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CONTENTS OF THIS NUMBER.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

EDITORIAL.

The late Major Short.
Triennial drill for many rural corps.
Simultaneous Rifle Matches in the North-west.
The camp ground for the Wimbledon Team.

A SAD AFFAIR AT QUEBEC.

Details of the tragedy by which Major Short and Sgt. Walleck perished.

REGIMENTAL NEWS.

Inspection of the Victoria Rifles.
Miscellaneous Notes.

THE RIFLE.

Weekly practices of the Allan Rifle Association and Ottawa Rifle Club.
The Montreal Ranges.

MILITIA GENERAL ORDERS.

No. 9 of 17th May, 1889.

Topics of the Week.

A letter has been received by Lt.-Col. Thomas Bacon, Secretary of the Dominion Rifle Association and the officer to command the Canadian team of 1889 for Wimbledon, from Lt.-Col. E. S. Roberts, commanding the Cambridge University Volunteers, cordially granting the team leave to camp on the drill grounds at Cambridge and to use the rifle range there for practice the week preceding the Wimbledon meeting. This has been the regular camping ground of the Canadian team for the past few years, and they have received many kind attentions from the officers of the Cambridge Volunteers.

The newly established Assiniboia Provincial Rifle Association, of Regina, N.W.T., has set an example which might profitably be followed by associations down east. Team matches, on the simultaneous principle, have been arranged to take place weekly throughout the season, between the Regina association and those of the various towns of Manitoba and the Northwest. The number of these associations is surprising. The programme contains the names of those of Edmonton, Calgary, Prince Albert, Battleford, Brandon, Fort Saskatchewan, Macleod, Winnipeg, Moosomin, and Lethbridge. The competitions will be between teams of eight men each, and will be about half at 200, 500 and 600 yards, and half at 200, 400 and 500.

It may be observed by reference to the orders for the annual drill, that the total strength authorized for drill this year is less than for a few years past, the reason being that there is not available for this purpose sufficient money to train more than the number specified. The appropriation for this year permits of the training of 53 per cent of the total strength in the Dominion. The city corps are allowed to drill every year, and as their strength is about 9,000, there remain this year but 10,225 men of all ranks to be trained in camp. Of necessity many rural corps not allowed to drill in 1888, are not called out for 1889 either, and will have but one season's drill in three years. To several of these the disappointment will be great, as in confident expectation of being ordered for camp they have put themselves to no little expense in preliminary preparations. To all such—and we believe the number is larger than usual this year—the MILITIA GAZETTE tenders its heartfelt sympathy. We trust that the misfortune will forcibly impress upon them the advisability of taking some such steps, before the year passes, as will ensure that when parliament is next asked to pass militia appropriations, there will be enough asked to provide for at least biennial drill of every corps in the service. The extra amount required is so small compared with even the total expenditure for the military service of Canada, that no one in House or country would object to granting it. If it is not available now, it is simply because it has not been asked for.

The Late Major Short.

A hero in death as in life, the late Major Chas. J. Short, of "B" Battery, Regiment of Canadian Artillery, has won for himself an honoured name that will live in history. He was perhaps the officer most widely known, by reputation at least, of all those in the Dominion regular service, and wherever known he was warmly admired for his manly and soldierly characteristics. An enthusiast of the service, he possessed in an eminent degree the ability to turn his enthusiasm to the best practical account, and quickly became a valuable artillery officer. Idolized by the men of his command, courted and respected by every brother officer, the favourite of the masses as well as the classes of the general population wherever his battery was stationed, Major Short had in his brief career achieved such distinction as can fall to the lot of but few in the comparatively monotonous military service of the Dominion. But with him nothing in which he engaged was commonplace; his energy enlivened every undertaking, and he had the faculty of inspiring a confidence which seldom failed to ensure success. He could not stand idly by when there was work to be done. He would not expose a soldier to a danger which he might face himself instead. Thus we find him engaged in the hazardous task in which his noble life was taken—a task not part of his military service, zealously undertaken with the object of saving the poor people of the municipality from the ruin and desolation brought upon them by the shiftlessness, if not criminal carelessness, of those who had taken upon themselves the responsibility of managing the affairs of the community—a responsibility too often not realized by the wearers of municipal titles. His death was horrible indeed, but from the soldiers' standpoint glorious, for he died at the post of duty. There was doubtless one moment of agony, as, too late to avert the disaster, the brave man saw the spark float into the open keg of powder; and a thought of the dear ones about to be bereaved, of life friendships about to be ended, of the brave Sergeant who stood by him in his deadly peril, flashed across his mind—and then all was over. That there was this momentary warning was gathered from the delirious ravings of poor Sergeant Walleck, who lingered several hours in terrible agony, which his officer was spared, and whose constant exclamation as he lay upon his deathbed in the hospital was, "Look out, Major, there's a spark!" The Sergeant's sacrifice is none the less appreciated because he was comparatively unknown to the public. He gallantly followed his officer, and as their bearers were united in the face of death, so will the names of Major Short and Sergt. Walleck be coupled together when the sacrifice is commemorated.

A son of Judge Short, of Sherbrooke, Que., the deceased served as an officer with the local garrison artillery. When the Fenian raid occurred he was on active service, then holding the office of Adjutant of his corps of the militia. When the Regiment of Canadian Artillery was established in 1871, he joined the School of Gunnery for a course of instruction, and his experience there served to intensify his military ardour. His distinguished services won for him in 1874 a lieutenantancy in the permanent corps. He was attached to "B" Battery R. C. A.,