

# The Canadian Militia Gazette

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In next issue we will give the usual complete report of the prize meeting of the Dominion Rifle Association, containing the lists of all team and individual prize winners and the details of their scores; together with a synopsis of the proceedings at the competitors' meeting and the presentation of prizes. The revised scores of all the matches are of course not yet obtainable, and in order that the record may be contained in the one issue we insert no part of it this week.

## THE RIFLE LEAGUE.

The story of this year's shooting in the Canadian Military Rifle League is fully told in the complete scores of all the teams published in this issue. The success of this plan for awakening general interest in the use of the military weapon has been almost as phenomenal as some of the scores reported under League auspices, and even after excluding all those returns which could not be duplicated under normal conditions the scoring shows a gratifying state of proficiency on the part of the teams. The contest for first honours has been exceedingly close, and general surprise has been created by the result, which places at the head a team from a corps hitherto not regarded as at all formidable in comparison with those accustomed to carry off the shooting honours at the Provincial and Dominion meetings. We are told, however, that the 20th Battalion are happy in the possession of a range peculiarly adapted to high scoring, and the great prize meetings just concluded show that they have for the nucleus of their teams some men of remarkable skill. For instance, Sergeant Rolston's unprecedented performance on Rideau Range this week has earned an enviable fame for his regiment. It is noticeable that the 20th have not only one but two teams near the top. The 96th Battalion, from Port Arthur, who are a very close second, have emphasized the fact they proved last year, that they are capable of taking a front place in competition with their comrades from whom they have necessarily been isolated until brought into touch by the League's telegraphic communication. The third place is worthily held by the 13th Battalion, of Hamilton, whose name has been connected with so many rifle victories in the past. Last year's winners, the 54th Battalion, again make a good showing, taking eighth place with a creditably high average.

The League took a step in the right direction in offering prizes for twenty, thirty and forty men teams as well as those of ten, and it is a matter for regret that so few corps com-

peted for these larger honours. With the encouragement afforded by free ammunition, a great many more new shots should have been brought out, and an effort should be made to have an improvement in this respect next season. Though the Department of Militia does not interfere in any way with the management, the generous gift of ammunition brings the League shoots directly under Departmental auspices, and such being the case it would well become the staff officers throughout the country to develop a greater appearance of interest than hitherto shown, and to impress upon the commanding officers the advisability of encouraging their men to take part. We believe the League itself could greatly increase the interest taken in its competitions by a simple alteration of the rules so as to permit the best ten scores made by any members of a competing corps to count, in place of the scores of the ten previously named. This would give the greatest chance of first place to the corps having the greatest number of good shots competing. It was tried in the Dominion matches this week, in the team competition under League auspices, and the principle seems to have been very generally admitted as sound. The strong objection which might be applied to it in the case of a match away from home, could not be made where each team fires upon its own range.

The suggestion made by the Secretary, in his very interesting annual report with respect to Martini shooting, is worthy serious attention. It seems quite practicable to offer as a reward for proficiency with this weapon the prospect of a trip to Creedmoor, the team for the purpose to be the pick of those who have taken part in the League practice. A final test at the D. R. A. meeting would add interest to the Martini shooting there.

From the address of the Minister of Militia, it is evident that Sir Adolphe Caron appreciates the good work the League is doing, and his encouraging words made it scarcely necessary to ask the direct assurance made when requested, that the ammunition grant will be continued next year. Fortified with this assurance, the members subsequently went to work in the most business-like way to discuss the weak points developed in the past two seasons' working of the League, and the determination shown to provide against any possibility of shirking a fair test should go far towards securing the disappearance of the looseness on the part of a few which, last year and this, threatened to bring the League into disrepute. It is a matter for congratulation that Lt.-Col. the Hon. J. M. Gibson has consented to retain the presidency for another year, and of corresponding regret that the Secretary, Mr. W. R. Pringle, finds it absolutely impossible to continue his labour of love in that office. It would be a misfortune were the direction of the League affairs to fall into less capable hands, and the executive will have no easy task in making their choice of an officer. Though nothing can well be done for a few months, the League programme should be determined upon and issued early in the new year, so that all concerned may have time for preparation.