

The first proposition, marked A in the report, as conceded, is of importance, as the whole question hinges upon it.

The answer to the second proposition, marked B, bears out what the undersigned has advanced—namely, that since the introduction of arms of precision all troops following the example of the old rifle corps adopt a neutral colour for service, and as far as possible avoid being conspicuous. These are some of the circumstances which produce a dark ground to aim on.

The answer to the third proposition, marked C, is fallacious, as all acquainted with the practical use of the rifle know that all aim is relative, and that not one time in fifty at any long range can aim be taken on the bull's-eye, but that it has to be taken on some part of the white target. The answer given in the report actually goes to show that the rifleman should be taught to aim on a dark ground. This is what the undersigned contends for.

The answer to the fourth proposition, marked D, is confirmatory of that which the undersigned has advanced.

The answer to the fifth, marked E, admits the range-finder might assist the rifleman to get an approximate distance; but objects to the danger through carelessness of its being blown away. Wherein lies the danger? If the rifleman foolishly blew it away, he could not hurt himself but might hurt his enemy. This blow-away view of the question also pictures the rifleman in such a state of fright as to make it appear he would not know what he was about.

The undersigned regrets the Board has not reported on the comparative advantage or otherwise of his method of carrying on judging-distance drills or practice; and also on his method of inculcating first principles by means of the mechanical trajectory. But at the same time he must express satisfaction at the cordial agreement in paragraph G, remarking at the same time that, should the Government demand a minimum of musketry, including judging distance, from Volunteers as claims for capitulation, the returns could not be obtained under the army system, but certainly could be under his.

In conclusion, the undersigned regrets the inquiry and trials took place at so remote a distance (90 miles) as to preclude him from the advantages of the friendly assistance of witnesses on his part, he being isolated so to speak.

I have, &c.,
J. C. SOALL.

The Hon. Dr. Pollen, Native and Defence Minister.

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