

# The Canadian Militia Gazette

THE POPULAR ORGAN OF THE ACTIVE FORCE OF THE DOMINION.

(Adopted as their official paper, by the Dominion Artillery Association, the Ontario Artillery Association, the Canadian Military Rifle League, and the Royal Military College Club.)

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## NOTE AND COMMENT.

WE would call the attention of our readers, especially those of the Artillery branch, to the "Experiences at Okehampton in 1890," printed in this issue and to be concluded next week. The lecture from which we make the extracts was delivered at the Royal Artillery Institution last December, and is printed in full in the Proceedings for February. The information contained in the lecture will be found very useful to all those interested in field artillery practice as now carried out in Canada.

PARLIAMENT being called for the 29th April, the dates of the annual meetings of the Dominion Rifle and Artillery Associations are now fixed. By their Constitution, the Riflemen meet on the third Wednesday after the opening, the 20th May; and the rules of the Dominion Artillery Association fix their annual meeting for the third Thursday after the meeting of Parliament. The latter usually meets on Thursday, but being called for Wednesday this year the Artillery meeting will probably be held on the fourth Thursday, in accordance with the spirit if not the letter of the rule, which was designed to bring the meeting the day following that of the riflemen, as a number of those who come from a distance are members of both associations.

THE military candidates came off exceedingly well in the Parliamentary contests on the 5th inst. To begin with, the Minister of Militia, Sir Adolphe Caron, who contested two Opposition constituencies, was successful in one of them—Rimouski, defeating the old member by a good majority. On the other hand, Hon. A. G. Jones, who was Minister of Militia in the Mackenzie Administration, failed to secure reelection in Halifax. Col. Bergin (Surgeon-General), Lieuts.-Cols. Kirkpatrick, Ouimet, Amyot, O'Brien, Tisdale, Tyrwhitt, Denison and Prior, Majors Marshall, Carpenter and Sutherland, all were re-elected, and a new military member makes his appearance, in the person of Major R. R. McLennan, of the 59th, elected for Glengarry. Dr. Platt, who is Surgeon of the 16th Battalion, failed to secure reelection; Major Sam Hughes, of the 15th, was not successful in his attempt to enter Parliament; and Lieut.-Col. Donville, 8th Cavalry, failed to oust Finance Minister Foster from the seat formerly wrested from the Colonel by

that gentleman. The military representation continues quite strong enough to exercise an important influence in the House.

*Outing* has added to its ever widening range of interesting articles, "Military Exercises" as bearing on physical development. In some of the recent issues we have had the Southern Cavalry Tilts, the Soldier as a Marksman, and the Soldier Cyclists. *Outing* for March tells "How England Trains her Red Coats" in a paper of great interest to all concerned in military affairs. The article is richly illustrated by special *Outing* artists sent to England and by the well-known English master of pencil and brush, Seymour.

THE Victorian Parliament has voted the sum of £500 towards defraying the expenses of the mounted infantry team which it is proposed to send from that colony to England, to take part in the competitions of the Royal Military Tournament. The team will go by invitation from the Tournament Committee, who will give a grant of £200 in aid of the expenses, in addition to providing quarters for the men while in England. The exact strength of the team is as yet uncertain; the Tournament Committee, however, stipulate that it must consist of not less than six, and not more than twelve. Sports of this description appear to take, with the volunteers of the Antipodes, the prominent place occupied in our militia by rifle shooting.

THE growing popularity of revolver shooting has led to the making of scores far beyond what the weapon was thought capable of making. Minor improvements in loading, etc., have brought the arm up to a point of precision which should satisfy the most critical user. Thus far the scores made have been without any very precise conditions, and comparisons have been difficult to make. In order to bring about a definite fixed championship record to determine the amateur having the highest degree of credit as a shot, *Forest and Stream* has undertaken the conduct of a formal championship match. This is at the special request of Mr. Walter Winans, whose position at the head of the line of English revolver shooters is well known. He will contribute as an emblem of the championship one of his own artistic pieces of sculpture done in bronze, and the conditions will be made as open as possible and an opportunity

made for all to shoot in what promises to be a match of more than ordinary importance. While comparatively little attention is given to the use of the revolver in Canada, last year showed signs of an awakening of interest in practice with that arm.

