, they might have remained there, not having any Light Troops to oppose them. On an application to General Valence, who commanded the army of the Ardennes, the 9th regiment of *Infanterie*

*fanterie Legere* was sent, consisting of 800 men, half of which had rifles: not only on their arrival did the enemy's Light Troops quit the wood, but General Shrøder quitted his post, and retired farther back; so much did he then dread an attack by this corps, situated as he was in a village surrounded with wood.

At the siege of the Chateau of Namur, a company of Irregulars in General Mazinsky's legion, near half of which had German rifles, occupied the side of a rugged mountain, so near one of the forts, that no man dared to look over the parapet. Baron —, Major of the place, with more courage than prudence, in exciting his men to return the fire, and looking over to let them see there was no danger, was shot through the head. The use of Riflemen is not confined to wood-fighting alone.

It is probable that the French in America learnt the great use of Irregulars; there they perceived the undisciplined peasantry holding in check the best-dressed regiments in the British service, when once they had possessed themselves of a wood; there they were confirmed in the report, that the raw peasants of the country on Bunker's Hill, killed and wounded, out of 2000, no less than 1054 British officers and soldiers.

It has been said that a Chasseur ought to be like an Indian in every respect but scalping. I have seen Indians in fire, and am persuaded that  
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fifty of them would kill or take two hundred men of any high-dressed regiment in Europe, who had fifty miles to march in a woody or an extremely inclosed country. To support this opinion, I would refer my reader to the accounts given of General Braddock's surprise, and total defeat, the 9th of June, 1755. This shews that Chasseurs ought to be brought as near the Indian as possible, and have nothing to carry when action is expected, but a powder-horn and a bag of loose balls; they ought to be able to run twelve twiles in two hours, which any well-made young athletic man could easily be brought to in a fortnight, for there is not better materials in the world for Irregulars than in this island.

This, Sir, is the substance of the short treatise I wrote in the spring of 1798, at a time when Government was under some apprehension that this country would be invaded, written with the best intention, to shew by argument, and by examples given of the use of Irregulars, how necessary it was to have them in our service, at a time too when bills had just passed both Houses of Parliament, to give almost an indiscriminate liberty for the people to arm; it was the moment I thought the most favourable to have organized corps of Irregulars, such as would have been capable (with the ardour they possessed, together with their natural dislike as well as contempt for Frenchmen) to have held the enemy's Chasseurs in



in check on the instant of their landing. But, alas! Sir, I reckoned without my host; for was it likely that country gentlemen, who knew no more of battles than what they read in the newspapers, would have adopted my plan, and formed their tenants into corps of Irregulars, of the use of which they had not the most distant idea? What is a Chasseur? they ask; what is his duty? If they had been called Irregulars or Riflemen, the same question would have been asked. It was not likely indeed that such corps should have been raised, when I seriously consider it; but my zeal to render an important service to my country, carried me too far; it certainly was not likely, when there is not a single model for them to have been formed upon.

An old Colonel, who commanded a regiment in General Burgoyne's army, after having read my observations on Irregulars, declared to me, that if there had been in that army about a thousand well-trained Chasseurs, that army would not have been lost. I will venture to say, had half of them been Chasseurs, it would have marched to Albany, even to New York. From repeated actions, in all of which the men saw their own inferiority, that army became perfectly dismayed, insomuch, that at Saratoga the commanding officers of the different corps reported that their men could not be depended upon. The men were sensible that they were not equal  
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to the American Marksmen; they had lost all confidence; they had none in themselves; they had not much in their officers; and when men are in such an unfortunate situation, a single cannon shot would put them to the right about. How brave soever a General may be, which his soldiers will naturally esteem him for, yet a want of confidence in his judgment will mar all his operations. But what is it that may not be undertaken with men, when they have an opinion of his knowledge and experience? A General who wishes to have the confidence of his men, which every General ought to desire, he should upon all occasions convince them that he will never wantonly throw away the life of a single soldier; and he who cautiously takes them into fire, and prudently withdraws them out of it, when he sees no more good is to be done, that General will soon have the confidence of his men. In the action previous to our retreat to Saratoga, the Grenadiers (commanded by a young officer, Major —, since dead) ran back into camp in the greatest disorder; they were drawn up *in battalion* looking into a thick wood; very few shots were fired from that wood before they quitted their station. Could any man with reason have expected any thing else from them? They had a few days before fought the severest action that had happened during the whole of the American war, and lost a number of men  
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and officers ; they encamped on the field of battle, and on which they had entrenched themselves, partly with abbatis, and partly with large timbers, expecting daily to be attacked ! Was it likely that those men would stand, when marched out of their entrenchments to seek the enemy in the woods, when it was manifest to them that their General did not even think them safe in their camp without works ? No, Sir, they were sensible they were not a match for the enemy's Riflemen in the woods, and therefore back to camp they ran, with the loss of Brigadier-General Frazer, and several brave and valuable officers.

No General was more beloved in an Army, or more deservedly so, than was General Burgoyne; but such an Army as he had was not fit to fight in woods, composed of heavy useless Germans, and high-dressed British Infantry ;—those were not the species of troops he wanted. The troops in Canada are at this day composed of just such regiments. If they were never to be removed from the walls of Quebec, or out of works, there could not be better men; but if they should unhappily be called into woods again to meet the Americans, that province will be over-ran in as short time as it was before by Generals Arnold and Montgomery. No less than three or four battalions of Riflemen, call them by what name you please, ought to be stationed

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here; the colour of their cloathing ought to be that which comes the nearest to the bark of trees.

