

WHAT A CONSERVATIVE PAPER SAYS.

THE MILITARY GAZETTE slates ex-Lieut. D'Arcy MacMahon, of the R.R.C.I., whose name was recently struck off the Militia List for slandering Major Wilson, in proper form, and in the course of its remarks it says: "D'Arcy MacMahon is a youth with a political pull. In fact, he comes of a family that has very successfully worked the Government for appointments." Unfortunately MacMahon is not the only officer in Canada's little standing army of whom the same may be said, and it is a great pity that such should be the case. Canada's permanent corps is a small but eminently efficient body of men, and the majority of the officers are enthusiastic and well-trained soldiers, to whose diligent efforts the success of the military school system is attributable; but in recent years a practice of making appointments by political influence has crept in, and the consequence is that there are now not a few young men holding commissions who have no personal qualifications for or interest in the profession of arms, but whose political friends have got them in just as they would have secured them a clerkship in the Civil Service, if the financial remuneration had been equal. In time of peace these "soldiers for revenue only" do not cut much of a figure, because the other men do the work, and that is all there is about it. But in case of war these gentlemen might have to be entrusted with the sole charge of a hundred men, or even a regiment, and then it would doubtless be found that the practice of allowing politicians to meddle with the military was ultimately expensive.—Hamilton Spectator.

AN INTERESTING MEMENTO.

A GENTLEMAN in Hamilton came across an interesting memento of the battle of Sobraon the other day. Among the papers of his father, a captain in the 16th Lancers, who took part in that engagement, he found a note written in faded ink on yellow paper, and dated the night before that battle, which was fought on Feb. 10, 1846, just half a century ago. It was written by a young subaltern, now an officer high in rank in the army, to his father, who was on picket at the Sutlej river, four miles in front of the army. It is written in imitation of the stilted diction of the East, and indicates that the writer was not weighed down with forebodings regarding his fate in the coming battle.

"To the commander of honor and glory post: Bismillah! we are all safe, but thou hast blackened thy face by sending thy companies in such haste with tidings which tendeth so much to derange the nervous system. However, on thy head be it should thou not be equally alert when real danger approach-

eth us, as in thy hands to-day in a great measure is our fate. Guard us. We have no wish at present to visit the hoüris and as little to sing hallelujah (our preference for some years to come being decidedly God save the Queen).

"Therefore, old man, let thy vigilance this night watch over our safety that we may live to bless thee and not pray for the defilement of thy father's grave.

"Inshillah! in God's hands be it. So Salaam, take care of thyself. Old Foster has just called, and we're going to have a time. Our swords are sharpened, our pistols loaded with slugs and lances keen."

Next morning the battle was fought, which resulted in one of the greatest victories ever won by British arms in the East. Sir Hugh Gough lost 2,300 men, but the Sikh army was destroyed and 67 pieces of artillery captured. The Foster mentioned in the letter died last month, a baronet and K.C.B. At a dinner held on the last anniversary of the battle only 16 survivors of the 16th were present.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Another addition to regimental histories has been added in the form of the "History of the New Brunswick Regiment of Canadian Artillery," compiled by Cap. J. B. M. Baxter, a member of the New Brunswick Historical Society. The book contains many interesting facts of the regiment since it was formed in 1793. Capt. Baxter has treated his subject well, and has linked the various events in such a manner that there is no difficulty in following them with interest. The book is well illustrated and is the work of The Sun Printing Co., St. John. Exception is taken in the book to the fact that the N.B. artillery are placed 3rd on the list of oldest regiments, while the regiment was formed 18 years before the Montreal regiment, which is on the list as second, and 30 years before Halifax, which is placed first. The officers of the regiment published the book for private distribution and it is "respectfully inscribed to Lieut.-Col. Irwin (late R.A.), Assistant Adjutant-General for artillery, as a recognition of his efforts in placing before the artillery of Canada the highest standard of excellence for their imitation."

Recently the attention of American officers has been drawn to the indiscretion of permitting foreigners to note the development made in war material in the States. The effect was the determination by the Navy Department to discontinue the practice of admitting representatives of other nations, either visitors or residents in Washington as attaches of the various legations, to the tests which are conducted at the Indian Head proving grounds. Now the War Department is likely to follow suit.

THE VOLUNTEER OF TO-DAY.

A LECTURE, entitled "The Volunteer of To-day: His Military Status, Duties and Training," was given before the members of the Royal United Service Institution by Major Rickards, of the London Rifle Brigade. Col. Sterling, Scots Guards, presided. Major Rickards, in his prefatory remarks, said his lecture was intended as a signal to that which was given by Col. Balfour at the Institution in November. He, although having had the advantage of twenty-three years' volunteer service—in the ranks and as officer—did not claim to possess any special experience of his subject, but excused himself for addressing his fellow-members on the grounds of the great interest he took in all connected with it.

Dividing his matter under the three general heads of Military Status, Military Duties, and Training, the lecturer said the volunteer was a member of the military forces of the country for defensive purposes only, giving his services without pay, with a view to acting as an auxiliary to the regular and militia forces of the country when invaded by an enemy; and his training must be sufficient to enable him, at short notice, to act as a member of such a defending force in his own country. It was hardly necessary to point out that a very small part of his time, and a comparatively small part of his thoughts and energies, could be given to learning his military duties, or even to military subjects, because the volunteer in the ranks to-day is almost invariably a bread-winner. When the present volunteer force sprang into existence in 1859, there were, comparatively speaking, considerable numbers of country gentlemen, and men of good private means, to be found in the ranks of the volunteers, who were masters of their own time, while the ranks are now almost entirely filled with men whose hours are not their own; and who can only take holidays, and get away for training, when their civilian superiors allow them to do so; and who would lose their employment if they absented themselves without leave; for in these days of keen commercial competition the employers, he regretted to say, were not by any means too ready to show their patriotism by giving their employes even three days' holiday in order to go into camp and learn how to defend their masters' warehouses or shops in case of need.

The military duties for which the volunteer should be trained are those which he would have to perform in co-operation with the regulars and militia in case of invasion; and although he assumed the probability of the volunteers being called out, say, from seven to thirty days before an actual landing of foreign troops could take place, so that they would have some time to shake down into their places and improve on their previous training, he considered that they