

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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## Comment and Criticism.

THE seven schools of military instruction already established in the Dominion appear to be fulfilling in a satisfactory manner the objects for which they were instituted. The several corps upon which the schools are formed are respectable representatives of a permanent force of different arms, without which the militia would have no suitable models of drill and discipline. It is gratifying to observe that the advantages these practical schools afford for the instruction of officers and non-commissioned officers are being availed of to the full extent their facilities will permit. All the schools instruct in military exercises, discipline and interior economy, while the mounted officers and those who desire to qualify for the duties of adjutant and field officers are specially instructed in equitation at the cavalry and artillery schools. The benefits derived from these courses of instruction are apparent throughout the force. Many young officers have become qualified for command in the junior ranks to which they were first appointed, and are seeking further knowledge for the performance of higher duties when vacancies permit. In like manner very many of the non-commissioned officers have shown an equal desire for qualification by attendance at the schools for instruction.

THE improved tent exhibited by the patentee, Sergt. Lewis, of the military stores department, Québec, on the Rideau rifle range last week, was an object of much interest and very favorably commented upon by those who examined it. And in this number were included leading officers from all parts of the Dominion. The improvement is twofold. Sergt. Lewis first turned his attention to securing better ventilation than could be had with the service tents now in use. He altered the form and shape of the air pockets until now, with the use of

his plan, it is claimed that eight or ten men can continue to live in the tent without the air becoming impure. But the other improvement excited even more interest and its practical worth was very apparent. This consisted in an adjustable pole, the length of which might be varied at will through the operation of a screw working in the ordinary socket where the two lengths join. The pole is lengthened by the simple turn of a handle on the outer side of the socket. At present with every change in the weather, the ropes of a tent have to be tightened or loosened, one by one, with the hand, and the operation is often attended with considerable discomfort. For instance, a heavy rain storm will come on in the night, and waking from their sleep the occupants of the tent will find the pole creaking or bent and in imminent danger of breaking should the ropes be not speedily slackened. The regulation mode of doing this in the past, has been—in order to preserve the clothing dry—to hastily emerge in nature's garb, and shrinkingly, as the cold drops fall upon the back, make the circle of the tent, slackening the ropes anything but evenly. But with the device above mentioned in use, all that has to be done in such cases is, with a simple turn of a handle, to shorten the pole a few inches, thus simultaneously and evenly loosening all the ropes. The authorities of the militia department will likely make a thorough test of Sergt. Lewis' improvements.

ANOTHER novelty exhibited on the range was the model of a newly patented double target, the invention of Pte. J. A. Morrison of "C." Co. I.S.C. It is a clever contrivance, and in many ways is a decided improvement upon that at present in use. There are two targets connected so that one rises simultaneously with the disappearance of the other, thus permitting of a vast saving of time in firing. With this system in use the marker when a hit occurs observes where the bullet has passed through the target, and before pulling it down places the spotting disc in the same place on that which is about to be raised. The marking discs are furnished by a sextangular block, the sides of which denote respectively bull's eye, inner magpie, outer, ricochet and miss. The disc block is constantly exposed, and the "miss" turned after each hit has been duly recorded, and remaining until next hit. The patches to be used upon his target, the inventor has gummed after the fashion of postage stamps, so that not only will the marker be relieved of the task of applying paste to each, but, no corners being missed in the wholesale preparation of these gummed patches, they will adhere better. The targets are raised or lowered not by the application of the hands to the frame as at present, but by the turn of a wheel, further lessening the marker's work. To properly operate this system the targets would have to run in iron frames, and an objection is therefore immediately raised on the score of expense. Then there might be uncertainty about the placing of the spotting disc before the target hit had been lowered for examination, and this would be a strong objection with riflemen. But there are many good points and genuine improvements on the present system which should ensure some attention to Pte. Morrison's patent, which he may perhaps yet be able to further improve upon and see adopted by some of the larger associations.