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Topics of the Week.

In last week's issue, in the reference to the troops called out in connection with the railway riots, an obvious typographical error makes us state that a troop of the "8th" cavalry participated. It should have read the "5th."

A sham battle at Halifax, participated in by the men of several warships as the attacking party, and the Imperial garrison as the defenders, is the sensation of the week there. The engagement took place yesterday, lasting nearly all day. Interesting details will be to hand only in time for publication next week.

It appears that the magazine rifle is to be the rifle of the future, and it is stated that it may be taken for granted "that the single breech loader will soon be as obsolete a weapon for military purposes as the muzzle loader." England has been content to wait the action of continental nations, preferring to stand still while her neighbours were arming and learning experience with a weapon whose superiority was sufficiently formidable to constitute a danger, and thus hoping from the exhaustive trials which are being made to obtain the best arm for the use of her troops.

The Department of Militia has decided to lease for another year the Agricultural-hall at Victoria for the use of "C" Battery. The huts already erected do not provide sufficient barrack accommodation for the whole of the officers and men, and it is proposed to ask Parliament for an additional vote next session to apply this accommodation. Pending the erection of new buildings, the men will continue to occupy the Agricultural hall. The quarters are by no means the most comfortable that could be desired, and it is to be hoped that not more than one more winter season will be allowed to pass without proper barracks being provided.

In connection with the calling out of the troops for the suppression of the Hereford railway riots, several influential papers have advocated that on such occasions in the future the permanent corps should be called out rather than the volunteers. The idea is a good one, but the plan would have its disadvantages. At present the expenses increased through the calling out of the militia in aid of the civil power, have to be borne by the municipality requiring their services, and this fact tends to prevent needless demands being made upon the time of the militia. Were the permanent corps called upon, however, there would be little

or no expense incurred beyond the cost of transport, and the municipalities could, whenever the whim came over them, have a display of force free of expense. But with the law amended so as to provide against abuse, it would seem to be preferable that the permanent force should be called upon whenever practicable rather than that the citizen soldiers should be called away from their business pursuits.

The old question of the propriety of Sunday parades appears to have been raised in Brantford, Ont., for a friend has forwarded a copy of the *Expositor* in which a contributor writes as follows: "Some people have the nerve to find fault with the Dufferin Rifles for parading to church on Sunday. Those who do have very narrow Christianity it seems to me. I watched them on their way to the Congregational Church on Sunday morning, and their appearance and conduct was as befitting as that of any Pharisaical Christian who strode to his church in his broadcloth and tall hat. I have seen good accomplished by these church parades; more, comparatively, than I can discover has been accomplished by the shouting and drumming of the Salvation army or any other special means employed for the evangelization of the people for a long time. A more decorous body of men could not be found than those who listened to Rev. George Fuller's excellent sermon Sunday morning, and the people who find fault with the parade lack one of the constituents of St. Paul's ideal Christianity. There is a holiness which bags at the knees, finds no pleasure in charity and is unduly selfish. If nothing desecrates our Sabbaths more than the parades of the Dufferin Rifles, we need fear no emptying of the Vials of Wrath upon us."

Concerning the closing of Wimbledon common and the danger of a diminution of interest in shooting in consequence, *Forest and Stream* thus comments: "There are not a few, and in the ranks too, who would not grieve if all rifle practice were abandoned, or at any rate cut down to a point where it would be practically unappreciable. Those who fail to make good scores in some instances feel their self-esteem hurt, and at once look with envy upon those "shooting fellows," and begin to think and preach that quite too much time and attention is given to banging away with the rifle. It is quite certain that curling up on the ground to aim and getting records for all kinds of weather into one's score book may not tend to keep the uniform spick and span, but the fact remains that a body of men in uniform and armed, but who are not capable of using those arms as intended, are likely to receive only laughter and scorn from a determined mob, while before an enemy trained in shooting they would stand no possible ghost of a chance. In England it is a question whether the rivalry of the rifle range has kept up the Volunteer movement, whether without Wimbledon and its work there would be any English Volunteer bodies to day. The sudden rush into citizen soldiering and the rush for the rifle ranges were pretty nearly simultaneous less than thirty years ago, and if the rifle shooting is not to be credited with whatever there is of the Volunteer movement, it is certainly to be credited with a large share of it."