

It is stated that one of the officers of the Cavalry School is to be sent to England for a course. It appears manifestly absurd to send officers to England until they have learned everything possible that is to be learned in Canada. Why do these officers not take the "long course" at Kingston first, then on to England afterwards.

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It is to be sincerely regretted that the discussion brought out by Sir Fred Middleton's articles in the United Service Magazine should have degenerated into a mutual recriminations tournament. What promised to have been a most interesting and historically valuable discussion threatens to develop into a thoroughly disgraceful personal squabble. It certainly is neither dignified nor necessary for officers and gentlemen to couch their statements of fact in harshly offensive terms. It is beyond belief that General Middleton would write a deliberate lie in an article sure to be brought to the notice of every survivor of the North-West Field Force. It is all a question of the General's veracity on the point about the projected withdrawal from Batoche during the first day's fighting. The General in his narrative said that some of his senior officers advised withdrawal, but that he decided to stay and fight it out. Lt.-Col. Houghton says, and unquestionably he is right, that he and Dr. Orton and the late Lt.-Col. Williams opposed the withdrawal. But there were other senior officers present; the officers on whose counsel the General chiefly relied, and Sir Fred will probably explain in good time that it was those officers who advised him to withdraw.

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There has been such a turning of the phrases on this matter of the proposed withdrawal or retirement that somehow or another the idea appears to have become general that the proposal to retire was, from the first, a very ill-advised if not an actually cowardly one. Such is not the case. When General Middleton left his prairie camp that May morning to march through the intervening brush wood on to Batoche the tents were left standing, the transport train remained in zarba and the men carried their day's rations in their harvestsacks. The Prince Albert scouts were such an infernal lot of prevaricators that Middleton did not know what was ahead of him; whether Batoche was impregnable, whether it was devoid of defences, whether Riel had five hundred or fifteen thousand fighting men with him, or whether Riel was in Batoche at all. Some of those who thought they knew said that the mere sight of Middleton's force would stampede the half-breeds.

Other, and these were the most numerous party, declared that it would need at least three thousand men to capture Batoche. The General had considerably less than a thousand effective fighting men with him. Clearly, then, the General's idea from the very start was to retire on his camp if he found the half-breeds too firmly entrenched to dislodge them easily.

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The march on Batoche was really a reconnaissance in force. Here, be it remembered, Middleton's orders were to put down the uprising with as little loss of life on either side as possible. If he could not easily get into Batoche with the force he had he was to wait for the reinforcements on their way to the front. But the reconnaissance at once developed into a general attack when the infantry and artillery got engaged, and a retirement then would doubtless have been bad tactics. The General at one time after his force got seriously engaged, certainly must have had an idea of withdrawing, for the ammunition and ambulance waggons were formed up in a column on the trail headed towards the camp, but he probably took this step at the urging of some of his officers; for one who was present says that there was a very general impression that the best thing to be done was to retire. No headway was being made and men were being killed and wounded and ammunition expended apparently to no purpose. At two o'clock in the afternoon, in spite of numerous casualties, the advanced line was considerably in rear of the position where the A Battery guns had been in action at the time the rebel attack developed in the morning in earnest. This did not look as though the North-West Field Force was doing much good by remaining on the brush-fringed and pit-circled plateau above Batoche. Meantime the present discussion might be useful if those participating would drop painful personalities.

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So circumstantial was the account cabled over from America of the escapade of the three fanatics who had explosive designs on the historic old Nelson's monument in Montreal, that almost universal credit was given to the statement that these men were officers of the Canadian Militia. Great, therefore, is the pleasure with which it is learnt, on the authority of the Canadian Military Gazette, that not one of the three young donkeys concerned were at the time of their silly prank, or at any other time, members of that patriotic body.—United Service Gazette.

News of the Service.

NOTE.—Our readers are respectfully requested to contribute to this department all items of Military News affecting their own corps, districts or friends, coming under their notice. Without we are assisted in this way we cannot make this department as complete as we would desire. Remember that all the doings of every corps are of general interest throughout the entire militia force. You can mail a large package of manuscript, so long as not enclosed in an envelope, for one cent. At any rate forward copies of your local papers with all references to your corps and your comrades.

Address,
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TORONTO.

The smoking concert held Feb. 9th by the sergeants of the Royal Grenadiers in their mess-room, Queen street west, was in every respect a success. About four hundred members and friends of the regiment were present. Staff-Sergt. Ewart occupied the chair. The following took part in the excellent vocal and musical programme presented: Messrs. C. Musgrove, J. Smith, Val-lary, Bell, Carmichael, C. Martin, Corrigan, Chandler, H. Sole, T. Carlyle, Kirkpatrick, W. Moody, J. Manning, Harvey, T. Carruthers, Anderson, Glionna, Burch, Piggot, Makenzie, Clegg, Clowey, Fenton, Phillips, E. Burton, Twigg, Grant, McIntyre, and the Royal Grenadiers band. A four-round contest between Messrs. Pratt and Crawford brought the affair to a close. Among the guests present were: Lt.-Col. Dawson, Maj.-Gen. Boyd, Capt. MacKay, and Capt. Trotter.

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The inclement weather had no effect upon the brow lads of "E" Co., 48th Highlanders, who held their annual dinner at the Metropole, Feb. 9th. They turned out in full force, and did justice to the good things provided. Colour Sergeant D. W. Smith officiated as chairman, and accomplished his duties admirably. He was ably assisted by Vice-Chairman Private J. G. Cane. The following was the toast list:—"The Queen," "The Canadian Militia," "Our Commanding Officer and Staff" "Sister Corps," "Our Guests," "The Ladies," and "The Press." The guests from other city corps were:—Captain Gosling and Colour-Sergeant Beant, of the Royal Grenadiers; and Colour-Sergeant Lennox, of the Queen's Own Rifles. During the evening many of those present added to the enjoyment by their rendering of vocal and instrumental music.

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The annual meeting of the Sergeants' Mess, Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, was held on Monday evening, Jan. 7th. The following were elected as the Board of Management for the current year: President, Col.-Sergt. J. G. Langton; Vice-President, Staff-Sergt. R. M. Williams; Secretary, Sgt. J. L. Hopwood; Treasurer, Sergt. F. C. Al-lum; Superintendent of Refreshments, Col.-Sergt. S. E. Cunningham; Committeemen, Sergt. E. A. Agar, Sergt. Wm. Meadows, and Sergt. T. H. Cramp; Auditors, Sergt. J. E. Thompson and Sergt. G. S. Pearey.

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At the second annual meeting of the 48th Highlanders on Jan. 30th, the following committees were elected for 1894: Regimental Capt. Macgillivray, Capt. Robertson and Lieut. Orchard; Rifle, Major Macdonald, Major Henderson and Lieut. Ramsay; Band, Major Crosby, Capt. Machie and Capt. Hunter; Mess and Entertainment, Capt. Hardie, Dr. Dame and Lieut. Mitchell; regimental secretary-treasurer, Capt. Macgillivray.