### THE MILITARY RIFLE LEAGUE.

Everything points to another auspicious season for the League, all last year's participants appearing keen for a renewal of the contests and inquiries being received from new places all over the country. Mr. W. R. Pringle, the secretary, passed through Ottawa this week on his way to the Maritime Provinces, on his semi-annual business trip. While here he interviewed the Minister of Militia about the "Caron Sharpshooters' Trophy," as his intended gift to the League will be called, and designs for which are now being prepared. This trophy is to be shot for at the Dominion rifle meeting at Ottawa by the League members present. Sir Adolphe Caron has not limited his interest in the League to the official gift of free ammunition and the private presentation of the trophy, but declares his intention of himself becoming a competitor, as a member of a team to be organized from the members of the Headquarters' Staff and the Militia Department. The Minister is well known for his sporting proclivities, and it will be a great thing for the riflemen if their own fascination for the range be made to take possession of him. Sir Adolphe could organize a strong team from his own Department—though perhaps its members would be a little shaky at first. His Deputy, Col. Panet, was in his day, we believe, quite an expert with the rifle; the Director of Stores, Col. John Macpherson, no doubt can make the weapons and ammunition he controls give a good account of themselves, although as Treasurer of the D.R.A. he has had more practice at rewarding than making prize scores. Capt. J. B. Donaldson, though having a strong preference for the Artillery, is not above making his mark with the rifle, and Lieut. Fred W. White, of the Militia Architect's office, being a R.M.C. graduate, must also be well posted. In the other branch of the Department, we have Major-General Herbert, whose attitude towards shooting has yet to be declared; Col. Walker Powell, the Adjutant-General, a tried and proved friend; Lieut.-Col. Thos. Bacon, the zealous secretary of the D.R.A.; Lieut. Streatfeild, the General's Aide, and a number of other officers; whilst the Military Stores bristle with sharpshooting non-commissioned officers and men. Major Henry F. Perley, lately Engineer Officer at Headquarters, says he has done with rifle shooting, but with his apparent return to health one would not be surprised to see the trusty weapon again produced.

Using his privilege as one of His Excellency's advisers, perhaps the Minister of Militia might suggest to Lord Stanley of Preston, an old military man, that he too should set the young men of the militia a good example upon this rifle range; and as the session will be in progress when the

opening matches of the League are fired, probably Vice-regal and Parliamentary teams could be secured. The British Lords and Commons, with their annual contest at Wimbledon, furnish a precedent for our legislators; and as for His Excellency, rifle shooting would be a dignified sport in comparison with the athletic performances of his predecessors at Rideau Hall. A programme for our King, Lords and Commons being thus arranged, the Fourth Estate has not been forgotten, a newspaper men's team being mooted, with good prospect of organization. Secretary Pringle has talked them up to it, and as soon as the season opens the correspondents will load the wires leading from Ottawa with shooting matter.

To turn now from the probabilities to the stern facts of the League, it is opportune to remind intending competitors that only canvas targets are to be allowed this season, and where iron targets have hitherto been used no time should be lost in equipping the range with the canvas substitutes. We will be happy to procure for and send to any applicant a copy of the description, specification and diagram, issued last year by the Militia Department, of a simple and inexpensive canvas target and equipment.

