

the truth of these premises—and to all those who have given serious consideration to this subject the truth is beyond question—it is obvious that, with the limited amount of training to be carried out every year, having regard to the very easy minimum laid down in the Regulations, all ranks will have to work hard to attain the end in view.* Officers, N.C.O.s, and men must now understand that the task they are about to undertake is serious, and one worthy of their best endeavours. If it is the ambition of all to reach a state of high efficiency, their work of necessity must be strenuous.

The chain of responsibility for the training of the Forces runs link by link from the highest to the lowest. Thus, the commanding officer of a battalion is responsible for the efficient training of his unit, and to the company commanders is delegated the immediate duty of training their company under the supervision of their commanding officer. The company commanders in their turn are assisted by their subaltern officers and the N.C.O.s of the company. It has been too often the case in the past that the training of the rank and file of the company has been left to the sergeant-instructor, and the officer has been satisfied to relegate himself to the position of a mere looker-on. This reprehensible custom is to be very strongly deprecated. Where this system has obtained, it will always be found that the officer has lost the habit of command, if he ever had any, and, with that, the confidence and respect of the men he is supposed and intended to command. It must be very clearly understood that in the future the company commander is responsible for the training of his company, and that he and his subaltern officers and N.C.O.s must take a personal and active part in bringing his company to a state of efficiency and readiness to take the field when called upon. It will be by the efficiency of his company in all respects, and the ability of his subaltern officers and N.C.O.s as instructors, that he and they will be judged. The company commander is only here taken as an example, but these remarks will apply equally to any other commander in a similar position, such as a battery, squadron commander, &c. The duty of the sergeant-major or sergeant-instructor is merely one of an assistant, and he may be used to assist in the instruction of recruits, of first-year men, and such officers or N.C.O.s as may require improvement and instruction in training.

Since it will be to his subalterns that a company commander will look for immediate assistance in training his N.C.O.s and men, his duty in instructing the young officer will be a responsible and serious undertaking. From the day the young officer joins his company his instruction in all his military duties will commence, and it is to the company or other commander's own interest that such instruction should be thorough. He will be responsible that the young officer learns all the professional knowledge that one of his rank should acquire. He is responsible that he inculcates that spirit of discipline, self-respect, and soldierly bearing which is so necessary to uphold the dignity of his rank, and command the respect and ready obedience of the men under him. He must instruct him in those lessons of tact and courtesy in manners, combined with confidence in himself, without which he will never obtain the habit of command, and which will engender that esteem and confidence in him on the part of his subordinates that will go far towards the maintenance of proper discipline. The use of strong language towards subordinates is to be deprecated: it only induces irritation, and does not conduce to the cheerful reception of instruction or the respect that is due to an officer, and generally results in a loss of dignity. It will thus be seen that the responsibility of a company commander towards his subalterns is no light matter, and is to be undertaken seriously.

As regards the training of his N.C.O.s, the company commander has an equally serious duty before him. He is responsible for their efficiency as instructors, and he should never recommend the appointment or promotion of an N.C.O. whom he does not consider will do justice to one or the other. He should keep a record of their services and abilities, and carefully watch their work on the drill-ground and in the field. He is responsible for their theoretical and practical training, and he should insure that they are the "backbone" of his company. All that has been said above as to the qualifications of an officer applies equally to the N.C.O. It is only by the attainment of these qualifications that discipline, command, and efficiency can be maintained in the ranks.

Where the subject of training is concerned, the question of the trainer is always a matter of importance. Efficient training is due to the efforts of an efficient trainer: that is a postulate that needs no argument. The trainer is judged by his results, which are obtained by, and are in proportion to, his knowledge and methods of procedure. It must be obvious, and it cannot be denied, that the trainer must have a thorough grasp of his business, or his efforts will be so-much time wasted. It is also obvious that his methods and manner of training must be sound. Without these two qualifications he is only a trainer in name. Since the officers and N.C.O.s of the New Zealand Military Forces, in this connection, are trainers, it stands to reason that they must, among other things, have these two necessary and important qualifications of a trainer in fact as well as in name. The attainment of these qualifications is not an easy matter, nor one to be acquired without much hard study and practical application. Those officers and N.C.O.s who attended the training-camp lately held near Featherston will appreciate these difficulties, and a very great deal of strenuous and continuous work was accomplished before they succeeded in becoming the body of efficient trainers they are. All of which goes to show that if officers and N.C.O.s of the Territorial Force intend to take their position seriously, they have a period of hard work before them to render themselves fit to be trainers in every sense of the word. The training-manuals will have to be studied and applied intelligently, and their knowledge of drill must be perfect and thorough.

* In this connection it may be of interest to compare the conditions of service in the defensive Forces of Switzerland, the citizens of which State are a democratic and practical people. In Switzerland the service is universal, and the citizen trains from the age of twenty to that of thirty-two in the first line, which is the only one we need consider here. In his first year the recruit comes up for continuous training during a period of from sixty-seven to ninety-two days, according to the arm of the service to which he belongs, and works for eight hours and a half a day. In the years following he does from thirteen to seventeen days' training. Yet one does not hear that it interferes with his calling or trade, and it is admitted that the Swiss are a prosperous people.