

THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

The return of "C" School.
The ammunition commission.
Instruction of mounted officers in equitation.
Horse furnishings for field officers.
Meeting of the D.R.A. Council.
The GAZETTE's sphere of usefulness increasing.
Proposed changes in tactics.
Old historical documents.
Col. Worsley's promotion.
This week's general orders.

SELECTED.

Reflections on Tactics, Col. Knollys, R.A.
The Winnipeg Infantry School.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Skirmishing matches.

REGIMENTAL NOTES.

THE TARGET.

King's County R.A. meeting.
85th Batt. annual open match.
60th Batt. and Missisquoi R.A. meeting.
Prescott R.A. annual prize meeting.
Victoria Rifle Club annual matches.
13th Batt. R.A. meeting.
Ottawa Rifle Club competition.

CLEANINGS.

EXTRACTS FROM MILITIA GENERAL ORDERS.

COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

The enthusiasm of the reception tendered to the Infantry School Corps on their return to Toronto last week furnishes another evidence of the depth to which the country has been stirred by the North-west insurrection, and of the reality of the appreciation since accorded to the militia force as a whole. Undoubtedly Col. Otter and his command deserve all the attention they received, for if hard work and fine discipline are worthy of admiration they have never been shown more effectively than by "C" company since they left Toronto last March. We are pleased to see them back at their regular work, and pleased that the force will permanently reap the advantage of their large and varied experience.

The commission appointed by the Militia Department to enquire into the manufacture of Snider ball ammunition at Quebec met in that city on the 22nd October and continued their investigations until the 27th. The board was to have been under the presidency of Lieut.-Col. Gibson, of Hamilton, but he was, unfortunately, prevented from attending, and Capt. Perley, H.Q.S., acted in his stead. The remaining members of the commission were Dr. Bayne, professor of chemistry, &c., at the R.M.C., Capt. Adam, 13th Batt., Capt. Hood, Royal Scots, and Capt. Würtele, 8th Royal Rifles. They made an examination of the manufacture of the shells, bullets and caps, and of the filling of cartridges, and tested them with the chronograph, by firing from fixed

rests, and also from the shoulder at the Levis range. The investigations are yet far from complete, but we feel sure from what has already been done, as well as from the composition of the commission, that they will reach the root of all the complaints that have been made against the quality of the home-made ammunition.

Should not some provision be made for the instruction of mounted officers of infantry corps in riding; or, to put the question more strongly, should they not all be compelled to qualify in equitation? We do not wish to insinuate that the whole of our mounted officers are bad riders, or even that the numerous accidents that have befallen this portion of the force are mainly due to their awkwardness, but nevertheless it must be patent to all observers that some of them look and feel anything but at home in the saddle, and on active service their usefulness would, to a great extent, be proportional to their skill as riders. Now that we have a cavalry school at Quebec and a school of mounted infantry at Winnipeg, it would seem an easy matter for the Militia Department to perfect arrangements to give, to at least the five mounted officers of each battalion, a course of riding lessons—not a regular cavalry course, but a short course specially adapted to their needs, and sufficient, at least, to teach them how to make a creditable appearance on parade.

Akin to this is the question of proper furnishings for officers' horses. The regulations are plain enough on the subject, but the regulations are not carried out, and we see in brigade camps as many varieties of bits, bridles, saddles and girths, as in years gone by we used to see of swords. Some of our correspondents have maintained very strongly that a man should not take a commission in the militia unless he was in a position to provide himself with proper uniform, and if this holds good for subalterns respecting their personal outfit it should have much more force with regard to the whole of a field officer's equipment, and it is our opinion that none should be gazetted unless it were certain that he would undertake the expense of so providing himself.

A meeting of the council of the Dominion Rifle Association has been called for the eleventh instant to consider the advisability of immediately issuing Martini-Henry rifles for practice to the members of next year's Wimbledon team, as well as for other business. It may be as well to explain that there is no difference of opinion as to the desirability of issuing rifles to the new Wimbledon team at as early a date as possible, but in consequence of the action affecting a period beyond the term of office of the present executive, it has been deemed preferable to submit the question to the whole council.

The following, from a new subscriber in the Maritime Provinces, is but a sample of the letters we are frequently receiving:—"I am much pleased with the *Gazette*, and hope in a few days to send you the amount due from my quota of subscribers. Publishing all the scores from all places as you do enables us to see each other's work, and I hope to see several changes introduced at our own provincial meeting next