

THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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NOTE AND COMMENT.

We direct the attention of all concerned, to the annual meeting of the Dominion Rifle Association, which will be held in the Railway Committee Room of the House of Commons, on Wednesday next, the 16th inst., commencing at eleven o'clock. His Excellency the Governor General, who takes a warm personal interest in the Association, has signified his intention to attend as usual.

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An excellent portrait of Major-General Ivor Herbert has just been issued from the "Elite" studio of Mr. S. J. Jarvis. It is of large size, mounted on card 18 x 24 inches, and is finished in the best style of the photographic art, as well as being an excellent likeness. There are two styles, one taken sitting, the other standing. This is, we believe, the first large portrait of the General taken for a great many years, and copies ought to be in demand to grace the quarters of the many corps with whom General Herbert has already achieved an enviable popularity.

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The annual meeting of the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association is to be held on Wednesday next, the 16th inst. At this meeting, and the Council and Executive Committee meetings which follow it, the principal business of the year is usually transacted, as there is a fuller and more representative gathering than at any subsequent meeting, unless something of unusual urgency occurs to call the members together.

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It is desirable then that representatives attending these meetings should be posted as to the opinions of members upon points of interest to themselves and to the Association; and that they should be given an opportunity to know something of the wishes and ideas of the members generally

before they definitely decide upon the programme for the work of the year.

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The approach of the annual meeting of the National Rifle Association fills the columns of the service papers at home with letters from well known practical shots offering suggestions for alterations, additions and improvements to the programme of that association which are always a valuable assistance to those entrusted with the management in guiding them to adopt a course in touch with popular feeling so far as feasible.

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The D. R. A. is admitted to be a well-managed concern, and the competitors or "grumblers" meeting held during the annual matches is supposed to give an opportunity to ventilate grievances and suggest reforms. At these meetings, however, it is occasionally found impossible to keep accurate minutes of all suggestions or complaints, and as the meeting is held some months in advance of the annual meeting the opinions expressed are often buried in oblivion before the time for their consideration has arrived.

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It would therefore be a decided advantage to the association and to members if those who have either improvements—for even the D.R.A., satisfactorily as it is found to run—might doubtless be improved—to propose or alterations to suggest, would do so through the columns of this paper previous to the date of the annual meeting. This would give others opportunity to express their views either of approval or otherwise, and the Council might be able to obtain an intelligible idea of the popular feeling upon many points on which they now have to work in the dark.

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The regimental orders of many Volunteer corps in England include notices of

Morris tube practices to be held semi-weekly or oftener. If a similar course was introduced here and made a part of the annual training more benefit would accrue to the force from it than from any other portion of the duties performed. We maintain, and the question does not admit of discussion, that with the very limited training which the Government find it in their power to give the Militia it is impossible to obtain a thoroughly trained, well disciplined force.

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It is, however, quite possible to have a large force of men thoroughly trained with their rifles who could be easily knocked into shape in a very short time if needed. This can be accomplished at very little expense and without much difficulty by a liberal distribution of Morris tubes and ammunition, followed by a more liberal issue of ball ammunition than now allowed. This will enable the men to practise in their armouries, and get some idea of how to hold, and pull, and how to use their sights, before they are brought before the targets and told to shoot, without having any previous knowledge of their rifles, as is now too often the case.

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It is currently rumoured that the Government have now in store and issued on loan a sufficient number of Martini-Henry rifles to arm the force with if it was desired to do so. If this report is true it is unfortunate that pressure is not brought to bear to have the old Sniders withdrawn and the Martinis issued. The facts might be ascertained by an enquiry of the Hon. the Minister of Militia, and if the report circulated is found correct it ought not to call for much persuasion to have the old gas pipes called in, particularly as the cartridge factory at Quebec is now making Martini-Henry ammunition.