

about matters of general, as distinguished from purely local, military interest. This is quite as true of the officers as of the rank and file. There are a few bright exceptions, whose energy and perseverance keep life in the force, but as to the great majority the truth is as stated above.

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From this small class of enthusiasts, and from the riflemen as a whole, we have received constant and generous support, but as the riflemen largely predominated, they have naturally received the most attention. Undoubtedly the mainstay of the force, they are men of great energy and resource, and do not as a class remain indolent during the non-shooting season, but engage actively in other outdoor excises. They will therefore, we are sure, be pleased to have all such pastimes noticed in this paper; and especially so if by interesting non-military men in our Athletic department, we can influence them first to read of and then participate in the military events. Our aim has been and will be, first to attract the attention of as many as possible by recording matters of interest to them, and next to afford such further military information, instruction or entertainment as may be put into our necessarily limited space.

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Though hardened by many years' cold shouldering, the frigid douche in the letter above referred to sent a shiver down our spinal column, for it was the first expression of opinion received with respect to a venture the success or failure of which is destined to have an important influence upon the future of the MILITIA GAZETTE. Happily, however, all our subscribers do not think the same as the above quoted, for in our New Year's mail we unexpectedly received from one of the ablest and most respected officers of the force, a letter from which we may safely quote as follows, though as it was marked "Private" we cannot use the writer's name:

"DEAR SIR,—I cannot allow the old year to pass out of sight without wishing you and the MILITIA GAZETTE every success in the new year—more particularly in view of your new departure in adding "Sports and Pastimes" to your columns—a step which must be heartily approved by every member of the force; for as the whole military structure is based upon physical fitness, so must athletic development and love of sport go on side by side with improvement in drill and discipline and target practice. How can the busy man better spend his well earned holiday than in taking part in military training in camp or field, or—with rod and gun—in forest or by

stream? And how can he more profitably spend an hour of a winter's evening than in reading accounts of "Sports and Pastimes" in your rapidly improving MILITIA GAZETTE?"

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New Year's Day was fitly celebrated by an interchange of courtesies on the part of the military men at the several centres, but Montreal seems to have led in this respect. At the spacious drill hall on Craig street, each of the many corps having headquarters there had a well equipped reception room, and visitors made the complete round. The quarters of the 65th Mount Royal Rifles are said to have been especially attractive, though there was nothing lacking in the way of hospitality at those of the others—the 1st Prince of Wales Rifles, the 5th Royal Scots, the 6th Fusiliers, the Field Battery, or the Garrison Artillery. The last named conducted their reception on prohibition principles—a pleasant variety. The Scots had their pipers present to give proper eclat to the occasion. At their handsome private armoury up town the 3rd Victoria Rifles held high carnival, and thither their comrades of all ranks repaired when the tour of the drill hall was completed. The day's reception had the effect of well advertising all the corps, and should be of material assistance in recruiting.

A traveller in Japan says that the Japanese dislike the Russians and the Chinese but like the Americans and the English. They are fearful of the aggressions of the Russians in Corea and of the Chinese in the Islands that lie south of Japan; but they do not look for any act of aggression by the United States or by England.

It is announced that after sufficient investigation, both theoretical and practical, the German War Minister has confirmed the employment of cast steel as wholly preferable for guns. The introduction of a new small calibre revolver, which has given great satisfaction at the trials, is also announced.

The *United Service Gazette* says: "Sailors have long been dissatisfied with the amount of protection afforded to a ship's secondary armament, and the successful trials in America of nickel-steel plates lead them to hope for an early improvement in this respect, more especially as the results arrived at on the other side of the Atlantic have been so far verified in this country as to justify the Admiralty in ordering a certain portion of nickel-steel armour for our future battleships. As this armour will be considerably stronger without involving any additional weight it seems obvious that those portions of a ship's armament at present insufficiently protected can be made far safer."

Letters to the Editor.

[This paper does not necessarily share the views expressed in correspondence published in its columns, the use of which is freely granted to writers on topics of interest to the Militia.]

IMPROVED MARKING AND SIGNALLING.

SIR,—In your issue of the 19th Nov. last appeared an article on a new system of targets and signalling likely to be adopted in India, which, as you very justly remark "seems cumbersome as compared to the system in use in Canada." While reading that article my mind was drawn again to a system of double targets and signalling, and I have since worked out a system which for simplicity, correctness and speed I feel confident cannot be excelled. Spotting discs can be done away with if desired, and yet the exact position of every shot shown. Can be worked by one man, or, if extra speed is required, by a man and a boy, or two smart boys, and at least ten shots a minute can be correctly signalled. Moreover, first class targets can be used on the same supports.

The parapet is only seven feet high from crown to floor, and nothing appears above it but the target when in use.

The cost is so small as compared with any other system, together with the advantage of being able to use a first class or 12 foot target, that it should be generally adopted.

EDWIN B. BEER, Lt. Col.,
74th Battalion.
Sussex, N B., 31st Dec., 1891.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE P. Q. R. A.

SIR,—The annual report of the council of the Province of Quebec Rifle Association just published is of a nature which will not suffer by a liberal criticism, and the more freely members come forward now, and give their opinions regarding it and the recommendations made to the incoming council, the better it will be for the members, competitors and association.

Acting upon this belief and in the hope that if I set the ball rolling I may induce others to follow my example, and thus enable the executive to get a more intelligent idea of the true reason for the decrease in the attendance at their meetings, I venture to ask space in your columns to consider the contents of the report just issued.

I will first deal with the items commended to the incoming council:—

1. I cannot agree that it would be beneficial to change the date of the meeting from August to July. In the latter month regimental and county rifle meetings are being very generally held, and instead of these meetings deterring competitors from attending the Provincial, it is often by their success in July that members are induced to attend the larger meetings in August. I would rather favour holding the meetings one week later, or