

the Central or Dominion Rifle Association, which is composed of the delegates from the Provincial Rifle Associations, and which holds its matches alternately in each province.

Second. To the provisional Rifle Association in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, which are composed of delegates from the county organizations in each province and which holds its match at the capital of each province annually.

Third. To the county and local Rifle Associations, which are composed of the residents of the locality in which it is situated, and which also holds annual matches.

The grant of \$5,000 is awarded to the non-commissioned officers and privates making the best scores at the course of rifle practice which they undergo at the brigade camps in each year. At these camps every man must fire forty rounds at 200, 400, and 600 yards, under competent instruction.

The system works as follows: A county or local Association, supported by local subscription, annual memberships, entrance fees to matches and a grant from Government and from the Provincial Association, selects from its best shots a team to represent it at the provincial match, which is supported in a like manner. The Provincial Association in like manner, selects from the best shots a team to represent it at the Dominion Rifle Association match, and from these again a team is selected to represent Canada at the National Rifle Association match at Wimbledon, Eng. Beside these association matches, a number of others open to all comers and to volunteers only, are held, and sufficient prizes offered to render the practice popular. The registered number of members of the Ontario Rifle Association is about 3,000, of the Dominion 8,000.

The leading officers are, of course, officers in the Militia, who have, however, to pass an examination before they can serve. Frequently they are in the regular service, and under pay; and this is generally the case with the secretary, whose duties take up much of his time. The markers as above stated are soldiers; so also are the caretakers, or range keepers.

VII. The aims of the Central Rifle Associations are briefly as follows:

1. To build up the local Rifle Associations.
2. To so arrange their prizes as to have numerous small prizes, so as to encourage beginners, and to discourage "pot-hunters."
3. To place all competitors on a equal footing at every match, and discourage all disputes.
4. To arrange for every detail beforehand so that the firing would proceed without delay.
5. To encourage practice with military rifles of the regulation pattern.

VIII. In addition to the money obtained from Government, all the funds required by the Association are obtained without trouble by sending a subscription paper among the merchants and business men. The Quebec prize list this year was 3,627 50' and that at Ontario about 3,000, the average prizes offered at each range being about \$200

IX. Your committee are able to collect some valuable information about the effect of rifle ranges upon the accuracy of aim of the English troops; and they purpose to publish as soon as possible some account of the marked improvement in shooting which the successive yearly matches have developed. This improvement has already compelled some changes in the size of bull's-eyes and centres; but it has outreached all such de-

vices, and the number of crack shots has become really embarrassing. A favorable breeze aiding the marksmen at one of the matches lately shot for at Wimbledon, there were no less than eight ties at 200 yards, all having the highest possible scores. Twenty tied with 14 marks, and 8 with 18 marks. There is no probability of such fine shooting at our ranges for years to come, but these facts indicate the positive value of these ranges, and they show us too that we cannot expect to retain all our open prizes. At first they will be taken by men who have had large experience; and no doubt our Ontario and Quebec friends, who practice twice a week, and are crack shots, will have the pleasure of exhibiting American prizes to their countrymen.

In conclusion your committee desire to express their sense of the great hospitality with which they were received, particularly by Col. Scoble, and by Messrs. Fletcher, Esdaile, Fairbanks and others; and as a number of these gentlemen intend being present at our match during the fall, it is hoped that an opportunity may be afforded by which some attention may be shown to them in return.

GEO. W. WINGATE, }
J. A. CHURCH, } Committee.
New York, August 31, 1872.

ENGLISH RIFLE PRACTICE AND RANGES.

The following report from the committee appointed to examine the subject of rifle practice in England was then read:

NEW YORK, August 1, 1872.

Colonel Wm. C. Church, President, National Rifle Association.

