

THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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Comment and Criticism.

A MEETING of the whole council of the Dominion rifle association has been called for two o'clock, on Wednesday the 8th December next. We would suggest that in future a *dies non* should not be chosen for such meetings.

SOME experiments have been made at the Quebec cartridge factory with a view of ascertaining whether projectiles for big guns could not be as satisfactorily made and filled here as in Great Britain. When Col. Irwin, Inspector of Artillery, was there early in the month, he, in company with Cols. Montizambert and Cotton, was present at the proof of several 9 and 64-pounder projectiles, manufactured under the superintendence of Major Prevost. A report on the result has been sent in to headquarters, and it is believed that the experiment gave satisfaction, and that good practice was made. It is sincerely to be hoped that the experiments in this direction may continue to give satisfactory results, so as ultimately to enable us to be self sustaining in this important branch of our military supplies.

THE announcement that a new order has been instituted for distinguished service in the army, navy and colonial forces, will be received with interest throughout the British Empire, and especially in Canada, where the opportunities for receiving Imperial distinctions have hitherto been somewhat meagre. In another column we reproduce the Royal Proclamation instituting the Order, which is so very explicit that

no enlargement upon it seems necessary; it is to be hoped that, at least, in the case of the North-West rebellion, its provisions will be made retro-active, for it seems especially designed to meet the cases of the principal officers concerned in the suppression of that insurrection, who have not yet received any recognition of the valuable services which they undoubtedly rendered to the Empire.

THE general orders this week are shorter than usual, and embrace only three items affecting officers higher in rank than captain. In The Governor General's Foot Guards Lieut.-Col. Ross resigns, and the command devolves upon Lieut.-Col. Pennington Macpherson. Both officers are well known throughout Canada, and the announcement will be received with a mingled feeling of regret at Col. Ross' retirement from active service, and of satisfaction at his successor's promotion. In the 57th Peterborough battalion Capt. Howard relinquishes the command of A company and assumes the post of paymaster, receiving the honorary rank of major. In all we find the orders contain six promotions, four appointments of qualified officers and nine provisional appointments, while there are only seven losses, so that by way of a change we have a net gain of six commissions.

GENERAL Middleton remarked casually, during the discussion after his lecture on outposts, that dogs belonging to the sentries had been found extremely useful aids to outpost patrols, and he suggested that this species of sentinel might be profitably employed to a greater extent in future. We notice that a similar experience has been reported from Germany, where the experiment was extensively tried during the recent autumn manoeuvres with signal success. We know that the wakefulness of the watch dog is proverbial, and the acuteness of his scent and hearing would prove of service at night, when man's duller senses are least available. If things could be so managed that a bark from one of the dogs would not set every dog within hearing barking, the importance of this sort of sentry could not be over estimated. Think, too, of the feeling of security and company that a dog would bring to his master in the weird hours of dawn, when every waving branch or rustling leaf suggests to the highly strung imagination of the lone watcher a lurking foe, and when even the most daring man feels the influence of the hour. A dog then is a better companion than a fellow man.

ABOUT a month ago Lord Charles Beresford, the new junior lord of the Admiralty, caused somewhat of a sensation in home naval circles by publishing an official memorandum, in which he accuses England of being utterly unprepared for war, at least so far as her navy is concerned. The substance of his complaint may be summed up very briefly. He claims that there is no preconcerted plan of war preparations, and that whereas the Admiralty should know just where to get all that would be wanted in case of war, it possesses no such information, that the great object to be attained is to be first in the field, but that England could not get out her first reserve under five days, while France could have hers in action in forty-eight hours; moreover, that there are not sufficient