On the breaking out of the American War, I offered, being then a Captain in the service, to raise a legion, persuaded from the use I had seen made of the Yagers in the woods of Westphalia in the German War, that such troops were the men wanted in America; that the Guards, and high-dressed corps, were not the troops, Sir, to take into the woods to fight Virginia Riflemen; this must be now acknowledged. I gave my proposition to Lord Barington; it was to have consisted of two troops of *Chasseurs à Cheval*, and 600 Riflemen. It was not approved of; but a corps was raised by General Tarleton\*, in America, somewhat similar to it; he knew my plan, and was to have been a Captain in my legion, had it been raised. The good effect of his corps was often seen; and it would have been fortunate for us if we had raised more such legions; it would have saved the life of many a brave man, who lost it in the unequal contest between high-dressed corps and corps of skilful marksmen. Seldom were the American's Riflemen seen, the report of his gun you heard, but his ball was felt. My blood ran

\* On various expeditions that able officer either mounted Infantry behind his men, or on horses of the country.



cold in my veins for years after that unhappy war, when it occurred to my mind the cruel situation my brave countrymen, through ignorance, have been placed in, when and where bravery was unavailing; yet it is a doubt with me at this moment, notwithstanding the experience we have had in that war, whether we should not fight it over again in the same manner, from the cheapness with which Riflemen and Irregulars are still held.

A military man of high rank, on reading my observations on the use of Chasseurs, expressed his wish, that I had "entered a little into the detail for the forming and training such Light Troops there proposed, for though parade forms might be overdone; certain systems must be laid down, and though officers of service would easily come into my ideas, unexperienced young men would want some rules and instructions, to form them for such corps; a short treatise, combining Light Cavalry and Irregular Infantry movements, with their attached Artillery, might forward the object." Now, Sir, seeing no disposition on the part of government to raise such corps, I thought it was a waste of time to write and publish a treatise of the kind: however, in the month of August last came out one, said to be written in German. No matter, whether it had its origin in German or English; the author must have seen a great deal of service, for he has given

admirable instructions for the training and disciplining such corps. Whenever Government may think proper to form them, his observations on an advanced guard, patrols, rear guards, and piquets, ought to be not only read, but most of them copied into the orderly books of our Infantry when going upon service; they ought to be read by every military man who has never seen actual service, nor will any officer lose by reading it.

The author of the treatise for the training of Riflemen finishes with a just remark. "Nothing (says he) is so disgraceful to an officer to allow himself to be surpris'd, the ground in his front and on his flank ought to be examined in person."—Such remarks are evidently meant as instructions for young officers on an out-post; they are, however, no bad lessons for Generals "to examine in person." Positions may certainly be taken from a good map, yet, if possible, the General ought, "in person," to examine every spot of ground where he is likely to have any thing to do; he ought to make himself perfectly master of every inch of country between his position and that of the enemy; he must examine, without bringing on an engagement, which ought to be avoided, till you are well acquainted with what is in your favour or against you, whether your position is an offensive one, or defensive; a perfect knowledge of the country you ought to have, that you may avail yourself of every advantage

vantage which offers itself, whether an enemy be advancing, or whether retreating. In an enclosed country, you cannot go far out of the reach of your cannon if you wish to reconnoitre the enemy; or examine the country, without an escort of Infantry, as well as Cavalry, which, in such a country, cannot be of much use; what Infantry could you have upon such an occasion preferable to Chasseurs, or such Cavalry as the French have in great numbers, *Chasseurs à Cheval*? To corroborate this opinion, read the following extract from His Royal Highness the Duke of York's Letter, May the 19th, from Tournay: "I regret that our loss is so great; but, when the nature of the action is considered, and that it was conducted in a country the most favorable to the views of the enemy that they could have wished for, while *their perfect knowledge* of these parts enabled them to take every advantage of it, it might have been expected to have been still more considerable." I found this to coincide with my opinion, and therefore I have given it here.

In order, Sir, to shew, indeed to prove by example and by argument, how unserviceable, how useless Cavalry, organized as ours, are when called into action in an enclosed country, I shall venture to quote another part of His Royal Highness's Dispatches, on the affair of the 18th of May: he marched out of camp near Tournay  
with

with 14 regiments of Infantry, and 10 squadrons of Cavalry; suppose, Sir, His Royal Highness's object had been merely to have examined the country to reconnoitre, no matter what, yet that immense force was not sufficient to protect even his person, for he was under the necessity of quitting it, and narrowly escaped being taken. Now, Sir, had the Infantry of this column been composed only a fifth part of it of Chasseurs, trained and cloathed in a manner I have recommended, and had his Cavalry been in part Horse-Chasseurs, that is, Dismountable Cavalry, so complete a disaster would not probably have happened. At Roubaix, a regiment of Light Dragoons was ordered to defend the town; they dismounted, it is true, a few men, whose short carabines were the only arms they had to oppose to the enemy's Chasseurs and Irregulars; it is natural to suppose their resistance was not long. What does His Royal Highness say of his Cavalry in his Letter of the 19th of May? "That the Cavalry was divided with the several corps for the purpose of patrolling, *the nature of the country not admitting of their being of any other use.*" All which proves, Sir, to demonstration, as far as such an opinion goes, and which ought to have great weight, that our Cavalry, such as it is, at this hour, are not in an enclosed country of any use but "for the purpose of patrolling," which is certainly very true, unless you have them



