

ation of the Militia Department whether an annual appropriation sufficient to encourage these to prepare for and engage in mimic warfare in company with the corps of all arms of their respective districts, would not be money well spent. Of course there is more to be done than to have the Department arrive at this conclusion. The Minister has to impress upon his colleagues that this desired outlay is more to be commended than some other proposed for the money, and were the secrets of the council chamber made known it would no doubt be found that the Treasury is valiantly defended against suggested appropriations for which there is no immediate necessity apparent. One great trouble about a parliamentary appropriation for a sham fight would be that so many regiments would strive to share in it that a choice of the privileged corps would be very difficult.

Already the command of next year's Bisley team is being actively discussed, and in Montreal the feeling appears to be very strongly in favour of the appointment of a local officer admirably qualified in every way for the post. An Ontario officer and Member of Parliament, who has much in his favour personally, is also prominently mentioned. But one serious objection which will be made—has been made to us, in fact, in a communication which cannot be published as received—is that it is unfair to the smaller provinces to give Ontario and Quebec so large a share of the honorary positions on the team. Without admitting the desirability of a hard and fast geographical rule of selection, we think that there is much force in the objection raised, and trust that if a likely candidate from the Maritime Provinces be put forward the officers above mentioned will endeavour to persuade their friends to withdraw their nominations for this time. Until this year the command was not held outside Ontario and Quebec since 1878; and the Adjutancy has also been pretty well monopolized of late by those provinces. Whoever the appointees may be, one qualification that should be regarded as essential is previous membership and active interest in the Dominion Rifle Association.

The Anniversary of Queenston.

(Charles Durand, in *The Empire*, 13th October.)

To day is the anniversary of the battle of Queenston—in 1812—one of the most disastrous to the Americans of the war. Considering everything, the Americans had all the advantages over the British and Canadians in equipment of troops, arms and numbers. They were greatly incensed at the capture of Gen. Hull and all his regulars and munitions of war at Detroit in the previous August. They were burning for revenge and the capture of the Niagara country, and during many months prior got up what they considered a crack army of invasion numbering from 6,000 to 8,000 men, including about 2,000 regulars under their best officers, such as Col. Scott and Capt. Worth—certainly the best officers they had. On the other hand, the British and Canadians were only about 2,000 strong, regulars and militia, under Gen. Brock at first, and, finally, after his lamentable death early in the day, under Gen. Sheaffe, who succeeded him on his death. It would almost seem as if the God of battles was against the Americans. The Americans before daylight attempted to cross from Lewiston to Queenston—openly in boats—and many of these boats were destroyed by firing from the British forts and musketry from the heights—but finally a certain number did succeed in landing on the shore below the heights, whilst a still larger number under Scott and Worth clambered up a bye-path leading from the river to the heights, a little south of the old suspension bridge, and gained the top of the hills south of Brock's monument. It was at this spot where the principal fighting took place, and where the Americans in the afternoon surrendered. The death of Brock early in the day disconcerted the Canadians, and they retired north below the village, leaving the Americans on the heights. Gen. Sheaffe in the meantime left Fort George, and passing quickly over the level country to St. David went up the low mountain pass and got in the rear or outflanked the Americans, and, assisted by a body of Indians under Norton and Brant, numbering about 100, who made a great rush in the road, attacked the Americans with great vigour and bravery and drove them to the brink of the precipice. The Canadians who had retreated below the village came up the hill from the north also to assist, and after fighting a few

hours the Americans surrendered with about 800 prisoners, among them Worth and Scott. Gen. Van Rensselaer, the commander-in-chief, had been wounded and carried to the American side. Some hundreds of Americans in their fright jumped over the heights among the trees, when some were killed and some were drowned in swimming the river. In the meantime the bulk of the Americans at Lewiston, although they knew the fate of war was going against their comrades, refused to go over to their assistance, although the officers rode among them and used all their influence. This was a most disgraceful sight—after all the loud talk they had used—the result being a complete defeat of the whole body, and the surrender of their best men, with several hundred killed. Full particulars, of course, cannot be given, but we may say that the result showed great bravery in the flank companies of militia—who were from the county of Niagara and above Hamilton—one of which, a very large company, was commanded by the late Captain James Durand, my father, whose name is mentioned in the military reports. Let our children and young people remember what their ancestors did at York.

(*Empire* Editorial, same issue.)

We heartily commend the action of the public school board in arranging that the pupils in the schools under their control shall indulge to-day in patriotic exercises in commemoration of the battle of Queenston Heights, which took place October 13th, 1812. It will have the effect of cultivating amongst the young folks an interest in the history of their country, and a respect for the noble men who defended it so bravely in time of need. The war of 1812 can never be recalled too often if we are a people wise enough to learn from the experience of the past. Its events speak eloquently of the indomitable courage, the firm patriotism, the heroic resistance to foreign aggression with which our fathers were filled, and if their spirit has not descended to this generation we are woefully mistaken. Queenston Heights at the beginning of the war was a worthy precursor of Lundy's Lane at its close.

The conflict between the two countries was not of Canada's choosing, and the American invasion cannot be otherwise regarded than as a wanton and wicked attack upon a friendly and unoffending neighbour. The quarrel lay between the Governments of Great Britain and the United States, and its causes were removed before hostilities began, so that if the United States were fighting for a principle they could have succeeded without firing a shot. The best element among our neighbours realized this, and never ceased throughout the whole course of the war to protest against this cruel and unnecessary conflict. But Canadians were fighting in self-defence, and their arm was thrice nerved with the consciousness of a just cause. In Upper Canada, as Ontario was then denominated, they sprang to arms under General Brock with the greatest enthusiasm, and captured the whole State of Michigan at the outset. Burning to avenge this defeat the Americans crossed the Niagara near Queenston in force, finding to oppose them only a small body of 300 men under Captain Dennis, who was compelled to retreat slowly. General Brock, who was near at hand, hearing the cannonading in the early morning, joined the Canadian troops and fell, mortally wounded at their head in charging up the heights. Meantime word had been sent to General Sheaffe, who was at Fort George, near the mouth of the Niagara, and who made a detour, approaching the Americans from the rear at the head of a body of soldiers and Indians to the number of about 1,000. The Canadians in the valley again charged up the hill, and the combined attack drove the Americans from their position and completely defeated them. Many prisoners were taken and the enemy discomfited.

Such a victory greatly raised the spirits of the loyal people of Canada, and in subsequent actions their success at Queenston stood them in good stead. The death of General Brock occasioned great sorrow, the sincerity of which was evidenced in after years by the erection of the magnificent monument on the heights near where he fell. The renewal of the monument at great cost after it had been destroyed by a miscreant was also a practical testimony of popular respect for the man and pride in the glorious event. To-day these scenes are being recalled in no vain-glorious spirit, but in honest, patriotic enthusiasm for deeds which saved this country when its existence as a portion of the British Empire was ruthlessly assailed.

The officers in attendance with the Emperor William at the Russian military manœuvres are believed to have been surprised at nothing so much as at the swimming exploits of the Russian soldiery. "Boots off!" exclaimed the colonel when his battalion reached the river bank. Then, making the sign of the cross, he plunged in himself, and the whole force followed him, swimming to the other side. Swimming, as a part of military drill, is not often heard of. The ancient Greeks, however, understood its value, and hence so few of them perished in the naval fight with Xerxes at Salamis.