

bone, or some such easily wrought material, and during which but little knowledge existed relative to the useful metals.

As the world progressed in knowledge and skill, the "bronze age" succeeded; weapons and implements were made of copper or of bronze, and most of the articles that have been found appear to have been cast, and where the marks of a hammer are apparent it has been surmised that the forging must have been done by a stone hammer on a stone anvil.

Bronze was displaced with the advent of iron, and it and its great product steel maintain the foremost rank to the exclusion, it may be said, of every other metal, for the production of engines of war.

The first weapons used were the bow and arrow, the dart or lance, and the sling—all primitive enough. These were followed by the axe, mace, sword, dagger, and scythe to be attached to the axles of chariots; and for artillery there were the ballista, catapulta and battering ram. After the introduction of gunpowder two classes of weapons came into use; first, those that could be held in the hand and fired; and, second, those that were heavy and had to be discharged from a rest.

As the world progressed and people multiplied nation became arrayed against nation, and war—then a rude service—became, as it were, the pastime of kings. We are told that Sesostrius, who lived 1,600 years before the Christian era or nearly 3,500 years ago, when he became king of Egypt formed a sort of militia, and to each soldier gave a piece of land on which to maintain himself and family. When the militia had been drilled into a state of efficiency Sesostrius headed them as an army for conquest in Asia.

During the great days of the Persian empire the cavalry was considered the flower of the army, and the foot soldiers, who were the greatest in point of numbers and formed the bulk of the army, were armed with pikes, axes and maces.

The Lacedemonians were celebrated for their "phalanx" in which the soldiers stood eight deep. The Athenian phalanx was reduced to four deep, and the men were armed with spears, corslets and shields; and it was covered by a species of light infantry armed with javelins, who acted as skirmishers; besides which there was also a set of irregular infantry armed with bows and arrows and slings. In the Macedonian army the phalanx was sixteen deep, and the men were armed with pikes or spears 24 feet in length, which were held so that a length of 18 feet projected in front, and as each soldier with his shield occupied 3 feet the phalanx as it advanced had six tiers of spear points in front, a wall of steel no troops could withstand, especially as the spear-men in front were pressed forward by ten ranks in their rear.

(To be Continued.)

CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE FRONT.

ANOTHER LETTER FROM THE MIDLAND BATTALION.

SWIFT CURRENT, Friday, 17th April, 1885.

To-day opened raw and cold, with stiff northerly winds, compelling all hands to take to their overcoats, notwithstanding which all are shivering, no doubt, chiefly in consequence of our exposure on Lake Superior, as almost every man got a deep-seated cold that will not leave him until fine weather sets in. In the matter of newspaper reports, I hope you will not feel the least uneasiness about our command, as I can assure you that you can safely put a discount of 95 per cent. on all you read. As an instance of this they have already had our hair lifted several times, and also had our battalion massacred west of Brandon, when the truth is that we have not seen the face of a dusky or a breed since we left Qu'Appelle. Our duties in camp to-day were confined to light infantry, firing, and judging distance drill, and to-night our outlying pickets will crown the surrounding hills about a mile distant. The Queen's Own are situated at a point 28 miles to the north of us at the crossing of the South Saskatchewan, and as there is only a very small scow ferry, the cable for which reached them but a few days since, the last of them are only getting across at this date. Should we move northward towards Battleford our track will lead for some forty miles through a thickly wooded country, right through the middle of the reserve of Red Pheasant, who, if you remember, is one of the restless and untrustworthy chiefs. However I do not feel uneasy, as the number of military now out here, although scattered, ought to be sufficient to "smash" any of the enemy who may give trouble.

SWIFT CURRENT, 27th April.

