

The nineteenth annual meeting of the Grand Trunk Rifle Association was held on Saturday evening 15th inst. at the G. T. R. reading rooms on Sebastopol street. After the secretary's and treasurer's reports had been read and adopted, it was decided that the Association would enter a team in the League matches this year. The question of the advisability of the P. Q. R. A. matches being held in June instead of in August then came up and the feeling was unanimous in favour of June. It was decided to hold the annual matches on August 19th, and that the open match should be shot with the Martini-Henri rifle.

The election of officers for the ensuing year then took place and resulted as follows:—Honorary president, F. L. Wanklyn, Grand Trunk works manager; president, James Anthony; vice-president, Joseph Walton; secretary, Joseph Ward; treasurer, G. Lavers; committee, L. Jehu, W. Collinson, A. Reid, J. Armstrong, D. Turnbull, junr.; trustees, J. Farrer, J. Pitt and J. Laing; auditors, J. W. Marks and J. McDonald. Before the meeting adjourned a unanimous vote of thanks was tendered to the many friends of the Association who had so generously contributed towards their funds.

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At the parade of the Montreal Garrison Artillery on 21st April, Sergt. Drysdale, who shot so well at the D. R. A. matches last year—winning the Governor-Generals prize and a high place on this year's Bisley team—was presented with a new Martini-Henri rifle, Webley make, and also a very handsome and valuable gold watch. The rifle was the gift of Lieut.-Col. Cole, the popular commander of the corps; the watch was from some of Sergt. Drysdale's many friends. We trust that the Martini will win him many prizes at Bisley this summer.

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A lecture on "The organization of an army for war" was recently read by Capt. Lydon, Royal Scots, before a large attendance of members of that corps. It was taken chiefly from a paper on the same subject read by Major-General Harrison, R. E., at the Military Institute, Aldershot, and is an excellent epitome of the subject. Capt. Lydon prefaced his paper with a few observations applicable specially to the Canadian force, pointing out the necessity of having arrangements so systematized that an Army Corps could be formed here ready in every detail for immediate action in case of invasion or war. He urged the necessity of a thorough reorganization of the rural corps, alleging that the greater part of the money now spent in instruction at the District camps was wasted, and advocating a permanent Provincial camp ground and establishment where each corps in that Province could attend for at least one week, and that the rates of pay be materially raised as an equivalent to those attending for the loss of their usual income. In connection with the rural corps he mentioned a rather amusing instance that came under his own personal notice. He said:

"I was on the staff in camp a few years ago and amongst the officers in command of a company was one who ranked as a provisional lieutenant, and had been so for eighteen years; he was then 82 years of age. He told me that he was thinking of handing his company over to his son, who was a sergeant in the company, because, as he said, the allowance for care of arms and instruction, though small, came in very handy, and he would like to keep it in the family. I asked him how he kept the company stores. He said he used a spare stall in his stable where he stored all the arms, etc., etc., and occasionally, in the winter, he went over the rifles to clean them. I asked him what oil he used. He said when he came into camp he always took a bottle of oil back from the allowance issued in camp, but when the oil gave out he used fat of pigs when they killed, as they always did in the fall."

We trust that this instance is an isolated one, otherwise the pruning knife cannot be too soon applied.

The lecturer considered his subject under the four heads of:—

- (1) Enlistment.
- (2) Equipment.
- (3) Training.
- (4) The Formation of Units.

On the first of these points, the various regulations under which a man entered the army were dealt with, defining long and short service, the reserves, and the militia. The success of the system of short service and reserve in Europe during

the past twenty years was pointed out, but attention was also directed to the complicated and unsatisfactory nature of the plan or rather plans now in vogue in the British service.

Under the heading of "Equipment," the lecturer divided the classes of equipment for war purposes into Personal, Regimental, and General or Army. He pointed out the difference between the personal outfit necessary in time of peace and that most suited for active service, and the necessity of providing for the latter contingency being always before the authorities. The limit of weight which a soldier can carry during a campaign, was stated as about 56 pounds for a temperate climate and 48 for the tropics. The supply of food was then discussed in detail, and the present regulations explained. Arms and ammunition, clothing, boots, and the various other necessities of a man going on active service were carefully considered, and some valuable hints given. On the important subject of boots he said:

"It hardly needs stating that soldiers should not take into wear a new pair of boots just when they are commencing the work of a campaign, and yet under the existing system in our army such must always invariably be the case. If the boots of the soldier were made of really good soft leather, which would bear soleing several times, there would always be in his possession one pair at least which could be relied on to take him easily and comfortably through the first three months of almost any campaign."

It was strongly advocated that the whole war kit should be in possession of the soldier and worn by him at all marching-order parades. Emphasis was also given to the necessity for a really good and serviceable water-bottle for the Canadian troops, and for the availability of a portable entrenching tool.

So much for the Infantry.

The mounted branch of the service was then considered. The necessity of careful attention to the horse, and to the load he is capable of carrying with ease, was stated. Special mention was made of the new pattern of blanket that has been recently adopted for the protection of the horse at night.

After some remarks about the equipment and uniform of officers on active service, the subject of transport and transport wagons and what should be packed in them, was fully considered. The latter comprises food, ammunition, clothing, tools and materials for repairs, tents, medical, signalling and miscellaneous stores. Eleven wagons or twenty-two carts are given as necessary for transporting the stores, etc., for each infantry battalion (presumably 1,000 strong.)

Under the head of *Training* the lecturer made some valuable remarks as to the necessity for special attention to this work, proving his views by the recital of many instances from both ancient and modern history. He pointed out that military training not only was an essential preparation for successfully waging war, but was also an admirable factor in the physical and mental improvement of the young men of the nation. Some hints on books of instruction were then given. On the question of pay, the very sensible suggestion was made that there be three classes for men in the ranks, the pay varying in each; these would be for (1) the recruit, (2) the 2nd class man, (3) the thoroughly trained soldier.

The concluding portion of the lecture was devoted to the subject of "The Formation of Units." The size of a military unit should, it was agreed, be limited to what can be commanded by one man. A plea was made for the increase of the strength of our (Imperial) infantry companies in excess of the present authorised strength of 125 men.

In conclusion, the lecturer drew attention to the necessity of we in Canada paying greater attention to these important matters of defence, and especially of the careful training of our young men in time of peace, so that they may be thoroughly proficient if the necessity for war should arise; and that every proposed change in our military system should be considered as bearing on the question, "How will the proposed change affect the organization of the Army for War."

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The annual meeting and the distribution of prizes won during the past season at the matches of the Montreal Rifle Association was held on Saturday evening, 22nd inst., in the officers' mess-room of the Victoria Rifles armory. In the absence of the president, Lieut.-Col. Cole, first vice-president, occupied the chair. The other members present were Lieut.-Col. Hood, W. M. Andrews, Capt. Finlayson, Lieut.