

GOSSIP OF THE MILITIA.

Third Annual Reunion of the Royal Military College Ex-Cadets.

A Schedule of Deficiencies in Infantry Equipment—Festivities at Government House, Toronto—Deaths in the Militia—Tragic Ending of a Halifax officer—More Northwest Indemnities—"F" Company, 13th Battalion at Dinner—Ottawa Riflemen Steeplechasing on Snowshoes.

THE Royal Military College Ex-Cadet Club held their third annual meeting and dinner last Saturday, at Ottawa, at the Russell hotel. At the meeting, which took place in the afternoon, little business was transacted beyond the election of officers for the ensuing year. Capt. W. M. Davis, C.E., of Woodstock, Ont., and Adjutant of the 22nd Battalion, was chosen president, Capt. S. Denison (South Staffordshire regiment), of Toronto, vice-president, and Mr. Fred. White, of the Militia Department, Ottawa, was re-elected secretary-treasurer. The following were chosen as the committee of management:—Capt. A. H. Van Stranbenzie (R. E.), R. M. C. Staff; Lieut. Duncan Macpherson, C.E., Adjutant Victoria Rifles, Montreal; R. W. Leonard, C.E., Springfield, N.S.; F. J. Dixon, Montreal; and L. H. Irving, Toronto.

The secretary, Mr. F. White, was after the meeting presented with a valuable set of "carvers and forks," in recognition of the services he had rendered to the club, and in anticipation of his being about to leave the ranks of the bachelors.

The dinner in the evening was served in the Russell's best style, and passed off in the happiest manner. Lieut. Macpherson, the retiring president, occupied the chair, and Capt. Davis, his successor, the vice-chair. These two gentlemen belonged to "the old eighteen," constituting the first class to pass through the College. Four more of "the eighteen" were present, viz., Capt. H. E. Wise (Scottish Rifles), A. D. C. to General Middleton; Capt. A. G. G. Wurtele, Instructor R.M.C.; Capt. Victor Rivers, "A" Battery, R.C.A., and Mr. R. C. Laurie, D.L.S., of Battleford. The other ex-cadets present were Messrs. H. S. Greenwood, Peterboro; G. R. Hooper, Montreal; S. Denison, Toronto; R. W. Leonard, Springhill, N.S.; F. C. Anderson, W. J. Stewart, J. Stewart, F. W. White, Campbell, Lambe, and Bowie, Ottawa. The guests of the club were Lieut.-General Sir Fred. Middleton; Major-General J. R. Oliver, Commandant R.M.C.; Col. Walker Powell, Adjutant-General, President Board of Visitors, R.M.C.; Lieut.-Col. W. H. Cotton, "A" Battery R.C.A.; Lieut.-Col. S. G. Fairt'ough, Instructor R.M.C.; McLeod Stewart, Mayor of Ottawa; Jas. Johnson, Ottawa Citizen; and J. D. Taylor, MILITIA GAZETTE. The list of toasts opened with those to the Queen and the Governor-General, loyally honoured. The first to call for a speech was that to "The Army, Navy and Auxiliary Forces," and brought a brief reply from Lieut.-General Middleton. The "Royal Military College" was next proposed.

Major-General Oliver responded, being received on rising with a demonstration of which he had good reason to be proud, and which testified unmistakably to his popularity with his former wards. In his speech he expressed the hope that a more commodious drill hall would shortly be provided for the College, and that its accommodation in the way of sleeping quarters and class rooms, and in other respects, would be increased. He expressed regret that such a small proportion of the Imperial commissions offered had of late been taken up, only those in the Engineers having been accepted. The Royal Artillery had for some time been short of subaltern officers, and he would have been glad to see graduates of the College join that branch of the service. The strictures of a portion of the press concerning the cost of the College, he did not think were really aimed at its abolition; such a result would be considered a great loss to Canada. As an evidence of the high esteem in which the College is held abroad, he instanced the reported intention of Australia to establish an institution on the same basis. He expected our College to increase in popular favour to a very large extent, should the efforts be successful which are now being made to have its course count as part of a university arts course. This concession being granted, a graduate who desired to take up the study of the law, for instance, would have three years taken off the time now necessary to qualify himself in that profession.

When the Commandant had concluded, Col. Fairt'ough and Capt. Wurtele were each called upon and spoke briefly in reply to the toast.

