

Since the establishment of the Council there has been one examination for field officers and adjutants, and three quarterly examinations for company officers. At these examinations eighteen field officers and adjutants have presented themselves, of whom two failed. One hundred and eighteen company officers were examined, the failures being thirteen up to the present. The answers on the whole are good, and show that a considerable amount of care has been taken in preparation.

The supervision of the musketry instruction of the colony having been placed under the Council, new target-practice regulations have been issued, which are in all respects similar to those recently published for the Volunteer forces in England, the number of points required to pass into a higher class being modified to suit the weapons in issue to the Volunteers. This should, after a little time, lead to much better and more practical shooting.

Under the new regulations prizes for good shooting are not given to individuals but to corps, according to the figure of merit attained by all their members. This should lead to great emulation amongst the various corps, which must result in a very marked improvement in the average shooting of the force.

The musketry returns and target-practice registers being the source from which the figure of merit is obtained, clear instructions have been issued to insure their being kept strictly in accordance with the regulations for the Imperial service, and I am in hopes that at the end of the present musketry season the returns will be found to have been more carefully and accurately kept than has been the case in the past. The returns during the past season were in many instances kept in the most deplorably careless and incorrect manner, which has caused an immense amount of unnecessary labour and loss of time in correcting them, so as to enable the general return to be prepared. This is unsatisfactory, as throwing doubt on the figures from which the figure of merit is computed.

The Council will, with the assistance of the District Instructors and District Adjutants, carefully supervise the musketry instruction of the various corps in the colony, and they trust ere long to see officers, non-commissioned officers, and men vie with each other in the interest taken in this the most important part of a soldier's education; so that, after a time, when the Volunteers of the colony are in possession of a more modern weapon, they will be second to none of Her Majesty's auxiliary forces in their practice with the rifle.

The Council is prepared to give instruction in military subjects to all officers desirous of qualifying for the direct commissions in the British Army which are annually offered for competition.

I have, &c.,

C. S. BAILEY, Lieut.-Colonel,

President, Council of Military Education.

Major-General Sir G. S. Whitmore, K.C.M.G., Commander of the Forces.

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