### DISTINGUISHED CANADIANS.

"Canadians in the Imperial Naval and Military Service Abroad" is the title of an interesting volume just issued from the publishing house of Williamson & Co., Toronto, the author being J. Hampden Burnham, M.A., Peterborough. As the Preface says, "The histories of Canada are numerous and elaborate, but the same cannot be said with regard to the histories of Canadians, \* \* \* more particularly of those of our countrymen who have entered the naval and military services of the Empire, and have gone abroad." The author has been at great pains to obtain authentic information, and the record he presents is most gratifying and creditable. The honour roll of Canadians who have distinguished themselves in the service is lengthy, including, besides the individual officers mentioned, the Hundredth or Prince of Wales' Royal Canadian Regiment, raised here at the time of the Crimean War (now the first battalion of the Prince of Wales' Leinster Regiment), and whose old colours were not long ago returned to Canada and may now be seen in the National Library. Prominent amongst the individual careers sketched are those of General Sir William Fenwick Williams, the hero of Kars; Major-General Sir John Inglis, the commander at Lucknow during the famous siege; Sir Provo Wallis, "the father of the Royal Navy," who succeeded to the command of the *Shannon* during the sanguinary conflict with the American vessel *Chesapeake* off Boston in 1812, and half a century later was placed upon the Active List "for life" in recognition of his peculiarly lengthy and active services. Having been born on the 12th April, 1791, Sir Provo Wallis is about to celebrate his hundredth birthday. Well executed portraits of the three distinguished officers named above are given. The story continues down a roll of about one hundred other Canadians who have served with distinction as officers in

the Imperial Army and Navy, and the names are many of them familiar as those of the families most prominent in connection with the Volunteer service in Canada at present. The officers who served with the Canadian voyageurs on the Nile are specially mentioned, and there is a list of the Royal Military College graduates now serving, with the names of their corps. The book is one which should be in every Canadian library, and it is to be hoped that its reception will be such as to encourage further work in the same direction.

## EXPERIENCES AT OKEHAMPTON IN 1890.

(Extract from Lecture by Captain W. L. White, R.A.)

The practice of this year at Okehampton shows, in some respects, a marked improvement over that of last year, especially in the direction of fire discipline. The batteries were worked more smoothly and consequently more quickly, all ranks seemed to have a much more thorough grasp of the principles of the system of ranging than is shown by the reports of 1889. Having thus apparently got the rudiments engrained we may now hope to proceed with perfecting the system and accelerating the process, not by elaborating, but by simplifying it. Here let me remark that many officers bring much deep thought and long experience to bear upon the subject, but so many of them stumble into the pit-falls which some of our continental brethren, who took to the modern system of fire discipline some years before we did, have already fallen into. It is difficult for the uninitiated to formulate a theory if he is only acquainted with results and not with the principles which underlie them, and it is difficult to arrive at these principles by analysis when reading works which only deal with results. The best works that I know of for dealing with these principles in a simple way, and which should be studied in order to avoid false principles and exploded errors, are Lottin's "Etude sur le Tir d'une Batterie de Campagne" and von Rohne's work on "Artillery fire," which latter may be got either in French or German.

During the past year there does not appear to have been any advance in the accuracy of laying, though there was no falling off, and the average range was longer, in the case of infantry targets, by nearly 300 yards, and in the aggregate by nearly 100 yards. The rate of fire has increased, however, by 42 per cent., and, as there has been no falling off in the accuracy of the laying, the result may be taken as not unsatisfactory, but I shall point out in what respects there is still room for improvement. The distribution of fire still leaves much to be desired.

It is natural that those points which were noticed during the practice of 1889 as requiring improvement, and which were set forth in the "Instructions for Practice" for 1890, should have attracted the attention of officers commanding batteries, we will, therefore, take them seriatim and see what fruit the criticism has brought forth.

"(a.) As a rule, unnecessary exposure in taking up position. This was specially noticeable on the part of the Commanding Officer and his staff, and range-takers."

In this respect there has been an improvement, especially in the positions taken up by the batteries, which have been more in conformity with the requirements of service. Indeed, the Camp Commandant, in his report on the first instructional course of cavalry and infantry officers, mentions, as one of the points noticed by the course:—"The smallness of the target presented by a battery in action, as seen from the range. This shows, incidentally, that the batteries, when at practice, made a proper use of the features of the ground."

