

The Countersign.

Alas! the weary hours pass slow,
The night is dark and still,
And in the marshes far below,
I hear the bearded whippoorwill;
I scarce can see a yard ahead,
My ears are strained to catch each sound;
I hear the leaves about me shed,
And the springs bubbling through the ground.

Along the beaten path I pace,
Where white rays mark my sentry's track;
In formless shrubs I seem to trace
The foeman's form with bended back,
I think I see him crouching low,
I stop and listen—I stoop and peer,
Until the neighbouring hillocks grow
To groups of soldiers far and near.

With ready piece, I wait and watch,
Until my eyes, familiar grown,
Detect each harmless earthen notch,
And turn guerillas into stone,
And then amid the lonely gloom,
Beneath the weird old tulip trees
My silent marching I resume,
And think on other times than these.

So comes the dream—so fleets the night,
When distant in the darkness glen,
Approaching up the sombre height,
I hear the solid march of men;
Till over stubble, over sward,
And fields where gleam the golden sheaf
I see the lantern of the guard
Advancing with the night relief.

"Halt! Who goes there?" My challenge cry;
It rings along the watchful line.
"Relief!" I hear a voice reply;
"Advance one, and give the Countersign!"
With bayonet at the charge, I wait,
The Corporal gives the mystic spell;
With arms at port, I charge my mate,
And onward pass, and all is well.

But in the tent that night awake,
I think, if in the fray I fall
Can I the mystic answer make
When the angelic sentries call?
And pray that Heaven may, so ordain,
Where'er I go, what fate be mine,
Whether in pleasure or in pain
I yet may have the Countersign.

[The American Volunteer.]

Major E. G. Selby-Smyth, Royal Irish Rifles, has been selected for the adjutancy of the 4th Battalion, at Belfast, vice Captain F. J. Tobin, whose five years in the appointment will expire in April. Major Selby-Smyth was A. D. C. to the General Officer commanding the troops at the Cape of Good Hope from November, 1873 to October, 1875, and to the Commander of the Militia of Canada from November 1875 to July 1879; he was adjutant from July 1883 to July 1888, and he obtained his majority twelve months ago.

The German Emperor has not forgotten the naval display he witnessed at Portsmouth. Admiral Sir Edmund Commerell, who conducted His Majesty over the fleet, has received a state sword, accompanied by a letter from the Emperor, which is described as a souvenir of an occasion which His Majesty was not likely to forget. At the Royal review at Aldershot, on August 7th last, the Emperor spoke to Sir Evelyn Wood in terms of high praise of the working of the troops he saw on that occasion. Sir Evelyn has now received from His Imperial Majesty a sword of honour, the hilt of which is richly studded with diamonds. On one side is the monogram, "W. R.," and on the reverse the Imperial crown.

A second test of the Polymath bullet-proof armour took place Jan. 14 at Waseington barracks, under the supervision of Gen. Gibson and Capt. Chester. A bag filled with oats was placed at one end of the range and a small target, made of the thin material which its inventor claims is bullet-proof, was fastened to the bag. It was decided to shoot from the 500-yard line. Lieut. Geo. Bennett did the shooting and did some very clever work, as the target was so small as to be scarcely visible at the end of the range. The first target was pierced the first time it was hit, and a second, which was said to be a stronger one, was substituted, but suffered a like fate. The test was complete, and showed that an undergarment made of the proposed material would not be the slightest protection against a modern bullet. President Lincoln's method of dealing with the inventor of such a contrivance was to ask him to put it on and let him fire at him.

Regimental and Other News.

A large and enthusiastic meeting of the members of the Battleford column of the Northwest Field Force was held in Toronto last week, when it was decided that a reunion of the force should be held on the 28th of March next. A large number of letters were received from members living out of the city signifying their intention of being present at the reunion. It is expected that members of the old brigade now living in the United States and the Northwest Territories will be represented. Judging from the enthusiasm of the men, and the strength of the Provisional Committee, this reunion will be a great success. The following are the names of those on the Provisional Committee:—Capt. MacDonald, Capt. Brock, Lieut. George, Col. Sergt. McKell, Col. Sergt. World, Sergts. Langtry, Eddis, Laidlaw, Ham, N. B. Sanson, A. McKenzie, and Messrs. J. F. Edgar, W. Wallace, N. Ham, and Alex. Boyd. The meeting adjourned to meet at a time and place due notice of which will be given, for the purpose of appointing a permanent committee, and deciding upon the nature of the reunion.

