

GOSSIP OF THE MILITIA.

How Artillery Fire has been affected by the Improved Sights.

The Prince of Wales' Rifles celebrate in Honour of H. R. H. Silver Wedding Anniversary—Activity in the 54th Battalion—Annual Meeting of the 26th—Canada in England—Miscellaneous Notes.

AT the first levee of the year, held by His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, at London on the 22nd February, the Canadian militia had a representative in the person of Capt. Greville Harston, of the 10th Royal Grenadiers. Each officer present had a private audience with His Royal Highness.

The annual meeting of the officers of the 26th battalion was held at London last week, those present being Lt.-Col. English, Majors Irvine and Choate (adjutant), Capts. Buchanan, Deane, Matthews, Robson, Stevenson (paymaster), Lieuts. Rice, McEwen, Taylor and Robson. A satisfactory annual report was presented. The band committee were re-elected. Major Irwin, Major Choate and Capt. Dreaney were appointed to wait on the county council, with the Colonel, in regard to the annual grant from that body. After discussing financial subjects for a short time, the meeting adjourned for two weeks.

His Excellency the Governor-General attended by invitation at a dinner given by the officers of the Governor-General's Foot Guards, at the Ottawa drill hall, on Wednesday evening, 14th inst. Several officers in the city in connection with the D. R. A. meeting, and others on parliamentary duties, were included in the list of guests.

Montreal.

THE Prince of Wales Rifles gave a grand ball at the Windsor Hotel on Friday night, in honor of the silver wedding of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, which took place March 9th, 1863. Says the *Star*: The ball was one of the most brilliant witnessed in Montreal, the many hued uniforms, the handsome costumes of the ladies, and the military decorations making a *tout ensemble* of a most striking character. At the end of the room in the centre of the ladies' gallery an arch of bayonets was constructed, illuminated by many gas jets, which produced a dazzling effect on the steel arms. At the base of the arch, stars, also formed of bayonets, surrounded the initial letter of the names of the Prince and Princess—Albert and Alexandra. The Royal cipher surmounted the Prince of Wales' feathers and the motto "Ich Dien." Trophies of arms were also placed around the walls, and these bore the names of the children of the Prince, Edward, Frederick, George, Helena, Alexandra, Beatrice, Charlotte, Dagmar. The motto of the regiment, "Nulli Secundus," was also displayed. The decorations of the ball-room were greatly admired, and were very fine. The guests numbered about 800. On their arrival they were received by Lieut.-Col. and Mrs. Bond, and dancing commenced about ten o'clock. The quadrille of honour was formed by Sir Fred. Middleton, the colonels of the city corps, and their wives and lady friends. Supper was served at midnight, in the ladies' ordinary.

On Saturday the following messages were exchanged:

From Lieut.-Col. Bond to the Prince of Wales:

"The officers and ex-officers of the First Battalion Prince Wales' Regiment, assembled to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Your Royal Highness' marriage, respectfully beg to congratulate Your Royal Highness and Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales."

From the Prince of Wales to Lieut.-Col. Frank Bond:

"Princess and I thank officers and ex-officers of regiment sincerely for kind congratulations."

A detachment of a hundred men from the Prince of Wales' Rifles, commanded by Major Cook, and the Montreal Field Battery, under command of Lieut.-Col. Stevenson, marched to the summit of Mount Royal Saturday afternoon and there fired a royal salute in honour of the anniversary.

AT THE VICS' ARMOURY.

The Victoria Rifles have commenced the annual drill by half battalions, and hard work will for a time be the order of the day. When the season is sufficiently advanced to permit of open air drills the regiment will be well up in company movements and the manual and firing exercises. A great many hope it will make its first spring appearance in the new service caps, for the purchase of which the men are generally willing to subscribe in full.

The spoon competition in the shooting gallery have been brought to a close, the sixth and last of the lot having been won by Corpl. Kough, P. W. Rifles, with 46 points. The aggregates of best four scores out of six matches were taken as follows:

1. Lieut. Desbarats, Vics, 179 points.
2. Mr. Geo. Cooke 173 "
3. Staff-Sergt. Shaw 172 "
4. Sergt.-Major Rodden 172 "
5. Staff-Sergt. Brocklesby 170 "

The green aggregate, best three scores out of the six, was won by Pte. Hutchison, with 121 points.

The M. G. A. entertainment at the academy, in aid of the Victoria Rifles' Armoury fund, was simply an immense success. For the deserved commendations on those who took parts in the comedy itself, I must refer to the local press reports, but the enthusiastic reception accorded to the detachments from the different city corps in the march past was grand. The following corps had squads of some 15 men each: No. 1 Troop Cavalry, the Field Battery, the M. G. A., the Prince of Wales' Rifles, the Victoria Rifles, the 5th Royal Scots and the 6th Fusiliers, each detachment taking in an officer and a sergeant, the whole led by the M. G. A. band, and under the command of Major Atkinson. The Academy was literally packed from the front chairs to the upper gallery.

BUSBY.

Toronto.