The indictment against the C. O. and his staff still, how-

ever, remains to a certain extent, though there has been an improvement. The appearance of one or two horsemen on a position at a long range, if they remained fairly still, might easily, if seen at all, be mistaken for a cavalry vedette, but the dodging backwards and forwards of the range-takers to find a suitable base, and up and down it when found, is a certain indication of the coming advent of the batteries. More care should, therefore, be taken to keep these men under cover.

A battery coming into action is most conspicuous when the teams reverse before the guns are unlimbered, this, as pointed out in the drill regulations, should be done, when possible, under cover, and the guns run up by hand. No doubt this will often throw severe work on the detachments, but it is work that must be done if we wish to take up our position without being disturbed by the enemy's fire and to get the start of him in ranging, upon which, probably, the issue of the combat will depend.

There is a tendency, too, when possible, to slightly decrease the interval between the guns at practice to render the command easier, this should be discouraged most strenuously. There are, no doubt, occasions when, to facilitate observation, the interval between the guns must be decreased in order to increase those between the batteries, but this must be looked upon as an unavoidable misfortune, as presenting a more visible objective to the enemy and an easier target for his shell to take effect upon.

"(b.) The system of notifying the point to be ranged on by word of mouth was generally adopted instead of some more definite means."

This difficulty has, I think, been thoroughly overcome by the use of a pointer about the size and dimensions of a walking stick, which is easily carried, and is immensely superior to any verbal description. One of a lighter pattern might easily be designed.

The suggestion that one gun should be laid and the Nos. I look over it serves the same purpose, but has the great disadvantage that the gun must be brought forward and exposed while the remainder of the battery is still in the preparatory position.

The extent of front to be covered with fire that has been assigned to the battery is also not so easily pointed out with a gun as with a light pointer, which can be easily moved so as to indicate the flanks of the target.

There is still much confusion in the application and in the understanding of the directions "right" and "left" when applied to the enemy's formations and when to the natural features of the ground, this not alone among non-commissioned officers. Much more attention will have to be paid to education in this matter in order that fire may not be misdirected, especially at the critical moment of ranging, when the mistake generally takes place.

"(c.) Too much time generally taken in picking up and verifying ranges."

As I prefaced by saying, there has been an increase of 50 per cent. in the rate of fire over that of last year, and a corresponding increase in the rate of ranging, which increase will no doubt continue to grow as those concerned get more opportunities for, and understand more about, the observation of fire.

This can only be attained by encouraging as much as possible the attendance of battery C.O.'s and their assistants at the practice of other batteries, causing them to keep a record of their observations and verifying them by the range report after practice.

One of the points noticed by the officers of the Cavalry and Infantry courses was as follows:—

"The length of time during which the battery is generally kept waiting in its preliminary position for the report of the range-takers. This time, it was remarked, would be very valuable if the target was of a transitory nature. It was explained to the course that this invariable taking of

the range by the range-finder was a local arrangement in order to obtain data as to the value of that instrument, and that if, on service, the target was likely to move, the report of the range-takers would not be waited for."

"(d.) There was generally a marked pause between the completion of the ranging shots and opening fire with time shrapnel."

There was an improvement in this respect this year, but a good deal still remains to be done. The principal causes of it are:—

The C. O. is so preoccupied with his observation of fire that he forgets to give timely warning to "Prepare for shrapnel." There is, moreover, no necessity to wait until the end of the verifying series before giving the length of fuze for the first section.

Muddleheadedness on the part of some of the sectional officers. I have several times heard them say, when the word "Prepare for shrapnel" was given, "I am loaded with common, sir, shall I fire it off?" All this conversation involves delay. Again, in several instances, I have observed delay arise from the fact that the sectional officer did not understand the process of ranging and, therefore, could not give intelligent assistance to his C. O. by, if not anticipating, at least being in a position to carry out his orders before they were well out of his mouth.

