

stage (for the first 100 competitors of the first stage) on the Thursday at 800 yards. Competitors will be allowed to use either the Lee-Metford or Martini-Henry rifle, and will not be restricted to the weapon of the corps to which they belong.

It was stated by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman in the Imperial House of Commons the other night that Volunteers who had served in the India and the Colonies will be entitled to the new decoration on substantially the same terms as those who have served at home.

The selection of the names for the new battleships by no means meet with universal approval, though one good result has been a general rubbing up of naval history. More particularly is it thought that names bearing a more renowned record than the *Illustrious* and *Victorious* might have been chosen; for though the ships bearing these names had a fair record of services, it is not at all understood why they should have had the preference when there were such illustrious names available as *Vanguard*, *Captain*, *Montague*, *Namur*, *Russell*, *Defence*, *London*, *Kent*, *Burford*, *Berwick*, *Essex*, *Portland*, and *Nottingham*, besides many others. The painful impression made on the public mind by the loss of the *Captain* may not yet have sufficiently passed away.

Referring to a statement in the obituary notice of General Sir M. McMurdo that Sir Charles Napier had given the sword he wore at Meanee to his gallant son-in-law, a respected correspondent writes that the sword Sir Charles Napier wore at the battle was given to him by his father, and that it was left to his nephew, Major, now General, William Napier, to whom Sir Charles bequeathed his pistols also. To his son-in-law, Major McMurdo, Sir Charles bequeathed the sword given to him by Lord Ellenborough. In his will he says, "I leave the Ameer's golden-hilted sword to my brother Henry's son Charles. This sword was given to me by McMurdo, and I would leave it to his son Charles, but he has the sword his father so gloriously took in single combat in the bed of the Fullailee."

An interesting trial of the speed with which despatches can be carried by military cyclists took place the other day in Holland, having been organized by the Dutch Cyclists' Union in conjunction with the Ministry of War. The idea of the experiment was to ascertain the time in which despatches could be conveyed to the War Ministry in the event of an attack on the Netherland frontier. The course was from Maestricht to The Hague, a distance of about 164½ miles. It was arranged that some of the cyclists should ride the entire distance, while for others the journey was divided into seven sections, a relay being ready at the end of each stage, so as to secure the greatest possible speed. The rid-

ers carried their full military equipment and rode the cycles used in the manoeuvres. Between Maestricht and The Hague rivers had to be crossed no fewer than six times, and this was a cause of some delay. The first despatches received were brought by one of the stage riders at 6.34 p.m., the distance from Maestricht having been covered in 15 hours 14 minutes. Two of the direct riders, who left Maestricht at 3.30 a.m., arrived at The Hague at 9.6 p.m., having thus accomplished the journey in 17 hours 35 minutes.

The Board of American naval officers to whom was submitted the question of the utilization of the whaleback type of vessels as ships of war has submitted a report to the Navy Department at Washington. The report of the Board is adverse to the proposition.

General the Duke of Connaught has returned from leave, and again assumed command of the Aldershot Division, which has been held during his absence by Major-General Sir Baker Russell.

It is officially announced that the Queen has appointed the German Emperor Honorary Colonel of the 1st (Royal) Dragoons.

Saint George's day is looking up. It is an extraordinary thing that whereas in the Army we most religiously observe the name-days of three out of our four national saints, the patron of by far the largest section is as a rule allowed to pass by unobserved and unhonoured. The Scotch keep the feast of Saint Andrew, the Irish that of Saint Patrick, and the Welsh that of Saint David, but, with the solitary exception of the Northumberland Fusiliers, no English regiment goes out of the beaten track to honour our national Saint George, which is all the more extraordinary when we remember that for centuries "Saint George for Merrie England" was the rallying cry of our forefathers, and that the saint himself was a very distinguished warrior. As there have been several Georges canonized we are quite prepared to have this last statement questioned, but it does not affect the main question. This year we have had a very successful banquet at the Mansion House, which is in a way the centre of such festive gatherings. At this banquet were present not only leaders of our own life, but distinguished natives of "England over the seas." The Lord Mayor expressed the wish (which all Englishmen will re-echo) that this might be only the first of many similar gatherings in celebration of Saint George's day, while the American Minister's presence served to remind that in the United States every large city has its Saint George's Society, and that whatever we might be doing on this side of the water, there many great gatherings would be assembled in honour of the day.

Before leaving Coburg the German Emperor informed the colonel and officers of the Queen's Dragoons that he had been

appointed Honorary Colonel of the 1st (Royal) Dragoons in the British Army, adding that he hoped the 1st Prussian Dragoons of the Guard and the Royals would henceforth be bound together by the closest ties of comradeship. Lieut.-Col. von dem Knesebeck telegraphed in this sense to Lieut.-Colonel Tomkinson, and received the rejoined message in reply in German: "Vom innigsten Herzen grüßen wir unsere neuen Camaraden. Seine Majestät unser Oberst er lebe hoch.—Colonel Tomkinson, Royal Dragoons." (We most cordially greet our new comrades. Long life to His Majesty our Colonel.) The non-commissioned officers also telegraphed to their comrades at Coburg as follows: "We, the non-commissioned officers of the Royal Dragoons, send our hearty greetings to our comrades of the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland's Dragoons." In reply the non-commissioned officers at Coburg telegraphed: "We thank our comrades of the Royal Dragoons for their kind greetings, which we cordially reciprocate."

The Commander-in-Chief has issued an order directing that officers commanding units of Cavalry, Garrison Artillery, and Infantry in possession of machine guns are to be held responsible that a thoroughly-trained gun detachment shall always be maintained, with extra men under tuition, to replace casualties. General officers will test the efficiency of these detachments at their inspections, and report upon them.

The *New York Herald* states that there is a strong probability the United States European naval station will soon be abolished. It is alleged on good authority that orders will be sent to Acting Rear-Admiral Erben to return home in the "Chicago" at an early day, thus entirely depleting the European squadron. It is not the intention to revive this squadron for some time, as all the vessels of the Navy are more urgently needed in other waters.

Before the Channel Squadron leaves England again, the four battleships, "Royal Sovereign," "Empress of India," "Resolution," and "Repulse," are to be supplied with cordite charges for use with the 6-inch quick-firing guns. These charges, being supplied with experimental purposes, are to be used exclusively for practice. The new charges are to be stowed in the hottest magazines of each ship in order that the test of the cordite may be as severe as possible. The "Blenheim" is also to be supplied with cordite charges for her 6 inch quick-firing guns. At the end of six months after being supplied with the new ammunition, the captain of each ship is to make a special report on the cordite used, and that remaining on board.

The Union Steamship Company's "Moor," which, it will be remembered, was chartered in 1885 to act as an armed