

THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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MILITIA GENERAL ORDERS.
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Topics of the Week.

The prize list of the Dominion Artillery Association for 1890, just issued, makes the usual admirable provision for the encouragement of the various branches of artillery work. The cash prizes amount to upwards of a thousand dollars, in addition to which there are a number of badges and valuable challenge trophies. An increase has been made in the prize money set apart for the shifting ordnance competitions, and for short course efficiency by non-commissioned officers or gunners attached to the artillery schools. The Ontario Association prize list is also issued, and this offers \$342 in cash besides cups valued at \$700.

The promoters of the Dominion Messenger Pigeon Association should feel encouraged by the announcement made that the Government are taking steps to establish a pigeon service on the Atlantic coast. Mariners have always looked upon Sable Island as one of the most dangerous points of the coast, and many of the most serious shipwrecks have occurred in the vicinity of the island. One of the principal disadvantages under which seamen shipwrecked at this place labour is that they have no means of communicating with the mainland except by steamer or sailing vessel, and it has frequently been the case that they have been stranded on the island for weeks without being able to inform the world or any part of it of their condition. To remedy this carrier pigeons from Belgium, trained especially for such service, are being imported. Some of the pigeons, after having become accustomed to their quarters in Halifax, will be taken to Sable Island, and when a disaster occurs there a pigeon will be set at liberty with a message attached to it.

The Marquis of Lorne was very complimentary, and properly so, to our Royal Military College in his article in the Canadian Militia recently contributed to *Colburn's*. He thus writes of the results of the thorough training given at that institution: "The general testimony of the Imperial army has been that the graduates have done the highest honour to themselves and to the College in every case where they have joined the British active army. Four commissions each year are placed at the disposal of the graduates, and the names of Stairs, who lately accompanied Mr. Stanley across Africa, and of Mackay would alone be

enough to show the type of men whom Kingston sends to the English army. But there are many others who have joined and who, whether in active service or on ordinary regimental duty, have more than fulfilled the highest expectations."

As the time for the Dominion Rifle Association meeting is near at hand, intending competitors would do well to make themselves acquainted with the new efficiency clause, which reads thus:—

"Any n.c.o. or man who has performed the last annual drill of his corps, or in cases where no such drill has been ordered within twelve months previous to the meeting of the D. R. A. at which he may be present, been a duly enrolled member of his corps for that period, shall be held to be an efficient member of the militia and entitled to compete at the D. R. A. matches."

Nothing about officers, it will be observed. No duty is required of them to qualify for participation in the matches, and it does not matter if they have held provisional appointments for a generation, without an attempt to qualify; they have the freedom of the range. We have heard that this subject is to be brought up at the competitors' meeting this year. If so, it should be by the qualified officers; objection would come with better grace from them than from the rank and file. But if no one else will move to remedy the injustice, by all means let the Privates be heard.

By inadvertence we stated last week that the Cape of Good Hope had not hitherto been represented at the prize meetings of the N. R. A. This was wrong, for Canadians have good reason to remember the Cape team that only two or three years ago came within a few points of wresting from Canada the Colonial prize in the Kolapore cup competition. The South African colony is not usually represented, but judging by past experience the riflemen from that region are apt to make themselves noticeable when they do attend.

General Middleton's Resignation.

Lieut.-General Sir Fred. D. Middleton on Saturday last tendered his resignation of the command of the Canadian Militia, to take effect on the 1st inst., and the Dominion has now lost the services of the most useful officer who has held that post. His resignation is an outcome of the action of Parliament in the Bremner fur business. Having admitted that he unwittingly exceeded his authority in ordering the confiscation of the rebel-suspect's property, General Middleton could no doubt have borne with the criticism contained in the formal resolution of the Parliament which a few years previously had accorded him a special vote of thanks for the "distinguished skill and ability" with which he had conducted the operations in the North-West. But that criticism was supplemented by violent and unwarranted abuse by members of Parliament whose arguments misled a large portion of the public who had all too soon forgotten the sympathy these same men had expressed for the arch-rebel Riel and his fellow-conspirators; and ever since the close of Parliament a stream of misrepresentation of the General's action has flowed through the press of the country. Those acquainted with the facts, and in a position to exercise a favourable influence on his