

operations in the field itself. It is all very well for a commander of a force to look down at the map, and say that he will move a battery here and a battalion there. His reasons for making these movements must be based on information which must have reached him from the front, and this information can only come in the shape despatches, all of which must be sent in time. The umpires of these tactical exercises have, with very great discretion, not made the practice too difficult to start with; but it will be necessary, in the course of time, to create a more advanced class, who shall participate in the practice under conditions as nearly approximating as possible to the conditions of actual warfare.

Here we may venture to make some suggestions and give some information which we trust will be of value to those who have not yet felt disposed to take part in these tactical rehearsals. The game is not a game in any sense of the word, and any officer who is competent to deal with questions of tactics is fully competent to play the War Game. The process is a simple one. His name is set down to play on a certain day, and, assisted by his next in command, he has the opportunity a couple of days previously of closely examining the map, and of learning the nature of the force under his command, and the information as to the hostile force which has been obtained by his intelligence department. Upon the map and upon this information he writes out his orders, which he forwards to the umpire-in-chief. On the day appointed for the game, the players find assistant umpires placed at their disposal, who execute all the mechanical work of placing the pieces on the map, and of carrying out the written orders of the players themselves. The practices are thus rendered free from all unnecessary difficulties of a technical character; and as we have before said, any officer who is competent to pass an examination in tactics, ought to be competent, to a greater or less extent, to play the War Game with success. It is with regard to the writing out of orders that a great difficulty may be experienced by neophytes. To those who wish to attain anything like a moderate standard of perfection in this, a most vital part of military duty, we cannot do better than recommend the perusal of a book published by Messrs. Clowes and Sons, being lectures delivered at the staff college by Major Clarke. We have no hesitation in stating that no officer has even an approximate idea of what military work in the field really is, until he has read this book. On page 139 will be found a model set of orders which, of course, must be read subject to correction, but which would give intending players a fair idea of how to begin their work.

Correspondence.

The Editor desires it distinctly understood that he does not hold himself responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents.

THE MONTREAL GARRISON ARTILLERY.

AN EPISODE OF THE FENIAN RAID OF 1870.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette.

Through several of the past numbers of your most creditable GAZETTE runs a historical sketch of the Canadian militia from the pen of Lieut.-Col. Oswald, the present commander of the Montreal Garrison Artillery. I would have remained in obscurity, so far as the readers of the MILITIA GAZETTE were concerned, but for an eager desire to make this historical sketch more complete by doing justice to twenty-three good men of the brigade M. G. A., who under my command formed part of the garrison of Isle-Aux-Noix for six days, during the Fenian raid of 1870. Our little band deserve notice, and will, I am sure, thank you for your kindness in giving me an opportunity of remedying an oversight.

On Saturday, the 21st May, 1870, the following appeared in the Montreal Daily Witness: "Brigade Montreal Garrison Artillery.—The brigade will parade at the drill hall on Monday evening next, the 23rd inst., at half-past seven, in full marching order, preparatory to parade and inspection on the 24th (Her Majesty's birthday). Orders will be given on Monday as to the time, &c., on the 24th. Every member is expected to be present at these parades. By order, R. J. Wicksteed, lieutenant and acting adjutant."

The parade on Monday was well attended, 201 being present.

The volunteer force of Montreal mustered on Her Majesty's birthday on the Champ-de-Mars, and were informed by Col. Osborne Smith that an attempt was again about to be made to invade Canada by the Fenians, and the volunteers would once more be called to go to the front. This announcement was received with prolonged cheers. Owing to the wet weather the men were soon dismissed, but it was announced that one officer and twenty-four men would be required from the Garrison Artillery, to leave in the evening for Fort Lennox, Isle-Aux-Noix. Here was a chance for me to smell powder, and cannon powder too—no doing infantry duty in blue coats. To take charge of some dozen 24 and 18 pounders, with the almost certainty of using their solid shot and shrapnel contents against living targets formed of my country's foes, was too great a temptation to resist. There was no probability of the remainder of my brigade being ordered to the front, so I offered my services to Col. Mackay, and then to Col. Osborne Smith. They were pleased to accept them. In a few minutes I had made arrangements with my partner in law, Mr. George Macrae, had packed up, in a very small valise, a change of uniform, and was down at the drill hall again to select my volunteers.

Some forty offered their services, but as only half that number were required, a sorting out took place. The result was soon known; the men chosen representing, as nearly as possible, every battery in the brigade. My command was composed of the following men: Sergt. A. Fraser, laborer; Corps. R. Wilson, machinist, and A. Finlay, clerk; Gunnery W. Addison, engineer; John R. Barlow, beltmaker; M. Birnie,

printer; Walter Bowie, chandler; D. Buchanan, storeman; John Curry, carver; F. Clarke, clerk; John Clarke, clerk; S. Dunlop, printer; James Higgs, laborer; John Hoerner, gentleman; James Holmes, cooper; John Innes, gentleman; Peter Ledwidge, laborer; Thomas Stapleton, laborer; E. Matthews, clerk; W. Morrison, tinsmith; John Sutherland, plumber; A. Smith, brass-finisher, and H. Weeks, machinist.

There were 22 bachelors and two married men, we included 22 Protestants and two Roman Catholics.