them armed and cloathed properly, to dismount, as occasion may require, to act in a double capacity; and all such Cavalry, whose organization will not allow them to do that, had better never approach an enclosed country nearer than musquet-shot, for they are likely to do more harm than good. Taking large bodies of Cavalry (such as ours are at this moment) into an enclosed country, where you are likely to meet the enemy, and sending them forward to find them out, may be attended with fatal consequences, and more so, if followed with columns of Infantry and cannon, for the first check they meet with, their retreat will be rapid. I have been with Cavalry in such a situation in the German War, when we have been obliged to retrograde rapidly before a superior enemy, every man calling, Halt! Halt! but all the while with spurs in his horse's flanks. To corroborate this opinion, I shall shew, from accounts given by an Officer of the British Army, in an account of the Campaign of 1794. (*It is here necessary to observe, that the Combined Armies on the 18th of May were under the command of the Emperor in person.*) The author, who was present on that day, says in a note, page 48, "the Austrian Hussars increased the confusion of that day by riding over our Infantry in every direction, &c. &c. One of the colours of the Third Regiment of Guards was unfortunately lost, a Serjeant was carrying it

it cased, when a party of British Cavalry *pressing on his rear*, the battalion was ordered to open and let them pass in a very narrow road, with deep muddy ditches on each side; into one of these the Serjeant was thrown, and stunned with the fall; (*they were not coming very slow we may presume*) upon his recovery, in his hurry to overtake his battalion, he forgot the colours." &c. &c.

On the misfortunes of that day, which are recorded in the public papers, I will not dwell.

Independent of the confusion a hasty retreat of Cavalry must occasion in an enclosed country, it has as bad effect on your Infantry, it inclines them to do the same; the greater hurry the Cavalry shews to get off, the more the Infantry will magnify their danger, when perhaps to them it is none, especially if organized as they ought to be; nor would Dragoons, armed and trained to act as Irregulars, hurry disgracefully out of the field, when they knew it was their duty to co-operate with Infantry, armed and clothed in a similar manner with themselves; on the contrary, a good understanding would always subsist between such corps, and they would of course offer each other mutual support. Men who feel themselves cyphers where there is danger, will not long continue in it; the reverse, if they have weapons in their hands, with which they know they can defend themselves, and in which they have confidence; and what confidence can a

Light

Light Dragoon have in his carabine, in an enclosed country, when he is subject to be shot by an enemy he cannot get at.

No officer is more sensible of the indispensable necessity of having Cavalry with all Armies, than myself; but surely it must be allowed, that the nature of the country you are to make war in must determine the proportion of Cavalry necessary. Before Namur was invested in November 1792, Dumourier asked me if the country about the place was such as Cavalry could act in. I told him, it was not on the other side the town, that it was there mountainous and woody. General Valence, who commanded the Army of the Ardennes, was much displeased with me, for he had desired a reinforcement of Cavalry for the siege; but I never knew a General, who went on any expedition, who was not grasping at having more men under his command than was sufficient; when the fewer men a General succeeds with, the more honour he acquires. A General asking for more men than he wants, and he is refused, he shifts, he thinks, the responsibility on the shoulders of those who refuse him.

An Officer (who has lately written a Treatise, which he titles Instructions for Hussars and Cavalry) observes, “ that if you have in your front nothing but defiles and woods, Cavalry is absolutely useless; if there be a defile or wood which is absolutely necessary to pass  
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through, you must make your Infantry come on, and order your Cavalry to remain in the open country."

What does he mean by open country? Not surely where there are hedge-rows and hop-grounds to impede a charge of Cavalry, for they are as great an impediment to the charge as a wood, as a bog, as a deep ravine. No, Sir, they are useless (which His Royal Highness's Dispatches confirm) in an enclosed country, but to make patroles. If you could persuade the enemy always to make war in an open country, your Cavalry could not be better than they are at this moment; I should not be an advocate for the making the most trifling alteration in their arms, cloathing, or appointment, for you would beat the enemy wherever you met them. But if the enemy were so inclined, or so vain or so foolish, to think they are able to cope with you in an open country, I should be glad to know, where that country is, that we are likely to make war in, and to meet them, that is free from impediments to a charge of Cavalry; the face of Europe is much changed within the last century, which has changed the mode of making War. All that can be said is, that the French have perceived it first; had the country been about Lisle what it was hear a hundred years ago, which it certainly is not, Lisle might have been invested on the 19th or 20th of May



1794. That the country about Lifle was open when it was besieged by the Duke of Marlborough, is evident from this circumstance; from there not being a tree in any hedge-row, or scarcely to be seen, that has 100 years growth in it, which is strong presumptive proof, that the face of the country is not the same: not only, there are no trees of that age to be seen, but the hedges shew it, as there are no shrubs, white thorns, nor hornbeam, &c. that appear to have been more than half a century planted.

With respect to England we are infinitely more strongly inclosed than Flanders, where the Combined Armies met all their disasters; and we have above 40,000 Cavalry in this country, and not a single troop of them trained or properly armed to dismount.

