

on the opposite side to our flag, on the tented field, and God forbid it ever should. Looking then at the true position of affairs, we only need prepare for an attack on our seaboard, and he would suggest how the evil may be remedied. There is no difficulty whatever in enrolling a full battery in Vancouver, at Chilliwack two companies, one at Maple Ridge, another company at Langley, one at Richmond, and at several other places. This organization could take place on the mainland and on the island, if the Dominion Government would undertake the necessary expense. There would be no difficulty in organizing a body of able men which would be ready at a moment's notice to spring to arms.

Mr. Thompson said the country was quite as unprepared now as it was several years ago when the province was alarmed at the imminency of war. The only protection we had was the men-of-war, which were liable to move to other points in time of trouble. The necessity for the defence of Nanaimo and Departure Bay was pointed out, as well as the imperative importance of increasing the government grant for militia purposes.

Hon. J. Robson felt quite confident that every hamlet in the province would contribute its quota of men. A militia force was required for the maintenance of peace within our own borders, and to keep the large Indian population in subjection. The motion had the full support of the government.

Mr. Semlin endorsed the sentiments expressed. In his district a volunteer corp had been formed, but for want of financial support had not been kept up. A valuable mounted corp might be formed in the interior, which would be a powerful auxiliary in the event of war. England supplemented her navy with a strong volunteer force, and the same policy should be pursued here.

### Correspondence.

The Editor desires it distinctly understood that he does not hold himself responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents.

#### THE RESISTANCE OF SNOW TO BULLETS.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette.

DEAR SIR,—The associated press seems to know more about my intentions than I do myself. It announced on Saturday that I proposed erecting a bullet proof shelter trench of snow, and on Monday informed a confiding public that I had fallen short of success in carrying out my idea. Those who saw the despatches may be surprised to learn that when the alleged trial took place I was 300 miles from Ottawa. I think it should be understood that a mistake has in some way arisen. After Col. Macpherson's first lecture on hasty entrenchments I asked if any experiments had been made to decide the resistance of snow to the passage of a bullet, as I had an idea it acted more effectually than might be supposed from its yielding nature. I added that I had picked up Snider bullets on snow at an unexpectedly short distance from where they first struck, and should like to see the matter tested systematically. But I certainly never claimed that snow in moderate quantities would form a safe entrenchment, nor did I undertake in any way to test the matter, so that the statements published respecting the failure of any undertaking of mine are most gratuitous assumptions.

WM. P. ANDERSON.

#### THE RECOVERY OF THE BODY OF GUNNER PHILLIPS.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette.

DEAR SIR,—The "mixed assortment" of our troops mentioned by Capt. Peters, R.C.A., as lying below the ridge when they carried off the gunner's body, was No. 4 company, Grenadiers, and I do not wonder that their five years' old patched clothing looked a "mixed assortment."

My company, No. 4, was, on 9th May, ordered up to assist the R.C.A. in acting as escort to the guns and Gatling, being in their rear when they opened fire and then ordered to their right, and afterwards to the right front with the Gatling firing almost over our heads. I never thought any one believed the yarn that "the gunners deserted their guns and were only saved, etc., etc." The gunners wheeled their guns back over the crest of the hill in good order and for the rebels to get at the Gatling or the guns they would have had to come through No. 4 company, R.G., which we flatter ourselves they would have found a tough job.

I well remember both gunners being carried off. The one at the Gatling, who was I think serving the feed, was carried off by Lieut. Freer and another, and the General came to the crest of the hill and ordered me to open fire with my left half company to create smoke and keep the rebels down and prevent them shooting, and I think it was also the General who shouted to me the order to do the same thing when the two gunners mentioned by Capt. Peters crawled out and dragged the body back by the heels as he describes.

I have not seen the letters Capt. Peters speaks of and know nothing of the controversy, and I need only say that as I see Dr. Codd's name is mentioned I hold that officer in the highest esteem.

C. GREVILLE-HARSTON,  
Capt. R.G.

#### HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette.

SIR,—As a militia officer who took part in the expedition of 1885 to quell the rebellion of Indians and Half-breeds, in the North-west, I, with many others, have felt deeply aggrieved at the slights and insults which have from time to time been aimed by correspondents in the GAZETTE at those portions of the expedition whose only fault has been that they obeyed cheerfully and efficiently the commands of the general officer commanding, although the duties assigned to them were, in many cases,

most uncongenial to them, and not such as they desired and endeavored to be appointed to.

One would suppose from the words of your correspondents that corps could choose for themselves where they were to go, and what duties to undertake. Your correspondents will probably be surprised to learn that the general opinion is that the favorable and speedy termination of the campaign was due more to the excellent disposition which the General made of the troops not actually under fire than as the result of any fighting that took place.

The corps to which I had the honor to belong left home with the expectation and desire of taking part wherever danger was most to be apprehended; but we also knew that obedience to orders was essential in a soldier, and that the soldier is but doing his duty wherever his superior officer places him.

