

DISTRICT OF BEDFORD RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

The fourth annual meeting of this Association was held at West Farnham county of Missisquoi, on the 12th March. There was a large attendance of officers and members, the three counties in the District were well represented, Major Gilmour President in the chair.

The Treasurer's report showed a small balance against the Association, but this will be more than covered by subscriptions not yet paid. The following were elected the office bearers for the ensuing year.

PATRON.—Hon. Judge Dunkin.

VICE PATRONS.—Lt.-Col. Hon. A. B. Foster, Senator; Lt.-Col. Chamberlin, O. M. G.; Hon. Thos. Wood, M. L. C.

PRESIDENT.—Lt.-Col. Miller, 52nd Batt.

VICE PRESIDENTS.—Lt.-Col. Rowe, Majors Gilmour and Fourdrinier; Captains Patteson, Bockus, Asa Westover, Hall, and P. Smith, Dr. Brigham, M. P. P., Geo. B. Baker Esq., M. P., Wm Donahue Esq.

SECRETARY-TREASURER.—Lt. Col. Fletcher.

COUNCIL.—The captains of companies belonging to the Association.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.—Lieut. Cols. Fletcher and Miller; Major Gilmour and Capt. Bockus.

It was unanimously resolved to hold the next annual match at Granby on the third Tuesday in June, if that time did not interfere with the annual drill in Camp.

A list of six matches with a total of eighty prizes was adopted. From the warm interest, and excellent spirit shown by the delegates at the meeting, it is expected the next matches will be very successful. The Border men—volunteers and home guards—are determined to keep up and improve their practice so that they may "watch well the front."

It was agreed to hold the next annual meeting at Sweetburg.

Votes of thanks were passed to the retiring President Major Gilmour and to the Secretary-Treasurer for their efficient services during the past year.

FROM MONTREAL.

[BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

A most extraordinary verdict has been given in the case of Col. Harwood, D. A. G., vs. Capt. David McNaughton, M. D., of Vaudreuil, for fraud in having embezzled \$318.50 a cheque for that amount having been given him in September last by Paymaster Brehaut, for the payment of his men. Capt. McNaughton had admitted his delinquency to Col. Harwood.

Judge Coursol having examined the law on the subject, inflicted the penalty the law allows,—a fine of \$20 and costs, amounting to \$25, or 40 days imprisonment. Who shall say in this case that the way of the transgressor is hard? An officer deliberately violates

trust, pockets \$318.50 the pay due to his men, the law fines him \$25, leaving a net gain to him of \$293.50 and the majesty of the law is appeased. If this be the law the sooner a change is made the better; we have had rather too many cases of similar nature lately, and such a verdict whether in accordance with law or not is one that will rather encourage than intimidate such criminals as Capt. McNaughton; imprisonment or Penitentiary without option of a fine, would have a salutary effect on such rascals, who bring discredit on the service, and create ill-feeling and discontent.

If the Militia Department does its duty, it will at once cancel Capt. McNaughton's commission and dismiss him from the service he has so disgraced.

A good deal of speculation is rife, as to whether we are to have a camp or not this year. I believe the general desire is to have one; at no time or nowhere can the men have the training required than at camp, and although these camps are expensive arrangements they are absolutely necessary if we are to sustain an efficient volunteer force. In regard to the proposed draft I learn that but a very few of some seventy colonels of battalions have replied in the affirmative to the query addressed to them by the Adjutant-General as to whether they could fill their ranks in the spring without resorting to a draft. The impression is that of the 40,000 men enrolled not more than half could be made available if required. However it is currently reported that a meeting of staff officers is called for at Ottawa next month, when this and other matters will be fully discussed.

The funeral of Major Edward St. George Smyth, superintendent of Military schools in Montreal, and formerly Captain in H. M. 30th Regiment, took place on Wednesday. It was largely attended both by civilians and members of the staff. B.

FRANCE AS A MILITARY POWER OF THE FUTURE.

