reinforcing his own threatened flank; that is to say, that he would have conformed to the movements of his adversary and per­mitted him to dictate the course of events. This was not the Japanese system. Oyama had no intention of fighting a purely defensive action. He knew that his opponent had massed his strength upon his left, and it was only reasonable to assume that if one portion of his line was strong, some other portion must be weak. The actual point first selected by Oyama for decisive attack was the centre of Kuropatkin’s line. This effort failed, and the scales were ultimately turned by an almost unexpected success against the Russian right. The resulting victory was certainly less complete than would have been the case had the Japanese commander been able to carry through his original plan, but it is obvious that a force operating against the centre of a hostile line must itself be in danger of envelopment; and in this case it is interesting to note that the battle was really decided by an outflanking movement by a weak force, while the central attack in considerable strength achieved but little. Oyama’s conduct of this battle has been much criticized. By some writers he has been blamed for leaving his own defensive line too weak; by others he has been accused of attempting too much. These are difficult questions, requiring detailed examination; for the present it is sufficient to note that, although inferior in numbers, he succeeded in accomplishing an enveloping movement which forced his enemy to retire. The fact is that by superior skill, although actually inferior in numbers, he succeeded in placing more rifles in the firing line than did his opponent. During a great part of this struggle, which lasted for five days, it would be difficult to say which side was on the defensive and which on the offensive. No doubt at the commencement Kuropatkin was the assailant; it is equally certain that in the end it was Oyama who attacked; yet it would be impossible to say, as at Austerlitz and Salamanca, exactly at what moment the rôles were exchanged.

If then we are justified in assuming that in the great battles of the future neither army will be acting entirely on the offensive or entirely on the defensive, it may seem idle to speculate as to whether the recent improvements in firearms and ballistics are in favour of one side or the other. In this connexion the lessons which may be learned from the South African and the Russo- Japanese wars are most instructive. After the former it was often urged that the conditions of modern battle are distinctly in favour of defensive tactics; in other words, that the force which awaits attack can develop the full power of each arm with greater facility than that which delivers it. This contention had much to support it, but it was not always realized that any­thing which gives new strength to the defence must at the same time add something to the advantages of the army which attacks. The outcome of the improvements in rifles, guns and powder is that far fewer men are required to hold a definite position than of old. To a certain extent this favours the defence. A much larger proportion of the available troops can be set free to act in reserve, and to deliver the counter-stroke, *i.e.* a much larger number than formerly can be employed by the defenders in attack. This is to the good. But the assailant profits in almost equal ratio. His strength has always lain in power of manoeuvring, of hiding his movements, and of massing suddenly against some weak point. To-day this power is greater than ever before. The increased power of the rifle renders it com­paratively easy for him to form an impenetrable barrier with part of his force, perhaps with his cavalry supported only by a small proportion of his infantry, behind which the remainder can move unobserved. Moreover, the object of the assailant’s manoeuvres will be to place portions of his forces on the flank or flanks of the position he is attacking. If he can accomplish this, the effect, moral and physical, of the enfilade fire which is brought to bear upon the enemy’s front will be far greater than that which attended a similar operation when fire was of less account. In addition to this increased facility for manoeuvre, the great strength of the local defensive confers upon the assail­ant the power of denuding certain portions of his line of troops, in order that he may mass them for offensive action elsewhere. Here again the study of ground and a true knowledge of the capabilities of the various arms are of supreme importance. Well- placed artillery, aided by machine guns, may enable a compara­tively weak force of infantry to hold a wide extent of front, provided that each arm is able to use its strength to the fullest extent. In this way the skilful commander can turn each feature of the battlefield to account and can release a greater number of his troops for the all-important enveloping move­ments. It was just this power which enabled Oyama to outflank the Russian XVII. Corps at the battle of Sha-ho, for he was able to weaken his own right to an extent which a very few years ago would have been impossible. In short, the process of envelopment is more easy than it used to be; and envelopment, which means that the enemy is under fire from several directions, is much more effective now than in the past.

In Germany this fact has long been recognized, and it was for this reason that German soldiers refused to accept the con­clusions at which many English military critics arrived after the South African war. Under the influence of their German teachers the Japanese never hesitated to attack, even with inferior numbers, and to make the envelopment of the enemy more certain they went into battle practically without reserves.

In this respect the war in Manchuria marks an epoch in the history of tactics; and for that reason, if for no other, it should be carefully studied. Moreover, it emphasizes an important difference in the handling of large and small armies which is of quite recent origin. Until a few years ago all continental armies were organized in army corps. These corps were com­posed of two or three infantry divisions with a large body of corps troops, principally artillery. Now the *raison d’être of* this artillery was to form the nucleus of a reserve which could be retained under the hand of the corps commander to be used as required. That is to drive home the infantry attack, to deliver or repel a counter-attack, or, but very sparingly, to strengthen a weak point in the defensive line. With the development of the enveloping battle, it was soon realized in Germany that corps artillery was an anachronism, for the distances are now so great that reserve artillery can hardly be moved to the particular part of the battlefield where its services are required in time to be of any use. Thus the corps artillery was first split up among the divisions, and soon a number of divisional reserves took the place of the great central body, while the corps commander retained a comparatively small number of troops under his own hand. In this way the control of the supreme commander over the course of the battle is greatly weakened and the chance of correcting any error in the original plan is diminished. It had long been realized that errors in the strategic deployment of troops were almost impossible to correct; and now it came to be seen that this was equally true of the tactical deployment. Just as under modern conditions even Napoleon could hardly have recovered from errors like those which marked the opening phases of the Eckmühl campaign (see Napoleonic Campaigns), so the most brilliant genius will no longer be sufficient to win battles if the original plan is not correct. It was upon this theory that the Japanese commanders planned their battles, and it was very soon proved that they had the courage of their convictions. For the first time it was seen that battles were no longer won by the general who husbanded his reserves, but by him who first got every available man into the firing line. But, while giving Oyama, Kuroki, Oku and the others every credit for the strength of mind which enabled them to divest them­selves of reserves when their battles were far from being won, we must also remember that they were fighting an enemy who, like the Boers, were incapable of organizing a really decisive counter-stroke. For English soldiers this point has a peculiar interest, as it has a very distinct bearing upon the tactics of our own army. From what has already been said it is, or should be, clear that the value of numbers upon the battlefield is greater now than formerly; for, granting that the leadership on either side is equally skilful, the chances of envelopment are in favour of him who commands the greater number of men. Owing