

in the new book? By-the-bye, will someone tell me when the newly authorized blue serge jacket is to be worn; is it compulsory or only optional? I will not ask all the questions I would like to on dress regulations as, if I did, I would monopolize all the space of THE MILITARY GAZETTE.

THOMAS ATKINS

EFFICIENCY RETURNS.

HALIFAX, N.S., Nov. 12—The publication in your last number of the efficiency returns of the Montreal regiments brings up the subject of the comparative merits of the different city corps. From what I can learn from the reports of the inspections of the Montreal and other Upper Province regiments, the comparative part of the returns, as far as this district is concerned, might as well be left out.

WHEN an inspector of infantry was appointed some hope was entertained that the same system of awarding the points for efficiency would be followed out in all the districts within his command, but when we read of a battalion of six companies being inspected in a few hours and others inspected in two ranks, instead of (as called for) in single rank, and again others openly charged with having men of other corps in the ranks to help them through, it is very hard for us down by the sea to say in what way we are to be compared.

THE 63rd Rifles finished their inspection on Friday night, the 6th inst., and as an account of it might be of interest to our comrades in other cities, you may find space for it. The battalion was paraded at 7.45 Wednesday evening and received the inspecting staff, the regiment being in line in single rank. I say the inspecting staff because a doubt still exists as to who or what constitutes the inspecting officer. Besides Lieut.-Col. Maunsell, inspector of infantry, Lieut.-Col. Irving, D.O.C., Major Black, D.S.O., and Capt. Curren, district paymaster, were present. The staff inspected the line down the front rank and up the rear. Owing to the strong muster there was not room enough for the whole line in the drill yard.

AFTER the manual and firing exercises by the C. O., there not being room to handle the six companies, No. 3, Capt. Dixon's, was marched off to the drill shed for detailed inspection by the D.O.C., and battalion drill under the inspection of Col. Maunsell was gone on with. After the C. O. came Major J. N. Crane, then Major Cunningham, Major Twining, the adjutant, Capt. Hechler, Capt. James, Capt. Sircom and Capt. Gunning. Nearly two hours were taken up with battalion drill. I need hardly say that the officers commanding companies have very little chance to handle the battalion; in fact, so much importance has been attached to the company work at inspection that in this regiment battalion drill has been made to give way to company work. There could be no doubt, however, in the inspecting officer's mind that there are plenty of officers in the 63rd able to command it on parade. The battalion was marched into the drill shed and the district paymaster called the rolls of those companies which were not detailed for inspection on this particular night. It took the D.O.C. nearly two hours to get through with No. 3 Co., starting with the practice of extension motions and ending with extended order by signal, every section called for by the G.O. having to be done in detail. After squad drill the company was dismissed, and immediately fell in by sections under section commanders, who were each examined by the D.O.C. as to his knowledge of his duties. The roll books of each section were also examined, and the rolls called by the section commanders.

THE company was now closed, and arms, clothing and accoutrements minutely examined. Company drill was then proceeded with, all the sections called for by the G.O., and many others not mentioned in the regulations for inspection, being thoroughly gone

into, the extended order movements being done by signal from the captain, who was at one end of the drill yard, with his company at the other. An unusual and unexpected feature of this inspection was the calling of non-commissioned officers to the front to give the detail and commands for volley firing and other firing exercises. Fortunately, our non-coms. are well posted, as, before a stripe is given, the man must hold a certificate from our regimental school.

FROM this outline of the company inspection it can be easily seen that two hours per company would be pretty well taken up. Nos. 3, 4 and 5 companies were got through with Wednesday night, the last not being done until about midnight, the order in which the companies were called having been decided by lot. Considerable rivalry existed as to the company standing, the C.O.'s cup being awarded on the points obtained at company drill, combined with the best average attendance at parades during the season.

ON Friday night the other three companies, Nos. 1, 2 and 6, were inspected, nearly all the officers of the battalion being present to watch their comrades being put through the trying ordeal, the last company finishing at 11.30.

THE opinion is pretty freely expressed that the D.O.C. of this district is too particular, and looks for more perfect work than can be expected from citizen soldiers, and considerable complaint is being made at the large amount of work called for at our inspection compared to other city corps. This is not satisfactory, for while the D.O.C. may consider he is doing right the regiment does not get any higher rating than other corps inspected in one-half the time and with about one-quarter the detail. Inspection in single rank must necessarily be much more difficult and hard on the company, as every man is in the front, and every individual defect is shown. The inspecting officer was quick to note, and charge to each company, any individual error. For instance, the manual in one company (No. 4) was pronounced "absolutely perfect," but in the present the sling caught on a button on one man's tunic. Off came a point of the company's score. This was pretty hard. Another company lost by one of the men, when going through the turnings in squad drill, not having his foot drawn back quite far enough. Several of the companies also lost points in the firing exercises by not resting solid on the heel, and others from not having the elbow well down on the knee.

THE comparative efficiency is a good idea, if it can be carried out, but the comparison under present circumstances is entirely local, for, with the extremely minute detail carried out by our D.O.C. and his very high standard of proficiency, it would be impossible to compare with the regiments of other cities. Of course, the inspector of infantry (Col. Maunsell) would be able to compare the different regiments within his command, but his inspection did not take in the detail on which the efficiency returns are made up.

OUTPOST.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

We are in receipt of a very handy little book, entitled "Changes in the Newly Revised Infantry Drill, 1896," compiled by Capt. W. Plomer, 2nd Batt. Royal Irish Fusiliers. It is very often the case that when a new infantry drill is issued it is found difficult to remember what has been omitted so as to learn what is new. In this publication, however, it will be found that most of the changes, omissions and additions have been noted in the order of the sections as they appear in the fresh edition. It will be found very serviceable indeed to all ranks. The general rules for physical training are also given, and those who intend going in for this work will find them very useful. Copies of the book may be had from T. C. Elliot, Drill Hall, Montreal.