

Correspondence.

[This paper does not necessarily share the views expressed in correspondence published in its columns, the use of which is freely granted to writers on topics of interest to the militia.]

THE SCORING AT ARTILLERY COMPETITIONS.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette:

SIR,—In your last issue I notice that Lieut.-Col. Irwin says (referring to the artillery competition at Orleans Island) that "the general results of the meeting were extremely satisfactory, the scores made were generally very good," etc.

As an officer who commanded a detachment at that competition I beg leave to remark that the of *system* scoring was not entirely satisfactory—no blame to the officers who kept the scores. I have reason to believe that this subject is already engaging the attention of the inspecting officers. We must always learn something. Now I object to the present system of scoring on the following grounds:—

a. The value of the shot is not at once signalled to the battery, but is calculated in the evening by comparing the score for direction with that for elevation and fuze.

b. The keeping of two registers, one at the gun for direction and the other at the target for elevation, gives one a feeling of uncertainty as to whether you are getting the whole of your score or only part of it and part of another man's.

c. Six points extra for a direct hit is too much.

How often does it happen that when fixing up a target one or two shot holes are discovered that have not been marked on the register? Or suppose a shot carries away one corner of the target, it counts 12 points. Another shot comes exactly in the same direction, but it only counts 6 points, because there is nothing to strike.

Everyone knows how disheartening it is to a competitor to have the slightest suspicion that the scoring is not correct, and I trust that some changes will be made in the present system of scoring.

ARTILLERYMAN.

COMPLIMENTS ON THE MARCH.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette:

SIR,—My friend "Linch-pin" runs away from the question in dispute, which arose over the statement that a company under arms, on the march, and under the command of an officer of the permanent corps, neglected to "shoulder arms" on meeting the brigade-major of the district, he being in uniform. I maintain there was no neglect of duty, and "Linch-pin" has failed to give a rule, precedent, or paragraph from R. & O., "Otter's Guide," or "Queen's Regulations." I may be wrong in my reading, but am willing to learn like other recruits, and must have something more than has yet been shown to cause me to depart from my original contention.

MILISH.

THE CANADIAN ARTILLERY AND LIEUTENANT SMITH.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette:

SIR,—Permit me to take exception to the opinion expressed in the GAZETTE in answer to the query of "X Pounder," as to whether an artillery officer of the active militia force has the "right" to use the words "Canadian artillery" after his name on a visiting card.

I should think that as a question of "right" the matter would be decided by the fact of whether one "is" or "is not," an officer of the "Canadian Artillery, not by the possibility of a misconception of the term.

If one is an officer of the Canadian artillery surely his "right" to designate himself as such cannot properly be contested, and, inasmuch as the officers of the Regiment of Canadian Artillery have no special precedence over the other officers of the Canadian Artillery, I cannot see any just reason why they should enjoy a monopoly of a designation that is the pride of the service, more particularly as they have the specific designation of "Regiment of Canadian Artillery." It has never, so far as I have been aware, been the custom for officers of artillery to mark the name of their corps or regiment on their visiting cards. In the Imperial service, while officers of the cavalry and infantry state the number or name of the regiment they belong to, all officers of artillery use simply the words "Royal Artillery."

I am under the impression that your reply as to "Lieutenant Smith" or "Mr. Smith" is also in part open to criticism. While it is proper to address strictly official communications "Lieutenant A. E. Smith" other communications in writing should be addressed "A. E. Smith, Esq., Lieut., — Battalion."

BILL-HOOK.

Ottawa, 6th March, 1888.

Gleanings.

An effort will be made at the next session of the North Carolina Legislature to abolish the present law giving pensions to Confederate soldiers and devote the amount so appropriated to the building of a soldiers' home. As the law now exists the amount for each pensioner is so small that but very little benefit is derived from it.

With the hostile forces of Abyssinia and Italy drawing closer, the Red Sea for the moment attracts much of the public attention that had been centred on the Black. Italy's concession to Spain of a fifteen years' right to a coaling station on Assab Bay indicates her purpose permanently to occupy that region. The bay is capacious, having a width of about five miles and a length thrice its width, so that there will be room enough for such Spanish vessels as may find their way there, even with all the rights of occupation reserved by Italy.

