

in the militia training have not been commensurate with the expenditure; and I see only in improved organization a sufficient guarantee of practical results, to justify such a recommendation. I shall submit to you, in the proper time, the programme I have prepared for the training of the present year; providing for training of an increased quota of Rural Militia, without an increase of the vote for that purpose.

In another part of this report, I shall allude to the administrative reforms, which appear to me essential, as a first step to the more complete training of the excellent material, existing at present, in an unorganized condition, in the rural districts.

3. *Rifle Shooting.* A marked improvement has been made in the rifle shooting of the Militia, during the past year. This is mainly due to the Military Rifle League and its indefatigable secretary, Lt. Pringle, 10th R. Grenadiers. This is an institution which has done good work and deserves every encouragement.

ALLOWANCES.

The system, under which allowances are now granted to the Rural Militia, is open to very serious objections. Allowances are drawn annually for "drill instruction," and for "care of arms," for which the country receives no real value. They are paid to Officers who are incapable of imparting instruction, and who are unable to give sufficient attention to the arms under their charge. In the majority of cases, these allowance are looked upon merely in the light of perquisites, attaching to the command of a battalion or company. The fault does not rest with the officers but the system, which makes an impracticable demand upon them. Considering the sacrifices made by officers of the Rural Militia in the performance of their Militia duty, it appears absolutely necessary that certain allowances, in addition to the pay of their rank, should be granted to those who exercise the most important functions. Such allowances should however be the payment for a distinct value received by the country.

(To be continued.)

The subject of establishing electric communication around the British coast between lighthouses, lightships, coastguard and lifeboat stations is now under discussion in England. Great loss of life results from the want of such communication.

The gold medalist of the Royal United Service Institution this year is Captain Craigie, of the *Hyacinth*, the subject being, "Maritime supremacy being essential for the general protection of the British Empire and its commerce; to what extent, if any, should our naval force be supplemented by fixed defences at home and abroad, and to whom should they be confided." Eleven essays were received.

THE NEW INFANTRY DRILL BOOK.

(Continued.—From Volunteer Service Gazette.)

The third part of the new book, which deals with battalion drill in close formation, is greatly shortened and simplified. It only occupies twenty pages, whereas sixty-eight were devoted to the same subject in the book of 1889.

In the "general rules" it is first stated as formerly, but in fewer words, that the movements of a battalion are effected by combinations of those already laid down for company drill, and that the movements of a battalion should be practised as though it was acting as a battalion in brigade. But it may be mentioned that according to the book of 1889, this was to be "kept in constant view"; whereas it is now only to be "frequently" done. And as there are to be no markers used, as a rule, the direction that "Commanding officers . . . should accustom themselves to make changes of position and formation on fixed battalion points dressed on previously determined alignments," is omitted.

The following are the regulations for the formation of a battalion on parade in line:—

Arrangement of companies.—When the battalion is formed in line, there is to be an interval of six paces between each company.

Colour party.—The colours, each carried by an officer (as directed in the Queen's Regulations), will be placed between the two centre companies; the Queen's colour on the right, and the regimental colour on the left, with a sergeant between them, and two non-commissioned officers or selected privates, with a sergeant in the centre, in the rear rank. The officer carrying the Queen's colour will command the party. An interval of two paces will be preserved between the colour party and the companies on its flanks.

Posts of mounted officers.—The two senior officers with the battalion, and the Adjutant, are to be mounted. The senior will be described as the Commanding Officer, the next senior as the Major. The Commanding Officer will be twenty paces in front of the centre of the battalion. The Major will be ten paces in rear of the centre of the rear rank of the right half battalion, and the Adjutant at ten paces in rear of the centre of the rear rank of the left half battalion.

Posts of staff officers and staff sergeants (if on parade).—The staff officers (Quartermaster, &c.), will be ten paces behind the centre of the rear rank in line with the Major and Adjutant. The staff sergeants two paces in rear of the staff officers.

Posts of pioneers, band and drums, or bugles.—The pioneers will be drawn up in single rank in rear of the centre of the battalion at twenty paces distance from the rear rank.

The drummers (or buglers) in two ranks,

sergeant-drummer (or bugler) on right of front rank, at two paces distance from the pioneers.

The bandmaster will be two paces in rear of the centre of the drums (or buglers) and the band in two ranks, band sergeant on right of front rank, two paces further to the rear, an interval of one pace between each man.

Post of sergeant-major.—In rear of the centre sergeant of the colour party, or in its absence, in the centre of the battalion, in line with the subalterns.

Posts of cyclists.—In single rank five paces in rear of the band, standing on the left of their cycles.

Posts of machine gun, regimental transport, and stretcher section.—Five paces in rear of the cyclists; machine gun on right, mules in centre, transport waggon on left. Stretcher section five paces in rear of regimental transport.

Post of signallers.—If on parade as such they will be placed between the pioneers and drums at similar intervals and distances, the drums and band being placed two paces further to the rear.

It will be seen that there are three novel features of importance in this arrangement. First, the companies (the sections or sub-sections of which are divided by intervals of two paces) will be separated by intervals of six paces. Secondly, the "Junior Major" is dispensed with altogether. And thirdly, the normal position of the Commanding Officer is in *front* and not in rear of the line. The respective places of the non-combatant staff officers and staff sergeants, of the band, drums, etc., are all altered, and provision is made on parade of signallers, cyclists, machine guns, transport waggons and mules, and a stretcher section.

Perhaps it may be convenient to summarise the above general arrangements for a battalion of eight companies in line at close order on parade. In front of the centre of the whole is the Commanding Officer. Fourteen paces in rear of him is the line of captains, each six paces in front of his company, each man of which occupies 27 inches of allotted space, so that he cannot touch his neighbour without moving his arm. Each company is divided into four sections or more sub-sections, each section or subsection being at two paces interval from the next one, and there is an interval of six paces between the companies themselves. In the interval between the two centre companies stands the colour party; but as there is to be an interval of two paces between the colour party and the companies on its flanks, it would seem that either the interval between the two centre companies must be slightly increased or that the officers and men of the colour party must occupy rather less than 27 inches space each, for the party is abreast, occupying, at 27 inches, a front of 81 inches; add to