

THE P.Q.R.A. COUNCIL REPORT.

The following is the annual report of the Council of the Province of Quebec Rifle Association, just presented:—

In submitting the twenty-third annual report of the working of the Association, your Council have to congratulate the members on a fairly successful year. The thanks of the Association are due to both old and new friends for subscriptions both in money and kind, a list of which will be found at the end of the report. While thanking those who so kindly aided us in the past, we would call the attention of the members to the large number of merchants and others who should subscribe to the funds, but have not done so. Some means should be devised to reach these, and the finance committee ought to take this matter up.

Early in the season a deputation of members of this Association, and of the amalgamated rifle associations, waited on the hon. Minister of Militia, and obtained the appointment of a new caretaker, Mr. Robert Allan; also the promise of the necessary repairs to the ranges. The Association altered last year's telephone system, and laid down four new lines, giving a separate telephone service to each section of targets. A new system of the division of targets was also adopted, and with these improvements, the range is now in first-class shape, and the competitors at the matches report the working as most satisfactory.

We believe the Minister has authorized the cleaning of the drains and target pits; also the fitting up of the 800 and 900 yards targets, which will be very much appreciated next season. A very important item, however, is still wanting, viz., a caretaker's house. Owing to the ranges being situated in a comparatively out of the way place, a house for the caretaker is an absolute necessity, in order that the property of the department and of the different Montreal regiments should be preserved from wanton destruction. The cost of the house, with well, etc., would be a comparatively small amount, and the benefits to the range and the Militia force largely increased. Numbers of the Montreal regiments would go to the ranges over night to obtain early morning practice, had they the convenience of meals and lodging, which the caretaker's house could afford them.

In the absence of the Secretary, who had gone over to England as Adjutant of the Bisley team, Mr. Elliott was appointed Assistant Secretary, and Major Bond, chairman of the executive committee, kindly undertook the detail of the working of the matches. Lieutenant-Col. Matrice was executive officer. The range officers were: Major Hodgins, Capt. Manley, Capt. Oswald and Lieut. D'Orsonnens. Camp Quartermaster was Capt. D'Orsonnens. The programme was drawn up to last four days, closing at 4.15 on Friday, 14th August.

The executive committee decided to increase the number of men in the teams for the Carslake Cup to fifteen, but finding that a large number of the competitors were opposed to it, they reduced the number again to ten. The Frontier match, series "B," was altered, by charging an entrance fee of 25 cents, and arranging that a competitor could take a prize in each series. The Merchants' was restored to the programme, making it a ten shot match at 600 yards, M.H. rifle. Sighting shots were again introduced, competitors being allowed one at each range, at a charge of 10 cents each.

There was a large falling off in the entries as compared with last year, the total being 1,636 individual, against 2,021 for last year, and 28 teams against 47, the largest number of entries in any one match being 129 in the Frontier, against 174 in same match, and 383 in the extra series, 600 yards, as against 430 in the 500 yards last year. No apparent cause can be said to have effected the large shortage in the number of the competitors this year, but the dropping away of several of the regimental teams, notably, the 8th Royal Rifles, of Quebec, the Prince of Wales Rifles, of this city,

and the Governor General's Foot Guards, Ottawa, would account at once for thirty of the individual entries short in each match.

Some of the council are of the opinion that the large number of league and regimental matches now taking place in the early part of the season prevents any ordinary practice for men who are not shooting on the teams, and brings up a question which will shortly force itself on the attention of the Montreal Brigade, viz., the necessity of increased second and third class target accommodation on the ranges. This want has been felt for the past two seasons, and will probably be still more noticeable the coming year. At least ten more second and third class targets are required, to afford the necessary accommodation for the nine regiments now practising every Saturday on the Cote St. Luc ranges.

A suggestion has also been thrown out, that the date of the annual matches should be changed, and that they be held the second week in July, instead of the second week in August, as heretofore. The council do not recommend this, but leave it to the consideration of the new officers and council.

The ammunition furnished by the Militia department continues to give good satisfaction to the competitors.

A motion was passed at the competitors meeting, suggesting to council that the lunch at present furnished by the Association to the field officers be done away with; your council would recommend that this suggestion be adopted.

The Canadian Pacific Railway, with their usual courtesy, furnished a prompt and efficient train service during the matches.

To the statistical officer, Lieut.-Col. D. T. Fraser, great credit is due for the squadding and timing of the competitors. The new system of separating competitors from the same battalion throughout the matches was carried out most successfully.

We have 68 individual members, and 14 affiliated associations, having gained "A" Company, 43rd Battalion, Ottawa, and lost G. T. R. Rifle Association, Toronto R.A., 85th Battalion R.A., 45th Battalion R.A., Q. O. R. R. A., Hemmingford R.A., Sherbrooke R.A. We are very much pleased to see competitors from the 55th Battalion, 86th Battalion, 56th and 59th Battalions, and hope they will come in larger numbers next year.

Your council are still of the opinion that with the usual number of competitors which they trust to see the coming year, that it will take four days to carry out the programme successfully, and would recommend the incoming council to give it another trial.

There was no public presentation of prizes this year, but on Wednesday a large number of friends visited the grounds during the afternoon, where they were received by Mrs. E. L. Bond, on behalf of the executive committee. Major-General Herbert and Capt. Streatfeild arrived on the grounds shortly before 12 o'clock, accompanied by Lieut.-Col. Houghton.

The General made a careful inspection of the whole range, including the butts, cook houses, shelter sheds, etc., and expressed himself as quite satisfied with all the arrangements as far as completed. During the afternoon the ranges were also visited by Admiral Conville, and the captain and officers of the French man-of-war Bisson, who, under the guidance of the General and the members of the executive, took a warm interest in the shooting, and general arrangements of the competition.

This year has been a little difficult in the matter of money. There was a considerable expenditure required to put the ranges in order, (\$451). Owing to the lateness of the season, there was delay in payment of the Dominion grant, and there was a marked falling off in entries, (\$333). In consequence of this, some of our executive committee had to provide money on their own responsibility, and our thanks are due for their prompt assistance.