

well, Lieut.-Col. Van Wagner, and Capt. Macnachten, vice-presidents; Lieut.-Col. Macdonald, Capt. Macnachten and Major Bliss were elected to compose the Executive, and Major J. B. Donaldson was elected secretary-treasurer for the twentieth time.

THE INSPECTION OF ARTILLERY.

To the Editor THE MILITARY GAZETTE.

DEAR SIR,—Enclosed find \$2 for subscription for another year.

I hope the force is spirited enough to assist you in your praiseworthy efforts in their behalf, but I hope you are not congratulating yourself too soon on the rearmament, particularly so far as the Field Batteries are concerned. There can be no doubt that your journal gives the militia a rallying point, and you have my best wishes for success.

I had thought to send you a note which might be of interest to the Field Artilleryman. For years we have boasted, and properly too, that the system of comparative inspection was the cause of our continued progress. It was to be assumed Col. Irwin, with his assistant inspectors, Cotton and Montizambert, had their standards as nearly as could be the same. This year I note that some of the way-up Batteries were inspected by "A" and "B" Batterymen. I would not dare say they are not competent—far from it; they are probably as well qualified for the duty as anyone. The point, though, is that the standard is gone, and we may have in effect the same system as makes the inspection of infantry by the district officers (I mean the marks for inspection) perfectly useless so far as comparison of one district with another is concerned. Last year was an off year for the Batteries, and our eight days' drill was only got at the point of the bayonet. With the new distribution between the two inspectors I hope it won't occur again. But a note of warning should be sounded.

GUNNER.

Feb. 19, '96.

BISLEY HUTS VS. TENTS.

To the Editor THE MILITARY GAZETTE.

SIR,—Now that the question of permanent quarters for the Canadian rifle team at Bisley is being considered, perhaps a line from myself might not be amiss.

For reasons of economy I would be opposed to the D.C.R.A. proceeding on such an elaborate scale as that advocated by Capt. Pope and supported by others, unless the Dominion Government could be induced, for the purpose of advertising Canada, to undertake the work, or very materially assist in carrying it out.

Now that camping out at Cambridge whilst practising has been done away with, there is no preliminary drill, so to speak, for the two weeks under canvas at Bisley. My experience of the past has been that

owing to the colds contracted each year during the first week of the N. R. A. meeting many of the team are not in a fit condition to do justice to themselves and Canada in the aggregate shooting of the second week. Running noses and watery eyes are quite prevalent, and it is extremely difficult under such circumstances to make satisfactory shooting; and I say it is almost impossible to escape at least a slight cold whilst living under canvas during that usually very wet season.

Had the teams better sleeping quarters during the past few years I can truly say they would have given a much better account of themselves.

These drawbacks, coupled with the fact that the shooting conditions are much different from those we have to contend with in Canada, make it especially hard for those who visit Bisley for the first time.

Now, sir, if the D.C.R.A. is not prepared to go the length advocated by Capt. Pope, I should suggest, as a compromise, the supplying of huts similar to those supplied by the N.R.A. and rented by them to the competitors at a slight increase over tent. I am sure the N.R.A., if requested, would erect a camp of huts for the Canadians and rent them at a very slight increase over the rate now paid; or the D. C. R. A. could get permission and erect, say, twelve or fourteen, which, with the marquees as at present, would furnish ample accommodation and satisfy the taste of the most fastidious Canadian rifleman.

A cook-house for a Canadian mess would be an addition that would be much appreciated by the majority of the competitors.

I am, yours, etc.,

M. G. B. HENDERSON,

Col.-Sergt. "A" Co., 62nd Fusiliers.

St. John, N.B., Feb. 24, 1896.

P.S.—The huts referred to above are wood, covered with corrugated galvanized iron, and raised on posts about three feet from the ground. Size about 12 x 16 feet, with a partition running through the centre. These, I have it from good authority, are far ahead of anything in canvas ever invented, being perfectly dry. M. G. B. H.

HUNTINGDON, P.Q.

There was a good attendance at the annual meeting of the Frontier Rifle Association, in connection with the 50th Battalion, which was held in Huntingdon on the 11th of February. The report showed that after all debts had been paid there was a balance on the right side of the books. During the past season new revolving targets were put in, and have proved highly satisfactory. The association has ten Martini-Henri rifles for use in rifle and league matches. The officers of last year were re-elected, with the exception of Major Gardner, who was replaced by D. G. Macfarlane.

DEFENCE OF VILLAGES.

LIEUT.-COL. MAYHEW, B.M., of the North Midland Infantry Brigade, delivered a lecture recently before the Midland Volunteer Officers' Association at the headquarters of the 1st V. B. Warwickshire Regiment, Birmingham, on the "Defence of Villages."

Villages, were, the lecturer said, of essential importance in a military point of view, and their existence in the neighborhood of any position occupied by a body of troops was a weighty factor in the operations. It frequently occurred that a village or an extensive homestead formed a part of a line of outposts, and it was a matter of great difficulty for a commander to decide whether he would or would not occupy a village. Villages, too, were often found near bridges, crossing large rivers, and therefore became of immense value for holding the passage of streams. Again, villages frequently formed part of defensive lines, and their occupation, and the proper method of placing them in a state of defence, so as to render them impregnable as time would permit, must always be a subject of special interest to the military student. In directing attention to a few points for consideration in placing a village or farm in safe defence, he mentioned the self-evident fact that before any building could be occupied it was absolutely necessary that a sufficient number of infantry soldiers should be available for the defence. Probably his hearers would say in their own minds, "Who would be such a fool as not to do that?" but some of the very best generals had failed; they had not had a sufficient number of troops to hold a village, and what was supposed to be a source of strength had turned out to be a source of weakness. Touching first upon outposts, the lecturer pointed out that it very often happened, when all arrangements had been made for a line of outposts, they would be found in a prominent position almost immediately in front of the lines of the enemy's sentries. The question arose, What was to be done? The only safeguard that could possibly be placed against the occupation by any rapid movement on the part of the enemy's troops would be by bringing artillery to bear on it, so that immediately the enemy came into the village, they would probably be obliged to evacuate it. In a rear-guard, the defence of a village would not be deliberate, yet every effort would be made to render it effective for delaying the action of the enemy. This would be done by raising obstacles of every description. In extreme cases villages would be set on fire, if considered undesirable that the enemy should use them for cantonments. The lecturer quoted instances of delay in Napoleon's march on Russia, and in the history of Wellington in the Peninsula, and after technically describing the positions to be