

the present system. For instance, a company column of fours, right in front, formed from a two-deep line, can only be deployed to the left by the words "front form company." If deployed to the right the rear rank would be in front. Under the proposed system, a company would be formed up in two single ranks, separated by an interval of six paces, each under a lieutenant, so as not to have too wide a front in line. The captain's post would be on a flank. Each rank would be told off in fours, and if at any time it was considered necessary to close the ranks, exactly the same words of command could be used for the now two-deep line. Such single lines are extremely easily extended and assembled, and are eminently fitted for a bayonet assault, for even with the present system the ranks have to be opened for this purpose. With single ranks, kept as such, the depth of quarter columns, and columns of fours, on the line of march would be increased, but on such occasions the ranks could be closed and the double line worked as a single one temporarily. The advantages of this system are very apparent, and the system is peculiarly suited to troops which can give but a very short time to their training, such as those of the Canadian militia. So advantageous is this system, that it can be confidently asserted that if any army adopts it it will soon be followed by other nations. Here is an opportunity for Canada to make a name in the military world, and at the same time to enormously increase her military power by the better trained state of her troops. Training is everything now-a-days in war, and here lies one of the best means by which Canada can fit herself to take her place in the defence of the empire when called on in time of danger.

A SOLDIER.

Ontario Artillery Association.

THE annual report of this thriving association has just been published, and contains the usual record of the year's doings, and the constitution, as amended at the late annual meeting. From the treasurer's statement we learn that there is a balance on hand of \$245 81, which is most satisfactory for a first year. The results of the firing competitions have been published in our columns from time to time, as they were received by the secretary of the D.R.A. We now append the annual reports of the President, Secretary, and Council, which will give a fair idea of the important results achieved by this young association:

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

The council of the association presents herewith the report for the year 1886 of the executive committee on the subject of artillery ranges; of the secretary on the working of the association; and of the treasurer, with the accounts, duly audited.

Affiliation.—Nine field and two garrison batteries have affiliated with this association during the past year. Next year, owing to certain restrictions as to training, the number of garrison batteries will probably be decreased; in fact, only one of the three Ontario batteries will be called upon to perform their annual drill and gun practice.

Gun Practice.—The shooting on the whole is far above the average. The average length of range which has been used does not exceed 1,450 yds. (Port Hope 1,300 yds., Port Colborne 1,600 yds). The Council is strongly of opinion that from 1,500 to 2,000 yds. should be the range for Field Gun Practice, and 1,300 for S. B. O., and 2,000 for B. L. R. or M. L. R. The Council begs to suggest for favorable consideration the question of obtaining some improved sighting arrangements, and the paying of say \$10 to each commanding officer of a field battery for expenses while attending practice.

Ranges.—Although the executive committee have made a report on all likely ranges so far as known, they have omitted to recommend any one of them as being suitable. Col. Cotton, assistant inspector of artillery, in his remarks on the Port Colborne range, says of it that in his opinion "it is the best artillery range in Canada." This council favors the concentration at one point of all Ontario batteries, for the purpose of performing the practice, and recommends Port Colborne as the best place. Your council would suggest for the consideration of the council of the Dominion Artillery Association, whether it would not be more economical and beneficial in the end if garrison batteries, using guns mounted on travelling carriages, were permitted to fire at the same time and over the same range as field batteries. In common justice to them, if they are to compete against batteries firing over a first class range—like Quebec, for instance—they should not be handicapped by using some chance range.

The prize list during the past year was a most liberal one. The council would suggest whether it is a question of good policy in offering prizes for voluntary drills—so few batteries competing—and of not offering more encouragement to drivers. Heretofore shooting and efficiency prizes have been the great object aimed at; an *immobile* field battery is useless. A prize might be offered for judging distances, which is a most important thing, and should be encouraged. The council would also

suggest to the parent association the desirability of its prize list, conditions, etc., being published at an early day in the year; that the attention of the Dominion association should also be called to the fact that this association are not in favor of the present method of competing for the Gzowski cup, and would recommend that such change should be made as will enable the object aimed at to be more fully realized.

The council would recommend most strongly, and as being of urgent importance to the interests of the artillery force generally:

1st.—The concentration of all batteries as above suggested.

2nd.—An increased number of rounds of ammunition to enable officers to compete

3rd.—A liberal increase of the annual grant to the Dominion Artillery Association. It is apparent to every militia man that the Dominion, with its small grant, aided by public generosity, has done much to increase the efficiency of the militia artillery.

4th.—The establishment of competitions for officers firing at moving objects.

5th.—A more liberal allowance of clothing. Nothing is more trying to clothing than gun drill, grooming horses, etc.

In establishing this association, success was partially ensured at the beginning by a generous grant from the Ontario Government, but the council expects that every officer who takes a proper interest and pride in his battery should be a member of this association. By united action and help alone can the association ensure the further success of both Dominion and Ontario associations. With regard to this the council regrets, but it is nevertheless a fact, that so few junior officers are members; the seniors are working for what really the now juniors will most benefit by, and they candidly say, and with a right, that they look to them for support both morally and financially.

W. BARCLAY McMURRICH,
Capt. T. B. G. A., President of Council.

REPORT OF LIEUT.-COL. GRAY, PRESIDENT.

I attended the practice of the Ontario field batteries at Port Hope and at Port Colborne. The range at Port Hope is in my opinion unsuitable; having to fire over the railway track, it was necessary to cease firing frequently, thereby causing delay, and interfering with the arrangements made by officers.

As an artillery range, I believe Port Colborne to be the best in Ontario, giving a mile from a good elevation, with excellent background, which brings the target out distinctly. As a matter of fact, the last shot of the practice was fired at this range by moonlight, and proved a hit.

The whole practice was carried out under military regulations, and left no room for complaint.

I may be permitted to suggest a few changes, which I believe, if adopted, will prove of advantage to the competing batteries.

1st.—The competition to take place annually about the last week in June.

2nd.—The firing squads to assemble on the same day, and remain in camp until the completion of the practice.

3rd.—Four guns to be in action. The firing to be continuous, shot for shot, from the right or left in the "Preliminary," and gun for gun in the "Final." By adopting this mode the time occupied would be reduced to a minimum.

4th.—All combatant artillery officers willing to attend the practice, to be permitted to do so and their transport supplied.

5th.—A sufficient supply of ammunition to be in camp to enable every officer to fire a stated number of rounds in a competition to be known as the "Officers' Match."

6th.—An extra supply of copper friction tubes. A very large number this year were defective. This should not be so. If on active service the consequence might be serious. The gun is the artilleryman's standard, and should respond to the pull of the lanyard when the enemy is at hand.

I must congratulate the Ontario Artillery Association upon the excellent work accomplished, and I wish to thank the officers for their active and intelligent assistance, which contributed so much to place the organization in first-class working order.

SECRETARY'S REPORT.

To the President of Council, Ontario Artillery Association:

SIR,—In compliance with rule No. 23, I have the honor to submit, for the consideration of council, the first annual report on the working of the association.

In 1883, 1884 and 1885, the annual gun practice, so far as the Ontario batteries were concerned, was held at the Woodbine, Toronto, over the same range, under the same conditions, and as nearly as possible at the same time. The results, no doubt, were satisfactory, but the idea prevailed that as the Woodbine was an inferior range, the Ontario batteries were handicapped in the firing with their comrades in Quebec.