

was that he "interviewed the president" and did not see the clubs, I, after consultation with the other members of the Council of Defence, instructed him not to travel for that purpose any more at present, and his time has since been occupied with other work.

I presume that it is really not necessary for me to point out that if the members of rifle clubs never do any drill or any field work of any sort, beyond shooting at a fixed target, usually, if not always, at known ranges, and cannot therefore be moved quickly about and manœuvred as required, they will be quite useless for defence purposes—indeed, in my opinion, a source of danger to their friends instead of their enemies.

No sane man of course will deny the fact that a man who can shoot is better material out of which to make a soldier than a man who cannot, but to be of any use in war he must be capable of being put where he is wanted, and shown what to shoot at, which means that there must be leaders and that all must have some knowledge of manœuvre, fire control, fire discipline, &c. To give any hope of success, battle (as defined by a great authority) must be a combined effort directed by trained leaders, and this certainly cannot be accomplished by men with no other training than target shooting.

It will probably be said by advocates of rifle shooting only that that great soldier, Lord Roberts, advocates the training of every man to shoot. He does, but no one in the world knows better than he that rifle shooting only will not suffice. In a letter from Lord Roberts, read last February at a meeting of the National Rifle Association in Sydney, the following passage occurs: "The complete soldier required training, discipline, marching-power, morale, and rifle shooting. *All these were essentials*, and nothing would be gained by exalting one to the detriment of the other. It was advisable that citizen soldiers should practise rifle shooting, a comparatively easy thing for them to do in view of their leisure time. Nevertheless the other points should not be forgotten. The individual should learn rifle shooting by himself, not so with drill, discipline, and co-operation, which required a period of continuous training under proper organization *and good officers.*" The italics are mine.

ARMS AND EQUIPMENT.

The number of new short rifles already issued to mounted rifles is 1,160. There are 840 in store, to be issued, and more are ordered. These arms are in every respect suitable for the purpose, and all those already armed with them whom I have inspected have expressed satisfaction with them from every point of view.

There is a sample of an apparently excellent arrangement, a combination of rifle-sling, belt, and bandolier, now in the Dominion, the patent of an officer in India, which I believe would prove the most satisfactory method yet found of carrying the rifle, and should be tried. The mounted rifles are equipped with bandoliers, and I consider the infantry should be also, as it is a much better way of carrying ammunition than with the pouch only.

Greatcoats, mess-tins, and waterproof sheets throughout are undoubtedly required before the Force can be fit to take the field.

Some few infantry companies still have only white belts to wear over khaki, which are for every reason quite unsuitable, and should be exchanged for brown.

CLOTHING.

All the corps I have seen (field Forces) have been in khaki service dress with the exception of two or three, and I believe they have now procured it. The appearance of the Force is spoilt, however, by the various shades and make of the uniform: not only are the uniforms of battalions, and companies in the same battalion, different, but in many cases even men in the same company or squadrons are not clothed alike.

This is a great contrast to the appearance of the forces of the Commonwealth, where uniformity exists, and whatever steps may be necessary to provide a remedy should be taken with as little delay as possible.

STANDARD AND SYSTEM OF TRAINING.

A new Drill Manual has recently been taken into use by the infantry, and one has either been or very shortly will be issued to mounted forces.

As it comes within the province of the Inspector-General to report upon the "Standard and system of training," I feel compelled to point out that I consider the aim of those responsible should be, as no doubt it is, to have the very least possible change in all drill which does not affect the fighting efficiency of the Force.

To make my meaning clear, I would explain that drill is for two purposes at least. One to obtain uniformity and discipline, and the other to enable troops to be easily handled, and put in the best and quickest manner where they are required. Of course, as tactics change the portion of the drill which affects tactics must change also, but there need be no changes in drill which is only for ceremonial or purely disciplinary purposes.

For instance, it *does* matter whether a body of men is in such a formation that it can be with the greatest safety and speed moved into the best formation and position in which to fight, but it *does not* matter in the least, from a fighting point of view, exactly in what manner men "present arms" so long as all do it smartly in the same way at the same time. With the exceedingly limited time we have to train, and the very short service of our men on the average, if there are constant changes they never learn one drill properly before it is altered, and they have to try to forget the drill they partially learned, and work at another, which naturally discourages them. Unnecessary changes are bad enough in the case of the regular forces; they are much worse in the case of Volunteers, with other work to do. I have found at many of my inspections great confusion in the drill consequent upon these changes.