

of sight, the extent of beaten and dangerous zones are diminished; but if the beaten ground slopes downwards with regard to the line of sight, the beaten and dangerous zones are often greatly increased. For this latter reason the reserve troops of the defence should be kept well in rear of the firing line at the early stages of the fight, and close up to them at the latter stages, which is a favorable condition for the defence.

Further, it must never be forgotten that in collective firing, as in all kinds of firing, a careful watch must be made as to the effects of the fire so as either to stop it if no effects are being produced, which only depresses the men and elates the enemy, or to correct the elevations used if necessary, for atmospheric conditions, the inclination of the line of sight, and the slope of the beaten ground, and for the unavoidable errors made in judging the range, all of which affect the fire and the proper elevation to be used.

On account of the longitudinal spread of the bullets in a collective fire, we must be very careful not to be misled in watching the strike of the bullets. We must remember that even though many of the bullets fall short yet the fire may be well directed. If either side is stationary, or if the ranges are rapidly decreasing from either side advancing, it is better for a fire to fall rather short of than rather over the target, for in the former case we get the benefit of ricocheting bullets, which are lost when the mass of the bullets pass over the target. If the ranges are rapidly increasing, oversight for the supposed ranges.

Use of Combined Sights.

Sometimes it is necessary to cover a greater zone than 100 yards with bullets. This is done by making half the men fire with an elevation for 50 yards under the supposed range, and the other half with an elevation for 50 yards over the supposed range. In this way a zone of 200 yards is covered with bullets. But at least a whole company should be used in this way so as to get a result as rapidly as possible, because prolonged firing ought always to be avoided when possible from the bad effect it has on the men in reducing their offensive spirit. A bold use of men and ammunition is always a good policy when once the fire is effective. *But as such a use of combined elevations means a proportionately great consumption of valuable ammunition, it should only be used when there is ample ammunition, when the enemy offers a good target, when the range is not accurately known, when the side is in movement, and when the atmospheric influences and the slopes of the ground near the enemy are not favorable, and the strike of the bullets cannot be observed.* Further, such a use of combined sights is only possible at the long and at the longer of the medium ranges while men are sufficiently under control for the purpose.

But in all cases it cannot be too strongly impressed on both officers and men that as the range increases (even when only one elevation is being used), the amount of ammunition expended has also to be greatly increased in order to get the same results in the same time, and if more than one elevation is used a proportionate amount of ammunition must be used.