

MUSKETRY.

CANADIAN MILITARY RIFLE LEAGUE.

CAPT. ANDREWS has just issued the following circular: "Since the issue of the former circular, published in THE MILITARY GAZETTE, enquiries have come in from the mounted force, drawing attention to the fact that this branch of the Service is armed with the following different carbines, i.e., Lee-Metford, Winchester and Snider.

"It is therefore considered desirable to divide the third series as follows:

"First section, Lee-Metford and Winchester carbines.

"Second section, Snider carbines, and to offer prizes for each section.

"This circular is, therefore, sent to officers commanding regiments of cavalry, as also troop commanders, with the view of obtaining a large number of team entries from the mounted force and to ask the co-operation of these officers in obtaining this end.

"It is a recognized fact that the different troops of cavalry are not so located at their regimental headquarters as to enable a regimental team, of ten men, to shoot at any one point; permission will, therefore, be given teams competing in the 3rd (or cavalry series) to shoot fraction of teams at their troop headquarters, sending their scores (duly certified by the captain of their troop) to the officer commanding the regiment to which they belong, and he will enter the entire team, with their scores, on the official score sheet and mail same to the secretary of the League. And in order that he may wire him the total team scores on dates as directed in circular of 2nd inst., the 3rd (or cavalry series) matches will be shot on the 9th and 23rd May, and 6th and 20th June.

"Letters have been received from troop commanders (who shot in League matches of 1895) to the effect that these matches had considerably raised the percentage of the annual class firing of their different troops last year. This circular is, therefore, earnestly commended to the favorable consideration of that arm of the Service to which it is directed, and it is hoped that at least one team entry from your regiment (or troop) will be received for the season of 1896."

A WORD TO THE GREEN SHOTS.

EDITOR MILITARY GAZETTE:

DEAR SIR,—I have been a regular attendant at the Cote St. Luc Ranges ever since their inauguration, and in fact for some years previously at Pointe St. Charles Ranges. I can recall year after year at the commencement of each season a wail from the young and green shots, complaining that they did not get enough encouragement from the old shots. Now,

Mr. Editor, will you allow me to give a few words of advice and experience to the coming "kickers"? In the first place, old shots do not go out to the ranges on fine Saturday afternoons to act as musketry instructors, but they go out for their own recreation, and it is certainly unfair to expect an old shot, who is participating in one of the numerous open matches at his own expense, to run around the range looking after a beginner. To overcome this difficulty there should be a paid musketry instructor on the ranges on every practice day.

A common excuse given by our young shots for not attending practice steadily is that an open match of some kind is generally going on, and all those who do not choose to enter such match are squadded away from those who could coach them. The best way out of this difficulty is for all these young shots to pluck up courage and enter the match, when they will be squadded with some of their companions, and learn more in one day than in half a dozen days otherwise. Of course, there is expense connected with this, but, as I said before, shooting is a recreation, and, as a rule, recreation costs something, and shooting can only be learned by experience, constant practice and steady perseverance.

I think the "expense" excuse is a very poor one, as we all know that there is no money to be made in shooting year in and year out. I have kept a detailed account of my shooting expenses year after year, and find that this amusement costs me from \$30 to \$50 per annum. Of course, this amount varies according to my luck in matches, but this is certainly not a very large amount to spend on a summer's pleasure.

I think if those young shots who are always looking for encouragement would buckle down to the real pleasure of rifle shooting, and make up their minds that it is going to cost them a little for their early experience, instead of depending on old shots, they would be surprised at the advancement they would make. When I commenced to shoot I soon noticed the great variety of opinions expressed as to wind and elevation, etc., and soon gave up asking questions, and learned to do my own guessing.

I hope this letter will catch the eye of a number of the coming green shots and set them thinking.

Thanking you for your valuable space, Mr. Editor, I am, yours respectfully,

RIFLEMAN.

Montreal, April 3, 1896.

BETTER TRAINING IN MUSKETRY

"Fire is everything, the rest is of small account." If this dictum of Napoleon's was the sum of his vast experience, what are we to say of the far-reaching firearms of today? In the war between France and Germany in 1870-71 and Russia and Turkey in 1877-78, the infantry of the losing side was armed with the better rifle, showing that vic-

tory was due rather to the superior tactical use of the weapon and not to the weapon itself. A high authority, writing of the Franco-German war, says: "The German soldier, carefully instructed in musketry, had such an unshaken confidence in his weapon that he made use of it with coolness and method, and, therefore, with a sureness that the French were far from equalling. The German infantry had the superiority which it owed to the long and minute instruction that had been given it in peace time." The importance of this statement cannot be over-estimated.

Even if we arm the militia with the Lee-Enfield, admitted to be the best rifle known, the fact will ever remain that the superiority of the Lee-Enfield can only be manifested through the skill of those using it, and the requisite skill can only be attained through a careful course of musketry training. Therefore the requirements of the battlefield must ever be kept in view, and in order that our men may have confidence in their weapons they must be taught in peace time what they would have to do in war.

Much has been done by the various rifle associations to stimulate a love for rifle shooting. Target practice in the ordinary sense is all very well for teaching a recruit the use and power of his rifle, but it is no training for the field, and the sooner this is recognized by the responsible authorities the better it will be for the efficiency of the force. What our rifle associations have to aim at is to lessen the number of "pot-hunter" competitions, to encourage practical rifle shooting, and to develop in every way possible shooting under service conditions.

General Gascoigne is evidently alive to the importance of this question; it is therefore the bounden duty of every well-wisher of the force to help in every possible way the General's laudable efforts to establish and develop a sound practical system of musketry training best adapted to our means and requirements.

NOTES.

At the annual meeting of the New South Wales Rifle Association regret was expressed at the death of the Hon. Sir W. M. Manning, K.C.M.G., who had held the position of president for the long period of 35 years.

From the report of the New South Wales Rifle Association it appears that the disappearing target has been a failure. The chairman, at the meeting at which the report was presented, said he hoped that, although it was a failure at first, the association would not be discouraged, but still further persevere and make it a success. Soldiers as a rule, he said, were conservative, and they should try and combat this conservatism and adopt as their motto for rifle shooting, "Advance, Australia."