

RAMBLING OBSERVATIONS ON ARTILLERY.

It appears that since the book of regulations for the manœuvre of the Field Batteries was printed, quite another system has been put in practice at Woolwich, and still another has been proposed.

It must be premised that the Field Batteries of the Imperial Army are now all armed with nine-pounder guns, and the usual twenty-four pound howitzers, of Millar's construction.—Field Batteries are usually supposed to be attached to Infantry, and not to move faster than they do; while Horse Artillery, whose gunners are mounted on horseback, and have no attendant waggons, is the auxiliary to Cavalry and accompanies its rapid movements.

But Field Batteries latterly have attained a rate of speed in manœuvre, that is very nearly equal to that of the Horse Artillery. This fact is said to have excited the jealousy of the Horse Artillery. It has been for some years a standing subject of "grumble," that the Horse Artillery have received far more than a due share of regard, at the hands of the authorities, to the prejudice of the Field Batteries; that they are the most costly arm of the service, and that their speed does not make up for the less weighty calibre of their guns.

Here for a digression. Some few days ago a contemporary paper used the term, "weighty calibre," for which it was taken to task by another. Perhaps strictly speaking the phrase is not a correct one; but the term is always used in Artillery. We rarely see the words "large calibre," but we constantly see the expression "heavy calibre," or "weighty calibre." It is found in all our works on the subject, and why so used, it is easy to account for.

But to our muttons. The alteration in the system of the manœuvres of the Field Batteries is this, that everything is now done at a "walk," the gun detachments marching on their foot with their guns. It is said that the only exception is that when a battery "trots" past a Reviewing Officer, the detachments receive the word to "mount." The swords of the gunners are all still strapped in the proper places on the carriages, not attached to the men's belts, and the drivers have been deprived of theirs altogether, when mounted, wearing only the sword belt. It strikes us that this is a very slow coach system, and in fact a retrogression in utility. It is true that if occasion comes, such as a necessity for a rapid augmentation of the batteries at a particular point of the line of battle, the gunners can be mounted, but why not practice continually in peace, that which is certain to be required in war?

But we have heard that a still slower mode of manœuvre is being tried at Woolwich. This, in fact, is, the removal of the waggons altogether, from the batteries to which they belong, in order to brigade them in the rear, somewhere or other out of reach of gun-shot. A plan, perhaps, economical of the lives of men, horses, and of the cost of material. Under this plan the gunners could never mount, and so, whatever the necessity, the battery could never go faster than at a "walk." In this system it is supposed that a field battery will go into action with no more than the ammunition contained in the limber boxes, and that the waggons will be brought up, one by one, as the limber am-

munition is exhausted, to refill the emptied boxes. In our humble opinion a most slow and unsatisfactory process. There are several other little inconveniences which will strike any Artilleryman as the result of such a system as this. At present, a gun and its waggon is all but a perfect machine, supplied with every thing. If a gun-carriage wheel is destroyed, it can be replaced by one from the waggon; for it is a rule that everything must be sacrificed to save the gun. The same with the horses. Part of the apparatus is carried with the waggon; that must all be transferred to the limbers, for everything must be at hand. The whole method of packing the boxes must be changed, for if one waggon only comes up at a time that waggon must contain the proportions of the various kinds of ammunition that each gun requires.—In the hurry and confusion of battle, particularly if the necessity for retreat should arise, the guns might be separated from their waggons, when all the gun detachment, except numbers one and six, would be separated from their great-coats, blankets, mess-tins and knapsacks, to say nothing of tents, picket-ropes, posts, &c.—the officer's baggage and forage, the forge-cart and spare stores.

All these extraordinary alterations in a system which has stood the test of fifty years trial are said to be due to Crimean experiences. We have not yet heard that any continental power has abandoned the system of mounting the gun detachments on the carriages.

