

by bringing all the family down to a sort of picnic upon the range, and towards mid-day there might be seen many a little social circle laying the foundation of future friendships. Jones *mater* would come down provided with a well lined basket, which Pte. Jones had supplemented with a jar of ale from the most adjacent public house. Up to that time Jones may not have exchanged more than a few dozen words with young Smith or Robinson, who have come unprovided with provender, but a little community of interests had been established during the match—an almost imperceptible puff of wind had given them simultaneously a bad outer or a miss, leading to mutual condolences, or a little "tip" had been given, resulting in a badly wanted bull's-eye, so that when feeding time came Smith or Robinson would be invited to take "pot luck," the result being that many a lasting friendship was started upon the range.

These little domestic pictures sometimes, however, had a seamy side. A good money prize would be competed for, and Jones *later* having expressed his firm intention of winning it, Mrs. J. would discover that she badly wanted a new dress, or that the children wanted a few days at the seaside, the expenses of which could easily be defrayed out of the prize money. The eventful day having arrived, the entire family would go down to see the shooting. Whether from nervousness, or over anxiety, our friend would begin badly, but would assume a jaunty air, and tell the partner of his joys and sorrows that it would be all right at the next range—he could soon pull up. But it was not to be, and as a succession of erratic shots caused visions of silk dresses and trips to Margate to vanish into thin air, a gradually deepening gloom would settle on the family circle; and when it at length dawned upon Jones himself that rifle shooting was a delusion and prizes a snare, Mrs. J. would put more coal upon the fire, by a hint that it might be better if in future he left shooting to younger men, &c., &c. •

Taking it altogether, the old time match had a considerable value over that of the present; not only socially, but as regards training in shooting. Now, a man takes up his position and fires all his shots in such a short space of time that there cannot be any very great change in the strength of the wind or weather, but when intervals of twenty or thirty minutes between each shot occurred a fresh calculation as to allowance had often to be made for every round fired, the habits of observation thus acquired by the old shots having had much to do in placing and maintaining the Volunteer force in the proud position that it holds—that of being the finest body of marksmen in the world.

Correspondence.

[This paper does not necessarily share the views expressed in correspondence published in its columns, the use of which is freely granted to writers on topics of interest to the Militia.]

HOW TO ENCOURAGE YOUNG SHOTS.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE.—The lines from "Old School," in your issue of last week, were read with considerable interest. "O.S." draws attention to one of the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of the novice with the rifle. As at present, with the exception of a sickly nursery competition, the beginner finds himself immediately pitted against the *creme* of crack shots, without, of course, the slightest hope of success. Nevertheless it is highly creditable to the pluck and perseverance of our beginners, that so many of them enter annually in our Dominion and Provincial meetings. A greater exhibition of nerve cannot be produced than to see a beginner slipping coolly into his place, next to a Mitchell or Burns, and bravely run up his string of mags and misses. He feels that not only is his shooting capacity criticized through his unfortunate score, but even his mental condition is seriously questioned. The most merciless dramatic critic pales into insignificance before the remarks of one of your hard shelled crack shots; to him a poor score is unpardonable, and is clearly indicative of a faulty intellect. All this the beginner realizes at the earliest possible moment, and his path is not materially smoothed by the thought thereof. It is difficult, however, to advance a remedy to meet the exigencies of the case. There is a touch of incongruity in the proposal to choke off the old shots at a certain stage, as an incentive for the young marksman to reach himself this same choking off point. No; those who have succeeded in reaching the goal of crackism should be encouraged to remain there. But equal encouragement should be shown towards those who are climbing the tortuous path of colthood. To this end, rifle shooting should be divided into two distinct classes, with say 80 points as the dividing line between them, and all competitions be regulated upon this basis. Let the more numerous prizes be apportioned to the second class, but by all means have the Wimbledon competition confined to the first class; better have old England think that our shots are composed of a hundred men who *can* shoot than of ten thousand magpie producers.

