

Government is willing to provide transport, it is to be regretted that no representation from Canada should put in an appearance, especially if, as seems probable, other parts of the Empire are represented. The *United Service Gazette* some time ago spoke of the suggestion in the following favorable terms:—"We have received from Major Deare, who commands the Prince Alfred's Guard Volunteers at Port Elizabeth, a suggestion that the occasion of Her Majesty's Jubilee this year should be celebrated by the assembling in London of contingents of regular and auxiliary troops from every part of the empire. Stay-at-home Englishmen still know but little of their colonial brethren; very few indeed have the faintest conception of the magnificent material of which the local troops are composed in Canada and Australia, in New Zealand and the Cape. Nothing would more strongly tend to weld together the Mother Country and her colonies than such a meeting in the old country upon an occasion so auspicious as the grand function which is to take place in Westminster Abbey. Imagine the magnificent effect of the streets in London being lined with troops from every quarter of the globe, who are serving the Queen without compulsion, sent by their respective provinces to do honor to her Jubilee." We agree with the *Gazette* in believing that the moral effect would be good, and that such a detachment from Canada would further strengthen the favorable opinion of the country made by the Colonial Exhibition last year.

### Personal.

Major Deare, referred to in another column as commanding a volunteer corps at Port Elizabeth, South Africa, is a son of the late Capt. Deare, of the Canadian rifles, who died at Niagara in 1851, and grandson of the late Mrs. Murray, of Drummondville.

Capt. Douglas, R.N.R., visited Toronto last week with his little three-barrel M.H.-calibre Nordenfelt gun, and exhibited it and explained its workings to Col. Otter, D.A.G., Col. Gzowski, A.D.C., and a large number of the principal officers of the local force. On one afternoon he took it out to the range, and fired a few rounds to show the rapidity with which it could deliver shots. Capt Douglas is now in Montreal.

In November, 1885, we described the improvements made by Capt. Greville-Harston to the Martini breech action. We are glad to learn that the war office think so favorably of this action that they propose testing it, and two rifles for this purpose are being made by Messrs. Bland, of Birmingham. At the request of Capt. E. Pallisser, who is acting for Capt. Harston in England, the inventor has succeeded in producing a complete attachable magazine for his action, so that it can be used either as a single shooter or repeater. These facts sufficiently contradict the groundless rumor that the Imperial government have ordered repeaters, or that they are inclined to adopt a "bolt" gun. What they desire is an action on the falling block or Martini system that can be combined with a repeating arrangement; and it is claimed that Capt. Harston's device, of which full size drawings have been forwarded to the W. O., completely meets the requirements.

### Simplification of Drill.—II.

IN the last notice on this subject the writer advocated the training of infantry in single lines and that the men in each line should be told off in "fours." The number "four" was chosen to simplify the explanation of the object aimed at, but for other reasons as affecting the effective use of infantry fire in the field, (which will be gone into at some future date), it would be preferable to tell off each line in "eights." The drill by fours would still be perfectly applicable, the pivot men being Nos. 1 and 5, or Nos. 4 and 8, respectively, according to whether the fours were formed to the right or left. Another advantage of the single rank system, numbered off in "eights," is the facility with which the troops can be faced about without altering the numbering. In cases of extreme necessity the command "right about turn" can be given as at present. In this case the numbering is reversed and the supernumerary rank has to double round the flanks. But this can also be done by giving the word "change ranks" when each eight would wheel round, and during the wheel the supernumerary rank can pass through the gaps. In this method the numbering is not reversed. This system of drill is no new one, as it is that practised in the cavalry at the present time.

Now as regards formations. All formations at drill are only a means to an end, that end being to bring the soldier into the position in which he can use his weapon with the best effect. Regular formations

are thus expedients, though very valuable ones, as they ensure mobility or rapidity of movement, order, and certainty of the men arriving at their proper destination. Theory would like a general to place every man under him in the required position, but practice shows that this is impossible and that he must form his men up in compact bodies and entrust their command to subordinate officers. At present we have to master two entirely distinct tactical systems—the one that of the old two-deep close-order line, which holds so glorious a place in the history of British infantry; the other that of an extended order, in some form or other, which has been forced on every European army by the introduction of breechloading rifles of precision and which with us is represented by the "attack formation." In civilized warfare the former has had to give way to the latter; yet if we examine Part III of the field exercise, we find that about one-half of what is called battalion drill consists of varieties and combinations of the two-deep close-order line, and further that one considerable section is devoted to a variety of formations for receiving cavalry; though all modern experience teaches that the only practical formation for the latter purpose is to develop the largest possible front of fire and to shoot as fast as possible so long as the cavalry are misguided enough to remain within range.

Advocates in favor of practising these two-deep line formations say that they are necessary to instil discipline, order, and obedience into the men and also that they are of value in making troops handy. Now battalion drill with its mass of detailed instructions as to the movements and positions of officers, teaches the latter far more than the men; the company is the real school of the men in the ranks; it is there they learn their knowledge. Further discipline, order, and obedience are instilled into the ranks not by mere drill formations themselves, but by the strictness and regularity with which they are carried out. If formations are everything, why then are two battalions, who carry out exactly the same drill formations, so often widely different in value? This difference is due to the officers and the way in which they do their work, and not to the formations. This fact forms the keystone to the problem. Consequently we can cut out any formation unsuited to modern warfare. Continuous line formations are only of use in savage warfare, as a formation to employ from beginning to finish. In such wars Canadian troops are not likely to be engaged, and even if they are the additional drill required for such wars can be learned in a day. The "attack formation" is a very misleading term, as it is not a permanent distribution of troops but an ever changing one. The changes in the circumstances and various formations of troops under fire should simply be called "the attack." This narrows our meaning of formations, and a study of modern wars shows that troops are not now-a-days called on to change front at less than a right angle on a central company, or to retire in column of double companies or form line to a flank, or to form a two-deep square from line at the double, or to perform faultlessly any other of the stately movements which go by the name of battalion drill. All that is now required of troops is for them to be able to move handily in any direction in quarter-column and in fours.

In savage wars they are also required to deploy from column into line by fours, but this movement is implied in the preceding sentence. If troops are merely trained to move thus, if officers have only one fixed position in all formations and wheels, and if companies, even in a deployed line, are kept separate by an interval of 2 or 3 or more paces, we can see, with a little consideration, what a vast saving of time would be effected in the efficient training of our troops in drill, leaving more time for field exercises and musketry. In all this, however, simple as the required formations need be, the greatest strictness and regularity must be maintained. Even as far back as 1869, Lord Wolseley said in his "Soldier's Pocket Book" that, "as for drill, the worst militia regiment can do enough for all practical purposes," showing that the complicated mass of movements known as battalion drill are not at all essential, and it stands to reason that the short period of training available for the Canadian militia must be greatly increased in value if all unnecessary forms and useless formalities, such as do not prepare the men for actual service, are done away with. With these points we will deal presently, but the regulations say: "The opportunity afforded by the annual training for acquiring proficiency in drill being limited, those movements only should be practised which are indispensable, and which experience may show to be most necessary for practical purposes in the field, best adapted to the nature of the country and the exigencies of modern warfare. Special instructions on this head will be issued from time to time by the adjutant-general previous to the annual training." This is a good regulation, so far as it goes, but why leave any doubt on the matter? Why not clearly lay down the requisite formations and movements so that they can be studied by officers at all times of the year, without any fear that next year these may be altered? Clearly defined regulations are of the greatest value to every army.

With regard to simplifying drill it was stated above that all unnecessary forms and useless formalities, such as do not prepare the men for