

Gunners' nature is only human nature; the Royal Artillery have no rewards for efficiency, while infantry, cavalry, seamen, and marines, and Volunteer Artillery, receive extra pay or prizes for proficiency with their special weapon, be it sword, lance, rifle, carbine, or great gun.

Lord Strathnairn, when Commander-in-Chief in India, introduced a system of competitive practice for the artillery, with extra pay and prize badges, as for infantry; it is very variously spoken of by artillery officers. All are agreed that being carried on entirely with smooth-bore guns, the results were much modified by chance; the admission of drivers and shoeing smiths (who would rarely, if ever, have to lay a gun on service), &c., into competition with gunners and Nos. 1 was thought a mistake: every man to his calling.

Prize pay and a badge of a cross-whips might be given to a certain percentage of the best drivers, whose horses were in good condition. These officers who adhered to the spirit of Lord Strathnairn's instructions allowed no man to compete unless he understood the elementary principles of gunnery, the setting of fuzes, was perfect at drill; and a first-class judge of distance. In fact, they who tried the system fairly speak in the highest terms of the spirit of emulation and efficiency it produced, especially the preliminary instruction in barrack-rooms by the subaltern officers.

Having been asked by many of my brother officers and some members of the committee to draw up for the Institution papers the outline of a scheme for competitive practice, I ventured to do so with the hope that general attention would be drawn to the subject, and errors I have made be remedied by the suggestions of any of my brother officers.

(To be continued.)

LOWE ON DILKE.

Our cable telegrams informed us some days ago that Mr. Lowe, the English Chancellor of the Exchequer, had been addressing a public meeting at Halifax, in which he had made some remarks upon the anti-Monarchical speech delivered by Sir Charles Dilke at New Castle. One of the charges made against Her Majesty by Sir Charles was that, although in the receipt of a very large income, she did not contribute to the Income Tax fund. This charge has been shown to be unfounded in a letter written to the *Times* by an officer of Her Majesty's household. And of the charge Mr. Lowe is reported by the *Manchester Guardian* to have spoken as follows:—

The gentleman has said that, as far as he could understand, the Queen, after having undertaken, through Sir Robert Peel, to pay the tax upon her income, had not fulfilled her promise. He was, as he said, almost ashamed to take notice of such observations because they formed an accusation which all who knew what the Queen was would be able to acquit her of without a moment's consideration. She has reigned over us for 34 years, and during that time she had maintained a high and stainless character. (Loud applause, and a voice, "Three cheers for the Queen.") Great cheering, after which a verse of the "National Anthem" was sung, the entire assembly listening and standing.) Mr. Lowe resumed.—He had been saying when so kindly interrupted (applause and laughter) that for the 34 years during which she had reigned over us, the Queen had maintained a high and stainless character, which was an

honour to herself and a credit to the nation which had the happiness to be under her rule. (Hear, hear.) Those who however remotely, had been brought into contact with the Queen would know that if there was any feature in her character more remarkable than another it was her strict adherence to her word under all circumstances and under all difficulties. It might be truly said of her—

"Her armour is her honesty,
"And simple truth her only shield."

No one had ventured to charge her with having stepped one hair's breadth beyond the prerogative which was assigned to her by the Constitution. Nobody could allege that she ever gave a promise that she did not fulfil. Nobody could say that anything had ever dropped either from her lips or from her pen but what was absolutely true, without the slightest intention in the world on her part to deceive or mislead. It was because he felt and knew this so thoroughly—and all those who had anything to do with the affairs of State knew it also—that he really felt almost ashamed to say what he was going to say; but with regard to the statement in reference to the income tax, he would state, being the person from whom such statements would come with the proper official authority, that the sum contributed by Her Majesty to the income tax since the year, 1842, when the income tax was imposed, amounted to hundreds of thousands of pounds, (Applause). If the hon. gentleman should bring the subject before the House of Commons, he (Mr. Lowe) would be most happy to give the fullest explanation, and he doubted not that the country would be satisfied in this as in all other things relating to her conduct in her high and honorable office, that Her Majesty had been true to herself and a worthy representative of the feelings of honesty and of the true spirit of Englishmen. As for the rest of the matter, he would certainly not discuss it. He should think it degrading and insulting to his hearers if he were to allude for one moment to the discussion as to the relative merits of Monarchy and Republicanism. Politics were not a speculative or metaphysical, but a practical and inductive science. The test of what was politically right what had answered and worked well. (Applause.) The English Monarchy beginning under William the Conqueror, with the sternest and most cruel tyranny, had in the course of 800 years endured, till under it we attained in this happy country more of order connected with liberty, more of ancient tradition connected with the springing power of boundless improvement, than had been granted to any other people on the earth, (Applause.) He did not misrepresent the feelings of his countrymen when he said they would not be disposed to consider for a moment the propriety of changing an institution under which they had derived so many great benefits—benefits admitted by all students of history to be such as no other country in the world had experienced. (Loud applause.)

