

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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## Topics of the Week.

Apropos of the achievement of the Charlottetown team in the recent telegraphic rifle match, it is interesting to note that Prince Edward Island takes a front place in artillery matters also, its garrison brigade having taken every first prize for general efficiency given by the Dominion Artillery Association, and every first prize but one given for shifting ordnance. The Islanders' noteworthy victories at the Island of Orleans competition this year will still be fresh in the minds of our readers, and in this issue we publish the details of the Dominion Artillery Association general efficiency competition, showing both first and second places to have been this year captured by batteries of the P. E. I. brigade. Isolated as they are from the rest of the Dominion, the Prince Edward Island militiamen might be excused if they did not show as much interest in the work as some of the more favoured corps; but the very contrary is the case, as officers and men alike excel in the performance of the duty required of them. To the officer commanding the Brigade, Lt.-Col. Moore, it must be a source of no little pride to note that, without neglecting their duties as artillerymen, the members of his brigade successfully compete with the rifle against the marksmen of the whole Dominion.

We are pleased to have this opportunity of mentioning one feature of the Islanders' interest in military matters, which is peculiarly gratifying to the publisher of the MILITIA GAZETTE. This is, that in proportion to the military strength, we have more subscribers in Prince Edward Island than in any other district in the Dominion; and there are none more prompt in paying up.

A correspondent whose letter appears elsewhere in this issue criticises a recent appointment to a commission in the Regiment of Canadian Artillery, seeing in it a dangerous precedent. The appointee, we are told, recently failed in his examination at the Royal Military College, where he had been as a cadet. We know nothing of the circumstances attending that failure; possibly the cadet was unfortunate, and will redeem himself when he takes the course of instruction all officers of the permanent corps must undergo as a condition of their appointment. It would be well, therefore, to suspend judgment on his fitness for his commission until that time. If he then make a creditable showing, it will matter little, so far as the efficiency of the force is concerned, from what electoral district he hails; but in this connection we think

our correspondent will admit that no one locality has been unduly favoured in the appointments made of late, whatever may be said of those of a few years ago.

The prevailing idea seems to be that a Minister of the Crown is happy in the possession of office-giving patronage. As a general rule the case is quite the contrary. For every office to be disposed of, there are perhaps a score of applicants, each one backed by a politician or politicians with more or less influence with the administration. In gratifying one, the Minister disappoints all the rest; and they, having failed themselves in the use of this powerful lever, straightway lament to their friends that political influence should be considered in appointments to office. Until the Millennium, it is bound to rule. In filling existing vacancies, and providing a staff for the new Cavalry School, the Minister of Militia will have several appointments to make in the near future, and we sincerely hope that the best men amongst the applicants may be strongly backed politically.

A few weeks ago, it was stated in these columns that "an artillery commanding officer" had stopped his subscription, because, as he said, too much of our space was given up to rifle shooting. And as in this officer's corps there is a very keen interest taken in rifle shooting, we cited him as a representative of that class of commanding officers—lately written of by our outspoken friend of the *Victoria Warder*—who do not represent the sentiments of their commands. We find we did an injustice, having mistaken the communication of a humble Lieutenant for that of an influential Lieutenant-Colonel of the same name. To the latter gentleman we tender an apology, and this all the more readily as we have every reason to believe him a good friend of the paper. We mentioned no names in our previous reference to the subject, and will not name any person now, but would simply request those commanding officers who have been, so to speak, pointing out each other as the culprit, to be kind enough to take down their fingers.

As we understand there is about to be a change in the regulations respecting the issue of grants to rifle associations, we would respectfully suggest to the Minister of Militia that he consider the advisability of making the continuance of the grant conditional upon a certain average proficiency being attained by the members of the association assisted—that is, in the case of regimental and other associations, which are looked upon as the training schools for the men who subsequently will be in a position to compete for honours and emoluments offered by the larger associations. As we have said before, we are sorry that it is in contemplation to withdraw the grants from all the associations—Provincial and Dominion excepted—not under purely military control, because many of these are doing excellent work, and by arousing increased interest in inter-regimental or company competitions have done not a little towards increasing the number of marksmen in the militia. It is claimed, however, that some of these non-military associations are doing very little for the money received, and that in cutting off the dead limbs the