

FACTS AND FANCIES

About Regulations, Drills, Ball Firing, Bull Ringing and Libations.

Nova Scotia Riflemen in Council—The Minister of War at the Pacific—The Provincial Aides-de-Camp—Corps without officers, officers without qualification—Another Engagement with Pound-maker—The Guards' Drill Competition Scheme—Hamilton Drill Hall opened—The Grocers give their quota to the force—A transport cart for India.

"THE CANADIAN GROCER," is the name of a newsy, bright and neatly printed publication issued at Toronto by a company having for its secretary-treasurer Capt. J. B. McLean, the adjutant of the 31st battalion. Volunteering seems to be exceedingly popular with those in the branch of trade for which Capt. McLean's paper is published, judging from the following interesting quotation from the last number: "It is doubtful if any trade is as well represented in the militia force as that which the *Canadian Grocer* speaks for," said a Front street grocer a few days ago. "In this city alone nearly every house has one or more members in the local corps. Mr. John Sloan, of Sloan & Mason, is a captain, and serves out the grub in the Governor-General's Body Guard. Mr. Hugh Blain does the same for the Queen's Own. Percy Mason, of E. Bendelari's, is a captain in the Queen's Own; Mr. James Ince is a lieutenant in the same corps, and his big brother and junior partner in the firm of Perkins, Ince & Co., trudges along as a full private in the rear rank, business cares preventing his acceptance of a promotion. In the Royal Grenadiers, big John I. Davidson, of Davidson & Hay, commands the best company, and is assisted by Forbes Michie, of King street retail fame; in the same regiment R. B. Ellis, the coffee and spice man, is quarter-master; and W. G. A. Lamb and John Morrow, the brokers, are lieutenants. The 7th Fusiliers, of London, have excellent officers in Major A. M. Smith, of A. M. Smith & Co., and Lieut. Cleghorn, of Edward Adams & Co. The 13th, of Hamilton, have in Capt. J. J. Stuart, of John Stuart, Son & Co., one of the best adjutants in Canada; Mr. Stuart also renders excellent service as an orderly officer at the district camps; Capt. Reid, the cigar man, is in the same regiment. In Kingston military ardour seems to be at a low ebb, for Harry McCuaig, of Geo. Robertson & Sons, is the only one in the 14th P.W.O.R. In Brantford J. S. Hamilton divides his time between the Pelee Island vineyards and 'A' company of the 38th Dufferin rifles. I do not know many of the militiamen in Montreal. M. Hebert, son of M. Hebert, of Hudon, Hebert & Cie., the leading wholesale house in that city, is a member of the gallant 65th regiment, which was so grossly libelled by a Toronto paper. He served with the 65th all through the North-West campaign."

Ottawa can add her quota to the above. Capt. H. Gerald Bate, of the G.G.F.G., is a member of the firm of Bate & Co., which stands at the head of the trade in both wholesale and retail branches in this city. Capt. Bate's employees have largely followed his good example, and are to be found in the ranks of the several city corps, as non-commissioned officers or privates. One of these, Sergt. A. W. Huband, of No. 1 Co., 43rd Batt., is secretary-treasurer of the regimental snowshoe club, and is besides a host in himself whenever the 43rd have any enterprise on hand.

Since 1870 the militia of Canada has been under arms, to assist the civil power to preserve the peace, about 675 days. The total number of men called out was about 34,500, but what the expenses of these different services were we cannot say. But it is certain that, whatever the cost was, the money was well spent. A few days of riot would do more injury, in one of our cities, and to the credit of the country, than the cost of supporting the entire militia force would come to for a year. But if we cannot find out what these expenses were we know that from 1868 to 1886 inclusive the militia force of the Dominion, including the military college and the regular schools, have cost \$23,495,410, and, enormous as this sum appears, Canada has had good service rendered to law and order, peace and prosperity for the outlay.—*Star*.

