

interesting as usual, being devoted this month to the inevitable Martini-Enfield vs. repeater question. The remainder of the number is chiefly devoted to scores and to describing an apparatus to facilitate rest shooting.

The English weeklies of the 30th are to hand. We may cite as of general interest the following articles:

Broad Arrow—Cavalry bridles; official inventors; France and England; General Boxer on the new rifle.

United Service Gazette—Lord Charles Beresford on the navy; the "Farming" shell; underground ranges; Italy's military resources; the Royal Irish constabulary.

Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette—"The Duke" (being an arraignment of H.R.H. commanding in chief); military education; sale of official plans, and some correspondence.

Volunteer Service Gazette—The Queen's prize and retired volunteers; a review of the past year occupies four pages, the *Gazette* having completed the twenty-seventh year of its existence.

Volunteer Service Record of 26th—Reprints of several articles on the new rifle for the army, on British officers and soldiers, and on the rifle range difficulty.

The Canadian Militia:—A Historical Sketch.

BY LIEUT.-COL. W. R. OSWALD,

Commanding Montreal Brigade of Garrison Artillery.

(Continued from page 539.)

AND now I come to a sad event, one which we must all feel keenly, namely, the sudden death on Friday last of Col. Dyde.* To myself personally, and particularly in connection with this lecture, the occurrence is particularly distressing. From the moment he knew of my intention to deliver a lecture on the Canadian militia, he took the greatest interest in the matter, and placed at my disposal his reminiscences of the war of 1812. I shall not alter a word of what I had written before his death, but publish now what I wrote then, and it is as follows:—

I am sure you will heartily agree with me when I tell you that I am going to give you what must be a treat to all of us, viz.: An account of the cause of this war, which occurred seventy-six years ago, and some of the principal incidents in it, as far as Canada was affected, given to me personally and in writing only the other day by one, who, if not actually a partaker, was at all events an onlooker at that momentous time, and who is still erect, hale and hearty, at the great age of 89, Colonel Dyde, C.M.G., A.D.C. to the Queen, the father of the Canadian militia of to-day. "On the 18th of June, 1812, the United States declared war against Great Britain. There was a deep feeling of animosity existing between the two nations owing to various causes. Great Britain was at war with France, and the sympathy of the United States was altogether in favor of the latter in granting facilities and protection to the cruisers of that nation in their harbors, and also in laying embargoes on English shipping, resulting in non-intercourse with Great Britain in 1812. At this time, Great Britain having cleared the seas of the vessels of almost every nation, the United States had nearly all the carrying trade. On the other side Great Britain had asserted the right of search, that is the power to overhaul merchantmen on the high seas, and impress any British seamen who might be on board, and also to claim from American men-of-war any deserters from British cruisers. This led to several sanguinary hand-to-hand engagements, notably those between H.M.S. Leopard, 2-decker, and the American frigate Chesapeake, and another between the U. S. frigate President, 44 guns, and the British sloop-of-war Little Belt, 18 guns. The account given of these engagements is very interesting, but we must pass on to matter more properly belonging to the subject of these remarks. The inevitable result of this state of things was that war was declared, as I have said, on the 18th June, 1812.

It caused much excitement and some anxiety. Montreal then contained about 12,000 inhabitants, nearly two-thirds French Canadians, the Scotch being next most numerous, and then English, but very few Irish. The Irish immigration did not take place to any extent till a long time after, when they came by thousands for many years. The fortifications had in a great measure fallen into ruins, been levelled or removed, to enable the town to expand, but the stone walls and gates remained in some parts, and the citadel was still intact where Dalhousie square now is. It was a hill of considerable height, with guns mounted and the artillery barracks on the top. It commanded the river and the town. After the war it was razed, and now forms a large portion of the Champ de Mars. The loyalty of the people, without distinction of race or creed, could not be surpassed, much to the disappointment of the

*[Col. Dyde's death occurred on the 5th March, 1886, only three days before this lecture was delivered.—ED.]

