



DRILL IN THE ROYAL NAVY.
H. M. S. "GARNET," PREPARING FOR ACTION. (Wm. Notman & Son, photo.)

Our Toronto Letter.

[From our own correspondent.]

TORONTO, November, 1890.

The Army and Navy exhibition given by ladies at Ottawa on behalf of the hospital there, has excited comment not altogether of a favourable nature. It is possible, and more than probable, however, that the young ladies themselves, as well as their parents and friends, assured themselves that the exhibition was not derogatory to the dignity of the sex before engaging in it. Few things are, when judged from a purely philosophical standpoint. The idea of military drill for ladies was a favourite idea with a drill instructor in Toronto, who, if he had lived, would have offered his services to the young ladies of certain of our educational institutions. His idea was that, since the more athletic out-of-door sports that are of such immense benefit to the mental and physical natures of men-students have no equivalent for women, and since women need exercise of a regular sort in the open air, the military exercises met the want in a most perfect and elegant manner. Even the sword and rifle exercises he considered as very beneficial, since they strengthened muscles not otherwise called into play by student-life, or by that led by the young ladies of our wealthy classes, whose servants relieve them of everything in the nature of rough exercise. Moreover, military drill requires no such expensive outfit as do calisthenics, and are at the command of our village belles as readily as our town beauties.

People of taste and judgment are a good deal disgusted with the prominence given to the murderer Birchall. The vulgarity that makes profit of a criminal, as certain newspapers are doing, is repugnant to all good feeling. And the sentimental silliness of those of our prominent people who have signed his petitions for a reprieve just because he is a university man and of respectable family connection, is a theme of reprobation by such as know that if he had been a poor and ignorant man, who, like Editha's burglar, had "had no opportunities," his fate would have excited neither interest nor pity. Either let us make something short of death a capital punishment, or let us be fair and allow the law to take its course without respect of persons.

Toronto enjoyed a most delightful Thanksgiving Day. The ground was moist enough not to be dusty, and dry enough not to be muddy. The air was soft and fresh; the sun smiled pleasantly through fleecy clouds, and the trees, not being all stripped of their leaves, touched the others with many lovely tints. The half-hidden purpose of a military surprise and its ensuing fight drew the crowds, as usual, away from the city. Some adventurous folk went as far as Lambton, and others took train to Mimico, the ground between these two points being spoken of as the mock "Stony Creek," to be fought by daylight, however.

The "crowd" gathered at High Park, where the march past took place after lunch was over.

The fight took place a good deal nearer than Mimico, and stragglers caught up the fact in no time. It was a short and sharp affair. The Queen's Own on one side, the Royal Grenadiers, "C" Company (Royal School of Infantry) and the favourite 13th Battalion from Hamilton forming the attacking force. The *locale* of the fight was nearly where the Americans landed in 1812, when they descended on Little York and blew up the magazine to their own loss as well as that of the attacked, their General (Pike) being killed, together with some of his men.

No such fatality—no fatality at all, in fact—accompanied the friendly set-to on Thursday, and Lieut.-Col. Otter, R.I.S.; Lieut.-Colonel Gibson, 13th; Col. Gwyn, 77th; Col. Wayling, 12th, and the officers of the various staffs must have enjoyed the fun as much as the men did. When "smokeless powder" is *en règle* there will be no drawback at all to such a day.

We like sham fights, but many would like them better if some form that recognized the purpose of the day could be added. If we had military chaplains—as, indeed, some think we ought, either attached or unattached—it would not be difficult to precede the march-out of each battalion with thanksgiving prayers and a hymn. The men would work none the worse for it, and outsiders would not feel that our militia were entirely cut off from those pious remembrances and thoughts that are at once a duty and a privilege.

The churches were well filled by the more religious of our population, and several of them provided a largely musical service, selecting the numbers with reference to the occasion. In all the Anglican churches on Thanksgiving Day collections for diocesan missions are made, with good results.

The St. George's society of Toronto gave their usual concert in the evening, and it goes without saying that it was a success, since the management are always careful to provide a first-class entertainment, and the public know it. On this occasion Mrs. Caldwell, Mrs. Mackellar, of Hamilton, Mr. Jarvis and Mr. Schuch sang the National Anthem as a quartette. These artists, together with Mr. W. E. Ramsay (comic) formed the vocal strength of the concert, and Mrs. Annie Waldron as a pianist and violinist and Mr. J. E. Wallis, clarionettist, were the sole instrumentalists. Mr. Giuseppe Dinelli, organist of the Church of the Redeemer, where Mr. Schuch is choir-master, acted as accompanist, with Miss Fowler and Mrs. Boyd in certain numbers.

The theatres were well filled, all the actors in town being favourites.

By the way, Monday sees Gilmore with his opera company at the Academy of Music.

The extraordinary profits made by the Toronto Street Rail-

way Company, as brought out by the arbitration enquiry in the courts, have excited as much surprise as did the results of the multiplication of the nails in a horseshoe puzzle. That a horse, a car and a man, multiplied by, say, forty runs a day, multiplied by, say, a dozen lines of road, should give such returns after all expenses of road and maintenance are paid, seems incredible, yet the books leave nothing to the imagination, except, indeed, certain extras that have their own value, too, but are not counted in. Nor would any one have a word to say to the size of any fairly earned profits if the drivers and conductors had not been so ill-paid. But while it is shown that the company have earned millions of profit, it is known that these poor men, exposed as they are to all the inclemency of the seasons from six in the morning until twelve at night and on duty from twelve to fourteen hours a day have received but a pittance, some nine dollars a week being the average. Well may men ask for co-operation. Moreover, the citizens are naturally indignant that the values of the rolling-stock have been put at the highest possible figure; some of them, as the books show, actually above original cost. The city may be the purchaser, but the citizens have to pay the piper, and they are wise to remember it, and to see that they have the worth of their money. It is a pity a reputable corporation like the Street Railway Co. should descend to meanness, particularly when they have really organized and carried out a very extensive business for the convenience of the city. The "poor man's carriage" is a great comfort to thousands of men and women in all classes of life, and with very rare exceptions the employees have been faithful and civil throughout. The "linees" might often have been better and the accommodation more commensurate with the needs of the public, but as a whole there has been little to complain of during the thirty years the company has served the city, and it would be discreditable to all concerned if such service went wholly unrecognized.

The death of Rev. Father Vincent, Vicar-General, the oldest priest in Toronto, has given occasion for many deserved tributes of respect to this venerable Roman Catholic. Since the Rev. Father came to Toronto his Church has made great strides, not more in the matter of church-building than in that of education, and in no section of his duty did Father Vincent show a warmer interest than in the promotion of knowledge. St. Michael's College, in which institution he died at a by no means advanced age, was represented by Father Vincent on the Senate of the University of Toronto for some years, and the organization of the separate schools, after such separation was secured, the deceased gentleman took an active part. The funeral was attended by a large number of prominent citizens, the interment being made at St. Michael's cemetery.