We will venture to say this, that under the present system, the Volunteer Artillery of Canada have acquired as fair a state of efficiency as any man could reasonably expect; that to alter the system would dishearten the Volunteers, who do not like to march with their guns on foot, though no men would be readier to trudge through mud or dust, if the roads were bad, and the horses getting tired, and we trust that we shall be allowed to do as we do now. And we will venture to say another thing, that if the Adjutant General issues an order to-morrow, to enrol the requisite number of horses and men, to convert one of our six-pounder batteries into horse artillery, that the thing can be done, and that in a month our hardy and active fellows will do that piece of work in a creditable way. We have an objection to any thing slow, and trust that we may go on as we have begun.

OWING TO SOME UNACCOUNTABLE omission on our part, we entirely omitted to state in the first two numbers of our paper, what was the price of our annual subscription. It is two DOLLARS, strictly payable in advance. We had determined not to send this, the third number, to any officer who did not transmit the money, but have determined to send the third, owing to our own omission, in order that time may be given. We may mention, by the way, that there is no paper published in this Province, which, in proportion to its size, gives anything like the amount of reading matter, that is to be found in the columns of the "Canada Military Gazette." As stated elsewhere, in our next, we shall commence the publication of Captain Moore's directions for the improved Infantry sword exercise, with some observations of our own thereon, and immediately afterwards shall proceed with the "Musketry instruction"—the "Duties of outposts"—and some practical remarks on "Artillery," to be found in no published work.

We have heard with great regret that one of the most active, intelligent, and experienced officers of the Active force is about to resign his commission. His reason is that he cannot stand the expense and the loss of time, the latter being the worst of the two evils. It must be explained that although the law awards ten days pay to the Cavalry and Rifles, and twenty days to the Artillery, yet that these corps are continually drilled. The officers and men know well that nothing, literally nothing, can be done in ten days. The Captain of a Company, actuated by the highly laudable feeling which is called *esprit-du-corps*, is supported by the same feeling among his men; had this feeling not existed, no corps would have been raised, nor would they have advanced towards a state of efficiency as they have done. It is very much to be feared that other Captains will be compelled to follow suit, with the gallant officer to whom we allude.

A sufficient sum of money ought to be voted by Parliament to relieve the Captains of Companies from many expenses to which they are unavoidably put, and it is to be hoped that the Government will see the justice of the proposition. We state no definite sum, for that is a difficult matter, and many Captains whose private means are large do not perhaps require any aid, but as a rule the Captains of the Active force are not rich, and cannot afford both time and money. We know by experience that the Captain of a Field Battery who does his duty, occupies two full days of every week in attention to his corps. The trouble attending the command of a corps, cannot be understood except by those who have "gone through the mill." We say that the men who came forward when their services were required, ought not to lose by it, and that, when a trifling sum would cover everything that can be justly desired.

THE SECOND LECTURE to the Ottawa Field Battery was delivered on last Monday week by LIEUT. A. FORRESTER, the subject being a series of preliminary explanations of certain elementary principles in natural philosophy, such as gravitation, the resistance of the atmosphere, &c.—The Lieutenant, then, by the aid of diagrams, explained what is meant by the "parabola," or the trajectory curve of shot through the air, and also defined what is meant by angles, diameters, tangents, and the various mathematical terms used in gunnery. As the lecture was of so very elementary a character generally, it is hardly necessary to publish it, though the Lieutenant has promised us, for next week a separate paper on the "Parabolic Theory." The lecturer actually delivered one of the best lectures we ever heard on such a subject, and this is a difficult thing to do because it is ever hard work to put things in the simplest possible language.

The next lecture will be given on Thursday evening, at the gun sheds, by *Sergeant-Major Forsythe*, the subject being the "PRACTICAL USE OF PROJECTILES." The lecture will be illustrated by the production of the various missiles used by a Field Battery, and the instruments required in the process of firing shells and spherical case shot. The lecture will begin at half past seven o'clock.

QUEBEC.—We understand that the Quebec Volunteer Cavalry are building a riding school. This is a move absolutely in the right direction; no cavalry can be made efficient without it.