

News of the Service.

NOTE.—Our readers are respectfully requested to contribute to this department all items of Military News affecting their own corps, districts or friends, coming under their notice. Without we are assisted in this way we cannot make this department as complete as we would desire. Remember that all the doings of every corps are of general interest throughout the entire militia force. You can mail a large package of manuscript, so long as not enclosed in an envelope, for one cent. At any rate, forward copies of your local papers with all references to your corps and your comrades. Address,

EDITOR, CANADIAN MILITARY GAZETTE

P.O. Box, 387, Montreal, Que.

OUR SERVICE CONTEMPORARIES.

A French naval officer has been at the compiling statistics as to the number of English homing pigeons which have been set free from the French Channel ports during the last three years. The number set up is, it appears, so fabulously large that even a French editor hesitates to publish the total, not, we presume, so much for fear of not being believed, as from a somewhat hypercritical desire not to publish statistics which cannot readily be verified. Such reticence, although somewhat exasperating to the idle and usually only too gullible general reader, is nevertheless of inestimable value to the hard-work specialist, who thus can get at facts without the tedious necessity for verifying them. As the figures quoted in this case are absolutely recent, there can be, as our contemporary says, no difficulty whatever in ascertaining their accuracy. Well, then, it appears that on June 21, 22 and 23 of this present year, over four thousand English birds were sent up from Cherbourg alone; to be precise, the exact number was four thousand and forty! The same officer who gives us such satisfactory assurance of the wide-awakenedness of the most recent development of our naval Intelligence Department, gives an equally flattering account of the zeal and intelligence of our naval officers, for it appears that all, or nearly all, the officers belonging to our Channel Squadron are familiar with every minute convolution of the capes and bays on the Normandy coast, and that our torpedo-boats are constantly to be met with in French waters. Moreover, a number of English officers are in the habit of ascending as far up the estuaries of the French rivers as it is possible for them to go in yachts or pleasure boats, and are thus enabled to obtain by personal investigation accurate details of the configuration of the coast.—United Service Gazette.

The officers of the H.M.S. "Warspite," who were in command while on the Pacific Station, have erected in Portsmouth Dockyard Chapel a memorial in brass to the memory of the four midshipmen, R. Caldwell, the Hon. A. de Montmorency, P. Brown and D. Johnstone, who were drowned at Esquimalt, July 17th, 1891.

The Admiralty have selected Commander George E. Richards, late of the surveying ship "Triton," for the command

of the composite gun vessel "Rambler" 3,835 tons, 650-horse power, which has been placed under orders to commission for service on both the American and West Indies Stations.

There floated over the hamlet of Villeneuve-la-Garnne, France, recently, in mid-air, a balloon. Suddenly it appeared to burst, and fell rapidly towards the earth. Fearing that a disaster had occurred, the terrified folk ran to the spot at which they expected the aerostat would reach the ground, when, to their amazement, they saw a parachute detach itself from the car and descend gently. Immediately the earth was touched, one of the passengers jumped upon a small bicycle, which he had brought with him from the aerial regions, and he disappeared in the direction of Levallois, in the neighborhood of Paris, as rapidly as the machine could carry him. The explanation of this singular occurrence is simple. The balloon was the Caliban, and the ascent was made from Levallois by Capt. Capazza and M. Hervieu, the latter being the cyclist. Their object was to test the possibility of a balloon being used for carrying war despatches, and they assumed that an enemy succeeded in destroying it. Yet they proved that by means of the parachute they would be able to make good their escape, and to cut-distance with their pursuers with the aid of the portable bicycle.

It is stated that, acting on the recommendation of the committee which recently sat in reference to harbour defence, the Admiralty have decided to construct a boom to stretch across the Rived Medway, for service if required. The shore anchorage of the boom will be near Port Victoria and Stangate Creek, and will cost about £3,000 each to construct. Four obsolete gunboats, and an enormous quantity of timber, will be utilized in the construction of the boom.

The following comment, which will no doubt be duly noted by those whom it concerns, was made by the Duke of Connaught in reference to the weakness of the companies of some of the battalions of Volunteers that took part in the field day with the Regular Forces at Aldershot on Friday, the 10th inst.:—"The handling of the Volunteers showed an improvement on that of the previous day's operations. Sections were kept well together; a point of great importance in enabling the correct direction to be maintained. The companies of many of the battalions were extremely weak. In order to render instruction effective, companies should consist of at least twenty-five fives."

Capt. Kyngdon, N.S.W. Artillery Regiment, has been appointed A.D.C. to the Major-General Commanding in New South Wales, vice Lieut. Jenkins, whose period of employment as such has expired.

Lieut.-Col. F. R. de Wolski, R.E., C. M.G., who was the last commanding Engineer in New South Wales, has been transferred from Shoeburyness to Mauritius.

The most recent returns of the British Volunteer Force, taken in connection with the Home Defence Mobilisation Scheme, show that the whole number of Infantry Volunteers allotted to posts in the Northern and Southern Lines for the defence of London is 114,051, with 79 position batteries, of whom 37,575 infantry and 26 batteries belong to the Northern Line, and 76,476 infantry and 56 batteries (each of four guns) to the Southern Line. Besides these there are 8,478 infantry and six brigades of garrison artillery allotted to the Thames defences. The strongest post is Caterham, in the Southern Line, to which 28,128 infantry of the North, South, and West London, Surrey, and Cheshire and Lancashire Brigades, and 21 batteries from Northumberland, Durham, Norfolk, Sussex, the Cinque Ports, Lancashire, and Cheshire are allotted; and in the same line Guildford has 8,918 infantry of the Home and Western Counties Brigades, and eight batteries from Yorkshire and Scotland.

On the occasion of the centenary of Lord Howe's naval victory on June 1, 1794, off Ushant, when six French ships were captured and one sunk, the 1st Batn. of the "Queen's," now stationed at Malta, were much gratified at receiving the following telegram from the Howe, then at Venice—"Bearing Lord Howe's name, may we congratulate the gallant 'Queen's' on centenary of his glorious victory." When the Mediterranean Fleet was in Malta Harbour a short time ago the officers of the Howe were greatly interested in an engraving hanging in the officer's mess of the "Queen's. The scene is laid on the quarterdeck of the Queen Charlotte, which was the flagship of Admiral Lord Howe, when he gained the battle known as the "The Glorious First of June." In the picture Lieut. John Neville of the "Queen's," is shown mortally wounded, supported in the arms of two other officers of the regiment, Capt. Isaacs and Ensign James Tudor. Lord Howe is a sympathising onlooker. The tradition is that King George III, was so pleased with the gallant bearing of the "Queen's" in this battle that he ordered a painting of the above-mentioned episode, and presented an engraving from it to each officer of the regiment serving on board the Queen Charlotte. The late Col. Burnaby, M.P. for Leicestershire, some years ago asked a question in the House of Commons as to what had become of the original painting, which used to be in Greenwich Hospital, but he received no satisfactory reply. The engraving now in the "Queen's" mess was presented by a former officer of the regiment, Major Mackie. Should the Howe return to Malta before the departure of the regiment for India, Lieut.-Col. Broderick and the officers hope to have the opportunity of inviting the officers