Yankees. An artillery corps, a troop of cavalry and four militia battalions were organized, armed, and equipped for service. All males from eighteen to sixty were accepted, or rather taken as eligible, but many younger and older men were disappointed at not being taken. All were constantly on the alert and in high spirits. The first demonstration that occurred was on the arrival of General Hull and his force; he had crossed the frontier at Detroit, issued proclamations inviting the Canadians to join his standard. After several reverses he was driven back and finally captured by the gallant and heroic Brock, who had been entrusted with the defence of the upper province, where all the fighting took place the first year of the war. On Sunday evening, the beginning of September, the American prisoners, accompanied by their general in a carriage, with a British officer of rank, followed by another with British and American staff officers, were escorted into town by detachments from the 8th King's regiment and the Montreal militia, headed by the band of the King's. The gratification of the spectators was intense; it being late, the streets through which the line of march passed were illuminated. The General was received at the government house by the Governor, His Excellency Sir George Prevost, and the officers, twenty-five in number, were quartered at Holmes' hotel. The prisoners left for Quebec under a militia guard on the 8th September. Although Montreal was not exposed to any direct attack for some time, still there were constant alarms of flying columns coming in by the way of Lake Champlain, or down the St. Lawrence from Ogdensburg to "gobble" up Montreal. On the 19th November, at midnight, the drums beat to arms and the whole force were ordered to meet the enemy in the direction of Lachine, but finding none, after some days the brigade returned. It was not until the autumn of 1813 that any fighting of consequence took place in Lower Canada. General Wilkinson had assumed command of the Northern army of the United States, and a plan was formed to unite his forces for a grand attack upon Montreal and Quebec by two strong divisions, one commanded by General Hampton, by the way of Lake Champlain, and the other by himself, descending the St. Lawrence from Sackett's harbor with the intention of forming a junction at some place near Montreal. After much manoeuvring, Hampton was signally defeated by the able and gallant de Salaberry, with his regiment, the Voltigeurs, and some militia, at Chateauguay, and Wilkinson, on his way down the St. Lawrence, was brought to bay and compelled to land at Chrysler's farm by the British force, which followed him from Kingston, and was also defeated, after which he made the best of his way back to the States. At the battle of Chrysler's farm the Glengarry Light Infantry distinguished itself, rivaling in gallantry His Majesty's regular troops. After Hampton's defeat at Chateauguay, and refusing to comply with Wilkinson's orders, he was dismissed the service in disgrace. Wilkinson remained quiet during the winter, when he prepared again for an advance on Montreal, crossed the Canadian border and pressed on towards Lacolle on the 30th March, 1814. After a fierce attack on the stone mill and block house, defended by His Majesty's 13th and militia, the American force being three or four to one, he was obliged to withdraw, having lost 13 killed and 128 wounded. The British loss was eleven killed and forty-four wounded and missing.

In the spring of 1814 the siege and surrender of Paris took place. Wellington's victory over Soult at Toulouse, and the unconditional abdication of Napoleon, were a great relief to Great Britain, for the war with France had been long and exhausting. These events enabled the war with the United States to be carried on more vigorously, and a division of Wellington's victorious army left France for Canada without delay. On arrival at Montreal a brigade marched at once for the upper province, and one, under Sir George Prevost, formed the chief part of an expedition to attack Plattsburg, and to act as occasion required. Owing to the incompetency of the commander these fine troops came back discomfited, and great dissatisfaction was felt by all. Sir George, in *quasi* disgrace, was soon after ordered home, but died on the passage. From this time until the declaration of peace, December 24, 1814, Montreal was not again menaced, it being always garrisoned by a strong force of regulars and active militia. When peace was proclaimed the whole militia force was mustered, the arms, equipments, etc., returned into the armories, and the officers and men relieved from further service; and from that time there was no regular militia force in the country till the troubles of 1837. There was, indeed, a troop of cavalry and a company of rifles in Montreal, turning out occasionally, and the sedentary militia, without arms or uniforms, was supposed to muster once a year for roll call, which was very perfunctorily carried out. Several regular regiments were sent home as soon as possible, Bonaparte having made his escape from Elba, and it is believed that some were in time for Waterloo."

Thus does the veteran who witnessed these stormy times, describe them to us to-day in clear and racy language. May he live many a long day yet to enjoy the honor and respect we all feel for him; as well as wear—worthily as he does—the honors bestowed on him for services to his country by his Queen.