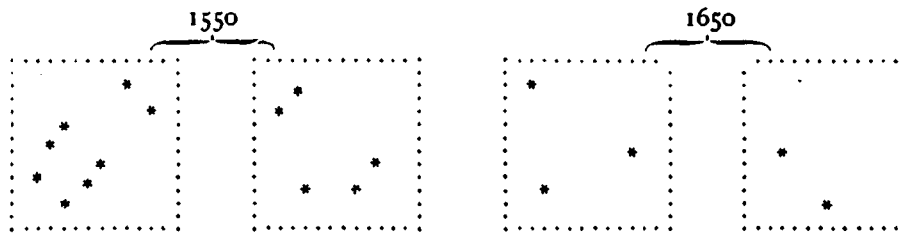
RURAL and I may not agree as to the justness of the grants made by the government to various associations, but I think we are united on the following extract if applied to the Canadian militia: "The truth is the different arms of the service are not sufficiently closely united; they fail to perceive that each only exists for the other, and that the efficiency of an army is measured by the product, not the sum, of the efficiency of each arm."

SERVICE VS. IMPROVED SIGHTS FOR ARTILLERY.

The Ontario Artillery Association has taken upon itself to say that, under the present circumstances, it is in favour of firing with the service sight of the 9 pr. as against Scott's improved sight. The association virtually says that unless each battery has a Scott sight to practise laying with, they can hit the target oftener with the old sight.

A friend of mine—a gunner—has "loaded" me up with the many virtues of this new sight. He says "you don't lose command over the axis of the piece, no matter how the gun wheels may be, your deflection is not guess work, and then, how many men will, when under fire, accurately multiply something by the difference of something else and divide by another thing and then scratch their heads to find out what they really have to do?" I couldn't follow this gunner in all his sayings, but I presume he has something in his argument, as the following diagrams of targets will show. I was, in fact, in the same position the men were when asked to fire with it.

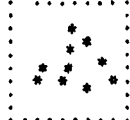
These taggets are 6 feet square—fired at by two steady batteries over the same range, and by very nearly the same men. The range was in the first instance 1550 yards, and in the second 1650 yards. The service sight was used at the first pair of targets, and Scott's sight at the second.



Thirteen hits out of 68 shots at 1550 yards with the service sight, and five out of 64 shots at 1650 yards with Scott's sight.

The new sight is a very good one, but to expect good results from one sight for ten batteries is like trying to teach a man the "manual and firing" without a rifle.

ACCURACY OF FUTURE ARTILLERY FIRE.



He also gave me an example of the accuracy of fire to be expected from the new English breech-loading guns. Ten rounds were fired by one man at a 3 feet square target, distance 1,000 yards, with the result shown in the diagram here printed:

He further says that the last Militia Report and its predecessors have been advocating—it always advocates, but never gets further—the issuing of Morris tubes to the Infantry Schools. "Really," he said, "we would almost think that the other schools required nothing similar. There is a Morris tube for field ordnance, being a rifle barrel attachment to a gun, aim being taken with the ordinary sights of the piece." These tubes, he considers, ought to be supplied to the artillery schools without delay.

LINCH-PIN.

The annual sleigh drive of G Co., Q.O.R., took place on Friday evening, 9th inst. The start was to have been from the usual rendezvous, the drill shed, but the "sleigh drive" on this occasion was on wheels. For an hour two brakes carried some fifty members of the company in a circuitous drive around the city and landed the precious freight safe and sound at the Albany Club, Bay street. Here an excellent supper was provided, the long drive having a decidedly appetizing effect on all who enjoyed it. Supper was served up in capital style, Capt. Bennett presiding. About sixty members of G company sat down to table, the head of which was occupied by Col. Otter, Col. Allan, Capt. Macdougall, Mr. Sears, Infantry School; Capt. Fahey, Capt. McGee, Capt. McDonald, Lieuts. Hicks, McLeod, Nelson, Brock and Mickle. The non-commissioned officers' staff was fully represented. After dinner the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were proposed and heartily responded to.—*Empire*.

Richmond.

THE officers of the 54th Richmond Battalion, with the assistance of their lady friends, are at present preparing for an entertainment to be given in Richmond after Easter. The operetta of "Trial by Jury," and the farce of "Advice Gratis" are the pieces selected. The funds are to be devoted to the establishment of a regimental fund.

It is hoped that the colours for the battalion will be ready for presentation at the annual camp this year, when the 54th are likely to be one of the corps out for training.

C. C. Cleveland, of Danville, has accepted the command and taken over the stores of No. 1 Co. The accession of this gentleman to the regiment is hailed with joy.

The rural corps especially ought to be encouraged to do all the rifle shooting possible. They have not the same chance of drilling as the city corps, but far better opportunities of becoming good shots. Twenty rounds per man issued for practice at company headquarters, would do more good than twice the quantity fooled away at camp.

The 54th are well off as regards ranges. At headquarters at Richmond they have a fine range up to 600 yards. No. 1 Co., Danville, has kept up practice all winter and has some excellent shots, viz: Capt. "Perk" Cleveland, our popular quartermaster, his son, Quartermaster Sergt. Cleveland, and Hospital Sergt. Shaw. No. 5 Co., Durham, has an excellent range to 600 yds., and No. 6 Co., Kirkdale has just got its targets up on a fine ground, where up to 1,000 yards and over can be had when we get the Martini-Henry's.

All in authority seem to agree that the chief end of the militia is their becoming good shots. What is done to encourage them? Echo sends back a very emphatic "nothing"!

L.IV.

The Council of the United Service Institution of India have decided to confer their next gold medal upon the writer of the best essay on "Infantry Tactics of the Future; and Changes involved by the Introduction of Repeating or Magazine Rifles and Magazine Guns."