Captain Greville Harstone, of the Canadian militia (says the *Broad Arrow*), has laid before the War Office a plan for converting the existing Henry-Martini rifles into magazine rifles, and has been requested to come to England for the purpose of fully explaining his method.

Announcement of the appointments of Henry Dodd of Regina, and F. H. Powell of Ottawa, to be assistant surgeons on the Mounted Police, was made in the last issue of the *Canada Gazette*. The appointments date from the 1st of October.

The Under Secretary of State gives notice in the *Canada Gazette* that information is desired touching the parentage, birth-place, date and place of death of John Kenneally, formerly a sergeant in H. M.'s 68th regiment, a native of Tipperary, Ireland, who enlisted at Castlebar on the 27th January, 1817, and was discharged at Chatham, England, with a pension, on the 13th January 1830. Was a servant by occupation. He received his first pension in London, England, on the 29th March, 1830, and, on the 30th idem, was transferred to the Quebec District, his declarations being dated at York, Upper Canada. By Order in Council, of the 7th July, 1831, he received a grant of 200 acres of land from the Government of Upper Canada and was located for the N. ½ 73 East side of Penetanguishene Road and Lot 73 in the 2nd Con. East of said road in the Township of Medonte, 100 acres each. This grant he assigned to Ulick Howard. He died in or about the year 1839.

At 10 minutes to 9 on Saturday morning the dread alarm of fire was sounded at the barracks. For a few moments the impression seemed to be that a practice alarm only was intended, but upon the men turning out, it was discovered that the western room of the "lean to" on the northern side of the riding school was on fire. Officers and men were promptly at the posts assigned to them. The fire engine was quickly brought round to the tank, when unfortunately the hose, owing to the extreme cold, 23 degrees below zero, was found to be frozen and consequently the engine useless. In the meantime the fire gained ground with fearful rapidity. The "Babcock extinguisher" being like the fire engine frozen and useless, the only weapons left to battle with the flames were the fire buckets. Many gallons of water were passed up the ladders and on the roof, but in vain. With odds so terribly against them, to save the building was out of the question and the order was given to save as much of the gov-

ernment property stored in the building as possible. With the assistant commissioner at their head, encouraging them with hand and voice, officers and men set to work with a will, and in an incredibly short space of time, guns, transport and stores were quickly removed from the burning pile, and scattered out of harm's way on the prairie. Scarcely had the last armful of stuff been carried out when the roof fell in with a crash, and in 33 minutes from the time the alarm was sounded all that was left of one of the finest buildings in the North-West Territories was a burning mass of embers. It is supposed the fire originated through the overheating of a stovepipe in one of the saddle rooms. A court of enquiry is being held at the barracks, under the presidency of Capt. R. B. Deane, to see into the matter. The town fire brigade was telephoned for, in the fear that the flames might spread to some of the other buildings. When the alarm rung in town the firemen rushed to the hall only to find, however, that not a yard of hose was on the reels and that the engine was not in order. Half an hour had elapsed before a start was made and when the barracks were reached the fire was burning out.—*Regina Leader*, 29th November.

British Columbia.

SIR ADOLPHE CARON, Minister of Militia, and Col. Walker Powell, Adjutant General, attended at the annual inspection of the Victoria volunteers, which took place last week, Lieut.-Col. Holmes, D.A.G., being the inspecting officer. One hundred and seventeen officers and men paraded at the drill hall shortly after 1 p.m., and at two o'clock a start was made for the review ground at Beacon Hill. The brigade, which was commanded by Lieut.-Col. Wolfenden, consisted of the three local batteries of the B. C. Garrison Artillery and the Victoria Rifle Co., headed by the fine artillery band. Sir Adolphe Caron and Col. Powell, who were escorted by Lieut.-Col. Holmes, D.A.G., Major Peters and Capt. Jones, were received with the customary honors upon their arrival. The men having been inspected the ranks were closed and the order given to march past. The *Colonist* in its report says: "Instead of forming quarter column on No. 1, and moving the battalion around in front, column was formed and the companies wheeled around on to the saluting base so that on coming to the third wheeling point a misunderstanding arose as to whether or not quarter column was to be formed, the ranks changed and marched back again, thereby causing a slight tangle, which marred what would otherwise have been an almost faultless 'march past.'" However, in a few seconds the parade was wheeled around the third point at the double and away around the three sides of the square at a jog-trot, keeping remarkably good time the whole way. This brought them back to the saluting base, and the order having been given to march past at the double, the whole again went past the saluting point in real good style. The battalion was then formed on its original ground and was put through the manual and firing exercises by Major Prior. At this point Sir Adolphe Caron and Colonel Powell, A. G., having an engagement with the Lieutenant-Governor and Admiral, were compelled to quit the field, but not before they had excused themselves and expressed to Lieut.-Col. Wolfenden their regret at being prevented from addressing a few remarks to the men under his command. Various other evolutions having been gone through in a manner which reflected great credit on both officers and men, the parade was then marched back to the drill shed, where refreshments had been provided.