A circumstance occurs to my mind, which shews how feeble are the efforts that cavalry can make when a village is in the hands of Infantry. In the German War, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, who was the first General in Europe, made a disposition to surprise a corps of the French, under M. de Stainville; it was well conceived, but ill executed. In the village of Emminghausen, Stainville had placed two or three Companies of Foot, but the Light Cavalry of the Army consisting of Hussars, and Elliot's Light Dragoons, Count Schaumbourg-lippe Bucke-bourg's Cuirassiers, &c. dared not ap-

proach the village or the gardens where the Infantry was, by near half a mile, and we were obliged to halt for our Artillery, to throw shot and shells into the gardens to oblige the enemy to retire. The village was in an open country. I was present with the Hussars, there was no impediments *but hedge-rows*.

In the rear of the village, on high ground, was Stainville's corps encamped with their tents standing. The check we met with at this village saved probably all his tents and baggage. Had the regiments of Cavalry or some of them been organized to dismount, and been attended with Light Artillery, which they ought always to be, the enemy would have been driven from the village and gardens in half an hour; as it was, we waited two hours for cannon. This I quote as a case that applies in favour of new-modelling our Light Corps. I have no doubt but many of our Cavalry Officers may recollect instances, where, for want of having been attended with Light Artillery and Chasseurs, they have been under the unpleasant necessity of retiring. I have read this War of desperate, I may say rash attacks on Infantry, supported by cannon; but I have also read of a number of horses of great value killed, as well as many brave men losing their lives. Whenever Infantry can be found in an open country, where there are no impediments  
to

to the charge, do it, even if they are superior in number: You will kill, wound, and take every man of them: but be sure you have no defiles, no swampy ground between you and the enemy. And what should prevent your being organized as I advise? Why, Sir, old jack-boot prejudices, which no argument, I fear, or example will remove. Before, Sir, the German War, there was not a single Light Dragoon in the British service; now we have little else, and we have not a single regiment of Chasseurs in our Army; yet I have no doubt, but that in a few years you will see many.

I shall say what Mr. Pitt does on the legislative Union with Ireland, that how much soever I may regret the opposition of men I value much, yet nothing shall prevent my exerting the faculties of my mind, during life, to induce Government to adopt my plan for new modelling the British Army, being thoroughly convinced, after near 40 years service, and having been actively employed in four Wars, that we never can, till that happens, meet the enemy on equal terms. Should any one ask, why then persevere? Why publish your thoughts on the subject, since you think what you advise will not be attended to? For the same reason the Chancellor of the Exchequer entered his resolutions on the Irish Union, on the Journal of the H— of C—, that what is here written, may be read and considered

dered by Officers of all description in the British service ; for the general good sense of the Army will, sooner or later, have the desired effect. It is said, Sir, that none are so deaf as those who will not hear, or so blind as those who will not see. I will put one or two questions to Military Men, which I am persuaded they must answer in the affirmative. Is there between London and Harwich, or Ipswich, any ground on which three squadrons of horse can form, without being in reach of musquetry from the hedge-rows in his front and flanks ? Of what use then, in God's name, is Cavalry, where they cannot form to charge, for if they cannot form they cannot charge. Will any Officer of Cavalry tell me he can enter a field of ten or twelve acres (few larger on either side the great road) when the opposite hedge-rows are lined with Infantry ? no matter whether Chasseurs or any other Infantry : he certainly could not, let his bravery be what it would ; for his men, when fired upon, would run back to the gate they entered, faster than they came in.

Much has been said of our national weapon as it is called, the bayonet. Let us see what effect that would have on a similar occasion, if they had an enemy to force, posted as I have described them. Before half your men are entered to form and charge, those who were not killed or wounded, would either rush forward  
with



with fixed bayonets, or rush backwards; if the former the field would soon be strewed with dead men, it would be another Bunker's-Hill. What then is to be done, may be asked, since you will not allow that our Cavalry can act in such case, nor our Infantry charge with a prospect of success? Nothing, Sir, so plain; nothing so evident; meet them as you ought with men armed and trained, to dispute hedge-row after hedge-row; then whichever army has the best Chasseurs (supposing numbers equal) will prevail of course; those who have the most, will not fail of succeeding, judiciously disposed of.

An Artillery Officer may say, here is no mention of us all this while, it does not appear that we have any thing to do in these supposed cases; if the country be flat, and very much inclosed, you must be very cautious how you approach the enemy with your Artillery, else you may lose it. You may recollect, perhaps, that artillery have been left during this War in an inclosed country. If there be commanding features in a country, whence the enemy may be discerned, and their motion fully observed, then your Artillery will have all the effect you can wish; but where you are prevented by the thickness of hedges, and flatness of the country, from seeing the enemy, your Artillery cannot avail you much, no more than theirs will avail them. Firing at random does very little execu-

execution, either with cannon or with musquetry; our turnpike roads will be the ground that you will have to dispute first; never bring your Artillery within musket-shot of a thick wood with large timbers, in which are the enemies Chasseurs; if you do, you may lose them. I saw in America 32 Artillery-men killed and wounded by Riflemen out of 36\*; the Artillery were once or twice in the possession of the enemy, but they could not take them off.

