

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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## COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

We publish in this issue the prize lists of the Ontario and Quebec Provincial Rifle Associations. We greatly regret that the latter should have reached us too late for publication last week, as the competition will have begun by the time this is published. The matches will be found similar to those of last year, though the prize list is somewhat reduced. It will be noticed that ammunition must be purchased on the ground; but English-made No. IX. will be provided. Our next issue will contain a full account of the matches.

The appearance of the Ontario programme was doubtless delayed by the absence of Colonel Otter, the indefatigable secretary of the Association, in the North-West; but now that it has appeared it is eminently satisfactory, being similar to those of previous years, and promising a week's good shooting. The "any rifle" match has been abolished, and replaced by a Martini match in two series, an innovation which will be gladly received by the military element. The regulations are substantially the same as those of the D. R. A.; full particulars can be seen in the printed programmes. One change, which is a step in the direction of simplifying shooting is, that "no 'fouling' shots will be allowed."

The Metropolitan matches held at Ottawa last week brought out as winners of first prizes three of the "Sharpshooters," lately returned from the North-west, and their success, besides being a matter of satisfaction to all parties, seems to bring out the principle that something more than regular practice is required to ensure success. They have probably had less practice this year than the competitors who remained at home, but they have had the setting up of pure air and hard work, and these have had their due effect on nerves and muscles and have brought them to the front. If it is unnecessary for a rifle shot to go into training, he certainly improves his chances by getting regular exercise and plenty of it.

The shooting at the Metropolitan matches was on the whole far under the Ottawa average, and if D.C. ammunition had been used there would have been a universal howl of condemnation of the home-made article, but all the ammunition was English, some ten years old, some eight, and low scores seemed to attend the use of both alike. The enunciation of some theory that would account for the prevalence of low scores on days that look like good shooting days would fill a long-felt want.

There is an impression prevalent in Canada that our Wimbledon team have not shot up to their usual form this year, an impression probably fostered by the facts that they lost the Kolapore cups and that their prize-takings were not cabled over from day to day as in former years, but an erroneous impression, nevertheless, as full returns show us. A team that could put one quarter of their number into the Queen's three hundred, that could furnish three men to the "Queen's sixty," and that could carry off the second volunteer aggregate and three of the grand aggregate badges is a team to be respected, and one that will be remembered in England.

Brigade drills are often unnecessarily tedious, and might be improved upon in some instances. It must be remembered that in them, as a rule, most of the work falls upon the officers, the ranks having much less to do than in battalion or company drill, and that the hardest of all work upon the men is standing still. When this is aggravated by the more punctual battalions having to wait half an hour for the last one to come onto the ground, the result, besides the lamentable waste of time, is most demoralizing. It would surely be a simple matter to arrange that each corps was to occupy a stated position at a stated hour, and thereupon to begin the intended movements punctually and to dismiss the battalions to further separate drill or to break off the moment they were concluded. With the limited time at the disposition of corps every minute should be economized, not by lengthening the hours, but by keeping the men fully employed while they are at it.

In a speech at Regina General Middleton, referring to the pleasing fact that no courts-martial had been necessary during the active service, stated his belief that the entire absence of crime was due to the entire