

commissioned officers and men, of whom 267 were authorized to receive pay for drill, only 11 officers and 74 non-commissioned officers and men (including a band of 16) were present on parade on that occasion.

"I am therefore reluctantly compelled to recommend that this corps be either removed from the Active Militia List, or else at once re-organized under some more competent commanding officer, as I am unable at the present time to report or, under existing circumstances, to hope that this battalion will ever again be brought to a state of efficiency.

"The accoutrements," he concludes, "I have already on previous occasions reported as, in my opinion, totally unfit for service."

HALF A CENTURY OF SERVICE.

With pardonable pride, Lieut.-Col. D. E. Boulton, of the 3rd Prince of Wales Canadian Dragoons, refers in his report of No. 3 district camp, of which he took command upon Col. Villiers being suddenly called away, to the fact that during that period he celebrated the "50th anniversary of my military service, beginning with the organization of 'The Queen's Own' as an incorporated battalion in 1837."

RECOMMENDATIONS ON RIFLE SHOOTING.

Lieut.-Col. Jackson, D. A. G. of No. 1 District, thus grapples with the much vexed question of musketry instruction and practice:—

"The lease of the rifle range to the Western Rifle Association, which had heretofore been used by the militia, having expired last spring, the owners of which declined renewal, a new location was sought for and the only apparent available one was rented by the Association, but on inspection it was found so dangerous, I could not recommend its use by the troops in camp, consequently the Major General Commanding was pleased to authorize the suspension of target practice.

"In a large camp, such as assemblies in this district, if firing takes place, some of the corps, in order that all may finish, would require to commence on the day after assembling, consequently they could not first receive any instruction in musketry, and as the musketry instructor would be required constantly on the ranges, all other corps would be similarly situated except that they would have an opportunity of learning something of drill.

"In order that the men might profit by target practice, they should first be taught their turnings, how to form fours and wheel, sufficient of the manual and firing exercise to ensure handling the rifle so as not to cause accident, with position and aiming drill, and such explanation of the sights and trajectory as will enable them to comprehend in some slight degree the theoretical principles of musketry. On this account, I believe better results would be obtained if these instructions were carried out during the annual drill, and target practice at company headquarters.

"Some years ago I ventured to suggest encouragement to rifle shooting at company headquarters. After several more years' experience I am more fully confirmed such would result beneficially to the force, and particularly to the rank and file.

"For the year ended 30th June last, nine rifle associations sent in returns, showing matches had taken place, viz.: Western District at London, Ingersoll, Wellington at Guelph, Leamington, County of Perth at Stratford, 33rd Battalion at Seaforth, County of Bruce at Walkerton, County of Huron at Clinton, 30th Battalion at Moorefield.

"The sums granted in aid of these associations by the Department amounted to the large total of \$625. From the small number of competitors, 386 all told, it would appear the usefulness of these associations is fast departing, and that some other method should be devised to meet the difficulty. It is also observed that these few competitors are largely composed of retired and non-combatant officers, staff sergeants and civilians, or, in other words, the absence of the rank and file is very marked. There is a diversity of opinion as to the propriety of officers competing with the men, but I think it is desirable the officers on the active list should receive such encouragement as will induce them to so perfect themselves with the use of the rifle as to be enabled to impart instruction in this very important branch to the men serving under them. With the view of having the rank and file more carefully instructed, and the ammunition fired without waste, it appears desirable an increased number of rounds should be granted, and the practice carried out at company headquarters.