The exigencies of the service required the breaking up of this battalion at Swift Current. One portion was employed at Swift Current and Moose Jaw, working day after day, like navvies, forwarding supplies. Another portion went to Saskatchewan landing, and were constantly employed forwarding supplies down and across the river, and how well they did their work the testimony of those in authority can show.

Fed with hard tack and canned beef, and with their clothing in rags, they wrought on, day by day, hoping for and expecting the order to advance. So anxious were they to go to the front that at one time not only every private, but every officer and non-commissioned officer was, waist deep in the river, working hard to get off the supplies accumulated there, having been led to believe that as soon as they could get off their supplies they would go forward in escort.

The headquarters of the battalion, consisting of 174 officers and men, (all that could be spared) were, at two hours notice, shortly after arrival at Swift Current, moved farther west to a position on the Saskatchewan river, intelligence having been received of an apprehended Indian rising. The position then occupied by them was held during the remainder of the campaign, and so important was it considered that 70 mounted Cow Boy scouts were permanently attached to them. In the case of certain eventualities, which seemed at the time very probable, this detachment would have been opposed to serious odds.

The object of sending this detachment west was realised. The Indians remained quiet, which they would not likely have done if no troops had been there.

Whilst giving all honor to those immediately engaged with the enemy, I feel that the battalion in which I served performed duties as important and as necessary to the success of the campaign as they did, and did them as well. The only difference was that they got the work which they preferred, and that we would have done anything to have had, whilst we got work which we did not like but did it all the same.

What I say of the battalion in which I served I apply to all. The General put no troops where they were not needed, and they but did their duty where they were sent.

What would your correspondent think if I were to assert that Fish Creek was a defeat, and that if we had been there we would not have retired, leaving the Half-breeds and Indians to shout at and jeer us and then to draw off at their leisure? Or what would you think if I were to say that Batoche was merely a needlessly prolonged skirmish, and that if the General had had some other corps with him he would have taken the place on the first day's attack? If I were to say these things I would doubtless be savagely denounced, and yet there would be no greater lack of fairness or courtesy in saying them than there has been exhibited by your correspondents. In fact I can scarcely conceive that anyone connected with the North-west expedition could have been guilty of exhibiting such bad taste, or of uttering such unjust and ungenerous sentiments towards others who did their duty on the expedition just as well as those who were more fortunate in the kind of duties assigned them.

I do not believe that the statements made by "Field Officer" are correct, for I never heard of them, and I was as likely to hear of such things as anyone not on the General's staff. Moreover, I do not believe that "Field Officer" belonged to the expedition at all, and if his personality were known, I think it is likely that his motive would be apparent enough. If your correspondents knew of any who did not do their duty why do they not specify them, instead of throwing a slur upon men who in the conscientious and efficient discharge of their duties merited as much praise as any.

It is only the belief that the sentiments uttered by your correspondents are not those of our comrades generally who fought at Fish Creek and Batoche, which has prevented retaliation of a kind which would not be pleasant. We did, however, expect that such unworthy and ungenerous sentiments would have been repudiated; and it is to be hoped that we shall not be forced into a discussion of the particular merits of each one's work, in which I for one feel that I have nothing to fear.

I regret the necessity for this letter, which has been forced upon me by your admission into the GAZETTE of letter after letter, the spirit of which I consider a disgrace to the writers and by implication to the whole force.

SUBORDINATION.

February 16th, 1887.

### Regimental Notes.

We wish to publish information respecting all the doings of all corps. Will the officers interested, particularly at a distance, assist us by having news relating to their corps promptly forwarded?

**Winnipeg.**—On the 18th the remains of the late Lieut.-Col. MacKeand were laid away with military honors in their final resting place in St. John's cemetery, beside his comrades who fell in battle while he was leading them at Fish Creek. Rev. Mr. Gordon, pastor of Knox church and chaplain of the 90th Battalion, held a very impressive funeral service in the house, at the conclusion of which the coffin was closed and taken in charge by the pall bearers, who were Lieut.-Col. Scott, Major Mulvey, Lieut.-Col. Fraser, Lieut.-Col. Taylor, Lieut.-Col. Smith and Major Street. As the body was borne from the house to the gun carriage which was to bear the remains to the grave, it was received by the 90th in line presenting arms, after which they took their place in the procession, which was formed as follows:—90th Batt., as firing party in column of half companies with open ranks, 90th band, gun carriage bearing remains, the late colonel's horse led by his orderly, detachments of the artillery, mounted infantry corps, field battery and cavalry, mourners, City Council, Board of Trade, private citizens and representatives of local societies. The procession moved off, the 90th band playing appropriate airs, and proceeded directly to St. John's cemetery, the stores and business places being closed as the funeral passed along Main street. On arriving at the cemetery the procession passed through the battalion lines and Rev. Canon O'Meara then read the solemn and impressive burial service of the Church of England. At the conclusion of the service the 90th closed their ranks and fired the usual three volleys in the air. Since Col. MacKeand's death his aunt, Mrs. George MacKeand, has died suddenly, and his wife's father, Mr. Thomas Bush, has passed away in his 87th year, both deaths occurring in Hamilton.