Another, and perhaps the greatest cause, occurs in the batteries where portable magazines are not used. The numbers at the limbers seldom begin to prepare the shrapnel shell before the word of command is given to load with that projectile, and thus all the delay of preparation comes in. This is directly the fault of insufficient training. At drill the drill shell is often drawn ready fuzed from the limber box, and can be handed over at once; or, more generally, the shell having once left the limber, is either on the ground or in the hands of the number carrying it from the limber to the gun, the supply of ammunition from the limber is, therefore, a mere form, and, when it has actually to be carried out, the numbers doing it are slow and clumsy. At drill, if a sufficient number of drill shell cannot be procured, the actual service projectiles should be issued from the limber, they need not be inserted in the gun, but the education of the limber numbers would thus be provided for.

"(e.) The adjustment of fuzes often presented a difficulty, and the systems recommended were not always followed."

On the whole there was an improvement in this respect, but the idea has not yet been universally accepted that with such variable things as fuzes, which are also so sensitive to atmospheric changes, the fuze scale can only be looked upon as a general guide, and not as infallible. The fuze scale still is, and I suppose will continue to be, a most convenient scapegoat. The old maxim, "If the practice is bad, abuse the fuzes," could not hold good this year for they were very good, as was acknowledged by, I think, every C. O.

There was a marked preference, for which I am quite unable to account, for getting the first time shell to burst on graze. I cannot see the advantage of this; a shell bursting on graze conveys no information as to how much too long the fuze is, whereas, if it be burst short, an approximate idea of the alteration to be made can be formed. Possibly the idea was that these two shrapnel shell would show whether the range was correctly found for shrapnel, but, if that is necessary, and it is possible, at the range at which practice is being carried out, to observe the burst of shrapnel on graze with accuracy, then it would be better to range altogether with percussion shrapnel.

The above remark must not be confused with the instruction for finding the length of fuze at indistinct targets, when it is necessary to lengthen the fuze until a burst on graze is obtained, and then come back a little.

There was considerable diversity in the manner of calling out the length of fuze, some officers using decimals, some

quarters; now all fuzes are to be marked in quarters this difference will probably disappear.

"(f.) Auxiliary marks were not used as often as they might have been with advantage."

Nor were they this year. Officers have not yet recognized the importance, nay, the absolute necessity, of this class of laying in a big action. There is, of course, the great hope that the introduction of smokeless powder in the immediate future will do away with much of the necessity for indirect laying, meanwhile we must not be content to risk being engaged in a campaign, where the number of guns and rifles using black powder would render it a necessity, without being expert in this method of fire.

Laying by means of auxiliary marks will be particularly drawn attention to in the "Instructions for Practice" next year.

"(g.) From insufficient and irregular distribution of fire, the flanks of an enemy's line were often comparatively safe. Care should be taken, however, not to overdo distribution, for shrapnel aimed too near the flanks run the chance of a considerable portion of the cone outflanking the target and so being ineffective."

This want of distribution of fire was one of the gravest faults of this year's practice. Over and over again I have seen the fire continued on the ranging point until three effective shrapnel had been obtained. It is true that the targets were, as a rule, small, and perhaps the fear of outflanking the target made the C. O.'s devote their attention to the centre of the small front fired at, but at brigade practice, where the targets were much more extended, the same fault was noticeable and, on examining them afterwards, the flanks were almost always found to have enjoyed immunity from losses.

Distribution of fire should take place at the latest when the first shrapnel shell is fired, *i.e.*, when the ranging for fuze commences. Officers object to this that it is not so easy to verify the fuzes when the fire has been distributed; that is sometimes true, but it is an unavoidable evil that must be accepted in the future as the only means of escaping a worse evil, especially in the combat of artillery *versus* artillery. Let us take an example of this.