It is not my intention to give a dissertation on Artillery, it is wandering from my subject; I have to shew that Cavalry, such as ours are, in an inclosed country are useless, and that Chasseurs are indispensably necessary in the British service. My opinion of Cavalry in this country has never varied, it has been uniformly the same. In 1781, when Sir Charles Hardy's fleet retired to Spithead, before the combined forces of the enemy, and an invasion was much talked of, and not a little expected, I wrote a treatise on the subject; it was sent to Mr. Egerton the Army Publisher; it came before the public without a name; my opinion then was, and still is, that our Cavalry was but the pageantry of the state, and not such as were required to act in an inclosed country, as this is beyond all others in Europe; it may be

\* Captain Jones who commanded them, was mortally wounded, September 19, 1778.

said, this is not the only country they may eventually be called upon to act in.---True.---What I shall propose will not prevent their acting in squadrons, when and where an opportunity offers.

The organizing Cavalry and making them dismountable in short legions, would not lessen our active force in an open country, or diminish our number of squadrons, on the contrary, they would have their Chasseurs to post with their Light Artillery, in the gardens of villages on each flank, which would give a small body of Cavalry a great advantage over a larger. The gardens of any village thus supported in the centre of a line of Cavalry, as well as on its flanks, might look in the face double or treble their numbers. When patrols or reconnoitering parties are going to any distance on hostile ground, a party of their own Chasseurs might be left in a small coppice or any kind of inclosure to cover your retreat; for if pursued by Cavalry they will soon halt when they come within reach of your Light Artillery, and Infantry so posted. The French are so sensible of the great advantage of having men on horse-back, that occasionally may be used in two capacities, that they have a number of such regiments: as may be seen in General Championnet's late letters from Italy.

December the 6th.—“ General Kellerman, commanding the advanced guard posted before Nefsi, was attacked with great impetuosity, by the first column which advanced from M——, the General had with him only three squadrons of the 19th Regiment of Horse Chasseurs, two pieces of light artillery, and the first division of the 11th Regiment of the line, this handful of brave men killed and wounded 400 men, took 15 pieces of cannon, 50 caissons, and made 2000 prisoners.”

By the same letter it appears they have also Legions in their service. Will any man, with common sense, say that it will be disgraceful to us, to have a number of light troops in our service of the description I propose, because the French have first adopted them?

Those who are so jealous of the national honour, need not to be under any concern in that respect for some time to come; for till this new system of Horse Chasseurs be adopted by Austria or Prussia, whom we copy in most things, and have done for a century past, we shall remain just as we are\*. Though I think so, yet I conceive

\* The Great Frederick, on his accession to the throne, had but 720 Hussars; at his death, the Cavalry of that description amounted to 15,000. Perhaps it is useless to observe that General Elliot raised the first regiment of Light Dragoons in our service, in 1769, so slow were we in following the example set us by such



ceive it is a duty that I owe my Sovereign and my country, to give an unbiassed opinion on the subject, founded on some experience. It is as I have observed no sudden thought, for soon after my return to this country, January 1, 1793, I presented a memorial to his Majesty, in which, after setting forth that my sole motive for going to France was to improve myself in my profession (for what talents soever an Officer may possess, every action he sees fought, he learns something). I represented to his Majesty, that the French appeared to me much superior to any troops in Europe in their *Artillerie Legere*, and by the great number of regiments they had of Chasseurs, of

such a General as the King of Prussia, that it was not till four years after that we had another.

Monf. de Grassin's regiment des Arquebusiers, was the first the French had of Riflemen; they were raised in 1744, by the advice of Marechal de Saxe. Extract from a note in the History of his Campaigns, p. 17, vol. ii. " Ce régiment de troupes légères, composé de 900 hommes, dont 600 d'infanterie et 300 de cavalerie, fût levé en moins de deux mois de temps : ce régiment servit dès sa premiere campagne avec autant d'utilité que les anciens corps : tant il est vrai qu'il ne faut que bien mener les hommes pour en faire de bons foldars. M. de Grassin pour aguerrir ses hommes au feu, les envoyait tous les jours faire le coup de fusil avec les patrouilles de la garrison de Tournay. Cette petite guerre leur inspira tellement la confiance que peu de tems après qu'il eut joint l'armée du M. de Saxe à Courtray, deux de ses piquets ayant été attaqués par les compagnies franches des Alliés, se defendirent si bien qu'ils les forcerent à se retirer en désordre, et les harcelèrent long temps dans leur retraite.

which we had not one. In doing this I obeyed the dictate of a mind impressed with a notion that it was my indispensable duty to lay these observations at the feet of my Sovereign. This shews that I have been uniformly of the same opinion. I shall now quote another letter of a recent date, from General Championnet, January 4, 1799, which will shew that numerous Chasseurs are in the French Army. "I detached, says he, General Rey to Terracina, with the 7th and 25th Regiment of Chasseurs, the Polish Legion, and some pieces of light artillery." In short, there is scarcely a letter to be found giving an account of any action fought by the French, that they do not mention their Chasseurs in some respect or other, and generally from the advantage they have derived from them. But I am told by the admirers of Austrian and Prussian discipline, that they have very few light troops of the description of Chasseurs, and not a single regiment of Horse Chasseurs in either service; but this does not prove, or shew in any respect that we ought not to have them. There is little doubt, Sir, but the Austrians must have seen the great advantage the enemy have derived from their Light Troops in an inclosed country, and will probably bring more Irregulars into the field this campaign than they have hitherto done; should that be the case, the success of their arms will be as brilliant as we could wish them. The  
Emperor,

Emperor has lost, unfortunately, that country which could have furnished him with Chasseurs as good as any the French have. The inhabitants of all the Belgic provinces are a brave, active, and hardy race, particularly those of Luxembourg, Namur, and Hainault. There are not in Europe men whose manners and dispositions, are better adapted to the formation of Irregulars, than the English; for, to say the truth, no set of men can make good Irregulars of any description who are not a free people, or what is the same thing, such as conceive themselves so. But, of all men, the Highlanders would make the best Irregulars, if well trained for the occasion, as they are a hardy, nimble, and an intelligent people.

