

men of the Engineer companies are no longer being sent to the Royal Military College for instruction. But to make up for this, it was also proposed to send a qualified instructor annually to each company to instruct the men locally in conjunction with such of their officers as had taken the military engineering course at the Royal Military College. This part of the recommendations referred to—in fact the most essential part—has not been carried out at all this year. Without some such annual provision of qualified and trained Instructors, the military engineering training of the companies will never be of any real value.

6. To enable the two city companies to practise the elementary parts of field engineering works during the year, and thus to save much valuable time when in camp, it is very desirable that they should be given annually a small sum for the purchase of brush wood and other such expendable material. Probably \$20 a year to each of the two city companies would be sufficient for this purpose.

7. I would again emphasize the fact that Engineers cannot be extemporized. If they are to be efficient as Engineers they must be trained as such, and as the training is special, they should, in my opinion, go into camp for at least 14 days every year, exclusive of the days of coming and going, and receive sufficient pay to induce them to go into camp for this length of time. To sum up, I consider that the following steps should be taken to place the Engineer companies on an efficient footing.

1. An increase in the size of the companies.
2. The formation of annual Engin'r camps.
3. The provision to each company of the necessary engineering equipment and stores for instruction.
4. The provision of an adequate number of proper text books to each company.
5. The provision of qualified and trained Instructors at the annual camps.
6. A small money grant given annually to the city companies for the purchase of material.
7. An increased period of training in camp.

Until some such steps are taken the companies can never hope to be "Engineer" companies in reality, though they may be so in name.

Another point to which I desire to draw attention, is the question of promotion among the Militia Engineer Officers. Lieut. Tompkins, of the Brighton Engineers, has been a subaltern for nearly 20 years, and in consequence of this Major Vince, who commands the company and who has been a major for 17 years, has seriously contemplated the step of leaving the Brighton Engineers in order to allow of Lieut. Tompkins being promoted. It would be a most serious loss to the engineer arm to thus lose such a valuable trained and energetic officer as Major Vince.

(To be continued.)

## THE NEW INFANTRY DRILL BOOK.

(Continued.—From Volunteer Service Gazette.)

The regulations for mounted officers taking up distance, giving points, and for markers when ordered to move out, are nearly the same as in the book of 1889. The directions, however, as to mounted officers drawing swords is omitted, because no officers of infantry are ever now to draw swords except when the men have their bayonets fixed or on occasions of ceremony.

"In deployments, the guide nearest the point of formation will dress the men of his company into the general alignment and then resume his position in the supernumerary rank, unless he is the left guide of a directing company, when he will take post on the left of the front rank of his company." It would, perhaps, be clearer to say, "unless he is the left guide of the company which becomes the directing company in line." We regret to see, by the way, that a more exhaustive definition of the "point of formation" is not given. It is simply defined to be "the point on which a formation is based," and we are told that "base points and markers will invariably turn towards the point of formation." But we are never told in the present book directly, nor so far as we can see indirectly, what is to be considered as the "point of formation" in the case of a deployment to both flanks, or of a change of front of a line on any point except one of its extremities. The regulations for points "at ceremonies or when specially ordered," are as follows:

In deployment to a flank, base points will be aligned by the mounted officer, whose place in line is in rear of the flank of formation, the other mounted officer will give a point where the outer flank of the battalion will rest.

In a deployment outwards the base points will be aligned by the battalion commander, assisted by the Sergeant-Major, the Major marking the right, the Adjutant the left flank point, of the battalion.

Each company as it approaches the alignment will furnish an outer marker, who will cover on the base points.

The markers will move out, when required, on the battalion caution by the Commanding Officer.

On the completion of the formation, points and markers will resume their places on the word *Steady* from the officer at the point of formation.

Base points and markers will invariably turn towards the point of formation.

To ensure the alignment being kept clear, companies will be halted in rear of it.

As regards the "degrees of march" the slow step is nominally given up altogether, though we presume that it is still intended to be used on two occasions of ceremonial—viz., by the

band at the "trooping of colours," and at funeral processions while the funeral march is being played. The double march is to be used regularly unless otherwise ordered during the interior formation of a battalion.

Under the head "Front," we are told, as in the old book, that "all interior movements of the battalion are to be made with reference to the front." Turning back to the "definitions," we find the word "front" explained in three different ways—viz., first, as "the direction of the enemy, real or supposed"; secondly, as "the direction which soldiers face when occupying the same relative position as when they first fall in"; and, thirdly, "the extent of ground covered laterally by troops." Here, the word is used, we imagine, in its second signification. The other observations about the front, contained in the old book, have now disappeared.

The rules for battalion firing are unchanged, except that the direction that when a battalion is firing with both ranks, the officers, supernumeraries and colour party will also kneel has disappeared.

A battalion when dispersed, re-assembles by companies as described in company drill. When the companies have all fallen in, they may be moved into any position by the commanding officer.

"Closing" to correct intervals is made very short work of. All we are told is, "After forming into line any intervals will be corrected." The "centre of the battalion should remain unmoved."

The directing flank is always to be named; and, when necessary, the Commanding Officer's words are to be repeated, not only as heretofore by the mounted officers, but "by as many leaders as are necessary to ensure the transmission of the order." This concludes the "General Rules" for battalion drill, and we now come to the details of the movements themselves.

The first is advancing in line. As heretofore, the dressing will be "centre sergeant" if there is a colour party, or by the left guide of the right centre company if there is no colour party. All the other companies will move by their own centres. The line of direction is selected and supervised by the Adjutant, without, as previously, the assistance of the Sergeant-Major. The words of command are, THE LINE WILL ADVANCE—*Steady* (from the Adjutant, when the line of direction is determined). BY THE CENTRE, QUICK-MARCH. The directions for a battalion in line to retire are unaltered, except that only the Adjutant and not the Sergeant-Major passes to the front to superintend the direction, and that the right guides no longer fall to the rear. The words of command are: THE LINE WILL ADVANCE. *Steady*. ABOUT-TURN, BY THE CENTRE, QUICK-MARCH. BATTALION. HALT. FRONT. The paragraph on retiring is rather carelessly