

(1.) That the recruits be divided into squads of not more than seven or eight men, opened out in the form of a semicircle round the instructor, their eyes directed to an easy aiming-mark to their front: each man to face same, to assist instructor in correcting inaccurate positions.

(2.) The instructor always carries a rifle, with which he illustrates what he wants done, and lays stress on the points to be observed in the position he is illustrating. He should stand about five paces to the right front of the squad.

(3.) He then tells the squad to "carry on," on which each man practises the movement until told to rest. The instructor in the meantime inspects each man in turn, and does not pass him until he is correct. He can, and must, only watch one man at a time, while the others, instead of standing idle and getting bored, as in the old days, are practising the movement. Faults must not be allowed to pass unchecked, otherwise the recruit will get into bad habits difficult to eradicate. During periods of "rest" the instructor can ask the squad questions bearing on the work in hand.

The following progressive course of training for recruits is to be carried out:—

- (1.) Improvement of eyesight.
- (2.) Judging distance.
- (3.) Aiming, allowing for wind, &c.
- (4.) Trigger-pressing.
- (5.) Various firing positions.
- (6.) Grouping and application, with miniature and ball.
- (7.) Classification practices on range.
- (8.) Individual field practices and collective field practices.

The following instruction can be carried out on a well-equipped miniature-cartridge range:—

- (1.) Grouping and application.
- (2.) Snapshooting at moving and vanishing targets.
- (3.) Practical instruction in the use of the extreme-range sights.
- (4.) The sighting of rifles for longer distances.
- (5.) The training of a fire-unit commander in controlling, directing, and observing the fire of his men, in distribution of fire, in indicating difficult features of the ground. The training of men in recognizing difficult features, the use of field-glasses, and in the principles of mutual support—all by means of picture-targets.

If a 30-yards range (for service ammunition) is available, men can use their own rifles from the commencement, and so get accustomed to the discharge and the recoil.

VISUAL TRAINING.

The soldier's eyesight must be trained to enable him to (a) quickly pick up service targets at close ranges, (b) judge distance, (c) recognize the point of aim in collective fire, (d) quickly align his sights on the mark, (e) to watch for the "strike" of bullets.

Teach him his "military vocabulary"—viz., the terms applied to different features of the ground, such as "crest-line," "forward" and "reverse" slopes, &c.; what a battery, &c., looks like in action, so that his powers of description will be improved for reconnaissance, and so that he may quickly recognize a target or aiming-mark in collective fire. With practice, it has been proved that a man's eyesight can be strengthened for military purposes. The description and recognition of difficult objects—such as a fold in the ground, &c.—necessitates the employment of some system, which must be the same throughout the Forces, as fire-unit commanders are often interchanged. The Hythe method is quick and easy to understand. A few prominent landmarks—called "description-points"—are impressed on the minds of all so firmly that their attention is at once directed to any of the description-points which may be named. The position of the target with reference to any one of these description-points is described by directing the attention to an imaginary vertical line passing through the target, this line being so many finger-breadths right or left of the description-point, the fingers to be held vertically and at arm's length; then the position of the target is indicated on the vertical line by means of the figures on the imaginary clock-dial placed on the description-point. If, in the fire-unit commander's opinion, the objective is an exact number of finger-breadths from the description-point, he should order rather less than the actual measurement, thus allowing the men with the largest hands to recognize the point of aim quickly; otherwise, in some cases, the objective may be hidden by the hand. Where a clock-ray leads direct to a palpable target, time is saved by dispensing with finger-breadths, in which case the fire-unit commander's orders would be "Bridge (the description-point) three-o'clock ray—at mounted men—1,500—rapid fire." On the quick and accurate recognition of targets depends the correct tactical application of collective fire.

JUDGING DISTANCE.

"In practice good shooting will depend primarily upon the accurate location of the enemy's position and movements, combined with certainty in judging distance." No matter how good a shot a man may be, unless he can judge distances his skill is wasted—in fact, the better a shot a man is, the less likely is he to do any damage if he fails to judge distance correctly. It is important, then, that no opportunity should be wasted of training in this direction. The Musketry Regulations, Part I, lays down the methods of judging distance, and aids to the same. The best of all is the "unit of measure," of not less than 100 yards. A man may have his own unit of measure—whatever distance he is most familiar with, such as a polo, football, or hockey ground. It is quite a good thing to print on a board, on the parade-ground or near the drill-shed, that "This parade-ground is 100 yards long," or "From here to there is 150 yards," so that the men will get the impression of those distances fixed in their eyes and so use one of them as a unit of measure when judging distance.