

Indoor Rifle Practice.

On account of the difficulty of finding rifle ranges convenient to the great centres of population in England, and the fact that a large proportion of the volunteers cannot absent themselves from business to perform target practice, the authorities have sanctioned practice in underground ranges, provided an experimental one now being constructed proves a success. Outside practice will still be compulsory for all passing out of the third class on an underground range.

Firing on this new plan the ordinary service charge is to be used, so that the men will become accustomed to the "kick" of their rifles. In all the American underground ranges, reduced charges are used, so that the full advantage to be obtained in practising men to stand up to the recoil caused by the full service charge is not reached, and therein they cannot be compared to the scheme now sanctioned. The range being built under the actual head-quarters, the men can be trained in musketry by companies, or squads of companies, under their own officers, and this benefit cannot fail to be appreciated by the company officers who take a due interest in the shooting of their men, and will of itself tend to increase the interest in shooting throughout the whole force. Until the new smokeless powder and the new magazine rifles are introduced, special arrangements are necessary to rapidly clear away the smoke engendered by the discharge of the full service charge, and this will be effected by adopting a "wing" fan, driven by a small gas engine, which will exhaust, by means of an uptake, all the smoke, and at the same time act as a ventilator to the range and an absorber of the noise caused by the discharge of the rifles. The walls and roof of the range will be of solid concrete; and as no openings whatever, will be requisite, it follows that the range is absolutely safe. The width of the tunnel will be from 10 to 11 feet, sufficient to allow three men to fire side by side simultaneously, and the height will be 8 feet in the clear. Paper targets will be adopted, each man having a carton of his own to fire at, and after each competitor has fired, his carton will be detached and the actual bullet holes found in it will be credited to him according to the value of their position on the target; thus no falsification of returns can be possible, and no splash back of the bullet apprehended, the bullet, after passing through the paper target, being caught by a deflecting plate and sent downwards into a heap of sand, whence the lead can be subsequently extracted.

After some rounds of preliminary practice—which will be insisted on in all cases of recruits and previous third class shots—when a man has been found to become accustomed to his rifle and to occupy the true military position, he will fire his twenty rounds in the third class, and, so far as his musketry course is concerned, he will have finished with the underground range; but in order that he may put in practice what he has been taught, he will have to proceed once to an open-air range and fire twenty rounds in the second class, by which means he will have at least had forty rounds of practice instead of twenty, as at present in the vast majority of cases, and yet his business hours will not be trenching upon any the more than at present, but he will have the great advantage of having been thoroughly taught out of business hours, when he has ample time at his disposal; and the probable result will be that, finding, with the previous practice had, he is now something of a shot, he will not only get through his second class, but will strain every nerve to find time to go on still further and fire in the first class, and ultimately reach the summit of ambition of every good shot—the marksman's badge.

Much of the influence of artillery is due to the moral effect produced by the rush of the projectiles overhead. It is inexpedient, therefore, except in desperate circumstances, to place guns in rear of other troops. Cavalry certainly, infantry probably, would be rendered unsteady by the cannonade.—*Hamley.*

The Rifle.

The Twenty-first Battalion.

The first annual rifle match held by the 21st Essex Fusiliers in Essex Centre on Monday and Tuesday, October 14th and 15th, is described as by far the best match ever held in Essex County. Col. H. Smith, Deputy Adjutant General of District No. 1, alighted from the west bound express on Tuesday for the purpose of inspecting the battalion range while the match was in progress. He expressed himself as highly pleased with the range, and said it was one of the best in Ontario. He commended Mr. A. J. Green, President of the Rifle Association, as well as the officers of the battalion for the interest taken by them in this match. Lieut. Col. Wilkinson and Capt. Fox, the Adjutant, were on the range from early morning on the first day until the match was finished. This fact received particular mention from the D. A. G. on his visit to the range. The officers, non-commissioned officers and men from the various companies present were as follows: No. 1 Company, Windsor, Capt. Cheyne, Lieut. Laing, with 12 non-commissioned officers and men. No. 2 Company, Leamington, Capt. Ley, Lieut. Alderton, with 6 non-commissioned officers and men. No. 3 Company, Essex Centre, Capt. Jones, Lieut. Russell, with 15 non-commissioned officers and men. No. 5 Company, Windsor, Capt. Dewson, Lieuts. Bartlet and Ponting, with 12 non-commissioned officers and men.

The presentation of the prizes took place at the Royal Hotel in the evening of the second day. Dr. J. Brien, M.P., was present. Col. Wilkinson, on behalf of the 21st Essex Fusiliers, thanked Dr. Brien for his liberality and kindness in presenting the battalion with such a costly cup as a prize. He said Dr. Brien had always been foremost in promoting the interest of the battalion, for which he tendered the hearty thanks of officers and men. Dr. Brien replied briefly. The Leamington and Windsor teams having to leave on the evening train prevented any lengthy addresses. Mr. A. J. Green, President of the Essex Centre Rifle Association, received the thanks of the battalion for the medal given by him, and for the trouble taken by him in having all arrangements made for making the match a success. Mr. Green took a great deal of trouble, and lost considerable time in obtaining prizes to offer at the match.

The staff officers presented the battalion with a very fine cup. A number of these officers could not be present, but the cup they presented showed the interest they took in the welfare of the battalion. In the competition for the Staff Officers' Cup, the team winning the Brien Challenge Cup was barred out. This necessitated the making up of another team by No. 3 company in order to compete for the cup. This was done, and the second team proved as efficient as the first. The chief prize winners were:—

Brien Challenge Cup Match.—Teams of six; 200, 400 and 500 yards, seven shots.—Cup, No. 3 Co., 384; \$12, No. 2, 341; \$9, No. 1, 252; \$6, No. 5, 202.

Staff Officers' Cup Match.—Teams of six; 200, 400 and 500 yards, seven shots.—Cup, No. 3 Co., 390; \$9, No. 2, 355; \$6, No. 1, 271.

The individual matches were an "all comers," with some forty cash prizes; and two extra series competitions, for which prizes in kind were offered.

Ottawa Rifle Club.

This club had a match on Saturday afternoon last, for two special spoons presented by the president, Major H. F. Perley. The firing was at 200 (prone), 500 and 600 yards, seven shots with Sniders, and the chief scores were:—

J. H. Ellis, (sp, 1st cls).	29	32	24	85	J. E. Hutcheson.....	30	27	25	82
Dr. G. Hutchison.....	32	26	26	84	Major H. F. Perley....	31	27	23	81
Major J. Wright.....	31	27	25	83	R. Moodie, (sp 2nd cls).	30	26	24	80

The Russian army has a grade of officer peculiar to itself—namely a sage-femme for each fortress, as appears from an advertisement in a Russian paper seeking competitors for the situation. The emoluments amounted to \$150 a year, and a sous-officers apartment.

The five years' service system in France is now formally at an end, for the Chamber, by a party vote of 386 to 170, has adopted the three years' system, which will practically be little more than two. Instead of half the year's conscripts escaping with twelve months' service, by virtue of lucky numbers, all will nominally be enrolled for three years, but an opening is left for lucky numbers, if, as is most probable, the Budget cannot meet the expense of the full period of service for the entire contingent. Although, moreover, upper class and middle class youths will no longer be entitled after a literary examination and the payment of 1,000 fr. to volunteer, as it has been called, for 12 months, there are provisions enabling those destined for professions to obtain release after one year on proving their military efficiency. The same favour is extended to Seminarists, but if in time of war priests should be called out as Reservists, they are to act as infirmary attendants.