

Spoon-fed Units.

65. Once the stage of unit training is reached, any direct intervention on the part of a specialist instructor, whether officer or non-commissioned officer, is fatal to the real efficiency of a Militia Force. The specialist takes a burden of responsibility off the shoulders of the Militia Commanders; in peace he may even produce a very fine surface veneer of smartness and intelligent working—so much I freely admit; but all the while he is as busy as a beaver undermining the war discipline of the unit. The men come to despise as incapable those who will lead them in war; the leaders lose confidence in themselves. A unit spoon-fed by outside instructors resembles that barrack-square make-believe, the Adjutant's regiment—a whited sepulchre. Outwardly it impresses the crowd, within is hollowness and death.

Combined Training.

66. Smooth and rapid co-operation between the companies of a battalion, or the squadrons of a regiment, or the battalions and regiments of a brigade, or the arms and administrative services of a division, is the result of practice. Theoretical study will no more teach a Commander and his subordinates how to work in with the other arms and bring off a stroke with the full momentum of every available man, mounted rifleman, gunner, and foot soldier, all together and all at the right moment, than it will aid the unfortunate person crossing between the North and South Islands from succumbing to sea-sickness. In the dry phraseology of the Training and Manœuvre Regulations, "Co-operation cannot be efficient unless all arms and services are constantly exercised together. Combined training not only gives each arm and service knowledge of the working of other arms and services which is essential to smooth co-operation, but also creates a mutual confidence between all branches. . . . A well-trained army is one in which . . . the whole has been carefully trained to combined action." Such combination it is the aim of regimental, brigade, and divisional training to produce.

War Training.

67. The more the training of the higher formations can be conducted under service conditions the more effective will they become. Practice in moving large numbers and in handling them across country and over every variety of ground is the chief essential. Hence in countries where soldiering is taken seriously, annual manœuvres become the climax of each year's training; the troops usually bivouac, or are billeted on the inhabitants, and the scene of operations, as in war, shifts from day to day over ground unknown to the troops.

Hence, too, Manœuvre Acts have come to be universal, the areas in which operations are to take place each year being proclaimed beforehand for military use. The old practice which obtained in England prior to the South African War of begging user rights over land from landowners has been abandoned. Not only was the patriotic landowner penalized, but, in practice, patriotism being an unvarying product, it was found that the same areas became available; and want of patriotism being also unvarying, the same blocks were marked out of bounds year after year. Thus the ground was generally limited in extent; its features were as well known to Generals and Staff Officers as their own home surroundings; and the manœuvres lost in consequence quite half their value.

Principles of Training.

68. Here, then, are my principles:—

- (a.) The elementary individual training of both officers and men can be, and on the war analogy should be, effected by experts apart from the units.
- (b.) A standard of efficiency is essential for the recruit. He should under no circumstances be allowed to take his place as a "trained soldier" in the ranks of his unit until, in the opinion of some high military authority, he reaches this standard.
- (c.) Unit training should be carried out in all its branches by unit commanders without the intervention of specialist instructors. The more advanced instruction of the trained soldier should be regarded as forming part of unit training.
- (d.) The training of units, and of the higher formations, should be progressive, leading by stages from the company or squadron through the battalion, regiment, and brigade up to the division of all arms.
- (e.) The instruction of the higher formations should be confined almost wholly to field operations, carried out over unknown country and, as nearly as possible, under service conditions.

The Swiss Example.

69. As regards the method of applying these principles, I cannot do better than take the practice in vogue in Switzerland as an illustration. For, first, I have studied their system on the spot so lately as last autumn; secondly, the Swiss are working heart and soul to train their citizens to stand up to the troops of the greatest military powers of the world; thirdly, they have been doing this for more generations than the number of years that any similar force has been in existence in a British dominion.

Recruit Training in Switzerland.

70. In Switzerland Cadet training is voluntary, the Confederation supplying equipment, arms, ammunition, and drill-blouses free of cost.

Recruit training proper begins in the twentieth year, and is carried out apart from units at certain centres, partly by a corps of permanent instructors (192 officers and forty-seven non-commissioned officers) and partly by Militia Officers and non-commissioned officers. The period of the recruit's