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CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The National Artillery meeting.
Changes in the Bisley team.
Skirmishing practice in order.
N.R.A. official notices.
The League matches.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR FIELD ARTILLERY PRACTICE.
Extracts from Royal Artillery Regimental Order.
CORRESPONDENCE.
Quebec's Military Schools.—*Pavillon Blanc*.

REGIMENTAL AND OTHER NEWS.

A budget from the military centres.

THE RIFLE.

The week's practice scores.
First match of the Military League.

MILITIA GENERAL ORDERS.

No. 5, of 9th May, 1890.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Topics of the Week.

The annual prize meeting of the National Artillery Association, at Shoeburyness, has been fixed to be held from the 9th to the 22nd of August.

Further changes are announced in the Canadian team for Bisley. Sergt. Loggie of the Newcastle Field Battery; Lieut. Hooper, of the 82nd Battalion, and Sergt. Goodwin of the 13th, who accepted their places some time ago, have intimated this week that they will be unable to go, and the next in order have been called upon. Capt. O'Grady, of the 43rd Bn., Ottawa, declined; Staff-Sergt. Ogg, 1st B.F.A., accepted; and Lieut. Manning, 62nd Bn, and Capt. Busteed, 3rd Victoria Rifles, have not yet been heard from. Should they accept, Sergt. Riddle of the 6th Fusiliers, Montreal, will be waiting man.

Those members of our team in a position to do so, would do well to obtain some skirmishing practice ere sailing, in view of the new team match in which the Dominion marksman will have an opportunity to show themselves as formidable firing under service conditions as they have demonstrated themselves to be in the less practical Kolapore cup competitions. A letter appearing in a recent issue of the *Volunteer Service Gazette* shows that the English riflemen are awake to the importance of making an early choice of their team. The letter is from Mr. G. F. Gratwicke, and says:—

"Probably most of your readers are aware that the *Standard* prize is this year to be competed for at Bisley by teams of twelve, representing the several nationalities of the United Kingdom and the Colonies. I am desired by Colonel Burt, the captain of the English team in the National Trophy, to ask you to kindly permit him to invite any Volunteer who desires to become a candidate for a place in the English twelve who will shoot for the *Standard* prize, to forward me his name and address not later than Saturday, May 17th, so that arrangements may be made for practices under conditions similar to those which will regulate the competition. In addition to the twelve members of the team, four will be nominated as the reserve."

In the official notices of the N.R.A. lately issued, it is prescribed that "the greatest length of a Government sling is 54¼ inches, not including the tongue or the buckle"; also, with respect to the "back position," that "no handkerchief, strap, or other appliance external to the uniform, will be allowed in competitions in which uniform is required to be worn."

As we anticipated there was no little confusion amongst the League competitors about the divisions of the 200 yards target. The regulations said: "Where not specially covered by League rules, the Dominion Rifle Association rules to be in force." As the D.R.A. have adopted the 16 inch inner and 24 inch magpie, the League teams should have done so also, and to this fact we called attention last week. On the day of the shooting, however, intimation was sent by the secretary to a number, if not all, of the teams that the D.R.A. rules to be followed were those of 1889, which called for the 24 inch inner and 36 inch magpie. Those rules do not admit of the back position at 600 yards, so that if there are any competitors who wish to practise that way for the D.R.A. meeting they will have to choose some other than the League days. It is perhaps unfortunate that the rules to govern at the Dominion and Provincial competitions this fall are not to be observed at the League matches, which will take up a large share of the time available for practice.

Instructions for Field Artillery Practice.

There has recently been issued as an appendix to the Royal Artillery Regimental Orders a set of instructions for Horse and Field Artillery practice extracts from which may be read with profit by Canadian artillerymen. It is prescribed that where these instructions differ from those contained in the "Field Artillery Drill" they will for the time being be accepted as a guide. Here are some excerpts:—

There are four descriptions of practice: Elementary; Competitive; Battery Service; Brigade Division Service.

1. The results obtained at practice depend upon (i) the accuracy and often (ii) upon the rapidity of the fire.

The attainment of both these points depends on the thoroughness of the preparatory instruction of a battery.

2. Accuracy of fire is dependent on.—(i) Good laying. (ii) Correct observation of fire. Of these, the latter can unfortunately only be practised while firing is going on, but the former must be insisted on before the battery joins the Practice Camp.

3. In order that the Officer Commanding a battery may be able to range it at once accurately and quickly, he must, having pointed out to the section commanders and layers the exact part of the target to be ranged on, be able to rely on correct and uniform aim being taken, whether ordinary or telescopic sights are being used, direct or indirect methods of laying.

It is not nearly so infrequent as might be supposed that the wrong elevation is put up on the sights. This is of course a fatal error. Layers must put up exactly the elevation ordered, nor must they make any alteration of it without orders. Deflection, however, section commanders are at liberty to alter if able to observe that it is necessary to do so, and they and Nos. 1 are always responsible that the corrections are made which difference of level of wheels may require.

4. It should be remembered that the same accuracy of direction is not so essential to effect when firing at broad formations of troops, long lines of shelter trench, &c. . . . (except for the ranging shots), as when the target is a narrow one, e.g., the head of a column of fours, gun-pit, guns in action, &c., and much valuable time is often lost in trying to get it. Elevation is, however, always all important.*

The rules for laying and training of layers are given in chap. iv, section 7, F.A. Drill, Vol. II.

* If the guns of a battery are properly laid, the mean error in range of all shell fired with the same elevation should not exceed the mean error of the gun; nor, if fired with different elevations, should the corresponding points of impact differ + or - more than that error. With the 12-pr. B.L. at medium ranges, 50 per cent. of rounds should fall within a length of about 21 yards. With the 13-pr. and 9-pr. R.M.L., within a length of about 25 yards. There may now and then be an altogether abnormal round, but since layers are selected, there should be no difficulty in recognizing it as such.