

News of the Service.

NOTE.—Our readers are respectfully requested to contribute to this department all items of Military News affecting their own corps, districts or friends, coming under their notice. Without we are assisted in this way we cannot make this department as complete as we would desire. Remember that all the doings of every corps are of general interest throughout the entire militia force. You can mail a large package of manuscript, so long as not enclosed in an envelope, for one cent. At any rate, forward copies of your local papers with all references to your corps and your comrades. Address,

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Montreal.

Saturday May 5th was a red-letter day of the rosier variety for the Victoria Rifles, and no mistake. The battalion was overwhelmed with praise and congratulations for the prowess it had displayed in winning the Sir Donald Smith cup last year, and it won universal praise for the way it turned out for the event in question, a way which augers well for its success in retaining the cup this year. Naturally, the Victorias turned out in full strength. It was their show, and they were bound to keep their end up. It was not to be expected that the other other regiments would be as enthusiastic as the Vics about turning out, and they only had a couple of days to prepare for the parade, while the Vics had had the ceremony in view for several weeks. The Major General who was present made the event the occasion for a short address on discipline. He said: Before asking the generous donor of these handsome prizes to make the presentation, I wish to offer you my congratulations on your success. It gives me particular pleasure to see the Victoria Rifles at the head of the list this year, and for this reason? Three years ago I inspected this battalion, and though I was not quite so severe in my public remarks as some unofficial critics, I discussed, as I am always glad to do, privately with commanding officers the causes which, I thought, led to much of the adverse criticism heard on that occasion. The following year you, Col. Starke, entered upon your duties as commanding officer, and I have pleasant recollection of some conversations which we had with reference to the system of training to be adopted. That year I gave you a much more searching inspection, which you went through very creditably, though you did not take the prize. That you did not so was, no doubt, a disappointment to many, but it has resulted in a higher credit to the Victoria Rifles, since it has given them an opportunity of making a proof of discipline. On that occasion you set an example which I should wish to see imitated. There was disappointment, but it did not find vent in complaints, either against the inspecting officers or against the terms or the competitions, in fact, you took your defeat in a manly spirit, with a quiet soldier-like determination to make victory certain next time, and therefore I say that you have my especial sympathy on this occasion. In the competition in which you take the

prize this year, we aim at the attainment of military efficiency, as tested by various military exercises and administrative details, but it must be borne in mind that a body of men, however highly skilled in military exercises, is worthless and unworthy to be called a military organization if it is not imbued with a spirit of discipline. It is hardly possible to establish a comparative test of discipline, but every man when he puts on Her Majesty's uniform should be given a clear conception of what is meant by discipline, and should endeavor to attain the ideal of discipline in the highest degree.

By discipline is meant that power of self-control by which a man places his will and the exercise of his mental as well as his physical faculties, under the direction of the person appointed to command him. Those examples of heroism which are familiar to you all and are household words wherever the English language is spoken—Balclava, the Birkenhead, and more recently still, the noble example given on board Her Majesty's ship Victoria—are merely instances of this power of self-control. (Applause.) The incidents that furnish such examples are fortunately of rare occurrence, but every man that is standing here tonight has the opportunity given him of exercising the same quality which has invested those incidents with an undying fame. Every man can, if he will, put a check upon the impulse, natural, perhaps, to assert his own opinion against that of his superiors, to criticise and to discuss when he should simply obey. He can compel himself to keep silent when his inclination is to talk. He can resist the temptation to acquire the transient notoriety afforded by having his name in print. He can abjure as unworthy of a man the use of anonymous correspondence. He can do this even in those cases "where each soldier knows some one has blundered," and he will be doing his duty as nobly in the sphere allotted to him as those who rode into the valley of death at Balclava.

A good deal has been said and a good deal has been written about this competition, more, perhaps, than is consistent with the practice of that self control to which I have alluded as the soul of discipline. I am more fully conscious than any one here this evening how far this competition falls short of the ideal which I would have it attain. Having fuller means of judging, I can appreciate more fully than anyone else the causes to which this partial failure is to be attributed. Difficulties there will be everywhere, but difficulties are meant to be overcome, and there is one here this evening, Sir Donald Smith, who is well fitted to show us how difficulties can be overcome in every undertaking. He has given us the encouragement which he is always ready to accord to every noble and praiseworthy enterprise, and I know that you mean to show yourselves worthy of his encouragement. I can assure him that as long as I am the trustee of his valuable gifts I will leave nothing undone to

preserve them from being unworthily awarded.

Turning to the detachment of the 65th Battalion, the General speaking in French said: "Colonel Provost, officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the sixty-fifth battalion—Before proceeding with the presentation of trophies now before you, and intended to reward the merits of your successful competitors, I cannot resist a desire to speak a few words to you, in your own beautiful language.

"I am happy to meet you, because you recall to my mind the finest pages of Canadian history. I fancy I find in you the descendants of those heroes who fought under the command of General de Montcalm, of Chevalier de Levis and of the Marquis de Vaudreuil. Never forget that you belong to the same race as those of your valiant compatriots who formed part of the Papal Zouaves regiment, those crusaders of the nineteenth century. That noble regiment rendered itself famous by defending the church at Castelldardo, at Montone, at Monte Libretti, at Monte Roland, etc., and under the very walls of Rome, the Eternal City. You see, then, that good examples come to you from all sides.

"Your fathers rendered themselves glorious under those famous chieftains. 'Good blood cannot lie.' You are on this continent the guardians of old French valor. A legend holds that, in days gone by French generals had only to show their troops a redoubt and tell them: 'Here is a fort to be taken.' 'It is to be taken,' the soldiers would reply: 'Well, then, we shall take it,' and they effectually took it, as they said they would.

"You see now those handsome silver cups, due to the munificence of our distinguished fellow-citizen, Sir Donald A. Smith; you have missed them this year, but they still remain to be taken. Well, then; take them next year!"

St. John, N. B.

The New Brunswick Battalion of Garrison Artillery has lately sustained a great loss in the death of its Paymaster, Captain Geo. F. Smith. Capt. Smith was but 54 years of age. In his younger days he had been a gunner and later a non-commissioned officer in the corps and had held a position on the staff for the past nine years. He was one of the foremost citizens of Saint John, N. B., being a large and prosperous ship owner, having recently added to his fleet, steel sailing vessel of the most modern type. He was a man of splendid physique and genial disposition, and a keen sportsman. He was one of the lessees of the Bonaventure Salmon River. His funeral was attended by his brother officers, the fine band of the regiment and many of the rank and file of his corps, all of whom sincerely mourn his loss, and by a large concourse of citizens. Under the new regulations the duties of Paymaster are taken over by the Major.

The annual meeting of the officers