Experiments with the view of the rapid entraining of troops at night time have been recently made at Konenbourg, in Austria. The light is created by electricity. The trials were satisfactory, and are to be repeated shortly at Vienna, with troop trains comprising sections of 300 vans for despatch at the same summons.

A French paper gives assurance that the sabre bayonet of the Lebel rifle is a real gem: "Quadrangular, pointed, of strong and flexible steel, it has all the appearance of a short fighting sword. The hilt is nickel. Our little *chasseurs* are quite proud to wear it. They look as if they thought that a good deal of business could be done with such a fork (*fourchette*), and they are right."

The 198,000 English soldiers with their colours cost as much as the 428,000 regular troops in Germany, the round figures for both countries being \$94,200,000 a year. Huge as the German army is it has less officers above the rank of captain than the English army, and this, with the smaller pay, cheaper clothing, and rigid economy in all departments, helps to make up the difference in the cost of the soldiers of the two nations.

"Portable railways of a new type will assuredly be among the leading features of the next great war," says the *St. James' Gazette*. "The latest invention in this line is the idea of an Austrian engineer, Herr Leinwather. His rails are said to be the best of the kind ever made, being especially good over uneven ground. The Austrian war office has ordered a small supply, and will make a trial of the railway at once. Germany has also asked Herr Leinwather for samples both of his rails and wagons."

"John S. Narg," a marine, writes to the New York *Herald* in regard to the recent article in that paper as to the "waifs and strays" who recruit the army, and says: "Men who make soldiering a profession have made up their minds that all that is required of them is implicit obedience; so when a recruit thinks an officer is acting like a Russian Czar, the old soldier thinks he is doing exactly that which he ought to do. Then, again, there are always at every barracks a lot of soreheads (generally deserters from the English army), who are always finding fault with everything and saying from month to month, 'I'll skin out next pay-day,' but they hardly ever go until fired out by the sentence of a court martial."

In the days of Brown Bess, no less an authority on musketry fire than the Iron Duke was asked his opinion upon a change of calibre in the fire-arm of the time, and bluntly answered that no bullet was worth having that would not take a charge hard and heavy enough to break a horse's leg. The guides on the field of Waterloo, at the present day, profess their ability to distinguish between the British and French or foreign bullets yet found in the soil. The first mentioned missiles are about one-third larger and heavier than the other specimens, and the volleys from the British squares certainly told with more sure and unerring effect upon the mail-clad cuirassiers of Napoleon, than the smaller leaden spheres projected by the Martini-Henry did upon the naked bodies of the Soudanese warriors of Osman Digna in Egypt.

"The bloated armaments of the great military powers of Europe" display their proportions in a very striking manner in Col. Vogt's work on "The European Armies of the Present." The mobilized strength of France is set down at 2,051,458 troops, exclusive of the territorial army, which is equally large; that of Russia at 1,922,405; Germany 1,493,690 and Austria-Hungary 1,035,955. The military strength of Italy has now attained proportions that would have been deemed incredible ten years ago. Including militia it is alleged to amount to 2,387,332 men. Compared with these figures the numerical proportions of the British Army ought almost to satisfy the members of the Peace Society. Including our militia and volunteers, as well as the Indian army, we can just muster 781,677 troops.—*London Court Journal*.

The March number of *Woman* more than fulfils the promise of that excellent magazine's earlier issues. In literary quality *Woman* stands second to no periodical of the day, and in its illustrated features, as well as its mechanical construction, it has already asserted a footing for itself in close companionship with the best of the older magazines. The number is embellished with a frontispiece of Gleeson, representing the famous stairway of rock on the island of Capri, which in turn is embellished with an exquisitely touching tale by Beatrice Presswood King, relating a romance of that spot, famous in Italian love story since the days of the Caesars. Thomas Stevens who travelled round the globe on a bicycle, gives an entertaining account of the manner in which women in Afghanistan are kept so absolutely in the background as to justify the traveller in bestowing upon that region the name of "The Womanless Land." The principal article is a thrilling recital of some of the horrors of polygamy, written by Kate Field, whose investigations of Mormonism have shed so much light upon the iniquities of that institution. An article of special interest on account of the pending dispute between the United States and Canada is contributed by Fred. Schwatka, the daring Arctic explorer who describes in lively style the Alaska seal fisheries.

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