

matches, was received with great interest here, and the general approval of the principle involved will not be lessened when the conditions attached to the privilege are known. These as officially promulgated are as follows:

"All Volunteers who have served for twenty years as efficient Volunteers, and all who have attained the age of 50 and have served for ten years as efficient Volunteers, shall be entitled to enter and shoot in the first stage of the Queen's Prize and for all prizes included in the Volunteer Aggregate, but shall not be entitled to take any prize in the Queen's Competition or the first in either the St. George's or Martins. Such retired Volunteers must be members of, or subscribers to, some existing corps, and must make their entries through the Commanding officer of the corps, who shall vouch that they are honorary members or subscribers."

The required affiliation with some corps is an idea which will especially commend itself. It is not too much to ask ex-volunteers who desire to continue to exercise their old privilege as riflemen, to make some such slight return, when relieved from drill and other responsibilities of active connection.

THE NEW INFANTRY DRILL BOOK.*

(Volunteer Service Gazette.)

This new manual of Infantry drill and training marks, it must be confessed, a great advance in the views of our military authorities. For the first time the fact is honestly recognized by them that modern weapons have necessitated the abandonment of the old principles of drill. We are well aware that in several successive editions of our drill book, the impossibility of marching up to the attack of a position in rigid lines supported by dense columns, has been acknowledged more or less fully. But the notion has never, until now, been thoroughly got rid of that there might still be some use for the beautiful and complicated manoeuvres in close formation. The consequence is that our Field Exercises have hitherto been the most cumbrous and the most impractical in Europe. Germans, Austrians and French have long found out that there can be no "manoeuvring" at all by troops in contact with the enemy, and that the simplest formations were all that could possibly be required for rendezvous and route marches.

Certainly the lesson has been at last well learned. In the work now before us, not only are all the so-called "close formations" greatly simplified and reduced in number, but a beginning is made in the introduction of the "group" system. The practice of framing every evolution by a compli-

cated array of points and markers is virtually abolished, and what is, perhaps, best of all, the mischievous distinction (established only in the drill book of 1889) between drill and manoeuvre has been given up, with the result, among others, that our Infantry will no longer move by "touch." Moreover, there is very little left of those old *bêtes noires* of Brigadier-General Macdonald—the fixed front and pivot flank; and, save for the survival of a few ceremonial observances, the English drill now presented to us is nearly as simple as that of the Germans and simpler than that of the French.

The following is the text of the Army Order by which the new book (which, by the way, is stated on the cover to be only a "Provisional" edition) is prefaced:—

Horse Guards, War Office,
1st March, 1892.

His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief has received the Queen's commands to promulgate these Regulations.

The main object they aim at is to obtain, at the critical moment, the greatest development of Infantry fire under the most careful supervision and control.

To attain this end a thorough training is essential—great precision being inculcated in the early stages of the soldier's instruction, and later, as much latitude being conceded to subordinate commanders as possible.

The success of the fire action of troops depends upon their discipline and their confidence in their leaders, and this can alone be gained by a careful and gradual system of instruction.

In issuing these regulations his Royal Highness confidently leaves to General Officers the important duty of the efficient preparation of Infantry for the practical requirements of the battle-field.—By command of his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief,

(Signed) REDVERS BULLER, A.G.

We proceed to examine the contents of the new book, comparing it as far as may be with that of 1889. But the two systems are so very different that it is not practicable to offer our readers anything like so close a collation as we have done on former occasions.

Like its predecessors, the book opens with a set of "definitions," but these have been remodelled and simplified, and, in some respects, as it appears to us, improved. The term "point of appui" is replaced by "point of formation." Columns of companies, of half companies, or of sections, are now called Company Columns, Half-Company Columns, and Section Columns respectively. To "deploy" is defined to be "opening out from column into a shallower formation"—a useful extension of the meaning of the term. On the other hand, the old explanation of "drill"—"the instruction and practice of military exercises," appears to us better than the new one, "the teaching and practice of parade

exercises." The terms: "Grand Division," "Oblique Echelon," "Short Echelon," "Evolution," "Reverse flank," and "wings" disappear altogether.

Part I. of the new book is, like that of the old, devoted to "Recruit or Squad Drill," and this is not much altered, so far as details are concerned. In the "General Rules" we are told that, "in nearly all cases, the recruit should receive his rifle after a week's drill," and that "all recruits of ordinary capacity should be thoroughly acquainted with Part I., and the rifle and firing exercises, after three months' instruction." The "position of the soldier" is the same as it was, except that the hands are to be "partially closed," instead of "open." When we come to the "turnings," we find that all turning about is to be to the right about, the command being only, "About—turn;" and that the directions for turning quarter right or three-quarters right or left are expunged. Perhaps by an oversight there is no distinct direction as to what the recruit is to do on receiving the word "front." In the book of 1889, after the "turnings" comes the section on "physical training," but in that of 1892, we go on at once to "saluting." The salute is the same as it was, but the directions as to what a soldier is to do who is standing and is approached by an officer, are left out, and it would appear that a soldier, if sitting when an officer approaches him, has only to rise and stand at attention without saluting. The rules for soldiers carrying parcels, &c., on meeting officers, are incorporated in the new book from the Queen's Regulations.

Under the head of "Marching," we find the slow time altogether abolished. The cadences and length of step in quick and double time remain as they were, but the side step for closing is increased from 12 to 15 inches, and for closing and covering (for a reason that will be presently seen) from 24 to 27 inches. In marching the recruits' hands "will swing naturally, the hand not to be thrown in advance of the leading foot, nor higher than the waist-belt." Hitherto the hands have had to be "kept steady at the sides." However, we are subsequently told that when the men are at the "shoulder" or "advance" (the "short shoulder"), the disengaged arm is to be kept steady. The balance (or "goose") step is retained in the book before us, but never without either advancing or retiring. The section on the slow march is omitted, as is, we are glad to say, that on the absurd "high step" introduced in the edition of 1889. We have already said that the side step for "closing" is increased to 15 inches. It will not be generally employed for more than six paces, and the directions in the old book as to closing a given number of paces and halting without word of command are omitted. "Turning on the march" is the same as it was, except, of course, that nothing is said about quarter

*Infantry Drill, as revised by Her Majesty's command, 1892. H. M. Stationery Office.