

THE success of the Queen's Own tournament seems to have had an inspiring effect upon other battalions, for we hear of several other entertainments of the same kind being on the tapis. There can be no doubt that such sports arranged for the winter will have a good effect in many respects. They will increase the feeling of friendship between the different corps, and will entice to the ranks members of our athletic associations, besides keeping up the *esprit de corps* during the winter months, when it is hardest to make things pleasant for the volunteers.

IF the suggestion made some weeks ago by our correspondent could be carried out, and a few sets of trenching tools supplied to any company that would guarantee to use them, instructions might be imparted in many different directions, with their help, besides in the regular shelter trench exercises. Why might not the feature be introduced at some of our rifle matches? For instance, by inaugurating a competition in which each man would be required to build himself a shelter trench at some unmarked distance, before starting to shoot; or the work might take the form of preparing trenches and butts such as required for rifle ranges, by which means new ranges would be cheaply established. The matter is at least worth talking over.

WHY is it that rifle associations will postpone their annual matches until the ground is all frozen up, and often until the snow falls? Surely anyone who has experienced the misery of standing about on a bitter cold day, waiting for his turn to shoot, should have learned enough to prevent a recurrence of such an undesirable arrangement. Suppose for a change some of our enterprising associations get up matches for the spring of next year, say about the end of May. The weather would certainly be finer than in November, and it would have the good effect of encouraging young shots to come out at the beginning of the season, and add to the good the reasonable probability that they will continue shooting all through the season instead of only taking it up in the fall a few weeks before they have to relinquish it again for the winter. Who will be the first to start the reform?

THE remarks upon the English militia and volunteers which we reproduce in this issue might have been written of our own force, so applicable are they to the surroundings of our militia. We have done wonders, considering our opportunities, but all that we have done is but a preface to what remains for us to accomplish and to learn. We can scarcely expect to achieve perfection, but we see the standard steadily getting higher, and the efficiency of our troops rising towards it, slowly it may be, but yet having a distinctly upward tendency. The military schools are doing much to increase the efficiency of our officers let the department increase the efficiency of the men by equipping them better, and by giving them further facilities for learning to use their rifles.

#### Personals.

Inspector Constanstine will be stationed at Calgary, his arrival being daily expected. Calgary holds out her right hand to welcome him, he is not altogether a stranger to her.

Lieutenant-Governor Dewdney and Superintendent R. B. Deane have been in Calgary for some time. They took in the St. Andrew's dinner on the 30th ult., and left for Regina the following night.

Major-General Strange is a candidate for parliamentary honors, and is now hard at work canvassing. He has an excellent chance of being returned, as he is universally loved and respected, especially by his old command.

Major Steele (the organizer and commander of the late Steele's Scouts) will leave for a visit to the old country in a week or two. He is at present in command of the N. W. M. P. at Fort McLeod. All the boys are wondering if he will require double tickets on his return.

#### The Canadian Militia—Its future.

THE recent publication in the CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE of Lieut.-Col. Oswald's most graphic and interesting articles on the past history of the militia, has inspired the present writer with a desire to examine into the prospects of the development of the force, and having

"Dipped into the future far as human eye can see"

to seek answers to the questions which rise and fall with every stroke of Col. Oswald's facile pen.

What is to be the future? The present efficient condition of the militia is due to the energy of a few devoted hands, a few brave souls who have early imbibed a true military spirit, and with steady determination upheld the old doctrine, that it is the duty of every man to take up arms for defence of his country! The progress which is now being made in a quiet, creeping advance, due, not so much to the ardent pushing of a few, but to the increasing desire for military knowledge which is rapidly taking a firm hold in the breasts of a majority of our officers. It is such an advance as this that has lately pushed to a successful completion one of the greatest works of the century, the link which binds ocean to ocean, and furnishes a means whereby good, armed men, with their complement of trains and stores, may be transferred day after day from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast.

What is the object which necessitates the retention of a force of some 37,000 men at a cost of a million dollars a year, and still drives us on in a wish to perfect the training of our men and fit them for all emergencies?

If the *raison d'être* of the militia be only home defence, it is not difficult to gauge with accuracy the absolute requirements of the country. There are evidently only two contingencies to prepare for, one an invasion from the south; and the other an attack on either or both coasts. Both of these are fixed quantities. It is easy to estimate the power of a possible invader, and equally easy to foretell the probable points of attack. These being known preparations may be made accordingly, always remembering that if our force is numerically weak, its value must be increased by better training and better discipline; or, to put the matter in another light, if our men are well and thoroughly trained, there is less need for numbers, and the burden on the country is lightened proportionately.

But preparation does not consist wholly and solely in perfection of training. Matters of high importance are mobilisation, that is, the process of bringing the units of an army from peace strength to war strength, and equipping them, and concentration, or the conveyance of mobilised units to the places chosen for the organization of the larger commands. The choice of places of concentration, the mode of transport to these, and the means available for a rapid supply of officers, men, horses, arms, equipments, ammunition, clothing and stores of all kinds, are questions to be settled during peace. Such preparations do not involve expenditure of money, but upon such as these depend rapidity of concentration, and readiness to meet the foe. How necessary such paper preparation is may be read in the disasters of France in 1870. A country which is not sheltered by fortifications and walls of stone will find its only safety in these paper walls so rapidly changed in time of need to walls of flesh and blood.

Taking it for granted that none of these points have been overlooked, we shall be prepared to defend our own soil and perhaps even to retaliate.

The question which next rises in our minds is whether our soldiers can be employed in any higher duties, higher, that is, in the sense of being more extended. Will the Canadian militia ever form part of the grand army of great and greater Britain? Shall our soldiers ever claim as a right the privilege of fighting side by side with our comrades of the Old Country for the defence of the honor and liberty of a noble empire?

Recent events would certainly seem to point in this direction. Canada has already made voluntary offers of help to our mother country. Facility of communication leads to a closer binding of ties which must never be broken. No new ideas are displayed here; it is simply the old feelings put into words. The wish to help our kindred in danger has always been present with us, but the manner in which we can do it has only lately appeared. Willingly we have offered a kindly support in the past; in the future we shall claim to give it as a right, and in the claim to this right lies the secret of the higher development of our country. A right to a participation in the control of our own foreign affairs follows; may, not only of our own, but of those of the whole empire. Voyageurs we have given; horses we have given; soldiers we shall give.

When we look upon ourselves as a reserve for the Imperial army, or, let us say, as an essential part of it, (for we shall claim the right to be foremost in the fray) there is nothing anomalous in the position. The militia of England is, indeed, a force raised for the express purpose of home defence, but it must be remembered that of the 12,000 men comprising it, more than one-third belong to the Militia Reserve, a force