At five p.m. we marched to the Bonaventure station, with detachments from the other corps, and left by train for St. Johns at 7 p.m. Col. Osborne Smith there bid me good bye, and I took special train to Stottsville, a station a short distance from the river in which lay Isle-Aux-Noix; destined, as we thought, to be our home for some time, or our grave forever. After procuring guides to the riverside, as the night was desperately dark, I ordered the men to break open a package of ammunition and place it in their ball bags, as we were then but ten miles from the boundary line where the enemy were known to be. After a few words of instruction to my non-coms., we started for the landing place at St. Valentin, and were ferried over the western channel. We landed on the Island—were challenged by the sentries—the drawbridge was lowered, and we stood, at 2.30 on Wednesday morning, in the square of Fort Lennox, reported the arrival of my command to Lieut. E. W. Davies, of the Royal Canadian Rifles, who looked as if he could have dispensed with this item of military duty, and in a few minutes the men and myself were asleep in barracks. Next morning, I was invited to join the private table of Mr. and Mrs. Davies, so long as I remained in the Fort: the same courtesy had been extended to Lieut. G. A. French, R.A., who had been placed in command of the garrison of Isle-Aux-Noix. We formed a very amiable quartette; Mrs. Davies, a whilom belle of St. Johns, pretty, engaging, merry and joyous, as was becoming to a bride of but a few months; Mr. Davies, a good type of the English army officer, even tempered, stalwart, plucky and energetic, a ready conversationalist, albeit now somewhat discontented at the breaking up of that fine old corps to which he belonged, the Royal Canadian Rifles. Mr. French was a clever, well-read, painstaking officer, kind hearted, his eyes and lips flashing or bubbling over with merriment suppressed or expressed, yet with a stern disciplinarian, as two of my men found out when they ignorantly transgressed the Mutiny Act and articles of war. There was also in the Fort a staff-surgeon, with a large family, and a governess, a handsome woman, who looked as if the task of teaching the youthful ideas how to shoot was a painful and wearisome one. If the shooting was inferior, the shouting was not, but spoke volumes for their father's medical skill and the healthy condition of their bronchial tubes.

The garrison proper consisted of about thirty men of the Royal Canadian Rifles, who had been kept on duty at the request of the Dominion government until this "scare" had passed off. They were fine looking old soldiers, much decorated with medals. Their salute was so precise and elaborate that I dreaded going near any of them for fear of putting them to so much trouble and pains. I used to slink round by the ditch rather than pass the guard room. The clatter raised in honor of my appearance was really more than a modest man could bear—if too often repeated.

Isle-Aux-Noix is a flat island but little above the level of the river Richelieu, containing altogether about eighty-five acres. It lies about ten and one-half miles from the boundary line, and is in an excellent situation to intercept the whole communication by water with Lake Champlain; it is, consequently, a most important military station, and has always been fortified with all the care its commanding position deserved. It is my intention if you, Mr. Editor, are willing, to give an historical sketch of this Island, showing the vicissitudes its fortifications and buildings have undergone. At present I can but give a few details as I saw them. Fort Lennox is a large, square bastioned fort, covering about ten acres. It is surrounded by a wet ditch and a low stockade. The interior is one vast parade ground with buildings on the north, east and west sides or faces, the south side, facing up the river towards Lake Champlain, being protected by the wall and parapet. In the centre of this face is a sally port leading to an advanced work, redan or fleche, the road crossing the ditch by a drawbridge, as on the north side.

The officers' quarters and the offices are situate on the north side. The west side is filled up by the men's barracks, and the east parapet protects the store rooms and the magazine. All these buildings are built of stone and finished in a most perfect manner. The central square or parade ground is covered with grass, and was kept neatly shaven and trimmed.

The shores of the river are somewhat low, but the foliage was rich at this time, and the passing river craft added much to the interest of the scene. I may here add that no vessels were allowed to pass the Fort during the night time on pain of being fired into without parley.

There were several fine shade trees growing on the ramparts. It certainly was most agreeable to lie under these trees in the cool early summer evenings, in the good company I have mentioned, looking out over the river, and at the ruins of the various buildings and works, shipyards, &c., which existed in former years, and are now monuments of the wastefulness of war, and the ravages of time.

The week wore on, being fully occupied by parades, alerts, heavy gun drill, filling gun cartridges, inspection of stores, &c. A boat picket was sent out every evening at dusk, to a short distance up the river, and remained out until dawn.

I went to St. Johns on Friday, reported myself to Capt. Glyn, of the P. C. O. rifle brigade, asked for orders, and brought back some necessaries for my own detachment. On Saturday, Mr. Davies and his orderly-servant left for Rouse's Point, to reconnoitre. They found the Fenians swarming all over the railway station and the town, disheartened by their reception at Trout river, and striking for home after striking at Canada.

The Rev. Mr. Lockhart conducted divine service in the barracks on Sunday. I noticed that he looked rather dismal, and was told that he was paid according to the number of men who attended his ministrations. Now, by giving leave to almost all my detachment, I had unwittingly robbed him of some money consideration. On Monday, the 30th May, I received orders to return to Montreal. We were all sadly disappointed at the receipt of this command, just as we were beginning to enjoy even the routine of military life—when that routine was exacted by competent men and good soldiers. However, there was nothing for it but obedience. My servant, Jimmy Higgs, brushed my boots for the last time, and the barrack sergeant sent in his little bill.

The report of the marching out inspection of barrack stores, at the barracks at Isle-Aux-Noix, lost, damaged, or destroyed, chargeable to the detachment of Montreal Garrison Artillery, on the 31st May, 1870, is quite a curiosity.

My sergeant, an old regular, should have examined every article with the barrack master before taking them over on our arrival. Failing to do this, he laid himself open to the tender mercies of the barrack master, who, as a matter of course, takes an opportune advantage of the careless company. We were, consequently, charged for articles which the sergeant said were never there, and for dirty articles which were not clean when we entered the rooms. So I had nothing for it but to pay \$7.90 for wisdom