

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF
THE MILITIA FOR 1872.*(Continued from Page 352.)*

However, both these points have been seriously and favourably considered by the authorities at headquarters—(1) A most liberal scale of rations—all that can be desired—has been granted. This has already been adverted to in this Report. The troops are invariably encamped in a healthy locality, with an abundant supply of pure water at their disposal, and with excellent sanitary regulations for their guidance. (2) By following the Adjutant General's "instructions" as to routine of duty and variety of drill's, beginning at the A, B, C, so called of military knowledge, with simple company drill, and ending with practical field days and sham battles—three of the service being represented—the relations between tactics and drill being taught. Nor is the necessary course of musketry instruction omitted. Officers and men are thus best instructed in their duties, and their military intelligence becomes greatly developed.

While this training is going on, the men are not overworked. Ample time is afforded for foot ball, cricket and other manly games. A reading room, too, without expense to the men, can ordinarily be established, supplied with local newspapers and periodicals; and besides all this, by strictly enforcing the orders as to not admitting spirituous liquors, crime will be conspicuous by its absence, and the sojourn in camp will surpass the expectations of the most sanguine.

In order to show the practical utility of our camps of exercise is being more and more appreciated by the people, I may quote the following from the *S. John Daily Telegraph* of the 8th July last:

"Leaving out of view the military knowledge gained by the volunteers in camp, it is certainly a great benefit to the men physically. Exercise in the open air, sleep under canvas, life in the fields, change of diet, regular habits—all have an influence for good. The men who leave the routine of office, or study, or workshops, for this are benefitted to an appreciable degree. They return to their duties refreshed and invigorated—rested mentally and physically.

MILITARY RESOURCES.

An important duty required of the officers commanding a military district, as indeed of all Staff officers is to make himself thoroughly acquainted with its resources.

Happily, even a careless observer cannot fail to notice the rapid but regular improvement in the resources of this country; emigration yearly increasing the population; agriculture, and commerce, with their necessary accompaniments of modern civilization progressing side by side; means of transport made easy; roads, railroads and steamers, available in every direction. While, therefore, the resources of the country are being developed, it is a subject of congratulation to the patriotic that the efficiency to our local forces is not neglected, as it has been justly stated that "the warlike strength of a country lies not in roads, railroads, steamers, breech loading rifles, and rifled guns, but in the skill and talent of the men that use these things."

"Military schools" are established in our midst; "tactical brigade camps" have become an institution of the country; drill and field manoeuvres are studied with eagerness, and last, not least, the weapon with which the force is armed, with its increased range, accuracy, and rapidity of fire, is now handled

with judgment and intelligence, not alone by a few picked "marksmen," but all who attend annual drill have opportunities afforded them—somewhat limited 'tis true—of learning to use their rifles with effect.

In respect to schools of military instruction—for the first time placed under the immediate control of the Militia Department (heretofore conducted by Her Majesty's troops stationed in the country)—it affords me pleasure to report that the attendance at the military school of instruction at Fredericton, during the six (6) months in operation from 1st December last, has been good, viz; 64 cadets, who obtained 2nd class certificates, versus an average of 55 during a similar period under the former *regime*. Besides these, three received first class certificates.

It but too often happens that but few officers of the Active Militia attend these schools, preferring to pass an examination before a Board of Examiners, which examination must necessarily be unsatisfactory; and if, in brigade camp, not unfrequently hurried, through want of sufficient time at the disposal of the officers commanding the board. However, at our school last winter, not only was there a fair proportion of officers, but an excellent class of intelligent young men, students of the University and others, attended—the President of the University himself seeing the advantage which his students derived from obtaining a military "education" while their ordinary studies were not neglected. I am glad to be in a position to add that we subsequently utilized the services of many of these young gentlemen, who have become useful members of the Active Militia.

The Adjutant General's orders as to the subjects for 2nd class certificates being supplemented by a short course of musketry instruction, were carried out with good results and I beg to suggest that such cadets as desire to remain for a lengthened course of musketry instruction, on obtaining 2nd class certificate, together with a prescribed qualification in "musketry," be granted a special certificate, with a view to their services being available to act as musketry instructors to their respective corps.

In conclusion, I take this opportunity to offer my best thanks to Lieut. Colonel Otty, Brigade Major, for the Assiduity and zeal with which he performed the duties of Adjutant of the school; also to Capt. McKenzie, for his efficient services as Instructor.

TARGET PRACTICE.

As regards target practice, the Military District under my command (New Brunswick), occupies a proud position in the "Dominion Army," it being the best shooting district in last year's course; and although, owing to the presence of so many recruits in the ranks, we cannot expect our "figure of merit" to be high this year, the strongest desire to excel has been evinced at our various camps, and I consider the improvement in the "target practice regulations" has ensured more regular firing than heretofore.

Now, the recruit, as well as the trained soldier, besides having to practice individual firing, as in the ranks—standing at 200, kneeling at 400, and is allowed any position at 600 yards—having to fire his five rounds in succession, he is enabled carefully to exercise his judgment and to avoid *hurry*; and while our consecutive firing is, to mind, infinitely superior to firing single shots in rotation, it still remains a question, I think, whether the following slight alteration may not be adopted with advantage, viz: "two

men in succession to be called to the front by the officer superintending the practice, and fire shot and shot alternately until they have completed their five rounds." This has already been adopted by our Provincial Rifle Association.

A list of the best shots, in each Company, Corps, and Battalion, and the District is herewith transmitted.

The best shot in the District is Private E. Phillips, No. 6 Company, 52nd Battalion—49 points.

RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

In addition to increased attention being paid to the prescribed course of target practice, the golden laurels won by our "marksmen" at Wimbledon has tended to give fresh impulse to the efforts of our people in the working of our various Rifle Association. It is to be hoped that the precedent thus established of sending representative marksmen "from our Active Militia" to compete against the best men Great Britain can produce will become an annual custom, and that not only every branch of her army, but every British colony will be represented at these annual Wimbledon competitions—such matches, as a rule, to be with a weapon with which the force is armed: the Snider Enfield. From the knowledge and practice of rifle shooting taught at the individual firing of his company, the "marksmen" is now led by successive steps, through the various prize matches of the "Battalion" "County" and "Provincial" Rifle Associations, until he has reached the "goal," and obtained the highest prize that a Canadian can aspire to—that of being selected to represent this prosperous Dominion at Wimbledon of our "Fatherland."

It must be added that the success which has attended our marksmen has not been without its good results at both sides of the Atlantic; amongst those here may be mentioned that the people who heretofore manifested but little interest in our efforts, have already been convinced that acquisition of skill in rifle shooting is not labour lost, and they have moreover, given tangible proofs of their willingness to lend us a helping hand. Our Rifle Associations have in consequence this year been more successful than usual, as will be observed from the returns hereto appended. It is to be hoped, therefore, that local aid and local encouragement will no longer be withheld from the mainstay of the force of the country—our Rifle Associations.

The following Associations have held competitions this year:

- 1, New Brunswick Artillery Association—recently formed.
- 2, New Brunswick Provincial Rifle Association.
- 3, Charlotte County Provincial Rifle Association.
- 4, St. John Provincial Rifle Association.
- 5, Carleton do
- 6, King's County do
- 7, York do
- 8, Northumberland do
- 9, 62nd Battalion Rifle Club.
- 10, King's County do
- 11, 71st Batt do

I have the honor to be Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

G. MAUNSELL, Lt. Colonel,

D. A. G., Militia,

M. D. No. 8.