

The Rifle.

To add interest to the class firing of the permanent corps, Major J. Peters of C Battery, R.C.A., offers a prize of \$10 annually to be given to the non-commissioned officer or man making the highest aggregate score in the first and second stages of the regulation annual firing. The prize will be given this year as a beginning.

THE MILITARY RIFLE LEAGUE.

Further reports are to hand respecting participation in the competition of this proposed league. Lt-Col. Smith, D.A.G., commandant of D Co., I.S.C., London, Ont., says the company will certainly enter a team. He thinks the idea a good one, and will do what he can to encourage it in his district. Lt-Col. Tracy, of the 7th Fusiliers, London, says they will certainly be represented.

Lt-Col. Hon. J. M. Gibson, 13th Battalion, Hamilton, favours the league, and promises keen competition from his doughty sharpshooters. The Hamilton boys are eager for the spring, so that they may have a chance at another city match.

Complaint comes from Kingston, likewise from London, that no 600 yard range is available at either of those places.

The MILITIA GAZETTE has been asked of late to whom should letters on business of the proposed league be addressed. In reply we would say that Mr. W. R. Pringle, lately of Montreal but now of Toronto, was the prime mover in the affair, and we would suggest that he be acting secretary until permanent organization be effected.

ANNUAL MATCH FOR THE PERMANENT CORPS.

Major J. Peters, of C Battery, R.C.A., who was the organizer of the recent telegraphic contest between teams of the permanent corps, has forwarded the conditions printed below for a proposed annual match open to the permanent corps, and desires us to request that intending competitors will communicate with him as soon as possible. C Battery, he says, will subscribe \$30 towards a trophy, and he has no doubt other corps entering will contribute like amounts. It is proposed that this annual match be fired with either the long or short Snider, upon the following conditions:

Thirty (30) officers, n. c. officers and men in drill order with expense pouches; one field officer in command, with army revolver.

Squad in extended order at 400 yards at the "Ready."

Target appears on the "commence fire" and remains up for 90 seconds, during which time as many rounds as possible may be fired, independent firing. At the expiration of the 90 seconds the target disappears for 25 seconds when the squad must advance at the *double* and not halt until it again appears for 90 seconds, when firing is resumed again.

On the second disappearance of the target for 25 seconds they will advance as before, halting for the final firing when the target is raised for the last 90 seconds.

The umpire will see that the target is raised on the "commence" sounding, that the squad does not advance till target is lowered, and, when lowered, that skirmishers are advancing at the "double," halting only as it appears; *i.e.*, men must not double to any fixed point, lie down and be waiting for target to appear.

The umpire to be the D. A. G. or commandant of the school. Two officers to be in the "butts," one of whom must belong to an outside corps and not be going through a course of instruction.

The umpire will check the time of exposure of target from firing point, and will count hits at end of match according to D. R. A. rules, telegraphing result to Adjutant General on date named below.

Targets to be all white, 6' x 2½', lines as directed in D. R. A. skirmishing target, but lines to be invisible to marksmen.

Any number of targets may be used in line, provided they are not less than nine feet apart from inside edge to edge.

It will be at the option of each corps to shoot on either June 1st, 2nd or 3rd, result to be wired to Adjutant General on the last day.

No firing to take place on these dates except for the match, and no squad may have a second trial. No sighting shots.

As it is impossible to prevent the loss of cartridges from the expense pouches and pouches while "doubling" and "lying down" in skirmishing, squads may wear cartridge belts with loops.

HOW TO SHOOT.

The value of winter instruction in the matter of rifle practice is coming more and more to be understood by those in charge of troops, and in a recent order the Adjutant-General of the State of New York goes over this matter with such detail, that his instructions are of value to everyone having a rifle. He directs: Commanding officers of companies will see that the enlisted men of their respective commands receive the necessary preliminary instruction in rifle practice, and, where possible, that they have gallery practice, before they are sent to the ranges.