To support the opinion I have given on so momentous a subject as the re-organization of a part of the British army, I shall here quote from the author of the History of the Campaign of 1796, who I understand is a Baron de Pomps, and who is a military man, page 386, note 32. He here describes the theatre of war in Italy; he observes—"That the vallies which separate the hills are covered with mulberry-trees and vines, planted in hedge-rows, or in arbours, forming narrow covered ways, which must be forced one after the other by the soldier; the roads are defiles lined with walls, and are nevertheless the only places where the cavalry can act." And in  
what

what part of England is it, where an enemy is likely ever to be engaged, that will admit of Cavalry charging but on out turnpike-roads? Our hop-grounds in Kent (the part certainly where the enemy are most to be expected) are as strong impediments to cavalry advancing as hedge-rows of mulberry trees or vines. The author proceeds: "In the Italian Tyrol a battalion can never march and attack in front; as soon as it advances to the enemy, it must be scattered about as *Trailleurs*; then each man must act for himself, and consider himself alone as a small Army." I was much pleased in meeting with this book, which I did last summer, after my publication on the use of *Chasseurs*; for this coincides perfectly with what I have written on the subject. And what follows is the same. "He must advance with rapidity when he is supported, and retire in the same manner when he is not; he must fire à propos, then put himself under cover; he must call his companions when he has found a good pass. What disadvantage does not the Austrian soldier labour under in such a country! He is obliged to fight with a musket weighing eighteen pounds, to carry sixty rounds of cartridges, a very heavy knap-sack, and a cloak around his breast which almost stifles him." Now, Sir, let any military man tell me what mighty difference there is, in either the country that may one day be fought in,



in, and for, by a British soldier, or that described where the Austrians have been so repeatedly beaten? Or let them tell me what great difference there is in the weight carried by an Austrian soldier and a British soldier. I believe the British soldier carries more, for his knapsack is generally a little better furnished, unless after the Austrians return from the sacking of some unfortunate village. The author goes on. "In this condition he is to contend with a French soldier, whose musket weighs no more than a fowling-piece, who has nothing but a wretched coat upon his back, which undoubtedly does not embarrass him, and whose natural agility, as well as his species of courage, renders very fit for this kind of war." What kind of war does the author mean? Can there be a doubt upon it? A war in an inclosed country, to be sure, "where a battalion cannot march or attack in front;" where the inclosures are so small, as to be within musket-shot of the hedge-row in his front; where cavalry cannot charge but on great roads, such as this country is. It is for this reason therefore, Sir, I contend, (and shall, till *I am childish*) that we must be reorganized to fight the enemy on equal terms. The author proceeds. "All new methods have succeeded in war, from the Macedonian phalanx to the tactic of Frederic. The French owe a great part of their successes to the  
new

new mode of fighting which they have adopted ; they precipitate themselves like a swarm of wasps on all the points they desire to force ; young Generals put themselves at their head, and share their dangers."

He adds : " The artillery has but little assisted the French in their successes in Italy ; they almost always charged with the bayonet." So then it seems the French have bayonets ; one would suppose they had not, from the great stress that we seem to lay on what we term the national weapon. He goes on : " The Austrian Army is brave, very brave ; well managed, it would be the first in Europe." He ought to have added, and properly organized to fight in an inclosed country, unless they had to contend with troops as high dressed, stiff, and as unwieldy as themselves, and where quick operations would not be required. But the author gives you another reason : " There is nothing done to excite and uphold the bravery and good will of the soldier." On the contrary, they are treated with much severity when in health, and with little humanity when ill. How trifling must such men's concern be, whether an enterprize succeeds or fails ! He proceeds : " He is left to all the horrors of his profession ; the idea of killing or being killed is constantly present to his mind, naked and unqualified ; it is never disguised

guished by the enthusiasm of honour." What are such soldiers fit for? Why, Sir, to be fixtures only in garrisons, or like the 48 pounders on the ramparts, never to be removed from it. But in actions, Sir, where animation, *where the exercise of the faculties of the mind* are called for, he is useless.

From the accounts of the recent victory at Stockach, so gratifying to our present feelings, and so cheering to our hopes for the future, I wish to give an extract, from which may evidently be deduced an observation in favour of the system of organization I have proposed.

The part of Germany which was in this important juncture the theatre of the war, is, from the description I have of it, extremely open, hill succeding hill, with small villages in the vallies.

