

in size, running to about 130 pages each, but they are excellent examples of the *multum in parvo*. The author of the first named work, Mr. A. Hilliard Atteridge, is a well-known Catholic journalist, who was war correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle* in the Soudan campaign of 1896, and who is the author of a number of volumes on war subjects, including *Towards Khartoum*, *Wars of the Nineties*, *The Men Bonapartes*, and *Famous Land Fights*. Mr. Atteridge has made a long and careful study of the organisation, operations, and ambitions of the German Army, and the result is an extremely interesting and accurate account of the greatest military machine the world has ever seen. The points dealt with include an Introduction and Note on German Numbers, the Making of the German Army, Development of the Army System, Army Organisation, Preparation for War, Action on Declaration of War, How the Germans Fight, Germany on the Defensive—a chapter which we hope will soon become matter of extremely practical interest,—the German Law of War, and German Ideas on the Invasion of England. Mr. Atteridge writes throughout in a spirit of the utmost fairness, and even friendliness, to Germany—a circumstance which greatly enhances, of course, the value of any criticisms which he may feel himself called upon to make.

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As illustrating the interest and worth of Mr. Atteridge's work, we may take his treatment of two topics that have bulked very largely in the cabled accounts of the war—namely, the German method of attack by close formation, and the dominant role assigned to artillery under the German system. Is the attack by close formation, as a general practice, sound, and has it been justified by results? Mr. Atteridge deals very fully with this question, and we have space only for one or two salient passages. 'To put the matter very simply,' he says, 'the accepted theory seems to be this. There is, say, a thousand yards of front available. If a firing line is formed such as we used in South Africa, there might be two hundred rifles in action on this frontage. It would be easy for each man to find cover and they would thus form a dispersed target for hostile fire. But on the same frontage one might put four times the number of men in line—not necessarily the evenly dressed line of the drill-ground, of course—and though more men would thus be exposed to fire, the volume of fire would be four times heavier. The German argued that the denser firing line would crush out the fire of its dispersed opponent and inflict loss not only on the men in action, but on the supports reinforcing them. We have seen the results of this theory of the fire fight in the battles of the present war, where the Germans have almost invariably pushed forward closely arrayed firing lines, which gave our men the impression that they were "coming on in crowds." Has the theory justified itself? On this point Mr. Atteridge's measured comments are worth careful pondering. "There is no doubt," he says, "that in the earlier battles not only were dense firing lines used, but when the attempt was made to push home the attack, the supports came on in successive waves, closed upon the firing line, and formed a crowd. When the war had lasted nearly three months, the losses incurred led to an attempt being made to introduce again the dispersed order of attack. In an army order issued to the Fourth German Army from the headquarters at Brussels by the Duke of Wurtemberg on October 21, it was pointed out that unnecessary loss had been incurred, not only by insufficient reconnaissance of the enemy's positions before the attack, and premature attempts to assault it, but also by "the use of too dense formations." But, as has already been noted, though the drill-book enjoined the dispersed order in attack, the working tradition of the army had for many years encouraged the other and more costly method.' And he sums up thus: "Through all German military literature there runs the idea that loss must be freely incurred for the sake of obtaining a rapid decision. In all the earlier wars of Germany in 1864, in 1866, and in 1870, the price was paid and the result obtained. The war

of 1866 was over in seven weeks. In 1870 within a month of the first battle, one French army was locked up in Metz and the other had been taken prisoner at Sedan. It is clear that in the present war an effort was made to obtain the same rapid results, and at first it looked as if the plan of sacrificing men freely and wearing down the enemy by reckless attacks, was being crowned with success. To overwhelm an enemy with an enormous development of artillery fire and hurl against him attack after attack of infantry, heedless of loss, is a policy that may be defended as more economical of life and effort in the long run, if a swift result can be obtained. But it has the drawback that if these costly attacks do not quickly break down the opponent's resistance and the war drags on, the strain on the nation is out of all proportion to the results obtained. And there is the further danger that, inasmuch as such methods at the outset of a war mean heavy losses amongst the best and most enterprising of the officers and the trained troops of the first line, the fighting power of the nation will greatly deteriorate in the second stage of the war.' There are already indications that, so far as Germany is concerned, that is precisely what has come to pass.

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On the artillery question, Mr. Atteridge has much to say, some of it especially interesting in view of the recent regrettable incident at Neuve Chapelle, in which it is rumored that through fog, or break-down of the telephone communication, or misadventure, the British artillery compassed the destruction of some of their own men. Mr. Atteridge's statement of the function clearly and definitely assigned to the artillery in the recognised military theory of modern times shows how easily and blamelessly such a mischance may occur. 'In the war of 1870 . . . the battle was supposed to begin with an artillery duel. But gradually this programme of the battle was modified. The infantry advance was to begin immediately. The batteries of the attack were to take for their targets from the very outset not only the enemy's guns but also his infantry positions, and the fire of the artillery was to be continued up to the last moment over the heads of the attacking infantry.' But Mr. Atteridge clearly inclines to the view that, on the German side at least, too much reliance has been placed upon artillery, and that the mistake is likely to cost Germany dearly before the war is over. 'It has already been remarked,' he says, 'that a leading feature of German battle tactics in the present war has been the reliance on artillery and machine-gun fire. It has even been said that in some of the battles it seemed as if the infantry were rather being used as an escort for these weapons than as itself the main arm of attack. This is probably an exaggeration. But five years ago one of the best known of German military writers, General Von Bernhardi expressed the opinion that, if anything, too much reliance was being placed upon mechanical elements in war. He is a writer who has ventured very freely to criticise the methods of his own army, and he went so far as to say that it might be a danger for Germany in a future war if the infantry who had so far been the main element in the winning of battles, came to depend upon elaborately improved cannon and machine guns to crush the enemy's resistance, instead of relying on their own rifles and bayonets as the weapons that would give victory. Rightly or wrongly, it has been said that in the present war the German infantry firing is not as efficient as it was expected to be, that brave as the men undoubtedly are, their attacks have only succeeded where the gunners had already all but completely shattered the resistance of their opponents, and that their advance has been brought to a standstill much more easily than was the case in 1870, not because the men themselves showed any lack of courage, but because their training had not prepared them to use their rifles to any real effect. If this be true, it would seem to confirm Bernhardi's criticism, and suggest that so much attention has been devoted to the development of the artillery as to lead to slackness or negligence in the infantry training of the German army.'