

In addition to the ordinary establishment of seven companies, a cadet company at Cheltenham college is also attached. Consequent upon these alterations and increase of establishment, it has been necessary for the corps to extend its premises; and to do thus the property adjoining the present lecture hall in Swindon road has been acquired, and the erection of a new drill hall commenced, the whole costing about £2,800.

Says the *Volunteer Service Gazette*: "The Army Orders for the present month contain an unwelcome surprise in the form of a regulation that in future the annual allowance of ball cartridge to Volunteer Infantry and Engineer corps is to be at the rate of only seventy-five rounds per efficient member instead of ninety. It would seem to be a retrograde step to reduce the supply of ammunition just when special efforts are about to be made to improve the shooting of the volunteers. And we cannot see how the step can be necessary, because by the Regulations any surplus ammunition that there may be at the end of the year has to be deducted from the normal supply for the following year. Indeed, if we understand the matter rightly, the only result of the new regulation will be to put new difficulties in the way of private rifle practice, which we believe it is most desirable to encourage."

In an exhaustive summary of the annual returns of the Scottish Volunteer corps, the *Glasgow Herald* has this paragraph which will be read with particular interest by the Canadian friends of the officer mentioned: "As for the Mounted Rifles, it appears that for ten years the Border Mounted have stood alone in representing this branch of the force, and it is due very much to the zeal and activity of the officers that the troop owes its continued existence. With Lord Melgund at their head, the troop was kept well in hand, and the popularity of the commander had not a little effect in bringing in recruits to replace those who annually retired. In 1885, its total strength was 40; but in 1886 the strength was raised to 56, and in the Jubilee year the figure was 57; last year, however, the total strength dropped to 49, and though there is only a reduction of one this year it shows that there is a tendency to fall off. The retirement of Lord Melgund from the command, since his appointment as Brigadier-General of the South of Scotland Brigade, must be felt as a severe loss. His personal influence was great, and the responsibility that now devolves on the officers still left in the troop is correspondingly greater. Last year the non-efficients only numbered seven, while this year they are almost doubled."

In a recent address to a Volunteer battalion, Lord Wolseley reiterated his oft made remark, that there was no subject to which a corps should pay more attention than to shooting. It must be remembered that soldiers were invented—it was the reason of their being—that wherever necessary they might be able to kill their enemies. If a soldier could not shoot well it was impossible for him to take the field and perform the duty that was the object of his existence. In fact, unless he could shoot he was not an efficient soldier, and a bad soldier was an encumbrance. It would be far better that, instead of wearing a red coat, he should stay at home with his mamma. (Laughter.) There were a great number of people who thought that if a battalion marched past well—looked remarkably fine and marched like a wall—it must be a good one, and efficient to perform all its duties. He had no hesitation in saying that a battalion might be able to march like a wall, be well set up with necks stiff and fingers extended down the seams of their trousers, and yet be useless. Drill was not to be decried; it was very necessary; but he was glad to know there was growing up, abroad and at home, a feeling that the days in which battalions were treated as military machines and estimated by the manner in which they performed those marching drills, was past and gone; and that a time was coming in which the inspecting officer would not go so much to see a battalion on parade, as to see what it could do on the ranges, at 400, 500 and 600 yards. He was sorry the army did not shoot so well as it should, and thought this greatly arose from the old-fashioned habit generals had of going to see regiments march past and no more. But latterly a great deal had been done to improve the shooting of the army, and the same thing might be said with regard to the volunteers. Latterly, extra inspectors of musketry had been appointed to go round the country and look after the shooting of the volunteers; and the commander-in-chief had approved of assistant instructors of musketry being appointed in corps; and a number of volunteer officers were about to be sent to Hythe, that they might be

trained as instructors. That the instruction might go on, he was glad to say that the Hythe instructors—who already were being hard worked—had voluntarily given up their Christmas holidays in order to attend to the volunteer officers who would go to Hythe. Next year every volunteer battalion should have a passed officer able to instruct it in musketry.

### Reminiscences of the Franco-German War.

On Nov. 18th Brigadier-General Macdonald delivered an address on "Recollections of a visit to the Franco-German war," before the members of the East of Scotland Tactical Society, in the rooms 51 Hanover Street, Edinburgh. Colonel Dods occupied the chair, and there was a large attendance, many being unable to secure admission.

Brigadier-General Macdonald said there were some lessons of importance to be learned from a view of the battlefields of the Franco-German war. One thing must be impressed on their minds in the first instance, and that was that they were not dealing with a case in which two combatants of equal strength, organization and skill were engaged. There could not be any doubt in the mind of anyone who had seen these battlefields that organization, discipline, and all these matters which went to make up an efficient soldiery were lamentably deficient on one side, and on the other they were on the highest possible pitch which they could attain during a time of peace. In the first place as regarded bad organization in the case of the French at the opening of the war, the superior officers of the French army were all supplied with elaborate maps of Germany, but they were not supplied with any maps of France. In the next place, the maps with which they were supplied were very inferior to the German maps, and when they did come to be supplied with maps of their own country they were not so accurate, or of so recent date, as the German maps of their own country were. One of the most valuable points that could be conceived in the face of an enemy endeavouring to enter France by Alsace and Lorraine was to have munitions and provisions in that district. But not only were there no munitions there, but no forage for the horses or biscuits for the men. The magazines were entirely empty, and the Emperor discovered within the first few days of the opening of the campaign that the rations of biscuits were short, and he wrote asking if it was not possible to get bread made in Paris and sent on.

One would imagine that now-a-days the very first thing to be done in war organization would be that whenever war was declared attention would be directed to transport by railroads, but a most remarkable thing happened just before the capture of Sedan. The railroads there were not in charge of the military authorities at all. On that account when a train with a large quantity of munitions arrived at a station for the French army, because one or two German shells reached the station the stationmaster ordered the train off, and it was never seen again. And again, when two companies of engineers were sent to Donchéry to blow up the bridge there, on their arrival there the stationmaster was in such a funk that he would not stop the train for a sufficient time to enable them to get their tools out, and the engineers were left and their tools went on. There was also this, that general demoralization spread over the whole of the French army in consequence of this state of things. Reconnoitring was extremely bad on three separate occasions. On the very first occasion of their encountering the enemy the Germans opened fire upon them while they were still engaged in the ordinary work of attending to the camp, and the Germans were within gunshot of their camp.

The Intelligence Department of the French was also extremely bad, so much so that Marshal McMahon himself was under the belief that the German army engaged when Sedan was taken numbered 70,000 or 80,000 men, when there could not have been anything less than twice and a-half that number. These were the disadvantages to which the French army were exposed, and in consequence of which they were so severely defeated. The Emperor was blamed a great deal for what happened, and of course he was responsible as regarded bad administration. But he seemed to have had a considerable amount of military instinct, and if the army had retreated when he made that proposition, probably the incident at Sedan would never have taken place. They were not to consider this as a fair contest between men equally well equipped, looked after, and organized, and with a military command, kept free from the control of political considerations. Brigadier-General Macdonald then proceeded to describe the battles of Gravelotte and Sedan, as the two most important that took place in the campaign. The battle of Gravelotte comprised a series of engagements, in which the Germans invariably lost a greater number of men than the French, but they always made their points. The two most remarkable features of all their work were these, that the Generals seemed to work towards one another. They were not waiting their orders, but on many occasions seemed to anticipate what their orders would be. They were always on the alert, and always ready to help one another. Their readiness to fight on one or two occasions led them into contests that were not wanted.