The extract from the official dispatches which I propose, is this:—"The principal force of the enemy was directed against our right wing. Major-General Count Meerfeld, whose advanced guard I had reinforced the day before, was, in consequence, obliged to retreat with a part of his troops to the wood between Liptingen and Stockach; the enemy pursued General Meerfeld into the wood with so much activity, that in a few hours *he was forced to its extremity*," though it extends a whole German mile (that is, six English). Now, Sir, I would ask any Officer, who has seen service, whether this retreat of

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General

General Meerfeld, through a wood of six miles in extent, which wood he retreated upon, does not somewhat show, that they are deficient in Irregulars, or they would have held the French in check there, and not even suffered them to have had hold of that wood? If they had had a sufficient number of Irregulars, would they not have disputed every inch of the wood? I shall only observe on this action, that no General ever shewed more abilities than the Archduke did on this occasion; for if he had not timely reinforced his right wing, it would probably have been turned. On the other hand, the French Generals did wrong to continue a pursuit, and exhaust their men through such a wood; they ought to have foreseen that the Austrians would have been ready to have received them on the other side, and prevent their forming. In all military operations, great or small, there is no occurrence that requires more judgment than to know when they ought to discontinue pursuits, of which many examples might be given.

Having, Sir, given you every example, through different instances, that occur to my mind, in which Light Troops have been employed with effect, particularly such as the French have in their service, and used every argument my poor capacity has suggested, to shew that nothing short of a reorganization of part of the British Army can, in an inclosed country, put them upon



an equality with the troops of the Republic; no matter, Sir, whether you are to fight them in Flanders, in Portugal, or in England. I shall now give you my propositions for so bold but so necessary a measure as that which I here advise.

1st. That one half of the regiments of Light Dragoons in the British service be immediately formed into legions, the Cavalry part of the legion to be Horse Chasseurs, that is, dismountable Dragoons; the eight troops of each regiment, which now consists of 80 men per troop, to be reduced to 72 per troop. The Cavalry of the legion will then be 580; these to be cloathed, trained, and armed as Horse Chasseurs, with a short musket, such as the French use, called *mousqueton*, of half inch bore, a perfect cylinder barrel, made expressly for carrying ball true.

2dly. That three companies be raised, or drafted from other regiments, each company to consist of 60 men; these, with the 60 that will remain of the Cavalry reduced in number, will make a small corps of 240 Chasseurs a foot, to act and co-operate with those mounted, as occasion may require.

3dly. That to this legion be attached two pieces of Light Artillery, not of less calibre than a four pounder, which is the size of the French battalion guns; for it is of the greatest importance in an action in an open country (in which such corps are as well calculated to act as in an

inclosed one) that you have with you, or at hand, artillery equal to that which you may suppose the enemy to have, and what may fairly be deemed open country, is where there is a space of one English mile between hedge-row and hedge-row, or inclosures of any kind, through which Cavalry cannot charge. When Light Troops meet in such a country, then it is that the guns which carry farthest, will give that party to which they belong the command of the intermediate ground between the two hostile corps, and that artillery which is superior will, if well managed, always force the other party to retire, and sometimes oblige them to abandon their guns. If you are superior, you have there an opportunity of not only forming your Cavalry on the open ground, but to bring your Infantry forward also, under the cover of your guns, and protection of your Cavalry. Enough has already been said on this subject; any Cavalry Officer, when he has seen a little service, will soon know what use to make of his artillery and Chasseurs.

4thly. That two Lieutenants of the legion be sent to Woolwich for a few weeks to learn Field Engineering; also two non-commissioned Officers of each troop and company, there to be taught the exercise of the guns, &c.

5thly. That all the Yeomanry Cavalry in England and Scotland be made dismountable, and be trained and clothed as Horse Chasseurs,

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or have either a rifle or musketoon given them; they then may be brought into action in a manner to do essential service, should this country ever be fought for; but as they now are, should such a day arrive, they will (I must repeat it) be found more an incumbrance than of use. Country gentlemen will excuse this remark on their present organization; they are not indeed now competent even to force a market-town in possession of a mob armed with scythes and pitchforks, with the avenues leading to it blocked up with carts and waggons. A proposal is here offered for their being armed and cloathed in such a manner, as to be able to render their king and country as much service as their zeal and ardour may inspire.

6thly. That one fifth of the Infantry of the line be immediately formed into regiments of Chasseurs, by drafting out of them every man not fit for that service, and completing them from the Light-Infantry of other regiments, and by giving leave for the Light-Infantry of the Militia to enlist into these regiments, without filling up their vacancies by a fresh draft on their respective parishes. By doing this, Government will be enabled to send out a fifth of every detachment of Chasseurs when it is probable they may come in contact with the enemy; and to the West-Indies a still larger proportion ought to be sent of troops of that description.

7thly.

7thly. That half the Supplementary Militia, which is a quarter of the whole, be armed, cloathed, and trained as Chasseurs. When all this is done, Sir, you need not fear an invasion, or meeting the enemy in any part of Europe.

These, Sir, are the outlines of my propositions, compressed into as small a compass as has been possible; and if the suggestions I now presume to offer, be adopted not only by us, but by other powers now at war with France, the troops of the Republic may be held in check, and I am sanguine enough to think, forced to retire back into their ancient limits. If, on the contrary, the Combined Powers adhere to the old system of fighting, and do not bring more light troops into the field, the enemy will penetrate into what country they can get a footing in, unless it be as open as that about Newmarket or Salisbury.

These are not, Sir, giddy, hasty, undigested reflections; they are not the productions of a young man, but of one who has been 40 years a soldier. It is said that a little learning is a dangerous thing, but sometimes a little knowledge in our profession is still more so. What I have written on this subject has been maturely considered; uniformly thinking the same, not a doubt every rising in my mind. I now, Sir, bring it *before the public eye*; and if it so happens that every military man in this kingdom condemns  
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the alteration proposed by me, in the reorganization of part of the British Army, yet surely will my opinion never change, no more than I could by persuasion or argument turn Jew or Mahometan, so deep a root has this opinion taken in my mind.