"Lieut.-Col. Wolfenden gave an address, stating that he had been requested by Sir Adolphe Caron to express the latter's admiration of the soldierly appearance of the officers and men, and that he was extremely sorry that he had been unable to watch the evolutions to the end. Half an hour was then given the men to sign the pay rolls, and having fallen in again, Lieut.-Col. Holmes, D.A.G., called the officers to the front and expressed his delight at the improvement made since last inspected, for, as he stated, although this inspection was not as perfect as it might have been, still when compared with that of former years, it was by far the most satisfactory one he had yet held in Victoria, and he would be enabled to send in a much better report this year than he had done last. In a very happy way he pointed out several defects in the various batteries which he hoped would be rectified. In conclusion he said that considering it was impossible to go through battalion drill in the drill shed—the only place the men have to drill in—the result on parade was highly commendable, and he was sure that when the Minister of Militia looked into the matter he would find the present shed too small.

"The usual details having been gone through, the parade was dismissed, thus ending an inspection which would be a credit to any crack eastern corps."

Sir Adolphe Caron was entertained at a public dinner held at the Driard House last Thursday evening.

London.

AS the military grounds have not been handed over to the city, according to agreement, some of the citizens are clamouring for the militia department to pay rent.

A sergeant of the Kingston Battery has been recruiting here during the past week with fair success.

Your correspondent "Linch-pin" is a "lectle" too hard on Pultan's adjutant; raising the cap to the other sex not being one of the reforms that he tried to introduce in the "Old Humbugs." Perhaps "Linch-pin" will kindly inform us how the movement is taught, whether by numbers, or in slow or quick time, and if it be accompanied by a scrape of the foot and a pull at the forelock.

I have been looking over the annual reports for 1886 and have concluded that the efficiency of the militia mainly consists in the very favourable reports of officers commanding camps. I will not ask you to read the whole of these reports; one will do, as they are nearly all written in a similar strain. After reading the report you will perceive a vast difference between what you have observed and the flattering reports as published in the blue-book. In the reports of the musketry instructors published (only three) one gives proof that the several corps in camp expended their allowance of ammunition; of course I do not mean to insinuate that the allowance of ammunition was not expended in the other military districts; but why is the classification not published, and why is so very little interest taken in the first and most important part of a militiaman's training.

I often read of corps and companies being reorganized. If a commanding officer, from any cause, retires from his command, the papers announce that the corps will be immediately reorganized by his successor. The same thing takes place in the event of a captain retiring. I have seen several companies undergo the process of being reorganized, and found out that it is all sham—a delusion and a snare, the process merely consisting in taking over the charge of the armoury and announcing the fact in the daily papers. Besides this eternal reorganizing speaking badly for the officers concerned, it leads me to believe that "something is rotten in the State of Denmark," and that our whole militia system requires to be reorganized; and I would commence with a lot of corps that have only a paper existence, and reorganize them until they disappeared from the militia list, the money saved being more usefully spent, in promoting greater efficiency in the remainder of the force. I would have no squad or