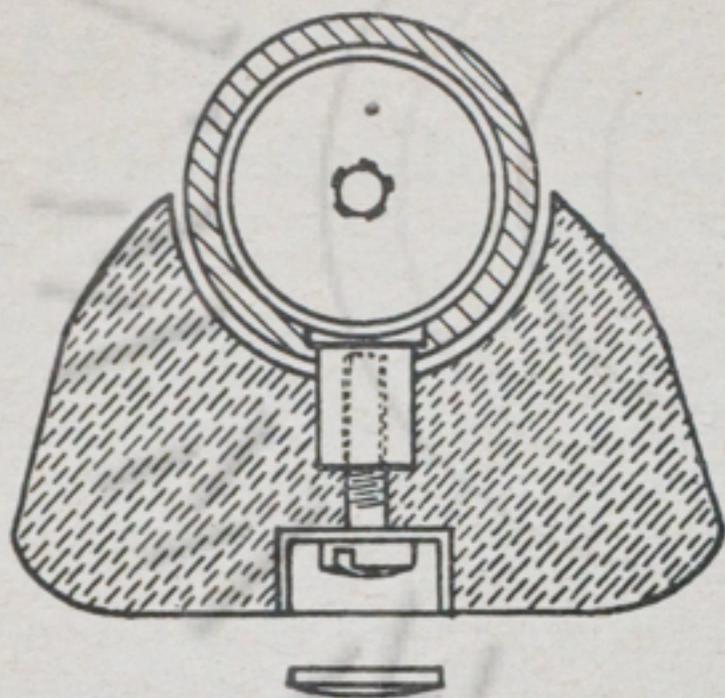


BARREL BANDS

If your rifle will still not shoot as well as you require, there is still one method left to try, and that is fitting a barrel band by which tension is put on the barrel and the group size or shape changed as the tension is changed. With a band, almost any shape of group can be obtained—strings straight up and down, or across or where you like. I have had several different kinds of bands on rifles and they all seem to work more or less—some better than others.

I don't know what happens when the tension is applied to the barrel—some say it damps down vibrations, some say it controls the "jump," and some say it puts a bending strain on the barrel. I have no idea what happens. I think the simplest type of barrel band is one made for me by Parker-Hale. It is a thin band of steel, fixed to a hollow threaded tube which goes through the fore-end. Below it in the fore-end is fitted a P-H sight element holder with a hole drilled through the bottom. A fixing screw passes through this hole into the tube. Tension can be applied with it and when all the adjustments are complete the cap is screwed in and everything looks neat and tidy (sketch 6).



BAND FITS THE BARREL AND THERE IS NO CLEARANCE AS DRAWN. THIS IS SHOWN TO MAKE IT CLEARER.

SKETCH 6

Barrel bands are all very well as a last resort and if you have facilities for adjustment and testing. There is not the least doubt that they do in many cases tighten groups considerably, but I would not like to tackle the adjustment without a fixed rest. Barrels with bands are very sensitive and it is amazing to see the groups tighten and improve their shape as the tension is applied. When the critical tension is approached the screw must be turned only a fraction of a turn at a time. Immediately that critical tension is passed the groups begin to widen and take on funny shapes. Often a different tension is required for different brands of ammunition—why I do not know again—so it is necessary to have enough of one lot to be able to adjust the band to suit it and leave it alone.