I know that it is to this new system of bringing more Irregulars into the field than their opponents, that the French owe chiefly their success; I know that we are as brave as they are, that we have as good materials to fight with. Admitting that (which all the world must admit) why not beat them as well by land as by sea? There you have adopted a new system of fighting, and it has succeeded. Let us learn to fight them by land in the manner they have found out and adopted; never let us be above or ashamed following the example even of an enemy, when we see it is a good one. I know the French well, I have seen them in action, and have commanded them. It is true they charge like tygers, when elated with a prospect of success; but they run like sheep when they are beaten, or likely to be beaten. Why, Sir, sacrifice thousands of brave men through pride? You may say it is not pride, but that at present you are not convinced the system proposed is a good one. Will you wait, Sir, for conviction, till the enemy have by that system forced the Emperor into a disgraceful peace? Will you stay till they have

republicanized all Westphalia, Hesse Cassel, and Hanover; overturned all the regular governments in Europe, before you are convinced\*?

I have now, Sir, only to lament, as well as yourself, and perhaps all England, that what I have here advised had not been advised by some Officer of better abilities than myself; you would then have felt the force of those arguments I have so feebly urged: he might have satisfied you of the expediency of the measure, without waiting for farther conviction, and shewn that what I have recommended ought, without loss of time, to be put into execution.

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An observation has escaped me, which presses so forcibly upon my present recollection, that I cannot omit adding it. When the short Treatise on the Use of Chasseurs was published last summer, I was told, that I had treated with pleasantry, our new parade system, and that it had given much offence, I hastened immediately to stop the circulation of it, for certainly it was not my intention to have thrown any ridicule on that which I hold of the highest consequence in an Army, viz. quick wheeling and rapid movement, and, above all, strict discipline; yet I maintain, that that system which is necessary with high-dressed Regiments, is not required with Irregulars.

*London, April the 10th, 1799.*

\* There is great reason to believe this would have happened, had not the two Imperial Crowns wisely renewed the war.

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## POSTSCRIPT.

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*June 4, 1799.*

IT was not my intention, Sir, to have added another line to my Remarks on the Organization of the British Army; but having seen the Volunteer Corps out to celebrate the return of this day, I could not resist so favourable an opportunity of observing, that these Troops, who are a part of that Army, are as efficient a part of it as any Troops in His Majesty's service, and are as capable of being useful to the state, should this country ever be invaded, as any Troops of the Line. Perhaps, Sir, some martinet Adjutant may look with surprise at this assertion, but I trust it will be proved to his satisfaction that I am right. Should such an event as an invasion ever happen, (of which it is true there is

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now not the least probability) could you, Sir, march the five or six thousand Guards from this great town, leaving it exposed to the dangers of commotion and plunder? Could you, Sir, leave London at such a time without Troops? No, Sir, nor for an hour. And what Troops could be better relied upon, than those who have so large a stake as the present armed citizens of this great town? Had such Corps existed in the American War, there would have been no occasion in the year 1780 to have called in the assistance of the Standing Army to have suppressed the riots. No, Sir, they would have been quelled with little bloodshed in the earliest stage of them. Thus, Sir, I show that my assertion is a just one, admitting that Volunteer Corps are competent for the above purpose, of which there cannot be a doubt. They will then, Sir, on that occasion, or any similar one, become good substitutes for the Foot Guards, who are certainly the best Troops in the British Empire; and by being so, will leave at liberty a large portion of our best Troops, to be employed where the exigency of the state may require their services.

There is one thing, however, I would suggest to those gentlemen, should this short treatise ever fall into their hands, that it is adviseable to practice the men, in firing with ball, not only singly



singly but in platoons, also firing at marks, for all the service that will, in my judgment, be required of them is street firing, and partial charges of the bayonet. I know full well, Sir, what a terrible weapon a Bayonet is in the hands of an Englishman, and furious are the attacks I have seen made with it. I have, contented only, that when a great battle is to be fought, the bayonet alone will not gain it.

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Having seen with much pleasure the rapid progress of the Imperial forces in Italy, and having observed also, with satisfaction, that the Russians have, in their army, corps of troops of the description which I have so often recommended as a necessary part of our establishment. I shall give an extract from General Suwarrow's Dispatches of the 6th of May, to show how far it corroborates the opinion I have given on that subject. " On the 26th of April, the Russian troops attacked the enemy before Lecco, and Prince Pangrazian, Commander of the *Chasseurs*, supported by two Grenadier Battalions, drove the enemy back to the bridge in spite of their advantageous position." The account does not state what number of *Chasseurs* the Prince commanded.

manded. I have endeavoured to inform myself how many regiments of them the Russians have in their army in Italy, but I have not been able to learn; that will show itself; if they are numerous they will drive the Republicans through the woods, forests, and inclosed ports of Piedmont; if they are not, they will there meet a check.

Should this short treatise meet with so favourable a reception as to demand a second edition, I shall have the honor of offering to you, Sir, some extracts from Letters, which I have received from officers of experience, which confirm me in the opinion, that Irregulars of the description I have given are wanted in the British Service; to which I shall add, such other confirmations of the same nature as I may hereafter be favoured with on the subject.