

Instruction connected therewith will be held at Shoeburyness from Saturday, Aug. 4th, to Saturday, Aug. 11th.

General Lord Roberts has been entertained at Newcastle by the members of the North of England Volunteer Service Institution. Sir Henry Havelock-Allan presided over a large attendance of regular and volunteer officers. In the course of his remarks, the distinguished guest said that nothing had struck him more, on his return to England after a long sojourn abroad, than to see the thoroughness of the spirit which apparently animates volunteer officers and volunteers in all ranks, and their determination that they will do all in their power to qualify themselves for their self-taken task. He had such a high opinion of the volunteers that, although he was aware of late years their number of "efficients" had increased annually, he could not help expressing the hope that there will be a still further increase.

The old *Benbow*, one of the last, if not the very last, of the "wooden walls" which harboured Acre in 1840, is to disappear from the navy list. The *Benbow* was built some sixty years ago as a third-rate, and half of her lifetime has been spent in harbor service at Sheerness as a floating coal depot. She is now rotten, and is to go to the ship breakers'. She has just been replaced by the frigate *Forte*, which has been fitted for the purpose at a cost of £1,200.

The hundredth anniversary of the first employment of an air balloon for war purposes falls in the month of June next, the event having happened twelve years after the paper manufacturers, Etienne and Joseph Montgolfier, made their first ascent at Annonay in the balloon invented by themselves. These balloons—called "Montgolfier's" by the inventors—were filled with heated air engendered by the burning of some substance underneath the balloon, which was pear-shaped, and open at the bottom. This was, however, soon improved upon, and on the 27th August of the following year M. Charles, the renowned natural philosopher, went up from the Champs de Mars, near Paris, in a balloon filled with hydrogen gas. It was in a balloon of the same nature that the first aerial journey was undertaken from Berlin, the aeronaut being Blanchard, who, on the 27th September, 1783, ascended from the exercise ground near the Thiergarten. During the siege of Charleroi, in the Belgian Province of Hennegau, an air-balloon rendered valuable services to the French up to the 25th June, 1794, when the place fell into their hands, and on the following day, when the battle near Fleurus was fought, the French observed the movements of their antagonists from a captive balloon held in its position by three cables.

Herr Dove, the inventor of the bullet-proof coat, is just now giving the public

at Wintergarten an opportunity of witnessing some practical experiments. The coat was not originally designed to resist the bullets of the new rifle, but Herr Dove has since brought his invention up to date, and it is now capable of keeping out the bullets of the magazine rifle. In the autumn Herr Dove intends to visit London and Paris, and it is stated that he will be prepared to act as a target. If so, the importance of the invention will no doubt be recognized, but it scarcely follows that the military authorities will be any the more willing to adopt it. The fact is that the days of armor have passed away. Breastplates and other protections were, it is true, retained in use for some centuries after the invention of gunpowder, but in these days of maxim guns, and light shells, melinite, and other explosives, armor would be of no avail in war. Moreover, Herr Dove's costume is said to be too heavy for the use of troops in the field, and this, of course, is the chief objection to its adoption for military purposes.

Arrangements are being made at the Royal Naval Barracks, Keyham, for carrying out experiments with carrier pigeons, with a view to training them for the transmission of despatches. Com. W. G. White, who has voluntarily undertaken the arrangements, has secured four pairs of homers, which will be kept for breeding purposes only. In about two months it is expected that a number of young birds will be ready to commence their preliminary training. At Portsmouth similar arrangements are being made, and it is intended that to a certain extent the two ports shall co-operate. Commander White intends to train his birds from distances in a south, south-westerly and westerly direction, whilst Portsmouth will train from south, south-easterly and easterly points. After having been made thoroughly acquainted with their own neighborhood, the birds at Keyham will be flown from the Sound, and subsequently the Channel. Birds will be sent out in vessels undergoing steam trials, and by the time the naval manoeuvres commence it is expected they will be sufficiently well educated to undergo practical tests. Although the Naval Intelligence Department at Whitehall are taking special interest in the various systems of training pigeons employed by other nations, the English Government do not allow one penny for training pigeons for their own purposes.

For some months past the authorities at the India office have been engaged in investigating an extraordinary story as to hidden treasure in India. It seems that some time ago a private in the 2nd Battalion of the Royal West Surrey Regiment died at Wandsworth. On his death bed he stated that he took part in the war with Burma in the autumn of 1885, and was among the troops which surrounded King Theebaw's palace at Mandalay. According to his confession he and another private, named White, entered the palace during the night, and after several exciting ad-

ventures discovered, quite by accident, the King's crown and regalia. These they at once took possession of, and promptly conveyed them out of the palace. The jewels, it is stated, were worth an immense sum. Their massive gold settings made them heavy and cumbersome, and the two soldiers, being afraid of detection, buried them just outside the palace grounds. Shortly afterwards a sentry box was placed upon the very site, and according to the statement made by the dying soldier the jewels are still there. White, upon being told that no harm would befall him, admitted that the story told by his dead comrade was correct. Subsequently the Earl of Kimberley, through his secretary, wrote stating that the government of India were prepared to give White 10 per cent. on any property he might discover up to the value of 100,000 rupees, and 5 per cent. on the remainder if any should be found in excess of that value. Ex Private White is now on his way to India, and is confident of his ability—a confidence apparently shared in by the authorities—to find the buried treasure. It is remembered now that the jewels found in the palace were not so numerous or valuable as was expected, but it was thought at the time that many had been taken away by the women who were allowed to leave.

The first annual dinner of members of the North-West Rebellion Field Force resident in the eastern part of the Territories, which took place at the Queen's on Monday night, was one of the unique events of the times. Around the admirably spread tables of Host Cleverly sat a large contingent of the N.W.F.F., gathered principally from Moosomin and district, but including representative veterans from as far north as Yorkton and as far east as Winnipeg. During the dinner, which needless to say was excellently prepared and called forth the highest praise from all the guests, the Moosomin Orchestra, led by Mr. R. Smart, played some of their high class selections which were much enjoyed. The chair was filled by Mr. Sheriff Murphy (Transport officer at the Front). The vice-chair was taken by Mr. B. Tennyson (French's Scouts). The other Veterans actively connected with the dinner were: Capt. Harris (Chief Inspector of horses for the whole Field Force and Senior Vet. Surgeon of Canada); Rev. Welbury T. Milton, (Transport); W. White, Q.C. (Transport Officer at the base, Bedford Column); A. E. Christie, (Midland Battalion); E. A. C. McLorg, (Boulton's Scouts); E. Gater, (Boulton's Scouts); A. G. Hamilton, (Transport); W. Mitten, (Transport); Hon. C. H. Manners, (Boulton's Scouts); H. B. Savin, (Boulton's Scouts); W. Bruce, (Transport); R. W. B. Eustace, (Extra A.D.C.); H. P. Christie, Hazelcliffe, (Scout); Jas. Norris, Winnipeg, (Halifax Battalion); W. B. Dunlop, Yorkton, (Transport); J. J. Young, (Regina Home Guard).

Before the toast list was commenced Mr. Fred. Gibson sounded the reveille on the cornet, and the usual loyal toasts were then duly honored.