Two companies of ours, "G" and "H," are still held at this station loading and unloading supplies and assisting in their transport to the South Saskatchewan by teams. We are also doing guard duty over the ammunition, a very large quantity being here awaiting transport to the front. "E" and "F" Cos. went forward some days ago, followed by "A," "B," "C" and "D" Cos. on Tuesday last, together with the C. O. and regimental staff. Under the circumstances our detachment (90) was light until the arrival of the 7th Fusiliers and 9th (Quebec) on Friday, which battalions are now lying alongside of us. The former corps is in first-rate shape and the latter very passable, though both battalions are much under our strength. Through being second senior to Lt.-Col. Deacon I had a taste of staff duty on Thursday last. At about 8 a.m. I had a note from the staff adjutant to report to General Laurie at once. I immediately went over to staff headquarters and found the general writing a despatch to a captain of scouts fifteen miles up the river, which he wished me to bear to its destination at once. He told me that I should require to go well armed, and asked me how long it would take me to get ready. I replied that I was ready then, and showed him my "bulldog" from under my cloak. I left here at a little after 8 o'clock, and got to the scouts' camp, baited my pony, repaired my buckboard, had dinner, and got back, to the General's astonishment, while he was eating his dinner, which elicited a compliment for my celerity. Amongst the scouts that I went out to see were Jack and Harry Dennis, of Ottawa. Speaking of scouts, there are enough of them here to serve an army three times the size of our forces. They are all well mounted upon Indian ponies and most thoroughly equipped with Winchesters and revolvers.

We did not like the idea at all of being left at this point as a rear guard to our battalion. However we were not long in finding out that we were the best off, as those who have preceded us are now at the ferry doing fatigue, such as cutting wood for the *Northcote*, our transport steamer, and building a mud fort that has been laid out by the engineers for the defence of the stores at that point. Their "chuck" comprises hard-tack and canned beef, the latter of which the men have tired of long since, while we can vary our grub by purchasing at the stores here. Bliss came down the lines yesterday to get, as he said, a square meal, and to lay in a stock of eatables in order to make life bearable.

Col. Williams will not allow his command to be discounted in point of marching, and the long tramps we had on Lake Superior do not seem to have satisfied him, for when leaving here with the right half-battalion the other day he made a speech in which he stated that thirty-two miles lay between them and their halting-place for the night, but from the past exploits of the battalion he confidently expected that not a man would fall out on the march. He was as good as his word, for he pushed them through the entire journey, reaching the ferry at 8 p.m. with some of the fellows pretty thoroughly exhausted. This march was, however, admitted to have been far less severe than some of the previous tramps, as it was on land instead of ice, while the men were without their overcoats and unbuttoned their tunics when very warm, &c. Fancy one at home thinking of marching 35 or 40 miles a day. But that it has been done by the Midland battalion is pretty vividly realized by all ranks, and I think it is largely owing to the rapidity with which the men, through strong food and continued exposure, hardened up to their work, as well as their admirable desire to do and face anything. I see that the Toronto papers are still howling over the terrible sufferings of the Queen's Own, just as if there were none others who got it as well as they. I am free to admit that the weather and exposure were extremely severe, also that the marches were terribly long and trying, but I feel and know that from the admirable spirit pervading the force (or at least this portion of it) they would be willing to go through it all again were it necessary, and even though it were doubly as severe. Col. Deacon and Barney Hodgins (both of whom were through the Crimean campaign from first to last) say that they saw nothing there more trying than one march of ours of 27 miles in which we tramped all night long. I am in hopes that before this reaches you we will have left this point for the ferry and will be moving northward by steamer on the Saskatchewan. There are said to be bluffs for several hundred miles on either side of the river, very favorable to the enemy, and from which they can harass a boat; however, as part of our supplies consists of hay in bales the steamer can be made pretty well ball-proof. You will of course have heard some days ago of the skirmish between General Middleton's command and the rebels, in which the general had rather a close call. The half-breeds and Indians had entrenched themselves in a ravine, the particular nature of which only those who have been out in this country can understand. When thus under cover one man is about as good as six in point of destructive powers, as he fires quite under cover, unseen