

THE DOMINION ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION.

Interesting Plain Speaking at the Annual Business Meeting.

Recommendations of the Council and Executive—Address and Gift from the Governor-General—The object of the Defence Commission stated—The Presidency of the Association—Col. Oswald declines re-election, in consequence of governmental lukewarmness—The "Militia Gazette" made the official organ of the Association.

At the annual meeting of the Dominion Artillery Association held in the Parliament buildings Thursday morning last, His Excellency the Governor-General was again in attendance. The President, Lieut.-Col. Oswald, occupied the chair, and amongst others present were Col. Powell, Adjutant-General; Col. Panet, Deputy Minister of Militia; Major-General Laurie, M.P., Lieut.-Cols. Hon. G. A. Kirkpatrick, M.P., O'Brien, M.P., Irwin, Otter, Macdonald, Walker, Gravely and McKenzie, Majors Prior, M.P., Wilson, "A" Battery, Stewart, Blaiklock, Capt. Donaldson (Secretary), D. C. Bliss, Lieut. T. A. D. Bliss and Mr. L. H. Irving.

The annual report was presented, comprising statements from the council, the executive committee and the secretary-treasurer.

THE COUNCIL'S REPORT.

It is a matter for congratulation, the council report, that in addition to the Royal Military College 16 field batteries and 26 garrison batteries have joined the association during the past year.

The garrison artillery competitions at Quebec were successfully carried out, but regret is expressed that the special grant to the association by the Government was inadequate to meet the total expenses of the competition, the extra expense falling upon the funds of the association. In this particular a difference exists between the provisions made for the field battery practice and that for the competitors at Quebec, as in the former case the expenses are borne by the Government in addition to all other grants.

The concentration of the field artillery competitions in two places in the province of Ontario has been to a certain extent successful and satisfactory, but the council feel that the utmost success cannot be attained until such arrangements are made as will enable the whole of the marksmen of the field artillery to be concentrated in one place for a definite period, as recommended last year.

The contributions received from affiliating batteries and members of the association in subscriptions and entrance fees during the year amounted to \$475, while the expenses of maintenance of the association, including the secretary's salary, amount only to \$307.12, so that the members of the association contribute considerably more than the expenses of working, leaving the whole of the general government grant to be expended in the prizes for the different competitions.

The amount expended on account of the Quebec competitions was \$2,081.21, of which \$1,339.21 was for transport.

The whole amount paid in cash prizes and for prizes in kind, with the expense of maintaining cups, etc., amounted to \$1,253.49. One hundred and sixty marksmen competed in firing from the field batteries and 324 from the garrison batteries, in addition to which large numbers of men were specially instructed in matters pertaining to their duties under the rules of the Artillery Association.

It is proposed that during the present year a detachment of 20 men and 2 officers be sent to the competition at Shoeburyness, and also that a central garrison artillery competition be held at Quebec, and a central field artillery competition at such other point as may be selected, provided the proposition is approved of and sufficient funds can be obtained from the government for the purpose.

The council is of opinion that the state of efficiency of the field artillery would be materially increased were some provision made for the preliminary drill of the corps before they go into camp. It would appear from the reports that while the standard of efficiency is maintained it has arrived at such a degree that further proficiency cannot be well reached without more time being spent in drill.

The council, in conclusion, press upon the artillery in the different provinces the advisability of their forming provincial associations, and with that in view approves of some changes being made in the constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE.

The executive committee in their report recommend the purchase of an additional number of Scott's revolving sights for the use of the

field batteries, so that each may be provided with at least two of these sights.

Concerning the garrison artillery, and the competition at Orleans island the committee report: "More stringent rules as to disqualification of competitors for serious mistakes in gun drill, etc., will require to be made, and some other details as to ranges, etc., will require modification." The gun practice was much delayed by the frequency with which the targets were shot away and the consequent loss of time in replacing them. As generally accurate shooting is the best test of marksmanship, it is proposed that in future the size of the target shall be much diminished and the points for a direct hit be very much reduced. Application has been made for improved sights for the 64-pr. gun, those at present in use being unsuitable for very accurate laying."

THE SECRETARY-TREASURER'S STATEMENT.

Capt. J. B. Donaldson, secretary-treasurer of the association, in his report shows the year's receipts to have been \$3,475, and the expenditure \$3,642, the balance of \$493 in cash at the beginning of the year being reduced to \$325. Having acknowledged the donation of two silver cups by the Governor-General and a gift of a hundred dollars from the Hamilton Powder Co., through the president, Mr. T. C. Brainerd, the secretary, continues: "In this connection I beg to suggest that the council, during the year 1888, take steps to solicit subscriptions from the various banks and establishments throughout the country, with the hope that an equally liberal response will be given to the appeal as was accorded to that made by the rifle association. The aims of the two associations are identical—the promotion of general efficiency with their respective arms. I would further beg to suggest that steps be also taken for the formation of an endowment fund by means of special subscriptions. Action in the above directions are a necessity if the association is ever to be raised out of its present impecunious position. The council, year after year, have by vote delegated the duty of drawing up prize lists for the competitions to the executive committee with the result that after drawing them up and distributing them they have had to be curtailed for want of funds, or the matter has had to be delayed so long as to delay the issue of the lists until after some of the competitions have taken place.

"It was hoped that a small balance would have remained to the credit of the association at the end of the year, to assist in meeting the additional sum which will be required if it is decided to send a team to Shoeburyness during the year 1888. Owing, however, to the distinct refusal of the Government, through the Honourable Minister of Railways, to grant free passes over the Intercolonial Railway to the detachments proceeding from the Maritime Provinces to Quebec—a privilege granted to the competitors at the Dominion Rifle Association matches—the sum of \$1,122 (less a refund of \$39 for three unused tickets) had to be paid to the Government for conveying the detachments to Quebec to carry out their annual practice, and the funds are consequently lower, perhaps, than they have been at the commencement of any year since its formation."

COL. OSWALD DECLINES RE-ELECTION AS PRESIDENT.

In moving the adoption of the report, Col. Oswald expressed dissatisfaction with the treatment which had been accorded by the Government to the association. Not only was their grant of money small, but they had been compelled to pay largely out of the funds for the transport of Government troops over a Government railway to perform Government work—that is to put in their annual gun practice while taking part in the prize competition at the Island of Orleans. While riflemen from the Maritime Provinces were granted free passes, the artillerymen had been compelled to pay for their transport. He regretted to have to state that in conversation with the Minister of Militia that gentleman had told him that there could be no increase in the grant this year. He had therefore informed Sir Adolphe that under these circumstances he found it incumbent upon him to retire from office in the association, for he did not feel that its efficiency could be maintained without an additional grant.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL SPEAKS.

A vote of thanks to His Excellency the Governor-General was moved by Lieut.-Col. Irwin, seconded by Lieut.-Col. Oswald. The mover announced that Lord Lansdowne had made a parting gift of \$75, which it was proposed to invest in a cup, to be competed for annually.

His Excellency made a neat speech in acknowledgement. He expressed the hope that the association would be able this year to send a team to Shoeburyness, and that though he would by that time have turned his back upon these shores, he might there catch a parting glimpse of some of our gunners. Referring to the action of the Government in appointing a central defence commission, he said this had been done not because they had any idea of asking the tax-payers of this country to become involved in an ambitious and extensive scheme of national defence and fortification, but rather because it was fitting that