Adjutant-General Powell, the "father of the College," was next toasted, and in an interesting speech reviewed the history of the institution, which, he was happy to say, he had taken a prominent part in establishing. He paid a high compliment to the teaching staff of the institution.

Major McLeod Stewart proposed a toast to "The ex-Cadet Club," to which replies were made by Capt. Davis, the newly elected president, Capt. Denison, vice-president, Secretary White, Capt. Rivers and Capt. Wise.

Col. Cotton, of "A" Battery, having entered the room a short time previously, being very heartily received by the company, he was now called upon for a speech in reply to the toast of the "Regiment of Canadian Artillery," proposed by Capt. Denison. "The Ladies" were spoken for by Messrs. F. White, Laurie and Campbell; Messrs. Johnson and Taylor replied to the toast of "The Press," and the company joined in singing the National Anthem and "Auld Lang Syne," dispersing about midnight.

The next reunion will take place, it is expected, either at Montreal or Toronto.

Lieut.-Col. W. E. Ibbotson died at Sherbrooke, Q., last Thursday, at the age of 64. He had been confined to the house for the past three months, suffering from a heart disease. He had been a prominent figure in volunteer circles, being one of the oldest officers in the district. For the last few years he had been on the retired list. Old No. 1 Rifles, of which he was captain for many years from 1856, was the foundation of the 53rd Batt., of which he took command after Lieut.-Col. Bowen's retirement. He took part in the Fenian raid service, and was at the head of the regiment in Montreal during the threatened riots in connection with the Young Britons' proposed 12th of July celebration in 1878, no finer body of men being on service that day than the 53rd. On this occasion that regiment and the 54th Batt. were highly complimented by the citizens and press of that city. Col. Ibbotson figured prominently in the troubles of 1837-8, being present in Montreal when the parliament buildings were

burned. He afterwards went to Australia gold hunting, but finally returned to Sherbrooke and set up in the drug business. He was buried on Sunday with military honours.

A military board, consisting of Col. Jackson, D.A.G.; Major F. Peters, of the London Troop of Cavalry, and Capt. H. Dreaney, of the 26th battalion, met in London last week to adjudicate upon the claims for pensions of volunteers of that district who sustained injuries while serving in the North-West rebellion of 1885.

A grand military entertainment in aid of the library fund of B company I.S.C., and under the patronage of His Worship the Mayor of St Johns, Lieut.-Col. Count D'Orsonnens and officers of the company, will be given at Black's Opera House, St. Johns, to-morrow (Friday) evening, the 27th inst. A number of Montreal friends, notably a talented comedy artist of the Vics, will assist in the entertainment.

British Columbia.

New Westminster, B.C., 14th January, 1888.

THE men of "C" Battery had a ball last week at their temporary barracks in Victoria. All who were present had a thoroughly enjoyable time. Dancing was kept up till the small hours of the morning.

Capt. White, quartermaster of "C" Battery, has resigned. His father, who died recently, left him a large fortune, and he leaves at an early date for his old home.

Arrangements for the erection of the new fortifications are being completed with the least possible delay. In a very few years the Imperial government intend making Vancouver's Island a second Malta. Esquimalt is already the headquarters of the navy on the Pacific coast, and Victoria will be the stronghold of the army, so should at any time war break out with Russia, England will already have a large force of the army and navy to protect her interests on this coast.

In the early part of the week, Capt. Bole, M.P.P. of No. 1 Battery, B.C.G.A., at New Westminster, held his first drill for this year. A large number were present. After drill Capt. Bole entertained his men and officers at a banquet. Capt. Scoullar, Lieuts. Doane and Rickman, of the N. W. Rifles, and Lieut. Glover, of Winnipeg, were the invited guests. The evening was very pleasantly passed in speech making and song.

A sergeant from "C" Battery is to arrive shortly in order to drill the Artillery and Rifles stationed at this point, and on his arrival each company is to drill three times a week.

COLUMBIAN.

Hamilton.