Two batteries of equal powers commence firing at one another at the same moment. Following the method of not distributing the fire until the correct length of fuze has been obtained, the one battery would probably have silenced one gun of the opponent before distribution took place, leaving the other five guns during all this time quite free to carry on their fire without any disturbing element. Whereas, by distributing the fire with the first shrapnel, the other battery would probably so disturb the fire of all the guns of the first that it is quite a matter of question whether the first could ever complete the ranging process in a satisfactory manner at all.

Foreign nations acknowledge the early distribution of fire to be of such paramount importance that they are now considering whether it is not possible to distribute the fire from the very first shot, and I think you will agree that, in some cases, it would be so. The following extracts from a paper by Colonel Schumacher, the Chief Instructor of the Swiss Artillery, entitled "Tactical Deductions from the Course of Instruction of the Swiss Artillery in 1890," the translation of which was kindly lent me by Colonel Walford, will show the drift of the argument.

"It was further laid down that in all applied practice the distribution of fire should take place at the commencement of group firing, especially against artillery targets, since on the one hand the observation of fire at this point in no way demands a fixed and single objective, while, on the other, prudence forbids us to expose ourselves to the fire of such guns of the enemy as are not under our fire. The theory of the successive destruction of the enemy is derived from the days of solid shot; it had still some value when common

shell was the principal projectile, but has none now, when shrapnel is almost exclusively used."

As long ago as 1886, Major von Rohne quotes, with approbation, from the work of a French artillery officer, Captain Viant, as follows:—

"The gist of his views is that the intensity of modern artillery fire does not permit the fire to be concentrated on one portion of the opposing artillery while the other portion is left alone. On the one hand the ranging is made more difficult, and on the other it permits the adversary to carry out his without let or hindrance . . . ."

"When the opponents artillery is in equal force, and when the enemy is not yet ranged, he will only admit the concentration of fire in a single case. Namely, when the target is to a great extent shrouded in smoke, it *may* be advantageous to concentrate the fire against the unhidden portion. The distribution of fire will, however, be imperative when the first of the enemy's shells fall in the position; then shrapnel will not be long in coming, and the batteries might be annihilated before their ranging was completed. The only salvation lies in the quickest possible opening of shrapnel fire, distributed along the whole of the enemy's line."

(To be continued.)

## REGIMENTAL.

### THE GRENADIERS.

The members of the "Grens' Sergeants' Mess held their regular monthly smoking concert on Wednesday evening last. The sergeants were out in full force and brought many of their friends, both civilian and military. A number of songs and recitations were given by the following gentlemen, Messrs. Harris, McDonald and Hutchinson, a banjo solo by Mr. Jarvis, a mouth organ solo by Mr. Bruce, etc. One feature of the evening were the acrobatic feats of the Sinclair brothers. The sergeants are to be congratulated on the success of their monthly entertainments.

The clothing for the two new companies has arrived, so Capt. Manley and Harston can get to work at once.

Major Mason has presented the Sergeants' Mess with a finely illustrated work called "Toronto, New and Old."

Capt. Harston's company is to be "I".

### QUEEN'S OWN RIFLES.

I can venture to say without much fear of contradiction that no other company in the militia of Canada can boast of just having celebrated their twenty-ninth annual dinner. Such was the occasion on which the members of E Co. and their friends met at the Arlington Hotel on Friday evening last, 6th inst. It was just 9 o'clock when to the strains supplied by the Bugle Band orchestra the company filed into the gaily decorated dining room of the Arlington Hotel, where mine host Matthews had prepared a spread which compared most favourably with any military dinner ever held in the city by any of the regiments. A unique and attractive feature of the table decorations were the number of fairy lamps which dotted the tables. After a hearty discussion of the bill of fare, and when the inner man had been amply satisfied, the tables were cleared and the toast of "The Queen" opened the second part of the programme. Lieut. Knifton then proposed the toast of "The D.A.G.," and in so doing paid some very graceful compliments to his former commander. Col. Otter, on rising to respond, was received most enthusiastically, those assembled singing "He'll be a General By and Bye." He thanked them for their assurance and hoped that their prophecies would be correct. He stated that at a gathering like this, if he had any schemes in contemplation, he took the opportunity to promote them. His scheme, which he would ask all present to take into their serious consideration, was this: In future

instead of the regiment visiting any city or town on the 24th of May, that they in conjunction with the other city corps, would form a marching column, with its advance guard, and practise the different modes of attack, etc., necessary in advancing through a hostile country, believing that in so doing more benefit would arise than if the time was spent in some strange town.

