

The whole of the corps in this district, with the exception of the Sarnia Artillery Company, (which embarked for eight days gun drill on board the gunboat "Prince Alfred,") performed their annual drill at two Brigade Camps of Exercise.

The London Field Battery, 7th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 32nd, and 33rd Battalions, of infantry, assembled in a Brigade Camp at Goderich for sixteen days continuous drill.

The St. Thomas and London Cavalry, Moorstown Troop, Wellington Field Battery (attached for purpose of instruction to a portion of the London Field Battery,) 22nd, 24th, 25th, 26th, and 27th Battalions, in a Brigade Camp at Sarnia, for eight days drill; both camps being under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Taylor.

The Brigade Camp at Goderich was formed on the 16th June, 1871, and the drill of the corps assembled carried out in accordance with the detailed instructions contained in the General Orders of 5th May, 1871, expressly drawn up for the guidance of commanding officers and all assembled for drill and practice at "Camps of Exercise."

On the 22nd of June last, I proceeded to inspect the corps assembled, at Goderich; on arrival there, I found the position of the camp well selected, situated on a plateau overlooking the Maitland River, which covered the front of the position, the right flank was protected by Lake Huron, and the rear by thick woods, whilst the side most open to attack, (viz., the left flank,) could have been readily protected by entrenchments.

The Brigade here assembled was mainly composed of the yeomanry, and agricultural population of the district, a fine body of men, in the prime of life—they appeared to enjoy, and, like most Canadians, seemed quite at home in "Camp Life." The tents were pitched with regularity, and surrounded as frequently seen in Canadian Camps, with branches of trees and evergreens, in such a manner as to produce a picturesque effect, while affording convenient shelter from the heat.

Remaining for several days in this camp, I inspected and personally mustered the whole of the officers, men, and horses, assembled, as well as witnessed and took part in several Brigade field days. The London Field Battery was inspected by the Inspector of Artillery, as to its regimental efficiency, and favorably reported on, the *material* was in good order, the horses of a superior and serviceable description, the men belonging to it were well trained to their duty, the supply of service ammunition was complete, and the general state of the battery reflected great credit on the commanding officer Lieut.-Col. Shanly, his officers, and men.

The infantry battalions, as far as concerns the *physique* of the men, was satisfactory, their Snider Rifles were in reasonably good order, the majority of the companies were badly uniformed the chief defect in equipment (a serious one,) being the want of a proper description of boot for marching.

The routine of drill consisted of, company drill before, and battalion drill after breakfast, carried out regimentally, with brigade drill in the afternoon; there being as a rule three parades daily. Every battalion in succession went to the rifle range, performing the prescribed course of target practice. At the brigade parades, the combined force was usually practiced in the mode of forming troops for attack and defence, (the different arms affording mutual support,) according to the nature of ground, and the imaginary presence of an enemy. Both officers and men displayed much intelligence and aptitude in acquiring instruction, and evinced great desire to learn their military duties.

This camp was visited by Lieut.-General Sir Hastings Doyle, K.C.M.G., commanding Her Majesty's Regular Troops in British North America, who, having inspected the brigade, was pleased to express a high opinion of the force assembled, and particularly complimented Lieut. Colonel Shanly, on the soldierlike appearance, and efficient state of the field battery under his command.

On the occasion of one of the field days, in which the gunboat "Prince Alfred" took part, it was computed that from 12,000 to 15,000 persons, chiefly belonging to the agricultural population, assembled to witness the review, many of whom had come long distances; the weather was favorable, and the military display appeared to gratify all present.

Lieut. Colonel Attwood, 26th Battalion, acted as the supply officer at this camp, and Major Smyth as camp quartermaster, the musketry instruction and "target practice" was superintended by Lieut.-Colonel Moffat, Lieut.-Colonel Service performed the duties of brigade major, and the district paymaster, Capt. F. B. Lyles, attended to the issue of and regulations concerning pay. Lieut.-Col. Taylor testifies to the satisfactory manner in which these officers performed their duties, and to the hearty support and co-operation he received from officers of all ranks.

Goderich is an exceptionally favorable place for a camp of exercise, there being plenty of open ground suitable for the manœuvring of all arms, and one of the best rifle ranges in the Dominion; ample supplies of all kinds are easily procurable, and there is communication both by rail and steam boat; moreover it is an important strategic position.

