

and, in the last resort, they alone can decide. Not only should the principles underlying military training and military organization be submitted to their consideration, but examples drawn from other parts of the world should be adduced so that they may easily follow the methods by which those principles have elsewhere been put into practice. I propose, then, to disclose in simple terms the principles underlying training, and to discuss certain methods of applying them.

Individual and Unit Training.

61. Military training may be classified under two distinct headings :—

- (a.) The instruction of the individual officer, non-commissioned officer, and soldier ;
- (b.) The instruction of the squadron, company, regiment, battery, or battalion, and of the larger bodies—*e.g.*, brigades and divisions.

The fighting efficiency of an army depends mainly on the amount of sympathy, experience, and enthusiasm which has been put into the training of its individual components. Second only in importance to the education of the individual comes the practice, under war conditions, of the units and higher formations.

Individual Training.

62. In every country the training of the individual is guided, both as regards matter and form, by specialists who stand altogether apart from the units themselves. Schools and classes for officers and non-commissioned officers are formed at convenient centres where instruction is given in a variety of military subjects. Here the student acquires knowledge to be imparted, later on, to his men. Here sometimes, too, amongst Anglo-Celtic communities, he has been known to absorb false ideas as to principles, and heretical notions as to methods, owing to the want of grip upon doctrine shown by the central authority.

On the Continent of Europe the training of the recruit is, it is true, conducted by regimental officers and non-commissioned officers at the headquarters of the unit. But this system cannot hold good in war, and recruit training is then of necessity carried out in depots, or in reserve units, apart from the fighting unit in the field. In England, in the United States of North America, and in Switzerland, the system of depot training for recruits obtains to a large extent in peace as well as in war.

Recruit Training.

63. In all serious armies a standard of efficiency in drill, musketry, and other vital subjects is laid down by regulation. To this the recruit must attain before he can be regarded as being in any sense a "trained soldier." In one army the standard may be a high one, in another it may be low ; but, whatever it may be, *it is universally applied*. Otherwise, the war value of an army would remain unknown. The General might be a man of genius, his Staff erudite, his regimental officers bold ; but, where no standard of training has been exacted from the rank and file, there the army could not face the battle ordeal with confidence. In an army whose officers obtain their commissions through the ranks, the after-effects of recruit training make themselves felt, in a special degree, throughout the entire military edifice. The man educated in a faulty school is so handicapped in his future career that only in very exceptional cases does he emerge as a competent officer—unless, indeed, war comes to give him the best of all educations whilst his character is still plastic enough to receive the genuine lesson and to forget all the old bad teaching.

Value of Squadron and Company Training.

64. Squadron or company training brings Commanders into touch with their subordinates, very much to the mutual advantage of both. Here officers and non-commissioned officers learn to make practical application of the knowledge they have acquired at their classes, and become the recognized instructors of men already prepared by their work as recruits to profit by such tuition. Here, by degrees, the Captain, subaltern, sergeant, or corporal becomes, each in his own sphere, the recognized leader, guide, enlightener of his men. Here, in short, the Commander obtains that ascendancy over the minds of the youth of the land which engenders discipline—a word of excessively bad repute amongst a certain small section of the public.

But what, after all, is this modern discipline ? In a country like New Zealand the men join the ranks full of good will and anxiety to acquit themselves well in the performance of a duty demanded of them by the State. The officers and non-commissioned officers are at least equally anxious to show them how best to achieve this same national purpose. Gradually, mutual esteem, and very probably affection, are evolved out of the relationship of eager master and willing pupil. The two are knit together more and more closely by the generous warmth of feeling consequent on working for a purely unselfish object. There is no money in it. If the Commander sweats the subordinate, that sort of sweat does not go to make the Commander fat. On the contrary, he is bound in honour to sweat himself at least twice as much as his men. The rank and file (the workers) recognize these truths instinctively and very quickly, although they may be for long, and perhaps for ever, hidden from the spectacles of learned but ungenerous sophists. They learn to trust their instructors, and the instructors learn to trust them. When this point has been reached, the unit will bear the strain of discomfort and danger without any loss either of cohesion or courage.*

* To give such a system a fair chance of success the men must have learnt, as recruits, the elements of the soldier's work before they come to squadron or company training. To attempt to combine recruit training with unit training is to destroy the efficacy of both.