"The Canadian Militia" was proposed by Capt. Mutton, he at the same time giving an interesting synopsis of the history of the militia since 1759. This toast was responded to by Major Vidal, C Co., I. S. C., and Capt. Manley, R. G.

The toast of "Our Commanding Officer and Staff" was proposed by Sergt. Caldwell and responded to by Lt.-Col. Hamilton, Capt. Mason and Quartermaster Heates. Col. Hamilton made a few brief remarks, in which he stated that about twenty-five years ago he was one of the rear rank men in this company. "Our Guests," proposed by Corp. Lennox, brought responses from Prof. Baker, Toronto University, and Staff-Sergt. Walker. "Our Sister Corps," proposed by Sergt. Pearson, was responded to by Major Meade, T.F.B., and Lieut. McLellan, R.G.

The remaining toasts were:—"Ex-Members," proposed by Col.-Sergt. Bowden and responded to by Judge Lawson, now of New Jersey, Capt. Thompson, ex-Capt. Miller, ex-Col.-Sergt. Simpson, ex-Sergt. Blight; "The Ladies," responded to by Pte. Blair, and the "Press."

The musical programme was lengthy, and was contributed to by the following: Capt. Manley, Bugler Davies, Ptes. Cuthbert, Caldwell and Francis, Sergt. Pearson, Sergt. Wood, Col.-Sgt. Cooper, Mr. J. Macdonald, Mr. Milne and the Bugle Band Orchestra. It was nearly 3 o'clock e'er the last of revellers left the scene of the pleasantest dinner ever given by this company.

BREECH BLOCK.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[This paper does not necessarily share the views expressed in correspondence published in its columns, the use of which is freely granted to writers on topics of interest to the Militia.]

### HOLIDAY PARADES AND FIELD DAYS.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE.—After your correspondent "Stadacona" has learned to distinguish between a "holiday parade" and a "field day," he will, no doubt, be in a better position to discuss the state of my health. Yours, etc.,

10th March, 1891.

SNAP CAP.

Perhaps the explosive of the future has yet to be discovered, but it seems likely that dynamite will before long play a very important part in military and naval operations. The danger of dynamite shells hitherto has been their liability to explode before leaving the gun. Zalinski's dynamite gun has in part got over this difficulty, but its aim is imperfect. Lieut. Graydon, another officer of the United States Navy, has invented a dynamite shell for which it is claimed that it may be fired from an ordinary field piece. The discharge of powder behind the shell, however, must invariably involve some risk. The inventor is now engaged on a pneumatic gun for firing his dynamite shells, the bursting charges of which are made in small pellets. As soon as the shell strikes the explosion takes place. The first of the Graydon guns has for some time past been under construction at Birmingham, and is now ready for trial. It is a rather heavy piece of ordnance, 15 inches calibre, and may be loaded and fired at any degree of elevation.

Many a once suffering consumptive has had reason to bless that valuable preparation, T. A. SLOCUM'S OXYGENIZED EMULSION of PURE COD LIVER OIL. Every druggist sells it, whilst the office of the company at Toronto, Ontario, can bear witness to the daily increasing demand for it.

## THE NORTH-WEST RIFLE LEAGUE.

The North-West Rifle League, to which reference was made in these columns a few weeks ago, has been duly organized, with Mr. T. W. Taylor as president; Mr. C. N. Mitchell treasurer, and Mr. K. Graburn secretary. The rules and regulations are as follows:—

Teams to be composed of five (5) members of any association, and may be altogether militiamen or civilians, or partly composed of both. Each association may enter as many teams as desired. It is not necessary to have the same men on the team each match, but when a man once fires on a team, he cannot fire on any other the same season.

