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Comment and Criticism.

PRESSURE of matter, consequent upon publishing the prize winning scores of the Manitoba and Quebec provincial rifle matches in the present issue, has made it necessary to add two pages this week to our usual eight. The record of all important rifle matches thus preserved in the columns of the MILITIA GAZETTE has been and must continue to be found exceedingly handy and of great value for reference in the future and affords as well for the present a means of making highly interesting comparisons between the methods of the several provincial associations, and the skill of their members respectively.

HAVING had the opportunity of personal attendance at the Quebec provincial matches, we are enabled to supplement the scores with some interesting details of the competition, and a very full report of the proceedings at the annual business meeting of the members. It was a pleasure to be present at the Point St. Charles ranges this year. Everything in connection with the running of the matches had been admirably planned, and very little cause for fault finding was to be found. The weather was bad, but nobody saddled the executive with the responsibility for that. Many, in fact, overlooked the weather altogether and blamed instead the Snider cartridges from the Quebec factory! emphasizing their complaints by the declaration that these couldn't be expected to be much better, anyhow, so long as boys and girls were employed to fill them as at present. That is the prevalent idea about the manufacture of the cartridges, and the belief is widespread that due care is not exercised.

THE executive of the P.Q.R.A. are mainly men who have had some actual personal experience in rifle shooting, and can intelligently set to work to meet the reasonable wishes of the competitors. One provision may be mentioned, by which they earned general gratitude. This was, equipping the register keepers with large blackboards, and stands upon which to place them, so that it was indeed possible for the competitor to watch his own score recorded. The range officer has to see that the scores marked on the boards tally with those on the tickets which he receives from the register keepers when each pair have finished firing. Another novelty was supplying the ammunition at the firing points. The system, upon this the first occasion we believe when it has been tried in Canada, was found to work well, and it relieved the competitors from the necessity of continually lugging round several packages of ammunition. The marking at the butts was all that could be desired. The

Bacon targets give unequalled facilities for rapid marking, and their use saves a lot of time in a large meeting.

MORE courteous and obliging range officers could not be found than those selected for the Montreal meeting. The good nature displayed and the desire they evinced to remove or explain away the fancied grievances brought to their notice by the competitors, largely contributed to the happiness of the meeting. Then the statistical officers kept their work well advanced, and got out the lists with commendable promptitude. The secretary appeared to be always in his office when wanted, but nevertheless found time to do a good share of the prize scoring.

IN connection with the matter of statistics, a seemingly unnecessary delay in the publication of the scores of one match—the military—caused a reference at the members' meeting. There are two similar matches fired at the D.R.A. prize gathering, and they are usually completed pretty late in the day, almost in the dark sometimes. But the results are always made up the same evening, and appear in all the papers on the following morning. In Montreal, notwithstanding the fact that the skirmishing and volley firing matches were concluded at a comparatively early hour on Tuesday afternoon, the results were unknown until after the firing had commenced on Wednesday, and no morning paper was able to obtain them. Even when published the returns were incomplete, the figures given being, not the actual number of points earned on the targets, but the total remaining to the credit of the teams after an unknown number had been deducted by the officer presiding over the match, for faults which not being pointed out to the competitors are just as likely to handicap them the next time also that they compete. Secrecy in such matters always makes trouble. Complete publication would satisfy all parties, provided there was no substantial grounds for dissatisfaction. As human nature is at present constituted, and seems likely to be for some time, a man will always have a lurking suspicion that he is being wronged so long as anything he desires to be told is kept from him.

ANOTHER matter brought up at the members' meeting was a difficulty about getting Martini rifles with which to practise. We do not wish to enter just now into the merits of the special situation there cited. But it does seem that a better use might be made of the large stock of Martini rifles in the country than to allow them to remain locked up in the government stores. Why should they not be served out, without unnecessary formalities, to corps whose members would make good use of them. It would be some encouragement to the young fellows—and the old fellows too for that matter—if when they do spend their hard earned money in the expensive pastime of rifle shooting they might be able to practise not only with the Snider, with which they are bound to make themselves familiar so long as its use is continued in the Dominion rifle matches, but also with the superior weapon with which the country has provided itself, but which is now lying unused in the custody of the government.