The Active Militia assembled at Goderich, consisted of the 2nd Brigade, Military District No. 1. with one Field Battery, and one Battalion, from the 1st Brigade, the remainder of the 1st Brigade, formed the Brigade Camp at Sarnia, on the 15th September, the following corps being assembled:

St. Thomas and London Cavalry.
Moorstown Cavalry.
Wellington Field Battery, (formed on London Battery) in course of formation, and to be attached to 2nd Brigade.
22nd Battalion.
24th do
25th do
26th do
27th do

This camp being only in operation for eight days, and under the ordinary system of pay and supply, was by no means so popular, with officers, or men, as the sixteen days camp at Goderich, the time being very limited, it was with great difficulty that the infantry corps, could be put through, even the short course of musketry and target practice prescribed. I inspected the whole of the corps in this camp on the 19th and 20th September.

The situation of the camp itself, (although as well selected as circumstances would admit,) was far inferior to the one at Goderich, and too close to the town of Sarnia.

Lieut.-Colonel Taylor, was assisted by his Brigade Majors, Lieut.-Colonels Moffat and Service, in superintending the drill and duties performed.

It will thus be seen, that the available corps, in Military District No. 1. have been drilled for 1871-72, in the proportion of rather more than one half for sixteen days, the rest for eight days, the whole of the corps in the District, having performed the prescribed course of target practice in camp, during the Annual Drill.

The best shooting battalion, in the district, was the 27th Lambton Battalion, its shooting

figure of merit being 19 92, the best shooting company in the district was the "Widdor Company," or No. 3 Company, 27th Battalion, figure of merit 26-57,—the best individual shot, in the district, among the non-commissioned officers and men, for the military year 1871-72, and winner of the District Prize; being Sergeant J. R. Burwell, No. 5 Company (Iona) 25th Battalion, who made 45 points, out of a possible score of 60.

Lieut.-Colonel Taylor reports, that the whole of the men, who performed the Annual Drill, were *bona fide* enrolled members of the different corps, a great portion of them, having joined since the re-enrolment, which was ordered to be made within three months from the 1st October, 1868; he states that he cannot ascertain what number of men, are likely to claim their discharge, on the completion of their three years service, but from the enquiries he has made, he does not think that more than one-fourth will leave the force, provided the system introduced of the sixteen days brigade camps, be continued and extended to all corps.

On this point Lieut.-Colonel Taylor says, that from the additional experience acquired, he is confirmed in the opinion, in which he is supported by the commanding officers of Corps, "that the sixteen days camps are the only means of giving the force proper instruction in their duties, and that they are the most popular" —, also that the month of June, is the best and most convenient month in the year, for the Active Militia, in Military District No. 1, to go into camp for the performance of the Annual Drill. 825 men are required to complete existing corps in this District, and Lieut.-Colonel Taylor is of opinion, that, in order to maintain existing corps up to their strength continuously, recourse to the ballot is necessary, and that it is desirable upon "military grounds."

The average strength per company of the force in this district in 1871, was three officers, and fifty-three N.C. officers and men; the average strength in 1870, being three officers, and forty-nine N.C. officers and men; and in 1869, three officers, and forty-seven N.C. officers and men, which, considering the difficulties of recruiting the force by volunteering, is as high an average as could reasonably be expected.

Lieut.-Colonel Taylor calls attention to the necessity for, and suggests an increase of, three more troops of Cavalry in the district, and the amalgamation of all the troops into a regiment of Cavalry—the formation of two companies of Engineers, one company in each Brigade Division—the addition of a sufficient number of Infantry to complete the 24th, 25th, 27th and 29th Battalions—the posting of the two independent companies to the nearest located battalion, and, with a view to overcome the great difficulty that has always been experienced in horseing the Field Batteries, the granting of a yearly bonus of about \$10 per horse, to those owners who duly enrol and register their horses, for service in the batteries.

I concur in those suggestions,—and also recommend that the Cavalry troops, when there are a sufficient number, be formed into one District Regiment to be numbered the "1st Regiment of Cavalry," and that two additional companies of Infantry be raised in the County of "Bruce" and posted to the County Battalion (the 32nd).

If the ranks of the corps in this district cannot be filled up and maintained at their proper strength by voluntary enrolment, the number of men required to complete such corps, can be obtained out of the district regimental divisions, in the manner provided for in the law, by means of the Ballot.