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Topics of the Week.

The establishment in connection with the other branches of the Canadian service, of a general efficiency competition, such as that which has worked so successfully in raising the *esprit de corps* of the artillery, would be a great step in advance. In the mother country the volunteer efficiency competition appears to produce excellent results. In this, points are given for the enrolled strength of corps; for certified officers and non-commissioned officers; for bicyclists, bearer and signal corps; for strength paraded at inspection; for skill with the rifle, according to percentages of first, second and third class shots. There is annually the greatest emulation amongst the Volunteer corps of the mother country, for the places of honour in the efficiency competition; and were such a scheme put into operation in Canada, it could not fail to have excellent results.

This is from the *United Services Gazette*: "Relations between the American Navy and the British are pleasanter than would be imagined from the desperate efforts of one party in the States to set the two countries at variance. When Americans were in dire peril from the rising of negroes on the Island of Navassa, a British gun-boat, the *Forward*, Lieut.-Commander Gray, steamed to the rescue and carried off the American survivors. And the other day when there was fierce fighting in Honolulu it was the American warship *Adams* that landed a squad of Marines for the protection of British interests. British interests could not have been in better hands, for the American Marines are a crack corps, as steady as a rock, and as brave as lions. This is what ought to be."

All the previous records in regard to long range shooting, under Queen's Third Stage conditions were cut by Sergt. Fulton, G.M., at a meeting of the North London Rifle Club recently with 94 points out of a possible hundred.

The military canteen systems have been abolished in India, and coffee shops, refreshment rooms, and liquor bars have been substituted. Every effort is to be made to wean the soldiers from converting the bar into a lounging room. These coffee rooms are working most profitably with certain regiments. The proceeds are applied to the promotion of the comforts, material and other, of the soldiers. As a part, also, of the general scheme of Sir Frederick Roberts for improving the condition of the soldiers, regimental institutes have been started on a wide basis to provide for rational amusement. Each institute is divided into five branches—library and reading room, a recreation room, an Army

Temperance Association room, a theatre, and, finally, a refreshment department. A sub-committee of three non-commissioned officers will assist each commissioned officer in charge. The Commander-in-Chief directs that every endeavour is to be used to suppress the use of profane and obscene language. Soldiers guilty of misconduct will be excluded. One of the main objects is to render the institute a means of raising the tone of the soldiers to the level of the best behaved characters in each regiment. Sir Frederick Roberts is fast establishing his reputation as the soldier's best friend, and his reforms are already bearing valuable fruit.

A Year of Progress.

Militia prospects are bright, if exceptional activity in every part of the Dominion count for anything. Toronto is organizing another mammoth Thanksgiving Day parade; at last sees official preparation for the long sought cavalry school there; has viewed the plans for her new drill hall—to be the finest in the Dominion; and talks of the formation of a Highland corps. In Hamilton the Thirteenth Battalion shows marked activity; still blushes with pride at the praise accorded its fine band at Washington, and waits with pleasant expectation for Toronto's verdict after Thanksgiving Day parade, in which the Thirteenth will participate. In Brantford the gallant Dufferin Rifles are brushing up to show what they can do in comparison with the crack corps of the big cities. London keeps quiet about the re-established Seventh, but is no doubt preparing a surprise. Meantime the credit of that city is well sustained by D company of the Infantry School Corps; who, having just vanquished C company with the rifle have yet on hand a similar engagement with C Battery R.C.A. on the Pacific coast. Kingston still talks of the A Battery sports, and praises the artillerymen for their feats of skill and daring. At Quebec B Battery has held a singularly successful rifle meeting, and shown an enthusiasm over the sport which might well be emulated by corps more advantageously circumstanced. Prince Edward Island rings with praise of the artillerymen for their Orleans triumphs, and of the riflemen for their prowess in defeating the teams of all Canada. Montreal flatters itself upon the carrying out of this same tournament; and upon the prospects of the great scheme outlined for next season; and in this commercial metropolis Major Atkinson with his contemplated cadet corps and Capt Macaulay with his already established High School companies, are going to make soldiers out of even the boys and girls. So the list might be indefinitely extended, were not the above facts sufficient indication of the unusual interest manifested by the public in the militia, and by the force in the duties devolving upon it. The activity is healthy and self-reliant. Progress is sought to be made, not merely conditional upon a government subsidy, or even with the expectation of such assistance, but the young men are willingly giving their time and money for the love of their military pursuits and exercises, and the several communities, realizing the public benefit derivable, are generous in their assistance. Taken all through, there has probably been greater progress made by the militia this year than in any other since the organization of the force.