

## THE ONTARIO MEETING.

To the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR:—As one who had the pleasure of attending the matches of the Ontario Rifle Association, at Toronto, during the week ending 28th June, I would like (without being thought captious) to point out some faults of detail that ought to be remedied before the commencement of the Dominion matches on the 17th Aug.

## 1st. Marking.

It was a pity to introduce a new system (Hill's disc marking) without previously having the markers trained to it. On the opening day of the matches the mantlets for the 6 targets on the left of the ranges were improperly constructed, and during the sighting shots some six or eight of the markers were severely cut by the splash of lead from the targets. Again, when the men of the 13th were put on to mark, their marking, in spite of the flattering resolutions passed by the Council, was very inferior, for which they cannot be blamed as target practice is not a speciality of a cavalry regiment. It is a well known fact that a great deal of practice is required to become a good marker, and the regular markers of the 60th Rifles were at Laprairie marking for the companies going through their annual course of musketry instruction, so that the marking at Toronto was done by entirely green hands. Another great pity was that there was no officer of their own regiment doing duty in superintending the firing and whole charge of the arrangements. Because regulars cannot be expected and never do obey the orders of Volunteer officers of any grade whatever, with the same sharpness and precision they would show to their own. There are several officers of the regulars now stationed in Canada, who have had large experience at Wimbledon, and have been on the paid staff of the National Rifle Association during the Wimbledon matches of the last three or four years. If the Council were to engage the service of a well known captain in the 60th Rifles, who has had a great deal to do with matches in Canada, and give him charge of the firing arrangements, they would save themselves an immense amount of trouble and could be certain to have things managed with despatch. In the first place none but the most experienced markers would be sent to the butts, the non-commissioned officers who act as register keepers, would be thoroughly instructed as to what positions were allowable and what not, and the officer in charge would have a couple of mounted orderlies to carry any communications to the markers. These small matters trifling as they appear on paper are generally the things which cause the most annoyance and delay at matches.

2nd. The measurement of the distances at Toronto is not extremely accurate. The writer was sure that No. 1 range was long and had it measured by some of the 60th

Rifles who returned it 525 yds. at the 500 yards firing point. Their measurement may have been not exactly correct, but at that range 6-100 of an inch increased elevation was necessary with a Metford rifle.

3rd. The construction of the firing points is extremely faulty. All the mounds are made far too narrow, being about 3 feet or 3 feet 6 inches wide, when they should be at least 6 feet, as few men like to fire lying straight behind their rifle, the council gave as a reason for not making the mounds wider or the probability of competitors firing at wrong targets on account of the proximity of the mounds. However, I cannot see why, with the whole of the target distinctly over it, any man *with care* should make a mistake. The other arrangements of the match were very good, and certainly none of the competitors could complain of want of civility or attention from the Council of the O. R. A. With the exception of the "May's patent Steel Arm" I did not hear of or see anything unpleasant, and I trust that none of the Volunteer Officers who had anything to do with the arrangements will be offended with me for stating that the markers would have been more expeditious with the fear of the guard room before their eyes, than they were when they knew they were not accountable except to their non-coms. To give the poor fellows their due, they had a hard time of it, and several were rather severely injured, I happened to see one of them having a large piece of lead cut out of his throat. Trusting that I have not taken up too much of your space

I am, Sir,

Yours truly,

ROYAL.

FROM BROCKVILLE.

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

Dominion day passed off very quietly here, there was no demonstration of any kind. The principle places of business, however, were closed, and a large number of the inhabitants proceeded to Prescott to witness the fine celebration there, where, at the regatta, a Brockville boat, the "Sleepy Canadian" carried off the first prize. A few of the Volunteers here devoted a part of the day to target practice.

The Brockville marksmen again distinguished themselves at the Provincial match four of whom took twelve individual prizes exclusive of the \$50 taken by the 42nd Brockville Battalion, Lt.-Col. Buell, five members competing.

The two G. T. Rifle Companies, Captains Young and Bell, all under the command of Major McKechnie, were inspected on the 3rd inst. by Lt.-Col. Gallwey, Brigade Major. After a close inspection of the arms, clothing, &c., the companies performed several evolutions in Battalion drill, including skirmishing, advancing and retiring firing, relieving skirmishing, &c., the whole of which

was creditably done; (the two companies paraded 92 officer and men) at the conclusion, Col. Gallwey complimented them on the cleanliness of the stores, drill and appearance, at the same time urging them to be more particular in fitting their accoutrements, and above all things to wear nothing but black on their neck when at drill. The officers of these two companies are all qualified, and from what I have seen and heard of the G. T. R's at other stations, I believe the force here is not second to any in the brigade.

Lt.-Col. Wilby, superintendent of stores has been spending a few days here, boating and fishing. The fine healthful air of the Lawrence, will, I trust, so improve his vitality that he will be impregnable to the dust and heat of the capital during the remainder of the season.

## 31st BATTALION V. M.

To the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

Believing every Volunteer remiss in duty and to his own interests who fails to subscribe for your valuable paper, and believing that occasional items of local as well as general interest have a tendency to extend your influence, I shall assume the privilege with your permission, of occupying a place in your columns.

You have doubtless often heard the query "Who has the pay of the 31st Batt. for 1867-68?"

That question has never been answered to the satisfaction of any officer or man in the Battalion. We have been casually informed that errors have been made in previous years, the men naturally ask "who made the errors and what are they?" the officers do not know, and the men say "then I know I am not going to remain in a company where such errors are made and no body knows anything about it." And they have in a large measure acted up to it, so that we are glad to fill up our companies with recruits, who actually refuse to come over two miles to drill, as provided in the much lauded act of the Minister of Militia. Another grievance we labour under is the delay in making appointments, for nearly if not quite two years we have had but one "Major," although the choice is not limited to one or two qualified officers to fill the vacancy, who are losing seniority every day the appointment is unfilled. In the same way resignations accepted last March are still vacant to the great injury of the companies interested and injustice to the acting officers in the vacancies. We hope all the grievances will be rectified with as little delay as possible.

A more pleasant subject to write about is a friendly match which took place at Flesherton, on the 1st inst., between Nos. 4 and 6 Companies of the 31st Batt., the Flesherton company entertained their comrades from Durham in a truly hospitable