The *Débats* notices a statement in the *Journal Officiel* to this effect:—"Yesterday we invited a loan of two millions, and five were offered. To-day we exhibit to Europe an army of 100,000 men full of valor, admirably commanded, who have just rescued civilization. France, unaccustomed to good fortune since the disasters accumulated through the faults of the Empire, begins to recognise and to be again conscious of herself." The *Débats* admits that the success of the loan is a cause for congratulation, and it concurs in the praises of the Army, but adds—"Let us be modest, as befits our position. Let us not recommence, either now or at any time, the foolish boasting which events have so signally denounced. We are returning to life, and our strength is returning, but it is not yet sufficiently great to be trumpeted abroad or 'exhibited to Europe.' When in his orders of the day issued from Versailles to reassure the provinces, and to give to these reorganised troops confidence in themselves, M. Thiers styled them 'one of the finest Armies France ever possessed,' the exaggeration was allowed to pass, and perhaps was necessary. But to-day we find the same expressions repeated in many

newspapers, and we ought to be upon our guard against the illusions which such exaggerations may produce. Let us say of those troops that they are the nucleus of a fine army, and we shall have spoken quietly but sufficiently. We are able from the present time to place 100,000 men under arms, but the discipline which this small number has recovered cannot supply the want of practical fitness among the cadres of the Army. A long sojourn in the camps of instruction will be needed before setting out upon the conquest of the world, if the era of conquests be not closed. What is really satisfactory is the bearing of those troops and the character of that review, so different from the parades which it pleased the Empire to exhibit to Europe on the plains of Longchamps or Satory, where the soldier, primed with a double ration of brandy, cried, 'Vive l'Empereur!' On the present occasion the troops defiled silent and gravely. Prætorian armies indulge in shouts; national armies preserve silence, and it is when the army utters no cry that we can exclaim 'Vive l'Armée' as then we know that it belongs only to the country. Let us hope, then, without becoming excited, without exaggeration, and, above all, without making any 'exhibition to Europe.' Glorious enthusiasm is unreasonable. The astonishing success of the loan also offers a temptation to our national pride. It is a review of our wealth, and it must be admitted a brilliant one. To have found this money in the midst of our ruins, to have inspired such confidence in our future at a time when our position seemed so precarious and our disasters so recent! Well let us resist that temptation to a legitimate pride. The millions offered are unprecedented; they testify to the extent and the solidity of our credit. But it must not be forgotten, alas; that those millions which we have so easily found are no longer ours. They are our hard ransom, and only a portion of that. We count them only to pay them away. A day will come—and what French heart does not beat quicker at the thought?—when we shall again become what we ought never to have ceased to be, and in which, "*la grande nation*" will perhaps become greater than it has ever been, but it will be only upon this condition—that it comprehends the greatness of its fall, the width of the gulf it has to cross, the qualities of reason and wisdom, and time that are necessary. Until then, let us juggle neither our spurs nor our money. If we are Frenchmen let us wear mourning."

Not remotely connected with this topic is the position of Italy and her relations with France, on which the *Soir*, has a long article on the 3rd instant which concludes thus:—"We close here an exposition between France and Italy for the last ten months. The conclusion which results is that we must neither quarrel with the Cabinet of Florence, nor count upon it, but watch it (*la surveiller*) Italy aspires to expansion. Can she do so without diminishing us? Evidently not, because she is an element always in progress of the Latin civilization of which we were formerly the sole representatives. Already she disputes with us the road to India by Brindisi, she seeks to establish herself in Tunis; she claims perhaps in accordance with Russia, a part in the protection of the Eastern Christians; in a word Italy seeks to inherit all that we may be unable to keep. That is not a reason for declaring a war, which is as much beyond our means as contrary to our interests; but it is a motive for showing ourselves attentive and vigilant over her diplomacy, and we heartily hope that the Government of the Republic will not fail in this duty of prudence and attention."