

The island of Minorca, which had been in possession of Great Britain since 1703, surrendered to Spain on the 7th of February. The Castle of Fort St. Phillip had been in vested on the 20th of August, 1781, by a combined body of French and Spanish troops under the Duke de Crillon; their force numbered 16,000 men, the garrison consisted of 2700 men, a part of whom were invalids sent from England in 1775, but the works were so extensive that the garrison were not half numerous enough to man them. The French opened 109 pieces of heavy artillery and 36 mortars on the Fort and Castle, but after three months of open trenches very little progress had been made. At the end of that time an inveterate scurvy, then the terror of the army and navy, had so enfeebled the garrison that only 660 men were capable to bear arms. A capitulation, therefore, was a necessity, but the troops were allowed to be sent to England not to serve till exchanged.

Immediately after the return of the Comte de Grasse from America an expedition was planned between himself and the Marquis de Bouille for the reduction of the Island of Barbadoes, and 8000 troops were embarked by the latter on board the fleet which sailed from Martinique on the 25th of December, 1781, but by contrary winds it was driven greatly to the leeward, and as Barbadoes is to the windward, and much time would be lost in beating up it was determined to change the object of the expedition and attack the Island of St. Christopher's, where the troops were landed on the 11th of January, 1782. The British forces on the island numbered about 600 men, but they were commanded by a skilful and determined old soldier, Brigadier-General Fraser, who, unable to oppose the landing, took post on Brimstone Hill, a place of great natural strength from its height and inaccessibility, where he was joined by the Governor of the island with 300 militia. Sir Samuel Hood, who, in the absence of Sir George Rodney, commanded the British fleet in the West Indies, was then at Barbadoes, and having received intelligence of the destination of the French armament he sailed for the relief of St. Christopher's, where he arrived on the 23rd of January. The next morning at dawn he formed his fleet of twenty-two ships of the line in order of battle and bore down to engage the French fleet of thirty-two sail of the line at anchor in the Basse Terre road. It is alleged that from the circumstance of two of his ships running foul of each other he could not carry out his design of attacking the French fleet at anchor, but he succeeded in capturing a French frigate laden with ordnance stores, which greatly delayed the siege of Brimstone Hill, which had to be honored with regular approaches. This gave the Comte de Grasse an opportunity of getting his fleet under sail and stand out to sea, by which his numerical superiority would be rendered more effective. Accordingly at daylight

on the 25th, when the British fleet again advanced in order of battle the French were found standing to the southward on the larboard tack. Sir S. Hood stood towards the enemy under full sail with the apparent intention of bringing on an action which had the effect of drawing the French fleet off the land, but no sooner had he effected this than taking advantage of a change of wind he tacked and fetched the anchorage of Basse Terre, which the French Admiral had quitted. The French Admiral, enraged at being outwitted, endeavored to cut off the British rear but was beaten off with loss. On the 26th he made two furious attacks on the British fleet at anchor, but was repulsed in both with such fearful loss that he sent 1000 wounded men to St. Eustatius.

Sir Samuel Hood was no tactician, although a good seaman; his manoeuvre of occupying the Basse Terre road only protracted the defence as do Grasso's superiority left every other harbor open to the French. His great opportunity was lost on the 25th when he allowed the temporary damage to two vessels to weigh against the advantage of attacking the French fleet at anchor. Nelson would have destroyed it and captured the besieging army.

Although exposed to a vigorous fire from the fleet the French army prosecuted their works with great industry, having finally succeeded in mounting 23 pieces of heavy artillery and 24 mortars on their batteries. The effect of a fire from such heavy armament on a space not over 200 yards in diameter may be readily conceived, but it held out till the 12th of February when every gun being dismounted and the whole works in ruins, General Fraser capitulated for 500 men, to which the garrison at Brimstone Hill was reduced, while the Governor, Mr. Shirley, capitulated for St. Christopher's and the dependent island of Nevis, both obtaining fair, honorable, and liberal terms, as their good conduct merited.

The British fleet left Basse Terre road on the night of the 14th, without being observed, and sailed for Barbadoes, while the Comte de Grasse detached a squadron to Montserrat, which surrendered on the 22nd of February.

A Washington correspondent of the New York Herald says:—General Banks is to present to the House of Representatives tomorrow's petition from John Warren for damages against Great Britain to the tune of half a million dollars, because he was arrested and tried as a Fenian conspirator, contrary to the laws for such cases made and provided. Mr. Warren, it will be remembered, was arrested, tried and convicted as a British subject, although he proved himself to be a naturalized American citizen. The charges against him were based mainly upon words spoken and acts committed in America, for which he contends he cannot be touched in Great Britain. He declares he committed no overt act in Great Britain or Ireland, and that if he had done so he was entitled to trial by a mixed jury. It is not known what action will be taken in regard to the matter.

COMPETITION DRILL OF THE 14TH P. W. O. RIFLES.

According to previous announcement the competition in drill between the different companies of the 14th P. W. O. Rifles for a prize of \$50, given by the officers, took place at the Drill Shed on Monday evening, in the presence of a large crowd of spectators. The balcony was principally occupied by ladies, and, for the purpose of drilling, the shed was inconveniently full. The idea of offering prizes for efficiency in drill is a new one, the result of which will prove highly beneficial to both officers and men. The drill of the battalion on Monday night was highly creditable, and we have no hesitation in saying that it will compare favourably with that of any corps in Canada. Should the Government encourage the movement of giving prizes for drill, as well as for rifle shooting, the 14th will be prepared to compete with any battalion in the country, and we have no doubt successfully.

All the companies, except No. 3, which did not compete, were represented by the full number of men ordered to parade. About 8 o'clock the Battalion was formed in open column, right in front, when the companies were proved, after which, with the exception of No. 5, they were allowed to disperse. In the absence of Lieut. Col. Jarvis, D. A. G., who is at present at Ottawa on important business, the board of examiners was composed of Major Kirkpatrick, 47th Battalion; Lieut. and Adjutant Givens, R. C. R.; and Lieut. Smyth, R. C. R., Adjutant of the Military School. No. 5 Company (Capt. Werner's) was first examined, and in succession Nos. 1, 4, 2, and 6. We will not undertake a criticism of the manner in which the movements were performed. All the companies drilled remarkably well, some excelling in one movement, some in another. The manual and platoon exercises were performed with unusual steadiness, uniformity and accuracy, and the wheeling was such as could scarcely be expected from Volunteers. When the competition had concluded, the judges returned to consider their verdict, during which time the Battalion was again formed in column, and was put through a number of movements by the Adjutant, Capt. Reed. A two deep square having been formed, the men were faced inwards and were addressed by Lieut. Col. Callaghan, who expressed himself agreeably surprised at the steadiness and general efficiency displayed throughout the entire drill. He felt proud to be in command of such a Battalion which, he believed, was second to none in Canada. The decision of the examiners was in favor of No. 5, Capt. Werner's. The judges found it a difficult matter to decide upon the merits of each company. All things considered, however, they were unanimous in awarding the laurel of victory to No. 5. Major Kirkpatrick, who is an old officer of the 14th, was much pleased with what he had witnessed. The drill of all was very creditable. He congratulated Col. Callaghan that he commanded such a well drilled body of men. Adjutant Givens, R. C. R., had seen a good deal of drill in his time, and he thought himself competent to know what good drill was. He pronounced that of the 14th Battalion of such a character as both officers and men should feel proud. It afforded him great pleasure to assist in the examination. Lieut. Smyth, R. C. R., Adjutant of the Military School, addressed the men in a short speech.