

The Canadian Militia Gazette

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GENERAL HERBERT'S FIRST SCHEME.

The first fruits of the study which the new General Officer Commanding has given to the affairs of our militia with the object of increasing the interest taken in military work not only by those enrolled but on the part of the general public as well, has appeared in the form of a scheme of holiday parades and voluntary camps. Major-General Herbert has issued a circular to the Deputy Adjutants-General urging them to enter into communication forthwith with the officers commanding corps of city militia, within the districts under their command, with a view to organizing beforehand military instructional work to be carried out on public holidays. General Herbert considers that such opportunities should be employed wherever it is possible, not merely to hold parades or reviews, but for field-days in which officers commanding corps of active militia may gain some experience of the tactical use of the three arms, by being placed in command of a mixed force, and given a clearly defined tactical problem to carry out. He thinks it may further be possible, by means of previous arrangement, to secure the presence in camps of a large proportion of some corps for the nights preceding and following the days fixed for public holidays, and thus to give the men some instruction in the daily routine of camp life.

In order to encourage such instruction the Minister of Militia has authorized the issue of camp equipment for this purpose under certain conditions. At stations where permanent school corps are quartered, the officers and men of those corps will be employed in pitching and preparing such camps, so that they may be available for occupation by the active militia corps on the eve of the holiday. After consultation, as above directed, with the officers commanding corps, the Deputy Adjutants-General are expected to report for the information of the Major-General the probable number of men of each corps that will turn out on each holiday, and submit a programme of instructional work to be carried out, with a view to every facility being obtained for its execution.

That the militia may be expected to enter heartily into the proposed operations may be inferred from the success attending affairs of the kind undertaken in the past without even the slight public assistance now offered. The Thanksgiving Day parades at Toronto have been notable examples.

It is to be hoped that the answers received from the commanding officers will show a general concurrence in General Herbert's scheme, and that a successful inaugural may be held on the Queen's Birthday, for which occasion rumour fixes upon Quebec as the probable scene of military operations on a large scale.

THE MILITARY RIFLE LEAGUE.

As an outcome of the recent meeting of the Ontario executive at Toronto, something definite may now be stated relative to League operations for the season of 1891. Important changes are proposed in the rules governing the competitions, and the League contests seem likely to increase in popularity by reason of this action.

With respect to the composition of the teams there remains to be adjusted a difference of opinion as to their numerical strength, some holding out for an increase from 10 to 15 or 20 men, and others advocating two distinct competitions, one series of matches for teams of 10 and the other for teams of 20. It is, however, generally conceded that the rule providing that men having once shot on a team shall not be eligible for any other that season, should be done away with.

Sighting shots will probably be no longer forbidden, and competitors will thus be at liberty to practise at other than the League ranges during the matches: the contests will also be made more a test of relative skill when the riflemen shooting on habitually difficult ranges are allowed to verify their calculations as to elevation and windage before proceeding with their match scores.

Further to equalize the conditions, it is proposed that only canvas targets should be allowed. To ensure confidence in the scoring reported, it is intended that where single teams are shooting a representative of the League shall be present in the butts (the expense to be borne by the League); and when more than one team is competing on the same range a representative from each corps participating is to be in the butts to check the marking. The bullseye and rings are to be measured by those chosen to check the marking. The range officers and their duties will be as heretofore.

The order of shooting is left to the team captains, no restriction being proposed as to firing in the same order at