"If an equal amount of money given to the local rifle association were divided among the companies, or say ten dollars to each, on such conditions as might be considered expedient—for example, on consideration that no less than a like sum should be raised locally, a prize meeting held, no one person be allowed to take more than one prize, and, if possible, each competitor to be awarded something, an increase of ammunition to forty rounds per man, twenty to be fired in practice (during camp if present regulations are continued), and twenty in competition for the prizes—this would induce the men to contribute their

time, keep up a more active organization locally, cultivate a military spirit among the younger men and boys, resulting beneficially to the force generally. Practice should be carried out annually, irrespective of the company being selected for drill in camps. These, of course, are only crude suggestions as a foundation to work upon, with the view of more thoughtful consideration, and will no doubt be objected to, particularly by those who take in the tour of rifle associations, and carry off, year after year, a large proportion of the prizes, as also others who will say the ammunition will be improperly expended; but I believe the improved results would more than compensate for all disadvantages. This system would also form a much more extended nursery for the Provincial and Dominion matches, where the most successful would naturally congregate, to compete for the valuable prizes offered, as also for places on the Wimbledon team.

Lt.-Col. Maunsell (No. 8) on same subject.

"The following suggestion (one I submit for serious consideration) comes from various quarters, viz.: that target practice, instead of being carried out as at present in brigade camp, should be carried out at local headquarters of corps subsequent to the completion of drill in camp, under proper supervision.

"The reasons for this are, I submit, many and obvious, as obvious as is the importance of the attainment of skill, individually and collectively in corps, in the use of the rifle, as part of all training.

"Target practice during the far too short period of training in camp, however active or energetic the instructor may be, is too often done in a perfunctory manner, with but little preliminary drill and with indifferent shooting.

"If carried out at local headquarters as I recommend, after camp, the previous training, with strict attention during the performance of the drill to the instruction of each company in the 'firing exercises'—important in preliminary drill—by company officers would produce good practical results. All such previous training would certainly serve the better to prepare corps for target practice.

"In order to insure this being carried out successfully at local headquarters it should be carefully done under the supervision of a district staff officer—D.A.G. or B.M.—one day's extra pay being allowed to each company for this service.

"As every company has, or should have a rifle range with proper targets at its disposal, there could be no insuperable difficulties to overcome.

"I would, in conclusion, repeat the recommendation often submitted that company and battalion prizes for rifle practice—granted for several years by the department with the best results—be again authorized. I have endeavoured to keep up this system of granting prizes, at my own cost and by other means. But, I submit, a government grant as above recommended would produce infinitely better results.

Lt.-Col. Worsley, No. 9 District.

"The shooting of the district I look upon as very bad. The men of the Canadian militia are not trained in the use of the rifle, are not heaven-born riflemen any more than their British brothers, and more than half the force in my district are third-class shots. In the camps those who did not obtain 15 points in the 10 rounds at 200 yards were sent back to fire again at that distance, this being the proportion required in Imperial service in order to pass in to the second class. I regret that the prizes recommended by the Lieutenant-General and myself for the militia in their annual shooting have not been acceded to; the liberal grants for rifle shooting scarcely touch the rank and file of the militia, certainly not in the rural districts. I therefore respectfully suggest a consideration of my report of last year, page 44, Annual Report.

The Musketry Instruction at Camp Aldershot (Major Irving).

"It will be seen that nearly three-fourths of the men who fired are in the third class; in view of this fact and of the importance of steps being taken to remedy it and increase the number of efficient shots, I would venture to suggest that the annual issue of twenty rounds of ball cartridge per man be made general and not restricted to the strength authorized for annual drill, those relieved from drill expending their allowance at company headquarters, under, if possible, the superintendence of a staff officer, in which case, were your recommendation in last year's report as to prizes carried out, I have no doubt but that in a very short time the shooting of the force would be vastly improved.

All the garrisons within the limit of the Seventh Army Corps (Lower Rhine and Westphalia) have now been provided with large samples of the new article of food which is in future to form the so-called "iron ration" of the men in the field. It is a peculiar kind of bread in the shape of small cubes the size of a chocolate drop, made of fine wheat bread, strongly spiced and calculated to keep for a long time. When taken into the mouth it quickly softens, and is both palatable and nutritious. It is chiefly intended for forced marches when there is no time for camping and cooking.—*Berlin Tageblatt.*