F COMPANY of the 13th Battalion held their annual dinner last week at the Franklin House, Capt. Gillespie presiding. Other officers present were: Lt.-Col. Gibson, Major Moore, Major McLaren, Surgeon-Major Ryall, Major Mason, Capt. Stuart, Assist.-Surgeon Griffin, of the 13th; and Capt. Hendrie, of the H.F.B. Colour-Sergt Grant occupied the vice-chair. After "The Queen," "The Prince and Princess of Wales and Royal Family," and "The Governor-General" had been toasted. "Lieut.-Col. Gibson and Staff Officers" was proposed. In responding, Col. Gibson congratulated the company upon the fine appearance they made physically and upon their high standard of intelligence. He congratulated the men upon the efficiency of their captain and Lieutenant Osborne. Major Moore, who next spoke, said he was very much pleased to be with "F" Company, as it was the company he first belonged to as a private, about a quarter of a century ago. Since 1864 he said he had never missed an "F" Company supper. Of the eight staff officers three had been privates in the company, and of the eight captains, four had come from the same company. Major McLaren, Surgeon-Major Ryall, Major Mason, Captain Stuart and Assistant-Surgeon Griffin also responded. Other toasts were: "The Hamilton Field Battery," responded to by Capt. Hendrie; "Capt. Gillespie and Officers of F Company," by the Captain and Lieut. Osborne; "Our Colour-Sergt Grant and Non-Commissioned Officers of F Company," by the Colour-Sergt, Sergt. Hamilton and Corp. Healey; "The Ladies," by Lieut. Osborne and Pte. Bethune.

Toronto.

LAST Saturday night Col. Allan had a most enjoyable smoking party at the Reform Club. Every corps was well represented, amongst those present being Col. Otter, D.A.G.; F. Denison, C.M.G.; Majors Dunn, Delamere, Hamilton, Harrison, and Mead. Songs and recitations were given by Capt. Manley, Messrs. Nelson, McLeod, Browning, etc.

The ball at Government House, which by the way was a great success, swarmed with officers of all branches, of the Retired and all other lists. From the Imperial service we had Mr. Platt, 6th Dragoon Guards; Mr. Bernard, 6th Punjab Regiment, also Sergt.-Major. Keefer, of the Bengal army. Col. Otter, D.A.G., and Col. Gray, Brigade-Major, represented the district staff. From the cavalry we had Col. G. T. and F. C. Denison, C.M.G., G.G.B.G.; Capt. J. Baldwin, 2nd Regt., and Mr. H. Merritt, G.G.B.G. Capt. McMurrich was the sole representative of field and garrison artillery. Major. Vidal, Capt. Sears, Messrs. Wadmore and Cartwright did the dancing for the Infantry School, while Col. Allan, Majors Hamilton and Delamere, Capt. Mutton, Brock, etc., of the Q.O.R., and Major Dawson, Capt. Manley, Davidson, Mason, Messrs. Lowe, Gibson and others, did the agreeable for the infantry. Col. G. A. Shaw, late 10th Royals, and Capt. G. H. C. Brooke, late 12th Batt., represented in uniform the retired list. Officers on the retired list might, I think, with advantage wear "R. L." on their shoulder straps. We would then know "who-is-who."

Mr. Wadmore, "C" Co., I.S.C., will on the 30th January give a lecture to the sergeants of the Queen's Own on "Reconnaissances and Outposts."

Thank you, Ramrod, for your letter in the GAZETTE of 12th inst. Are you asking me what he is? "Pooh-Bah" of the militia will fill the bill.

ECCENTRICITIES OF THE PERMANENT CORPS.

We are always ready to poke fun at the militia, whether urban or rural, but we are not so prone to give the permanent corps an occasional dig in the ribs when they deserve it. It is not so long ago that a sentry of a permanent corps gave up his rifle to the officer of the day. Neither is it so long ago that I saw a permanent corps, whilst marching out, pass a Brigade-Major in all his war paint without taking any notice of him. Neither is it so very long ago that a militia officer, up for his certificate, was asked to countermarch his company, then in column by the left. He did it. After the words, "Halt, front, dress," he was asked, by which flank does the company take up its dressing. "By the left, sir." "No, you are wrong, it is by the right." So points were deducted from the poor ignoramus of a militiaman, and the other officers go scot free—bar this gratuitous notice.

I like a man when he has made a mistake to acknowledge the corn, saying, "as you were—my mistake!"

DEFICIENCIES IN INFANTRY EQUIPMENT.

Which would you sooner see first—a city corps, if equipped, equipped at the expense of the officers and men, or a rural corps, which drills once in every two years?