ROBERT MILLAR.

Montreal, 13th January, 1890.

AN ANSWER TO "OLD SCHOOL."

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE.—As an old shot I would like to say a few words in answer to Old School.

If Old School would endeavour to ascertain how the old shots got to be able to carry off the majority of prizes at rifle meetings, he would probably find out something he doesn't know.

As to his college argument, what sort of a young man would want to spend year after year at college for a gold medal, and then stand a chance of losing it to some other rising scholar? I presume he would use his knowledge to further his own interests and that of his country.

It is not so with old shots, the most of whom spend their vacations if they can get any, shooting, because they like it, and to be of practical use to their country when needed.

We have all heard of the oft repeated complaints of cost of ammunition, &c., and it takes the average man with steady practice two or three years at least to become a good shot. Now, Old School would like to see these men step down and out, or forced to do so by the association, because their more unskilled brethren won't practice.

If he carefully counts up the cost he will find the old shots cannot get rich at rifle shooting. If he had been to Wimbledon even as often as I have he would find that in Old England the same men are on the common year after year. He need not go to much trouble to find at the very least four times the number of old reliables he credits Canada with.

I do not see why Old School should want to lower the standard of shooting to from 65 to 75 points. I suppose it's because he dislikes practice or won't spend the money. It's a pity if the majority are like him, because other countries would be apt to get away ahead of us while we would never improve. As to the appliances, perhaps he would do as well without them. He might get a little mixed and pull off the pipe instead of the rifle. I use only the sight elevator and the rifle as it was made. Of course there is a vast difference between a rifle match and a battlefield; nobody can doubt that. He states that experience has taught him that scientific shooting is no use when you are aiming at a human being. That is strange, to say the least of it. He has the advantage of me in that; I never fired at a human being, and possibly he never fired in a match, but I think it would require science and all other agencies combined, as in our skirmishing matches, to accomplish anything.

Our friend Old School might be of service to his country with the bayonet but he needs more practice with the rifle. "Practice! Practice!" I say, and thus wipe out the old shots.

Ottawa, 13th January, 1890.

O. S.

Regimental and Other News.

Pte. Geo. Atwell, of D Co. Infantry School Corps, caught the "grippe" whilst on leave of absence in Toronto and died there.

A meeting is to be held in Toronto shortly, under Col. Otter's auspices, to re-establish the Militia Institute.

Major Joshua Wright, of the 43rd Battalion, has been elected by acclamation an alderman for the City of Hull for the two year term of 1890-91.

Capt. John S. Hendrie, of the Hamilton Field Battery, sails from New York in the Britannia for a three months visit to England. He will visit Woolwich arsenal.

Hugh O'Neill, late of D Co. I.S.C., died at London, Ont., on Saturday last. He was born in Rondalstown, County Antrim, Ireland, some fifty years ago, and at an early age enlisted in the 1st Battalion, Wiltshire regiment. He was discharged after twenty-one years service with full pension, second class certificate and four good conduct badges. Having migrated to Canada, he joined C Company, Infantry School Corps Toronto, in 1884, and served with them during the Riel rebellion of 1885, receiving the medal and clasp. Having left C Company he joined the 14th Prince of Wales Own Rifles, Kingston, then doing garrison duty at Fort Henry during the absence of A Battery R.C.A. After the detachment was disbanded, he went to London and joined D Company, serving until a few months ago when he was discharged invalided.

Winnipeg *Sifings* thus notices the Christmas dinner given at the Royal School of Mounted Infantry: "The sergeants gave a dinner in their mess rooms; and although they went through the form of inviting a few friends to partake with them, it was only a form, any one that appeared within hailing distance being made welcome at their hospitable board. The chief and Lt.-Col. Villiers, Major Buchan and officers came in. After taking a glass of wine each, the commandant thanked the sergeants for the support they had given him during the past year in putting the corp