The official report of the loss of the British troop ship *Megera*, states that on June 8, on the passage from the Cape to Sydney, a leak was reported, but was for several days kept under by hand-pumps and building. On or about the 14th of June the leak became more serious, and the water gained on the pumps. Steam was then used, and by the aid of the main steam pumps the water was kept in check. It was determined to steer for St. Paul's Island where she arrived Saturday, June 17. A survey was then held, and a diver sent down to examine the leak.

A hole was discovered worn through the centre of a plate, about twelve feet abaft the mainmast, and about eight feet from the keel port side, besides other serious injuries in the immediate vicinity of the leak. It was considered unsafe to leave the anchorage. Provisions and stores were then landed. June 19, weather being very stormy, and being unable to keep the ship in position, having carried away and lost three anchors since first anchoring, and being unable to carry on the work of landing provisions on account of the stormy weather, it was determined to beach the ship. At about 1 p. m., the ship was run full speed on to the bar, and remained there. She soon afterwards filled up to the main deck aft with high water. The work of landing provisions and saving cargo was then continued, and a portion of the men and officers landed in charge of the same. The ship was not entirely abandoned for about ten or twelve days after she was beached. Up to July 15 about eighty tons of cargo for Sydney had been saved, and divers were still employed recovering it. Men and officers were living under canvas, and all are well. They had provisions to last, on half allowance, till the beginning of November, with exception of bread, flour, tea, and sugar, of which they were very short, men being on four ounces of bread per day. Water was obtained from summit of the hill during rainy season, but could not be depended upon. It is considered impossible to render the ship fit for further service.

The British artillery came in for a share in the general gratulation which the appearance of the troops at Aldershot produced. Ninety guns, or fifteen batteries, in perfect order, and only suffering from some excess of "burnish" and deficiencies similarly slight, paraded to the great satisfaction of all England. "Never before," says *Broad Arrow*, "did the British eye behold ninety guns in battle array on the English isle." But, nevertheless, ninety guns are but a small item in the equipment of a first-class army, and, accordingly, we find the Woolwich gun factories at work on twenty-seven batteries, or 162 16-pounder guns. They are built upon Frazer's system, and supply the army with a heavier projectile without lessening its mobility. The new 16-pounders really weigh less than the old 9-pounder bronze gun, which weighs 13 cwt., against 12½ cwt. for the former. When these batteries are completed and horsed, the British artillery will want but one thing to be a model institution, and that is to be let alone by the other branches of the service.

The courts martial being held at Versailles bring to light, in a curious manner, the total absence of anything like command which reigned in the halcyon days of the Commune in Paris. Rossel was arrested for wishing to enforce discipline in his legion, and, while under arrest, was promoted by War Minister Cluseret whom he succeeded, when that officer was in his turn arrested. The other day citizen Pigere, a cabinet maker who had served on the staff of General Dombrowski, was tried, and attempted to show that the battalion which he commanded before being placed on the staff had never left its cantonments. "My men," said this worthy, "did nothing but eat, drink, and chase vermin. They were so badly clothed that I would never hear of them marching against the enemy. Their pantaloons were in such an unservicable condition that the shirt passed through, and most of them had no boots; I was quite ashamed of them."