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Topics of the Week.

It seems to be very probable that 1889 will witness another "positively last appearance" of the National Rifle Association at Wimbledon. Out of the number suggested the authorities have so far been unable to agree upon a new site.

This, from the *United Service Gazette* of the 3rd inst., will be news to our readers:—"There is a rumour current in Clubland to the effect that the command of the Canadian militia will be vacated on Jan. 1 by Lt.-General Sir F. D. Middleton. We should not be surprised if the report were correct, for it is no secret that the Dominion authorities are very difficult to work with. It is only fair to say, however, that since he has held the appointment General Middleton has worked wonders in the way of improving the organization and status of the force he commands." The paper quoted does not appear to be aware that not many months ago Sir Fred. Middleton's term was extended for two years. It is only reasonable to suppose that when the extension was arranged the General was satisfied to work with the Canadian authorities, and the latter have been accused by no one of a sudden change for the worse. By the way, ought not difficulties to be an attraction to a fighting man?

The *United Service Gazette* has been hearing something else of interest to Canada. It is this: "We hear on very good authority that the absorption of Newfoundland into the Canadian Confederation is virtually decided on, and that the conclusion of the arrangement is mainly delayed by the pending trouble between Canada and the United States. The accession of Newfoundland would complete the work of confederation achieved in Canada by the Confederation Act of 1867, of which important measure we are not unlikely to hear a good deal more by way of precedent for other parts of the Empire." Canadians generally would be pleased if the information proved to be correct; but the prospects of a federation do not seem to have been advanced any by the recent discussion of the subject in Newfoundland.

A cable message has been received stating that the seven Engineer commissions accepted by Canadians have been allotted, and that the gentlemen were expected to report at the School of Military Engineering on the 25th of November, inst. These are A. E. Panet, (son of the Deputy Minister of Militia); T. Joly de Lotbiniere, of Quebec; W. B.

Leslie, Kingston; C. B. Farwell, Sherbrooke; A. P. Bremner, Halifax, N. S.; P. C. Girouard, Dorval, P. Q., and T. Adams, Kingston. This year the Imperial Government offered the following commissions in the regular army to graduates of the Royal Military College: One in Cavalry, three in Artillery, one in Infantry, seven in Engineers. The Cavalry commission was accepted by E. C. Hamilton, of Montreal, who is now with the 3rd Hussars. The Artillery commissions were accepted by F. C. L. Barker, of St. John, N. B.; A. C. Cayley, of Toronto, and T. N. Johnston, of Quebec. These also joined their respective corps. W. T. C. Heneker, of Sherbrooke, accepted the Infantry commission, and has for some time been with his regiment, the Connaught Rangers.

Those of our friends in the rural corps who sometimes say there is nothing to be said about their organizations to interest general readers of the *MILITIA GAZETTE*, should peruse the interesting budget from the 21st Essex Fusiliers which appears in another place in this issue. "Hotspur," as an Essex man, has good reason to be proud of the corps, as the writer knows from his observation of them at the last camp at Stratford; and with a live commander such as Col. Wilkinson, the 21st will not be apt to lose the high place they have gained in the favour of the people of the county, as manifested by the attentions bestowed upon the corps by the parliamentary representatives.

The recent visit of the Emperor of Germany to Vienna and Rome, and the deep significance given to this outward show of the Triple Alliance, seem to have raised the alarm of the French to a sensitive degree. First, the attention of the French public was called to the Alpine passes and to the local troops for the defence thereof. Next, the question was raised of the Northern frontier, and the Germans were accused of a scheme for invading France through Belgium. Now, the Italians are supposed to entertain aggressive ideas by way of Switzerland; and, finally, the *Moniteur de l'Armée* calls the attention of the Government to the defenceless state of the island of Corsica. To the Italian formidable fortifications at Maddalena, and their division of troops in Sardinia, it is said that the French cannot oppose more than one regiment of Infantry, while not a fort on shore nor a ship in the harbours is in state fit for even temporary defence against a *coup de main*.

In reference to the new German drill-book, a correspondent writes to the *London Times* as follows: "Many a thinking soldier who has truly studied this truly wonderful book is anxiously asking himself the question, "Will this book also be read, thrown aside and forgotten?" or will thousands of these soldiers in a neighbouring land learn and apply its letter and spirit, and gradually in years to come force its influence on ourselves? Will those who are busy revising our own drill-book dare to publish a work one iota more behind the times than the German one, and if they are bold enough to do so what will happen? In 1869 the present Adjutant General of the army wrote: "Drill is now more essential than ever in the formation of an army; but instead of teaching a man complicated evolutions that may have a fine theatrical effect in Hyde