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(SUCCESSOR TO THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE.)

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MONTREAL, 15th JULY, 1893

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

The following paragraph appears in one of the English service papers: "An Out-door Tactical Exercise for officers has been arranged by the Home District Tactical & War Game Society, with the approval of the General Officer Commanding the Home District, for Saturday, the 22nd inst., in Epping Forest. The exercise will be directed by Capt. Granville Smith, Coldstream Guards, and the subject of the instruction will be "the occupation of a defensive position in a wooded country." Officers who propose to attend should forward their names by Thursday, the 20th inst., to Major E. Satterthwaite, Windermere, Bromley, Kent." There is nothing very peculiar in this for such paragraphs appear in almost every English service pa-

per one takes up. Where the peculiarity comes in, is that something of the kind is never done in Canada, particularly where we have schools specially provided with officers to keep militia officers posted in their work.

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These schools appear merely to exist for the purpose of grinding out certificates for officers at the shortest possible notice, and there their duties end. But the officers of the schools are capable of doing much more than this and would do it if they were given a chance. They are always writing to give information and advice to officers and non-commissioned officers in the force and to do anything else to benefit their comrades outside of the permanent force, and the officers of several of the schools have before now offered to undertake instruction in practical tactical work if militia officers so desired. Some years ago Lieut. Colonel D'Orsonmens, of the St. John's School, for instance, invited the commanding officers of the Montreal city corps to make a reconnaissance of a section of the frontier with him, leaving it to the officers to pick out defensive positions and say what they would do under certain war conditions if located at different points indicated by commandant of the school, he criticizing their plans. This would have been practical military work and would have provided the officers taking part a most enjoyable day's outing, but the invitation was not accepted. If Lieut. Col. D'Orsonmens would repeat his invitation now and include some of the junior officers he would be sure to get a large class out, and other classes might with advantage be organized in the neighborhood of the other schools.

The newspapers have published some very silly things about the Victoria disaster, and probably few people have the haziest kind of a notion as to how the thing occurred. Owing to a misunderstanding of the method of signalling in the navy many of the newspapers have been misled in the matter of that portion of Admiral Markham's despatches referring to his hesitation to reply to the signal of the Commander-in-Chief. It should be pointed out in explanation that hoisting a signal does not carry with it an order for the immediate execution of the purport of that signal. Its execution follows on the flags being hauled down. No such question, therefore, as whether the Camperdown added to the possibilities of disaster by the delay in her response to the signal can possibly arise. The signal at that time is merely preparative, and it is within the right of any captain, or other officer in command of a ship affected, to keep his flags of response at the dip until he has made out its meaning. Sir George Tryon's question, "What are you waiting for?" did not imply, as some have supposed, "Why don't you turn?" for no order to turn had at that time been given, and it might well have meant, "Are you, or is any other ship, in doubt as to the meaning of the signal?" But in the meanwhile the doubt had been removed and so the Camperdown answered, and the executive signal was made by hauling down the flags.

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Most Canadians regard the presence of the North Atlantic squadron in Canadian waters as a mere matter of course, an incident of little real importance, and take little interest either in the strength of the squadron or the personnel of the force manning it. Those who have ever given any attention to the subject of Canadian defence know very well that the