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Note and Comment.

We are authorized to state that in the selection of a commandant for next year's Bisley team, preference will be given to a Nova Scotian, in recognition of the claim of the riflemen of that province upon the honour. A couple of weeks ago we expressed a hope that were a candidate put forward from the Maritime Provinces, those already mentioned from Ontario and Quebec would gracefully retire in his favour, and we are glad to hear that those in authority in the Association have, by making this early announcement, taken the best step to prevent the appointment of any other than a Nova Scotian being urged.

While in sympathy with the feeling expressed by our correspondent who writes on the subject of the new regulations to govern the wearing of miniature medals, we think it is very desirable that the Imperial and Canadian rules should be the same. This is the view, we believe, taken at headquarters, and such being the case an early promulgation of the Imperial edict as part of our Regulations and Orders may be looked for. The general question, however, of whether in such cases it would be better to adhere to or establish a custom of our own rather than deprive our officers of the opportunities now enjoyed of displaying the rewards won by their self-sacrificing service in the field, is one quite proper for discussion, there being much in favour of our correspondent's contentions.

This opens up another field for legitimate discussion. If officers are to be allowed to wear miniature medals in plain clothes, why should not non-commissioned officers and men have the same privilege, especially in a volunteer force so constituted, as ours is, that there is practically no difference in the social standing of the various ranks? There seems to be an injustice in this, and now that the officers are likely to be deprived of many opportunities of showing their rewards, perhaps they will realize more fully the gratification it would afford to the privates to be allowed to wear the miniatures.

At the Antipodes, as here, some of the more enthusiastic riflemen appear to show a disposition to shirk other military work, and in protesting against such a state of affairs the New Zealand *Volunteer Gazette* says: "Rifle clubs, mere rifle clubs, will be found useless as factors in the defence of their country. Riflemen might be able to hit the moon at every shot, but without drill of what possible

service could they be as soldiers? Shooting is doubtless a very important part of a soldier's work, but after all is only one half of it. Without the other half, drill-cum-discipline, a regiment of a thousand Queen's Prizemen would, in the face of a disciplined foe, only go forth to their own destruction."

It is not altogether to be wondered at that devotees of rifle-shooting are often so little interested in drill, because so little trouble is taken to make the latter attractive, or to present some plausible reason—other than the desirability for efficiency on general principles—for thorough study and practice. At the risk of wearying by the reiteration, we would again prescribe, as a remedy for this admitted evil, a general efficiency competition devised so as to interest the corps from end to end of the Dominion in each other's work and progress. We have heard nothing but praise of the theory of an efficiency competition such as suggested, but the difficulty is invariably set up that it would be found impossible to satisfactorily carry out the suggestion. With this we do not agree. Will not some one move in the direction of a trial?

Our Canadian advocates of the desirability of a carrier pigeon service will be interested in hearing that a correspondent urges, in the last issue of the *Volunteer Record* to hand, that a pigeon messenger service section should be organized for the Volunteer force in England. He points out that in the recent advices of the movements of the French army, the carrier pigeon is spoken of in terms of the highest praise, and its success as a wheel in the organization of an army corps has been proved on many occasions at the different manœuvres.

While Canadians are happy in the knowledge that their marine interests are vigilantly protected by the Empire's fleet, without cost to us, save the allegiance which we are proud to profess, the Australian colonists, to whom naval protection is of even greater importance, are to be asked to pay in coin as well as fealty. The *United Service Gazette*, noting the despatch of a Commissioner from England to make inquiries in view of a probable discussion in Parliament, says: "It seems that the opinion of the colonists is that local defence pure and simple will be quite sufficient to meet the exigencies of the case, but the authorities at home consider that while a local squadron is necessary, provision should be made for the partial maintenance of the Imperial naval force stationed in Australian waters. We are informed that it is an instruction to Captain Moore to impress upon the colonists the necessity of recognising this fact, and of paying towards the support of the Imperial squadron, to which hitherto they have not contributed."

Soldiering as a profession, in the case of the rank and file at least, seems to be losing favour in England, for a serious dearth of recruits is reported, whilst there is said to be a marked deterioration physically in the men now joining, compared with those who formerly enlisted. Only one-half of the 50,000 candidates for enlistment in 1888—the last year yet reported upon—were found fit for service. It is suggested