



# The Volunteer Review

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### REPORT OF THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL

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#### ENGINEERS.

At present there are actually only three Companies of Engineers in the Dominion, viz: The Montreal Engineer Company, the St. John (N.B.) Company, and the Grand Trunk Company; the condition of these Companies is stated in the Report of the Inspector of Artillery who is also charged with the instruction, inspection and training of the Engineers Corps.

The Engineer force is altogether too small, and up to the present time no proper steps have been taken to teach the officers and men of the existing Companies their special duties; no difficulty however, need any longer be experienced on this point, for the Artillery officers in command of the Schools of Gunnery at Kingston and Quebec would be able if assisted by two sergeant instructors of Engineers, to impart the necessary instruction to such Engineer officers and men as could attend these schools.

A knowledge of fortification, construction of siege batteries, field works, attack and defence of posts and fortresses is absolutely essential to the Artillery officer, as also a rough practical knowledge of military topography and surveying, construction of military bridges, &c., the above with the addition of Artillery, Mines, and Torpedoes, includes the entire training of the Military Engineer—their education is identical at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and it would be very advantageous to combine the practical training of all Canadian Staff, Engineer, and Artillery Officers at the Gunnery Schools—the subject of instruction being common to all.

The increase of Engineer Corps generally throughout the Dominion, is recommended until there is at least, one Company in the District; also the formation of a Telegraph Company in each Province, provided with Telegraph equipment, and the organization of Pontoon Trains.

On reference to the report of the officer commanding the militia in Military District No. 5, it will be seen that the Montreal Company of Engineers, under command of Captain Kennedy, rendered good service at the La Prairie Camp last summer by preparing the rifle ranges ten in number, and erecting camp huts and other work, thereby saving considerable expense to the public; this company also constructed a two-gun battery (earthwork) for practice.

#### INFANTRY.

Nearly 30,000 (Officers and men) of the Infantry have performed the Annual Drill during the past summer, the greater portion being present at the various Camps of Exercise.

The suggestions contained in the Annual Report of 1870, for the extension of the period of drill, and the introduction of a general and systematic mode of carrying out Target Practice at the time of the Annual Drill having been approved of and authorized, the result has been that as compared with the two former years, a marked improvement has taken place. Indeed no measure could have been better calculated to increase the efficiency of the Infantry, than the adoption of some system to instruct the whole of the men practically in the use of the rifle, and the granting of numerous prizes for good shooting.

In the course of my inspection within the last three years, I have seen few of the Infantry Corps who were not, whenever commanded by officers who had learned their drill, after a few days practice fairly acquainted with the few simple Company and Battalion movements necessary to actual warfare; I have seen some Battalions who had the advantage of Drill Sheds at their local head quarters, very creditably drilled. But when it is remembered that the rifle and the spade are the tools used most in modern warfare, that individual skill in the use of the rifle is more than ever the first consideration in the military training of the Infantry, and that target practice cannot be carried on in Drill Sheds, the desirability of affording facilities for this, the most necessary kind of training in preference to mere drill shed drill, as illustrated at the various Camps last summer, is obvious.

There was a decided improvement, in the condition of the Snider Rifle last year, as compared with the two previous years of 1869 and 1870, the general condition of the uniform clothing, accoutrements and equipments being much the same.

The frequent losses and deficiencies of clothing, equipment, &c., which occur in some corps, (the expense of which falls upon the public) I attribute mainly to the fact, that in all cases the men are not required on the conclusion of the annual drill, when they return their arms and accoutrements into the various armouries, to return at the same time their uniform clothing. With a view therefore, to prevent such loss, I think this should be generally insisted on, the Captains of Companies being responsible for

the clothing and equipment, as well as the arms of their men.

#### TARGET PRACTICE FOR 1871.

During the past season the whole of the Infantry assembled in the various camps of Exercise, performed the prescribed course of Target Practice with the Snider Rifle, and Government money prizes were distributed amongst the officers and, to the successful competitors; to the best shot in each Company \$5, with a badge; to the best shot in each Battalion \$10, with a badge; to the best shot in each District \$15; and to the best shot amongst the non-commissioned officers and men of the Active Militia in the Dominion who performed the prescribed course of target practice, at the time of the Annual Drill the Adjutant General's prize of \$50 with a silver medal was awarded. 584 Government prizes were given, and great interest was taken in the competition.

A return showing the average shooting figure of merit of every Company, Battalion and Corps exercised, together with the names and scores of the best shot in the same was published in General Orders of 30th November, and although many of the men are as yet very insufficiently skilled in the use of the rifle, the foundation has been laid for a systematic course of practical instruction and target practice at the time of the annual drill which cannot fail eventually if persevered in, to increase in general efficiency.

On reference to the General Order above alluded to, it will be seen that:

The 27th Battalion, figure of merit 19.92, was the best shooting Battalion. No. 2 Company, (Widder) 27th Battalion, figure of merit 26.57, was the best shooting Company, and Sergeant J. R. Burwell, No. 5 Company, (Iona) 25th Battalion, with a score of 45, was the best shot in Military District No. 1.

The 31st Battalion, figure of merit 17.08, was the best shooting Battalion. No. 6 Company, (Flesherton) 31st Battalion, figure of merit 23.81, was the best shooting Company, and Private John Parks, No. 6 Company, (Flesherton) 31st Battalion, with a score of 51, was the best shot in Military District No. 2.

The 48th Battalion, figure of 14.53, was the best shooting Battalion. No. 1 Company (Tamworth) 48th Battalion, figure of merit 24.05, was the best shooting Company, and Corporal Frederick Hobbs, No. 1 Company (Bowmanville) 45th Battalion, with a score of 51, was the best shot in Military District No. 3.