COLONEL: Acting under instructions from your Association requesting me to examine into the workings of the National Rifle Association of England, and the method of competitive rifle shooting as exhibited at Wimbledon annually, together with all details as to targets, instruction, etc. connected with the subject, I have the honor to report that on arriving in London I placed myself in correspondence with our minister, General Schenck, who kindly detailed his Secretary, Colonel Moran to assist me in gathering information on this subject. Provided with letters of introduction to Lord Ducie, President, and Captain Mildmay, Secretary, and other prominent members of the National Rifle Association, I called on these gentlemen and was courteously and kindly received, but under all the politeness and hospitality experienced at their hands, I found that a certain reticence in giving me positive information everywhere prevailed, which I ascribe to the universal excitement regarding the Alabama claims, which unfortunately pervaded the entire English people. Under these circumstances I determined to act independently in the matter, and can conscientiously say that I am under no obligation to a single member of the National Rifle Association of England, for any facts or information I may have gathered. The method of instruction at the different rifle ranges throughout Great Britain, is laid down in the regulation Book of Tactics, and as your association is provided with these and other books issued by the English Government, I need not go into this part of the subject. I visited the ranges in Birmingham, Manchester, Bradford, Huddersfield, and London, and found that the proficiency in accurate shooting was surprising. Every large town had its one or more volunteer regiments, and every regiment has its own range, where practice with the rifle goes on from April to November. The men seem to take that pleasure

in using the rifle that our young men do in games of ball, boating, and other athletic sports. The clerk or mechanic, with a few hours leisure on an afternoon, naturally shoulders his musket and goes to his regimental range, and takes real delight in shooting at the targets. A Government ordnance sergeant is detailed at each range, who always has for sale cartridges at a nominal price, and for a small sum markers and scorers are employed to register the shooting of each man. Then the Governor requires each volunteer to shoot, each spring and autumn, sixty rounds of ammunition. This practice is divided into three series of twenty rounds each, or five rounds to each distance, commencing at 100 yards and ending at 1,000. A correct record is kept in books for that purpose by the orderly sergeant, and certified to by that officer. Prizes from twenty-five to five dollars, together with certain military exemptions, is the reward of averages over forty. From these superior marksmen a certain number are selected to represent the different corps at Wimbledon, and as all the regiments are members of the National Rifle Association, they are entitled to enter at this annual competition. Under these circumstances it is no wonder that such wonderful scores are made; for missing a target, even at the regimental ranges is rather the exception than the rule, I need not enter into the apparent want of discipline and drill in the volunteer army of Great Britain, as my opinion is simply an individual one and does not affect the matter of rifle shooting, for on this latter point no one can help giving the palm of superiority to the English soldier, both regular and volunteer. The targets now universally used at all ranges and at Wimbledon are Richards, and I can safely recommend this target for the use of your Association. Circulars, prices, and all details I have placed in the hands of Captain Wingate. At Wimbledon during my short stay, I was the recipient of every attention, and I only regretted that my limited time did not admit of a more extended visit. The system here is simply that of the smaller ranges carried on a grand scale. The prizes are large and numerous and the competition extends during two weeks, ending in a grand review and distribution of prizes won. Each prize is shot for in three stages, any number of competitors being admitted on payment of a small sum. Each stage is divided into certain distances, and an established average is requisite to advance from one stage to another; those remaining at the end of the last, have to shoot a series comprising all the distances contained in the three ranges. This I believe is a general rule and contains the entire system for trials of skill in rifle shooting. There are also pool targets, where any may enter upon payment of ten shillings; this forms a pool which goes to the winner. Scoring books, plans of the camp, and reports of the Association, I have placed in possession of Captain Wingate. The English Government has recognized the National Rifle Association as a National organization and has fostered it with a care that shows its great importance. It is supported by fees and contributions from members among whom are found most of the nobility, and the aggregate amount of prizes annually contributed by the English people, from the Queen down to the wealthy Commoner, is simply enormous, and under these circumstances we are not surprised to see over three thousand volunteers meet at Wimbledon to test their skill and win their rewards. I feel that we have too long neglected this most important subject of rifle practice,