

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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## CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER.

### EDITORIAL.

The D. R. A. Programme.

Notes on Events of the Week.

COL. OTTER'S MODEL CAMP.

### MILITIA NEWS AND NOTES.

THE MILITIA PASTIME.

MILITIA GENERAL ORDERS.  
No. 12 of 15th June, 1888.—[Concluded].

### MISCELLANEOUS.

## The Dominion Rifle Association Programme.

THE prize list for the matches to be held on the 3rd September is out, and contains the programme which we indicated in our issue of the 24th May last. Want of space prevents us from reproducing it, but this is the less necessary as Col. Bacon sends copies to all members of the Association, and any other persons requiring them will be furnished, we are sure, on application.

There is no doubt that the changes made from last year's arrangements will meet with the approval of the competitors in every respect, though if the new Quebec ammunition keeps up the good reports lately received of it, it may be questioned whether it would not have been more satisfactory to have fired the whole three ranges of the Dominion match with the Snider.

We may add to our previous remarks concerning the changes, that for the purpose of making the range more difficult the bull's eye at 400 yards has been reduced in diameter to 20 inches; that nearly the whole of the additional prize money has been devoted to increasing the inferior prizes, so that there is now a greater chance of capturing a ten dollar prize, while except in the extra series matches the prizes of least value have been raised to five dollars, and lastly that pending an announcement of the new Governor-General's intentions towards the association, it has been necessary to leave out the match for the prizes usually offered by that functionary.

## Topics of the Week.

A new infantry equipment, known as the Slade-Wallace, after the names of the two designers, has, since its exhibition by Col. Slade at a meeting of the Royal United Service Institution in April last, attracted not a little attention in England. Mindful of his fellow Canadian volunteers and their interests, Gapt. Greville Harston has purchased in London and forwarded to the Minister of Militia a complete outfit of the new pattern. This Slade-Wallace equipment is claimed to be superior in every respect to the valise equipment of 1882 pattern. Its details are as follows:—The front ends of the braces are passed through D's on the belt and pouches, and buckled; the back ends after being buckled to the waist-belt behind, go round and support the great coat rolled 15 inches long, and the waterproof sheet if one is carried. The mess-tin rides on the coat, and is kept from shifting by the strap being passed through D on mess-tin cover, and runner on braces, and then round the great coat; the coat and mess-tin balance the ammunition which is carried in the pouches in front. The valise weighs only 1 lb. 8 ozs., and holds a complete field kit, including emergency ration and pair of shoes; it rides on the shoulders, the carrying straps passing through D's

on the braces just behind the shoulder-straps, and fastening to the front buckles of the braces. When on the march it can be worn high up or let down at the option of the wearer, by taking up or letting out the straps in front. The havresac has two short carrying straps, so that when the valise is not worn it can be carried in its place in the same manner. The pouches which have been made in anticipation of the introduction of the small-bore magazine rifle hold ninety rounds, thirty being in loops, and are so arranged that four cartridges can be got at readily without opening the pouch. These pouches sit close to, but well clear of, the body, and even when full of ammunition do not chafe or rub the sides and lower part of the body.

Thirty-two points out of eighty possible was the average scoring made by the troops in camp at Niagara in their annual practice. The low scores were no discredit to the men. They were as smart and intelligent a body as are to be found anywhere in the Dominion. True, the regulations for camp say that the greatest attention is to be paid to rifle shooting, and to an outsider it will appear strange that greater proficiency is not attained. But the mystery is explained when it is stated that these men fire only twenty shots in each two years of their service, and that so poor is the system of instruction that even this scanty allowance is wasted in hap-hazard firing. It would be no more ridiculous to expect the camp commandant to personally teach the whole brigade the rudiments of their drill, than it is to have one man, discharging the thankless duties of Musketry Instructor, personally teach the whole brigade how to shoot and hit, for the officers and non-commissioned officers, being appointed without any regard to their ability to instruct those under them in the use of their weapons, are generally of no use upon the range. Musketry instruction should be a company, not a brigade affair, and it should be the sole duty of the Brigade Musketry Instructor to see that the subordinate instructors were up in their work and attended to it.

A correspondent, doubtless vexed at getting the worst of a struggle with red tape, writes the MILITIA GAZETTE a letter indignantly protesting against members of the militia being compelled, as he says, to pay a duty on military rifles imported for target shooting purposes. There is no such tax, arms imported for the use of the militia being duty free, upon certificate of the Deputy Minister of Militia that articles so imported are of such a character as to be unfit for any other use. An order-in-council passed last year removed the grievance for some time existing on this score. Officers were granted the privilege of absolutely free importation of rifles, for their own use or the use of men under their command. "Military tailors and others," who have to pay the duty upon importations, secure a remission in full as soon as it is shown that the rifles have passed into the use of the militia. If our correspondent committed the error of making the importation himself instead of getting an officer to make it for him, his remedy lies in paying the duty and, producing the proper certificate, immediately securing a refund.