

THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

A complaint to the Deputy Minister.
That disputed Kit Allowance.
Estimated Expenditure for 1889-90
Canadian Military Pensioners.
The Departmental Report.

COMMON SENCE MUSKETRY TRAINING.
THE ANNUAL MILITIA REPORT—III.
REGIMENTAL NEWS.
U. S. ARMY RIFLE PRACTICE.
The New Order Recently Issued.
MISCELLANEOUS.

Topics of the Week.

In the House of Commons, yesterday, Sir John Macdonald intimated as much as that the claim of the York-Simcoe Battalion for kit allowance in connection with their service in the North-West in 1885 is at last to be granted. The regulations do not entitle the militia to this allowance, and on this score the claim had been refused, notwithstanding that it was paid to all other corps. The battalion did not go without the kit, but were equipped at the expense of the county council. The claim was made after their return home, and it was held by the Government that the county should receive any grant made. That there is now to be a grant is assured, but no announcement of its disposition has been made. In the meantime, credit is due to Mr. Wm. Mulock, M.P. for North York, and President of the Ontario Rifle Association, for the untiring agitation he has kept up on behalf of the York-Simcoe Battalion. Two of its officers, Lieut.-Cols. O'Brien and Tyrwhitt, are also Members of Parliament, but as they are political supporters of the Government they could not take such an open part as Mr. Mulock did in pressing the claim, whatever persuasive force they used in private—and it is well known that they worked assiduously to bring about the happy result.

A graceful and well deserved tribute was paid Lieut.-Col. Panet, Deputy Minister of Militia, by his chief, Sir Adolphe Caron, in the Commons on Tuesday, when the estimates of Departmental expenditure were being discussed. Replying to a question asked, Sir Adolphe said it was not true that his deputy was about to be superannuated, and declared that he was a most valuable as well as painstaking officer.

For a few weeks past a good part of our space has been given up to publication of the contents of the Annual Report of the Militia Department, and we fancy our readers will agree that the importance of the matter justifies all the space occupied by and yet to be given to it. The blue book is read by a very limited number indeed, and we trust to enhance the value of the interesting suggestions and criticism it contains by giving the more important of them the additional circulation of this paper. The first instalment covered the reports of the Deputy Minister and the General Officer Commanding; then came those of the Artillery Inspectors, and this and the succeeding weeks the available space will be devoted to the reports of the officers commanding districts. It will be noticed with gratification that these reports are uniformly eulogistic of the praiseworthy spirit animating all ranks of the force.

The estimates for the fiscal year 1889-90, just submitted to Parliament, show the total amount of money asked to be \$1,290,000 or \$29,700 less than last year. There is a decrease of \$38,700 in the amount asked for the permanent force and the schools, but an increase of \$18,000 for the Royal Military College. The reasons for these changes are not shown in the estimates, but they are doubtless both caused through special expenditures. In connection with the College, for instance, a house for the Commandant has just been purchased at a cost of \$12,500. The appropriation asked for ammunition, clothing and military stores is \$5,000 less, and whereas \$4,000 was required last year for barracks in British Columbia, there is nothing asked under that head this time. These are the only changes in the appropriations.

Canada's military pension list amounts to the respectable total—though small comparatively—of \$46,160, as estimated for the coming fiscal year. Of this amount \$32,800 is on account of the rebellion of 1885. Close on \$7,000 is asked for for veterans of the war of 1812, and for militiamen engaged in it, and their widows. The rapidity with which this last account is being closed up by the lapse of time is shown by the fact that it is estimated for 1889-90 at \$1,540 less than for the preceding year. At that rate it would take but five years to end it altogether.

The Annual Militia Report—III.

The reports of the officers commanding the several military districts which it is proposed to review in part this week, are much more than ordinarily interesting, and go to prove were proof needed how zealous these officers are, one and all, to improve the standing of the force under their control. In this issue it is proposed to give only the purport of the general remarks, later on the reports on each individual corps will be presented, and there are passages relating to musketry instruction, and to the medical branch of the service, which require special chapters.

No. 1 District—Lieut.-Col. H. Smith, D.A.G.

In this district there were drilled two corps of field artillery—three batteries in all—and seven corps of infantry and rifles. The total strength drilled was 180 officers and 2,007 non-commissioned officers and men, this being 367 under the total strength authorized. There were relieved from drill 162 officers and 1,538 non-commissioned officers and men of the corps selected for training, the 7th Fusiliers performed its drill at its own headquarters, and the remainder in brigade camp. "The 7th Fusiliers, says Colonel Smith, seems to have been in a far from efficient state for some time back. On taking command of the district in May last, I endeavoured to bring about an improvement, but without success."

The Camp of Instruction for the year was formed at Stratford, on the 19th of June. The Brigade Staff were:—

In Command, Lieut.-Colonel Henry Smith, Deputy Adjutant General Military District No. 1.