

any in the service. That he has some claim to these titles is shown in peace by (1) in the annual competitions on board ship it is usual for guns worked by Marine Artillerymen under their own officers to take prizes; (2) in the annual 10-inch M.-L. gun competition at Shoeburyness (the only opportunity given them of competing with the Royal Artillery), the gun detachment sent from Eastney is always well placed, and has several times been first; (3) in all army rifle meetings and matches near Portsmouth the Marine Artillery team is well known as being among the best; (4) on parade and in manoeuvres they are generally praised for their infantry drill.

So much for peace. Now let us examine how each instruction has been of value when put to the crucial test of war.

In their proper function, that of manning guns on board ship, they have taken part in every naval action since their formation, including in later years the bombardments of Sevastopol, of Sveaborg, and of Alexandria. At Sveaborg, Marine Artillery officers were placed in command of mortar boats.

As infantry they have been engaged in almost every small war of their century of existence; in the larger war against France they were absorbed by the requirements of the Fleet, and only landed as infantry in forming part of a Naval Brigade. They were in Canada, China several times, New Zealand, Ashantee (where most of the preliminary work fell to their share), Zululand, Egypt and the Soudan: India alone has been to them a forbidden territory, but even there they have in solitary instances done service, as in Burmah, for instance, in 1886.

That their land service artillery drill has not been wasted is well shown by examples from history. With field guns, they were employed as a field battery in the Carlist war in Spain; in 1839, in a mule-battery with rope harness arranged by themselves in Mexico; in 1864, with a field battery in China; and in a mule machine-gun battery at Suakim in 1885. In 1882, in Egypt, they were not supplied with guns ashore, but served as an infantry battalion in all the actions of that brilliant campaign. Yet here again their knowledge of field artillery drill was utilised. In the advanced guard action about Tel-el-Mahuta on August 24 only two guns were present, belonging to the Royal Horse Artillery. The gunners of this division, after maintaining for five hours a duel against 12 Egyptian guns, became so exhausted that General Willis ordered a few of the Marine Artillery to assist them, who, from this time, shared with the Horse Artillery the severest labours of the day. Again, in the advanced guard action on August 28 at Kassassin, "The shells from the enemy's artillery were chiefly directed upon a Krupp gun which, taken from the enemy at Mashama, had been mounted on a railway truck, and was worked by a gun detachment of the Marine Artillery under the command of Captain Tucker." Four Horse Artillery guns came up to reinforce them, but their fire became so

slow from want of ammunition as scarcely to relieve the Marine detachment." Somewhat later these four guns were withdrawn altogether, and the Marine Artillery Krupp gun maintained the fight, as regards artillery fire, till its close at 7.15 p. m. On September 9, in the second action at Kassassin it was this same gun which fired the first shot on our side at 7.15 a. m. "This was directed upon a train bringing up some of the Egyptian troops." At the battle of El Teb, in 1884, the Marine Artillery captured a Krupp gun from the Arabs, which Major Tucker was again enabled to work with success, thus accomplishing twice within two years this exceptional feat of employing the enemy's own guns to aid in their defeat. In siege warfare they did good service in the batteries at Sebastopol, some officers also being employed as acting Engineers. It was in the Sandbag Battery that Bombardier Wilkinson won the Victoria Cross, for which decoration he was recommended by the Royal Artillery officer in command there. Colonel Dare Dowell also received the V. C. in the Russian War for saving a boat's crew of the Ruby in the action at Viborg—a fair share of these most esteemed decorations, considering the small effective of the corps.

For working guns of position in fortresses England has had little need of their services, but after the bombardment of Alexandria the Royal Marine Artillery landed from the fleet found suitable employment in remounting guns for the defence of the town.

Formerly, when ships were commissioned, a detachment of Marine Artillery was sent first to mount the guns and rig the tackles and gun-gear, and it seems to me that in case of a great naval war they will be found invaluable in organizing the artillery of the large "liners" which are retained by the Government to serve as additional cruisers.

They have frequently performed duties of some civil value. Returning from Egypt in 1882, a force of picked old soldiers were sent to Dublin to aid in police work there, for which arduous duty they were publicly thanked. They were twice sent to Skye to support the police, and this duty they performed with so much tact that, on leaving, the men were entertained at a farewell banquet by the crofters, and parted with mutual regrets on both sides. After forming part of the garrison of Suakim from 1884 to 1885, a detachment of Marine Artillery was sent to form part of the garrison of Port Hamilton, a quieter but more salubrious duty.

The first trip to Skye (November 11, 1884), illustrates the peculiar value of the Marines in our little wars—their "first-for-sea" organisation, which permits of battalions being sent on distant service at the very shortest notice. The detachment for Skye received its orders to go between noon and 1 p. m., and were on board H. M. S. Assistance by 3.30 p. m.—the Dockyard is an hour's march from Eastney—and the ship had cast off from the jetty at 4 p. m.; and this was done as quite an every-day occurrence of har-

rack life. No apparent gap was left by the departing men; ordinary routine was not disturbed. One of the officers only received his order to start at 2.30 p. m., and had thus only a few minutes in which to pack. A Marine is one morning tranquilly carrying out his ordinary duty on parade, and yet by night is starting for a little war in China, the West Coast of Africa, or the Soudan; or in peace, the young subaltern is airing his mess jacket at a dance given by the King and Queen of Honolulu, much to the admiration of Her Majesty, is hunting kangaroo, or flirting with Japanese "Moosnies" within a few weeks of finishing his drills on the Eastney Parade.

It is this state of daily readiness of a portion of the force for foreign service as well as the ready habit of the old Marine to "shake down" at once into a new position, which fits the corps so admirably for the garrison of the advanced posts covering a disembarkation and necessary for the formation of depots and magazines on the line of advance. To-day, however, with the large increase in our first line of defence, there are not so many men available for this work as there were in 1882.

Now that there is a growing idea that that we ought to have a real short service system, a separate Indian and a separate colonial army, it seems to me that the Marine organisation is best fitted for the colonial army. If the system of garrisoning the coaling stations and colonial ports were alone carried out, it would set free the Army for the performance of its already too onerous duties at home and in India. For this the corps of Royal Marines would have to be considerably increased; but it has never suffered from lack of recruits, and if the colonies could be induced to aid in bearing part of the expense it would be in immense stride in the cause of Imperial Federation. Though somewhat adopting the French system, our Marines, unlike theirs, would be still available for reinforcing the fleet after a battle, and in peace for effecting the ordinary reliefs to the detachments embarked.

As adding yet another accomplishment towards fitting the corps for the defence of naval ports, a squad of Marine Artillerymen with four officers has undergone an extensive course of submarine mining with the Royal Engineers at Chatham, and these are still keeping up their practice at the Submarine Mining Depot (R. E.) at Gosport; and all officers of the Royal Marine Artillery have, as already stated, qualified in torpedo work on board H. M. S. Vernon, the principal naval school of submarine mining.

The signallers of the corps are trained in both Army and Navy methods, so as to be fitted to keep up communication between a fleet at sea and a military force on land.

In considering the difficulties of dual control in the defence of a harbour fortress, who is naturally so fitted as a Marine officer is to arrange minor details acquainted as he is with the discipline and routine of both the Navy and Army.

I have thus tried to answer the question, "What do you Marine Artillerymen