The following instructions prepared by the General Inspector of Rifle Practice (Gen. Robbins) are prescribed:

Sighting.—I. A sand bag for each squad will be placed on a rest, which may be a table, a tripod, or a stack of arms, and so arranged that the bag will be about 4½ ft. from the ground. The men will be formed in single rank, and in squads not to exceed ten men in each. The instructor will then flatten the sand bag with the back of his hand, lay a full cocked rifle on it, aim at some small object at as great a distance from it as the drill room will permit (a wafer on the wall, for instance), and explain to the men the following simple rules:

The sight should not incline to the right or left. The line of sight should be taken along the centre of the notch of the rear sight and the top of the front sight, which should cover the middle of the mark aimed at. The eye should be fixed on the mark, and not on the front sight. Particular attention should be paid to this rule, as beginners are apt to fix the eye on the front sight and not on the mark, which prevents the latter from being distinctly seen, and greatly increases their difficulty in aiming.

2. The instructor will also explain the different kinds of sights, *viz*: Fine Sight—When the point of the front sight is just seen through the notch of the rear sight, the effect of which is to shoot low. Full Sight—When the whole of the wedge shaped portion of the front sight is displayed through the notch on the rear sight, the effect of which is to shoot high. Half-Sight—When but half the front sight is seen.

3. At times during this drill the leaf of the rear sight should be required to be raised.

Aiming—(One.) Come to the position of ready and raise the leaf of the rear sight.

(Two.) Raise the rifle smartly in front of the right shoulder to the full extent of the left arm, without moving the body, head or eye; the arms to move close to the body; barrel nearly horizontal and pointing a few inches below the mark; the eyes fixed upon the forefinger inside the trigger guard; both elbows inclined downward.

(Three.) Press the piece smartly with both hands against the hollow of the shoulder, which must neither be allowed to give way nor pressed forward or raised to meet it: the left elbow at the same time being brought as far under the rifle as is possible without assuming an unnatural position; the right elbow slightly raised, being nearly squarely with the right shoulder; the centre (or rather the upper than lower) part of the butt to be pressed firmly against the shoulder with the left hand without touching the collar bone, the top of the butt being as nearly as possible even with the top of the shoulder, the forefinger will be placed around the trigger like a hook, but without pressing it; the head and body will be kept perfectly perpendicular the whole time, no attempt being made to look through the sights.

(Four.) Close the left eye and incline the head to the right over the small of the stock so that the right eye may quickly perceive the coincidence of the rear and front sights, and the object aimed at.

(Five.) Raise the head, look squarely to the front and bring the piece smartly to the first position.

Practice in aiming will be continued until the men aim quickly and correctly from the shoulder, after which they should be taught how to discharge the arm by pressing or squeezing the trigger, and especially to avoid a pull or jerk in so doing.

MOUNTED RIFLE PRACTICE.

Major E. V. Sumner, 5th U. S. Cavalry, Inspector of Small Arms Practice, Department Missouri, in his annual report, presents some interesting data and pays especial attention to the practice of mounted men. On this head he says: "In all mounted practice with arms the horse is almost as important a factor as the man; therefore, the necessity for purchasing better horses and having them undergo a certain amount of training before being pushed into the ranks with the service bit now in use and while they are perfectly green, should be understood. Under existing conditions the opponents to the use of the revolver in the ranks of the cavalry are quite well supported in considering the weapon more dangerous to friend than foe; and, unfortunately, those who enlist the recruits and those who purchase the horses have little to do with their coming together as implements of war in the cavalry sense. The reduction of the target season to two months gives ample time for rifle and carbine practice. Cavalry should have one month additional for revolver practice, mounted and dismounted. Men may differ in opinion as to the importance that should be given to each of the parts of a soldier's duty, but in acting together in harmony and friendship we wear off the rough edges of prejudice and are able to accomplish a result gratifying to all and of inestimable benefit to the service."

THE NEW RIFLE.

The *Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette* says: "On dit that the new magazine rifle is to be issued to the First Army Corps next February. The Government factories at Enfield and Sparkbrook are working