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IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The editor will be glad to receive accounts of all matters of interest to the Militia Force, and invites contributions and correspondence on any subject pertaining thereto.

Communications intended for publication must be written on one side of the paper only, are to be addressed to The Editor CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE, and should reach the office not later than Monday.

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NOTE AND COMMENT.

We have much pleasure in recording the election of Major Sam. Hughes, 45th Batt., to represent North Victoria in the Dominion Parliament. The fact is none the less pleasing because in a measure unexpected, the well known popularity of his opponent, the late representative, Mr. John A. Barron, making it appear to many that the seat was a safe one for the Liberal party.

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The Militia have secured another friend in the House in the person of Major Hughes, and one who as an officer of a rural corps is thoroughly conversant with the disadvantages under which those organizations are labouring while striving to render themselves efficient.

The well known energy, perseverance and ability with which Major Hughes pursues an object which he may have in view makes it very probable that if he can be induced to endeavour to obtain similar treatment for the rural corps to that now granted to the urban battalions, in a very short time the Battalion with which he is connected will rank as high in efficiency as its riflemen now do in target practice—second to none.

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Lieut. A. H. MacMahon, of the Grenadier Guards, and lately on the staff of His Excellency the Governor-General as A.D.C., has recently succeeded to a Baronetcy by the death of his father Gen. Sir Thomas MacMahon.

Gen. Sir Thomas MacMahon was Colonel of the 5th Dragoon Guards. After serving in the 16th Lancers, 1829-30; 6th Dragoons, 1830-42; and 9th Lancers, 1842-47, Sir Thomas MacMahon joined the regiment as Major (from the Half Pay List), Nov. 24, 1854, and at once succeeded the ever-lamented Sir James Yorke Scarlett in command. He brought the regiment home from the Crimea, May 28, 1856, and served with it successively at Edinburgh, York, Manchester, Aldershot and Brighton until Feb. 15, 1861, when he was succeeded in command by the Hon. Somerset J. Calthorpe, Feb. 15, 1861. On Jan. 6, 1874, he was appointed Colonel of the 18th Hussars, and on the death of Gen. R. Parker, who had succeeded Sir James Yorke Scarlett as Colonel Dec. 7, 1871, Sir Thomas rejoined his old corps as titular chief on March 16, 1885.

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The Militia Department has received samples of 6-lb. shell, 9-lb. shrapnel and common shell, made at the cartridge factory at Quebec. Col. Panet, Deputy Minister of Militia, says they are as good as any made in England and have been proved so on the test.

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A series of experiments conducted by the London *Field* to test the accuracy of the Martini-Henry ammunition served out to the volunteers in England, the results of which have recently been published, have been the theme of no little correspondence in the English service papers, and apparently demonstrate beyond a doubt that very serious defects from a marksman's point of view undoubtedly exist in the ammunition.

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Samples were tested from the manufacture of six consecutive years—1886 to 1891—and in each year's manufacture variations were found of 7 grains or less in the charges of powder, of 6 grains or less in the weight of the bullets. It was found that two varieties of powder (one

bright and the other dull black) were used, and some cartridges loaded with one, some with the other, were found in the same package.

Of 150 charges of powder which were weighed 54 were of the standard weight (85 grs.); and the rest varied from 87 grs. down to 80 grs. Of 150 bullets, 28 only were of the standard weight (480 grs.) and the others varied from 483½ grs. down to 476 grs.

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Strong objections were also urged against the coiled brass cartridges, and it was said that those made of light coloured metal shot differently from the darker ones.

On this point the report says:

If one thing more than another has come out prominently in the course of this investigation, it is the utter unsuitability of the coiled cases for these competitions. From their general flimsiness they easily get altered in form; and their internal capacity varies considerably, so that some bullets go much further into the cases than others do; they do not properly fit the chamber, and when the powder is fired different degrees of expansion have to be effected, with a waste of force; and, as this tells most on the smallest charge, it greatly exaggerates the loss resulting from a deficient quantity of powder. On the other hand, the solid drawn case does fit the chamber, and when the powder is fired there is no loss of time or force in the expansion of the cartridge.

We believe that for active warfare the solid drawn cases are employed. If such be the fact, why should the "mimic warfare" at Bisley be carried on with the cheaper substitutes, which may be good enough for the drilling of an "awkward squad," but certainly are not fitted for competitions of skill? The variations in the charges are serious evils, and steps ought to be taken to remedy them, but these evils are intensified by the inefficiency of the coiled cartridge. The nation provides, for the use of its defenders, arms of precision. Inventors are put upon their mettle to show (with accurately weighed charges and bullets) which of them can place the greatest number of shots in a 1 ft. mark; and then, the weapons being passed over into the hands of the riflemen, they are furnished with ammunition which gives them no certainty of hitting a target 6 ft. square.

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These experiences ought not to be without their value to the Canadian Cartridge Factory, where the manufacture of Martini-Henry ammunition has just been begun, and it is to be hoped that care will be taken to avoid errors such as the above, so that when the ammunition is