

thirty or more may be relied on. Martini ammunition has been placed in the militia stores and can be procured in the usual way, on deposit of \$24 per 1,000 rounds.

7. The association continues under annual obligation to Lieut.-Col. Maunsell for his prize in the Nursery match. The council would insert here their further thanks to him for having aided several applications to headquarters, and for his kind attendance at the conclusion of the annual matches to assist in the presentation of prizes. Among the prizes presented was a handsome pitcher, a gift to the marksmen of Kings county, by Wm. Pugsley Jr., M.P.P. The executive committee had the pleasure of carrying out the conditions of the prize in accordance with Mr. Pugsley's wishes, and the council are glad to mention this act of favor to so large a portion of the competitors.

8. The Intercolonial and New Brunswick railways gave the usual reduced rates to competitors, for which the council begs to return the thanks of the association. Before the next competition, the association should make a determined attempt to secure free passage to Sussex on the Intercolonial for volunteers in uniform. If it is granted anywhere on that line our riflemen should also enjoy the right.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN H. PARKS, Major,
President.

October 6th, 1886.

The "United Service Gazette's" Military Retrospect.

THE year which closed last night has not been one of those marvelous periods which stand out high and rugged from the surface of history and become a landmark for the student in ages to come. It is rather a bend in the ever-winding stream of time, which, while our attention has been fixed upon the events of the hour, has brought us almost unconsciously into a different state of affairs. In point of interest none can say with Sir Charles Coldstream, that there was "nothing in it." True, no startling event took place during its progress, and we must fervently hope that 1887 may pass with as little excitement, and that the dead level of monotony may be maintained in the new-born year. The most advanced optimist can scarcely hope for this consummation. The horizon is ominously dark, and the cloud, in place of being "as big as a man's hand," has already assumed swollen proportions, and threatens, if it bursts, to rain down with a deluge of human blood. It is our province, however, to sum up the past, not to forecast the future.

The year 1886 opened with a proclamation made by the Empress-Queen notifying that "the territories formerly governed by King Theebaw will no longer be under his rule, but have become part of Her Majesty's dominions." Lord Dufferin, as Viceroy of India, was deservedly complimented for the prompt, firm and deliberate action by which this annexation was effected and another jewel added to the British Crown. At the same time General Sir Donald Stewart—one of the most brilliant commanders of the day—issued in a general order his farewell address to the Indian army. While all concerned keenly regretted his loss, the pain produced consequent on his retirement was sensibly mitigated by the fact that Sir Frederick Roberts—erst his first lieutenant—succeeded to the command. The first week in January brought the news that General Stephenson, with a force of British and Egyptian troops, had attacked the Arabs at Giniss, where the enemy was routed with severe loss, the casualties on our side happily having been only one officer killed (Lieut. Soltau, 1st Berks) and twenty men wounded. In the first week of February a change of administration caused a re-shuffling of the cards at the Admiralty and War Office. Lord George Hamilton retired in favor of the Marquis of Ripon, while Mr. Campbell-Bannerman replaced Mr. W. H. Smith. The War Secretary under Mr. Gladstone's administration, although well versed in the routine of subordinate office, had not served with cabinet rank. It was predicted that, under his auspices, the service over which he presided would be starved, and the army estimates sensibly cut down. The prophets, following the usual fate of those who go, not with but before the time, were wrong. Politics apart, common justice must be done to Mr. Campbell-Bannerman by saying that he made provision to materially increase the strength of the army when a certain but fleet popularity might have been ensured by cutting down army estimates to the minimum; and more than this, the ex-War Secretary, recognizing the national importance of the volunteers, undertook on their behalf to consider their right to an extra capitation grant, and, although no distinct promise was made, to Mr. Campbell-Bannerman belongs the credit of the fast-increasing wants of the volunteers being recognised.

