

avenue. They will be headed by the society's band, which will play the church call on the square. At the church an appropriate sermon will be delivered by Rev. Mr. Johnson, who was a military chaplain for many years. The society decided to join the Veterans of '66 in the demonstration on June 2nd.

The Veterans of '66 held their quarterly meeting May 11th, in the Richardson hotel. Among those present were: Chairman Major Dickenson, Major W. H. Cooper, Ald. McMurrich, Ald. Hewitt, Capt. Musson, Lieut. A. M. Macdonald, Capt. J. Douglas, Major Peel, A. Muir, M.A., Major Farewell (of Whitby), Major Parsons, T. R. Whiteside, C. T. Smith, Major Fahey and Sergt. Lawrence. Mr. Alex. Muir, M.A., reported that the Queen's Own Rifles band had volunteered their services free for the celebration of June 2. The secretary said that they expected to have the tablet at the Parliament buildings unveiled on July 1. Among the institutions invited to take part are Upper Canada College, the Boys' Home, the Industrial School boys, and the public school children. The speakers to be invited are the Lieutenant-Governor, his worship the Mayor, Mr. W. R. Meredith, Sir Oliver Mowat and Col. Denison.

The Queen's Own Rifles appear in increased strength at every succeeding drill parade. May the 9th the parade strength was 701, and this number included only 15 recruits. Under command of Lieut.-Col. Hamilton, and headed by its fine band, the regiment marched from headquarters to Bay street, up Bay street to King, and along King street to the old Upper Canada College grounds. In passing up Bay street the regiment marched in half companies, keeping straight and steady lines in this formation, and presenting a very fine appearance. At the National Club-house the men were reviewed by Hon. Mr. Reid, of Australia, the ladies of whose party witnessed the march past from the windows of the building. On the Upper Canada College grounds the regiment was put through several manoeuvres, and a couple of companies were exercised in physical drill under the direction of Sergt. Butcher, R.C.R. This was in the presence of Hon. Mr. Reid and party. The regiment was then drawn up before the Australian Minister of Defence, and was addressed by him in the most complimentary terms. He said also that if Canada could ever send any of her soldiers to Australia to meet in honorable competition the picked troops of that colony, they could be assured of a most pleasant reception. He was heartily cheered by the riflemen. One enthusiastic man among the spectators insisted upon shaking hands with him. Hon. Mr. Reid left the city at 10.15 last night, on his return trip to Vancouver. The regiment was exercised in battalion movements before leaving the grounds. After dismissal at the drill-shed, a number of the men were presented with badges won for regular attendance at drill.

Infantry Screen in Attack.

So long as hostile forces are still separated by a considerable distance, the duties of reconnoitering in advance of their march towards the scene of action are performed chiefly by mounted troops; but when the battle ground is approached, it becomes necessary to make different arrangements. Cavalry and mounted infantry are no longer equal to the task, and require to be supported and finally relieved by a

"screen" of infantry skirmishers, covered by whom the assailant advances to the attack. The tactical importance of the work now to be done can scarcely be overestimated, since it is not too much to say that the success or failure of the subsequent attack will greatly depend upon whether the screen proves capable of attaining the objects for which it has been sent forward. Yet, curiously enough, but little attention seems to be devoted to this essential matter, and in the very meagre reference to it which is contained in our "Infantry Drill" there is one assertion founded upon a totally incorrect apprehension of perhaps the most vital principle involved. The screen is required in the first place to pioneer the advancing columns, and to clear a way for the guns, so that the latter may come into action unmolested by infantry fire. Driving the enemy's advanced troops before it, the screen must advance upon the position with sufficient determination to enable suitable ground to be occupied from which accurate observation may be made of the general features of the position, and the resistance likely to be offered to the attack. It is universally admitted that troops once committed to an advance under fire are incapable of manoeuvre. Even a very slight change of front becomes impracticable. Points of attack which have been selected in accordance with reports received from scouts, or from other data, may have been chosen with consummate skill; but it will rarely happen that modifications in the direction and method will not be enforced by various circumstances which only a near view of the position can actually disclose. Such conditions it is the manifest duty of the screen to discover, and the previous errors of judgment will only become apparent when their effects have made them clear. Or, in other words, during the advance of the screen it will be discovered that in place of continuing the original direction towards the chosen point, either the right or the left shoulder might advantageously be brought up. If, instead of the screen, the real fighting line were involved, a change of front would not be feasible; but the contrary being the case, and the moment for action having arrived, the real attack can be extended in rear of the screen upon the true front, and advanced through the latter in the proper direction. "Infantry Drill" states that "at any moment the extended line [i.e. the screen] may be developed into a formation for attack." This is the passage with which we directly join issue. In our opinion no circumstances could possibly arise under which a commander would be justified in using a screen as the nucleus of a real first line. Under the circumstances to which we have referred above, when the front of the screen was not found to coincide with the proper direction for attack, the point of our argument needs no further emphasis, since it would be obviously absurd to reinforce a line facing otherwise than in the right direction. But even assuming the situation to present no such difficulty,

the objection still applies. A screen is simply a line of skirmishers extended at comparatively wide intervals. We own that all the battalions detailed for the first line should be enabled to fall into their places. They would every one of them require to be represented in the screen, with the result that sub-sections, or weak sections, would be covering the front of at least two companies, i.e. their own and that in reserve to each—sometimes even a still wider front. In order to develop the skirmishing line into a real attack, these small units would at all events require to close upon their inner flanks with considerable accuracy, so as to make room for the remainder of each half company. This, under fire, would be quite as impracticable as a change of front. The only alternative would be a premature mingling of units, an event which, although inevitable sooner or later, should certainly be avoided as long as possible. Therefore granting that neither changes of front nor any considerable closing to a flank can be effected under fire, and that to anticipate the mixture of units is to be deprecated, it follows that the screen should be an independent organization, furnished by troops not intended to carry out the real attack. No case could arise, demanding a thicker line than the screen, which could not be as rapidly met by bringing up the real firing line in rear of it, as by any system of reinforcing it. The development of an attack, based upon reinforcing a screen, could only take place outside the zone of aimed fire, or, in other words, before things had been discovered, which a nearer approach would bring to light. In short, therefore, if the screen is to realize the full advantages which it is capable of achieving, all idea of its development into an attack formation must be laid aside. Unhampered by any ideas except intelligently advancing as far as it can, the screen should press onwards, and the nearer it can approach the better. The wide intervals of a skirmishing line will not render it a tempting target for the defendant's artillery, whilst even infantry or machine guns could scarcely hope to inflict very great loss upon it at long range. The advance should be continued as far as practicable, since the further it is pursued the shorter will be the distance to be traversed by the real firing line before it can profitably open fire, and the better the chances of avoiding initial errors of direction. The screen should aim at reaching a distance of 700 or 800 yards from the position, or closer if possible, and not being intended for the real attack it should be permitted to expend as much ammunition as it pleases, commencing from about 1000 yards, provided that suitable targets present themselves. Finally, when no longer able to advance, the line should be reinforced by every man of its supports or reserves not already included, and fire rapid volleys, or even resort to magazine fire, whilst the real firing line is coming up to relieve it. Afterwards, when the firing line has proceeded sufficiently far to the front to draw the enemy's aimed fire, the screen should retire, close, replenish ammunition, and join the third line or the general reserves, according to the strength of the force concerned. Would it not be an excellent reform to revive "divisional battalions," in order to use them more especially for this class of work?—*The Broad Arrow.*