COMPLIMENT TO LIEUT.-COL. BOG.

About two dozen prominent citizens accepted of invitations to be present at a dinner tendered to Col. T. Bog by Major McDonnell, on Tuesday evening, 14th inst., at the Tecumseth House, Picton, Ont. The universal grippe prevented a number of invitations from being accepted, and some of those present claimed to be victims of the malady; but it was a cheerful and brilliant gathering and will long be remembered. Among those who sat down to the table were: Lt.-Col. Bog, Major McDonnell, Dr. Platt, M.P., surgeon; Capt. John A. Sprague, M.P.P.; Major Donald Ross, quartermaster; Major W. T. Ross, paymaster; Capt. Horrigan, Capt. Lighthall, Lieut. Horrigan, Lieut. Wilson, Capt. Arnott, 40th Batt., Hastings; Sheriff Gillespie, Registrar Mackenzie, R. B. Crombie, Manager Bank of Montreal; John A. Wright, John Caven, C. J. Bongard, W. Boulter, E. M. Young, R. A. Foster, W. Kerchausen, C. A. McDonnell, Mark Burlingham, and representatives of the local press. The 16th Battalion band was in attendance. The cuisine was carefully attended to and the tables were loaded with a lavish profusion of the choicest edibles. The dining room was decorated with flags and bunting and presented a festive appearance. A list of toasts was drunk with enthusiasm and speeches were made containing many complimentary allusions to the guest of the evening and his great services to the battalion since its organization.

MEETING OF VETERANS.

The half-yearly meeting of the Toronto Army and Navy Veterans' Society, which was largely attended, took place in Temperance Hall on the 14th inst., Mr. John Nunn in the chair. The following new members were proposed: Honorary—Major Vidal, late 4th King's Own, and Lieut. Alexander Leith, Ancaster; ordinary—Robert Fernley, late 14th Hussars; Edward Hance, late 38th Staffordshire Regiment; William Whiter and William Stevens, late 1st Battalion 60th Rifles; and William Cole, late Royal Horse Artillery. A communication was read from the Secretary of State for War stating that in answer to the prayer of the society's petition immediate action would be taken as to the payment of pensioners by post-office order. A pattern of the new band uniform was exhibited on Private Walker and approved by the meeting. The cap resembles that worn by the staff-sergeants of the Grenadier Guards, and the tunic the patrol jacket of an officer of the Rifles. A chart, representing the uniforms of various divisions of the service, was presented to the society by Sergt. Brown, late of the Royal Artillery. The receipts for the evening were \$35.25.

THE DUFFERIN RIFLES.

The regular annual meeting of the officers of the 38th Battalion Dufferin Rifles of Canada was held in the officers' rooms, on the 13th inst. Present—Lieut.-Col. C. S. Jones, Major B. H. Rothwell, Surgeon Wm. T. Harris, Capt. and Adj. W. A. Wilkes, Paymaster, Capt. J. S. Hamilton, Quartermaster, Capt. Harris, Asst.-Surgeon H. Minchen, Capt. H. J. McGlashan, H. F. Leonard, W. D. Jones, C. M. Nelles, Lieuts. J. Ruddy, W. G. Kilmaster, Robertson, H. D. Curtis and A. J. Bown. The regular annual reports were presented, showing the battalion to be in a most satisfactory condition. The Standing Committees for the year were appointed as follows: Regimental Committee—Major T. Harry Jones, Capt. Stratford and Capt. Hamilton; Band Committee—Capt. McLean, Capt. Jones and Lieut. Curtis; Mess Committee—Major Rothwell, Capt. Leonard and Capt. Nelles; Rifle Committee—Lieut.-Col. Jones, Surgeon Harris, Capt. McGlashan, Leonard, Nelles and Harris; Entertainment Committee—Major Jones, Capt. Wilkes and Nelles, and Lieuts. Kilmaster, Robertson and Bown; Armoury Committee—This is a new committee to look after the new drill shed generally, and is composed of the captains of each company with Capt. and Adj. Wilkes; Auditors—Major Jones and Capt. McGlashan.