The army estimates were moved in the middle of March. Briefly stated, they provided for a sum of £18,233,000 as compared with £17,750,700 for the previous year. This last-named sum was the estimate proper and stood apart from the scare vote of credit passed by parliament, on the outbreak of the Afghanistan complications. The money applied for was to be spent on the increase of the regular army,

which was to be augmented by 9,500 men, owing to an enlargement of the establishment in India. The Egyptian garrison at the same time was materially reduced, and, as the increase of forces in India was thrown upon that country (we do not say with justice, but in accord with hitherto prevailing custom), the excess of estimates was to be administered as follows: The infantry of the line was to receive an increase in its home battalions, which in future will maintain a minimum strength of 750 rank and file against 520 as hitherto. There was a proposed addition to the cavalry of the line and to the Royal artillery of 1,000 to each of the above-named branches, and 500 to the Royal engineers. The commissariat and transport, as well as the medical staff, were likewise credited with a slight addition to their strength. For warlike stores there was an increased demand of £341,300, mainly required for the armament of coaling stations, which necessitated £50,000 for ordnance, projectiles, rifles and explosives. So much for the regular services. The army estimates, as cast by Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, provided for the auxiliaries receiving more attention than had up to his time been accorded them. The effective of the militia was to be increased by 20,000 men; while the yeomanry muster was computed at an excess of 3,000 over the former year. At the same time provision was made for (with no increase in the rate of the capitation grant) 254,000 volunteers, or 30,000 more than shown by their former muster. The proposed distribution for the regular army during the past year was as follows: Home strength, 114,034; in the colonies, 25,638; in Egypt, 8,846; in India, 68,196, making a grand total of 215,714. The total numbers estimated for during the past year were, not reckoning those in India, 151,867. From this number, however, must be deducted 2,534 on the general and departmental staff, and 815 for miscellaneous establishments, leaving 148,518. Again, taking from this balance the staff of militia, yeomanry and volunteers, we arrive at 141,284, the strength of the regular forces on the establishment. It is interesting to observe that the total of 148,518 is accounted for by the following details: Cavalry, 13,733; artillery 23,653; engineers, 7,073; footguards 5,878; infantry of the line, 84,934.

The above is a summary of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's estimates. Owing to a change of ministry a vote was taken concerning them on account, and on the reassembling of parliament the fortunes of the War Office were placed under the auspices of Mr. W. H. Smith, who had before shown a special aptitude to deal with matters military. In September the army estimates again came before the House of Commons, when the Secretary of State for War practically adopted the lines laid down by his predecessor. On this occasion Mr. Smith might appositely be compared to a builder called in to finish a house half-erected. His work was simply to complete the edifice, not to alter the plan or original design, but to use the quantities already estimated and provided for him. In moving the army estimates formally he was therefore simply working out the details left by his predecessor, and as a vote had been taken on account he merely requested that the balance might be paid. So the army vote went through with but the shadow of opposition. Some few members who love words more than deeds endeavored to obtain from the right hon. gentleman an assurance that the volunteer grant would be increased; that a commissariat corps would be formed for our citizen army; while a distinguished optimist vainly endeavored to induce the War Secretary to sanction the formation of volunteer corps in Ireland. These side issues having been disposed of, the army estimates were passed satisfactorily.

During the year a controversy raged on the subject of our national armour, including ordnance, small arms, swords and bayonets. Envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness were freely exhibited in the discussion of the question, and the exacerbation of temper displayed on both sides is to be regretted. Into the merits of the case it would manifestly be beyond our province to enter on the present occasion, especially as in a legal sense it may be said to be *sub judice*, the Secretary of State for War having wisely in his discretion appointed a committee to investigate the matters of complaint. Looking at the composition of the committee, the nation has every confidence in its members one and all, and the result of their deliberations cannot fail to give satisfaction when they issue their report on the weak spots in our national armour. As a corollary to the above it may be mentioned that in the past year there was issued to certain regiments of British infantry a new composite rifle termed the Enfield-Martini, supposed to embrace the best features of all existing rifles. Criticism, however, was rife on the question of its asserted excellence. Lord Wemyss led the van in attacking it, and clearly demonstrated that the straightness of its stock makes it a certainty for soldiers to shoot too high; so in the end the matter was referred back to the small arms committee, who recommended some important alterations. While these were being effected a new departure was necessitated by the almost universal adoption by all European powers of repeating rifles. It was naturally felt by the War Office authorities that if the magazine gun is considered to possess advantages over the "one-shooter," our arms would be unfairly handicapped were it called upon to face a foreign foe.