

As regards the methods of training, this will have to be carefully considered. As has been said, the training must be progressive. A thorough grounding in the elements of drill is an absolute necessity. The recruit must be taken carefully step by step from the commencement. He should leave nothing behind him that he does not thoroughly know, and everything that he has to do should be carefully explained where necessary. Human nature is prone to reason as to the necessity of things, and a few words of explanation as to reasons will often clear up a difficulty that might otherwise prove a stumbling-block. A man is always amenable to reason, and, where this is legitimate, he ought to be considered. A recruit is a recruit in drill until he has passed a test under the eyes of his commanding officer or Adjutant—preferably, where possible, the former. The commanding officer must be satisfied that the recruit is efficient in squad and company drill before he allows him to join the trained men of his company, otherwise he is only a weak spot in that organization. Not only must he be efficient at drill, but he must pass a test in semaphore work and his standard test in the recruit's course of musketry. He must also have a thorough knowledge of the parts of his rifle and the method of taking proper care of it. Until he has mastered all this he cannot be considered a trained recruit. These remarks apply equally to recruits in the other branches of the service.

The next responsibility of the company commander is the training of his company in drill, work in the field, and musketry. The Imperial training-manuals will guide him in the two first and the Musketry Regulations in the last. A special course of musketry on the range for recruits and trained soldiers in the New Zealand Military Forces is being considered, and will be published later. But in all his company training the commander must keep in view the fact that it is to be progressive. His object is to fit his company to take its place in the battalion under his commanding officer, ready to act as an integral part of the unit on the drill-ground or in the field. The ideal that a commanding officer should have before him is a battalion that is uniformly steady in the ranks, that drills smoothly with a minimum of orders, and can be trusted to work by itself in the field, under the company commanders, after the necessary instructions have been given to them and in turn intelligently imparted to all ranks in their companies. But this ideal can never be attained without much training and a high state of discipline, and, above all, the latter.

There may be officers and N.C.O.s who require further instruction before they are thoroughly fitted to take up the duties of training. To meet their requirements, it will be necessary for all Adjutants to institute continuous classes of instruction during the evening, and, with the assistance of their Sergeant-major Instructors, to make every effort to afford help to such officers and N.C.O.s as may call for it. It is only by such practical means, combined with a study of the manuals, that officers and N.C.O.s can fit themselves to become efficient trainers. The first duty of officers commanding units is to see that their officers and N.C.O.s are efficient and up to the mark, otherwise they cannot expect to train their units to the required pitch of efficiency. It is very strongly recommended to all officers and N.C.O.s not to wait to be ordered to attend classes of instruction to render themselves efficient, but to take their own training seriously in hand without delay, and be ready to take up the duties of training their men.

The question of discipline is supposed to be a serious and a difficult one—why, it cannot be conceived. It is an obvious fact that no organization, whether civil or military, and especially the latter, can exist in an efficient state without discipline. To descend to men's recreations: no team at any game can hope for success in a match unless it is willing to submit itself to that necessary discipline enforced by those responsible for the management of that team in its efforts for success. So as regards a body of men organized as a force intended to take part, if necessary, in the defence of their country, they must be willing to submit themselves to the discipline enforced by those under whose command they find themselves. But since the defence of one's country is of the highest importance, and the attainment of success in this is paramount, so the necessity for discipline in the Forces of one's country by far transcends that in a business concern or a mere matter of games. It is believed that submission to discipline will be an easy matter when its necessity is recognized, as it must be; but success in its enforcement will depend on the manner in which it is done.

That an army without discipline is no better than an armed rabble is a truth that is as old as history. No undisciplined people or troops have ever yet carried a war to a successful issue, though they may have prolonged it. In the American War of Secession, the Northern army lost more men through desertion than the whole of their losses in fighting or through disease during that war. This was due to want of discipline. In the end they did acquire discipline, which, coupled with their superiority and resources, brought their operations to a successful termination. But had they from the commencement had that spirit of discipline so necessary to an army if it is to be efficient, the war would not have been prolonged through the years it was waged, and the ultimate expenditure of blood and treasure would have been small in proportion.

On the other hand, history has innumerable instances of the triumph of discipline. No doubt it was this quality in his troops that enabled Alexander the Great to traverse untold difficulties and penetrate into India. The discipline of Cæsar's legions helped him to conquer half Europe and establish himself in Britain. The rigid discipline of Frederick the Great insured victory for his arms. Napoleon could not have overrun Europe except for the superior discipline of his soldiers, who in their turn had to give way to the British troops, inferior in numbers but steadfast in their discipline. In all the history of our wars in India it will be found that British soldiers were a handful compared to their enemy, but their discipline always carried them through. No soldiers in the world could have withstood the punishment the 57th Regiment received at Albuera; but they held their ground, and gained the nickname of the "Die-hards." They were disciplined, and knew that their duty was to stand firm or the day might be lost for the British. During Sir John Moore's retreat to Corunna, his best-disciplined troops was a brigade of the Guards. This body, because of their superior discipline, suffered a smaller proportion of losses to the remainder of the force.