The ranges will be at such distances as may be determined by the Executive.

Position at 200 yards, standing or kneeling; at all other distances, in any position with head to target.

Rifles.—The Snider, long or short, and the Carbine.

The matches to be fired every alternate Saturday afternoon (except the 5th September) during the season, commencing on Saturday the 16th May.

Each score sheet to show the detailed shooting of each competitor, and to be vouched for by the signature of the senior officer or member of the association present throughout the shooting, and to be forwarded to the secretary, Mr. K. Graburn, Dominion Lands Office, Winnipeg.

The senior officer, or if no officer is present, then any one who may be selected by the members present, will take charge of the shooting; whose duty it will be to see that the rules are carried out and the conditions of the competitions strictly enforced. The name of each member of a team to be handed in or made known to the Range Officer before commencing firing—after the first shot no change in a team to be made.

The fee for entering each team for the whole series of matches to be \$5.00, payable in advance to the secretary.

The full amount received for entrance fees (less current expenses) to be expended in the purchase of such prizes (one for every four teams entered) and to be awarded in order of merit to the highest aggregates of any five (5) of the fortnightly competitions. Teams representing Winnipeg shall only be eligible to win one team prize.

The D. R. A. rules will govern in all cases not provided for in the foregoing.

The object of the League is especially for the purpose of encouraging rifle shooting, and to foster a desire amongst the younger shots to strive to obtain such proficiency as will enable them to take rank as first-class shots.

The officers of the League shall consist of a President, Secretary and a Treasurer, who will also act as the Executive of the League.

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## THE N. R. A.

The winter general meeting of the members of the National Rifle Association was held on the 26th February. Brigadier-General Lord Wantage, V.C., K.C.B., the Chairman of the Council, presiding, in the absence of the Duke of Cambridge, President of the Association. In presenting the report of the Council the Chairman spoke in the most hopeful terms of the prospects of the Association. Having completed four years' service as Chairman he had placed his resignation in the hands of the Council, and Lord Waldegrave, a well-known rifle shot and officer in a prominent Metropolitan volunteer corps, had consented to take the position. He referred to the two changes in the Secretaryship during the year, first Mr. Humphry and then Lieut.-Col. Marsden having been compelled, owing to private reasons, to resign, and their successor being Col. Mackinnon, the present Secretary. He announced an increase in the target accommodation and a general improvement in the grounds at Bisley.

Quartermaster Gratwicke very freely criticised the position of affairs as shown by the report, and questioned whether there was any real economy in doing with the partial services of a secretary, when the whole time of such an officer might be profitably employed in endeavouring to keep the Association before the public, and to induce subscriptions. The annual subscriptions had steadily decreased until in 1890 they were only £522 or £200 less than seven years ago. He considered the expenses of management were much too great. He pointed out that while the Martini shots paid £3,000 a year in excess of the Martini prizes, the small-bore shots drew £150 more than they paid—a discrimination against the service rifle which should not continue. In conclusion he advocated a re-arrangement of the programme, so that all the principal matches might be finished the first week, and the rest of the shooting disposed of in three days of the second week.

Lieut. Heath urged that the use of orthoptics should still be allowed. Sergt. Fulton also rose to speak in favour of orthoptics, but was interrupted by the Chairman, who amidst applause stated that the Council had resolved to allow their use to be continued.

When the time came for election of members to fill vacancies on the Council, the long-threatened storm broke. In amendment to a motion made on behalf of the Council to elect Col. Villiers, Col. Bargrave Deane was proposed. A spirited discussion followed, during which Sir Henry Halford stated that the Council would have to treat the rejection of their candidate as a vote of want of confidence. A show of hands being called for, 33 members declared for Col. Villiers and 27 for Col. Deane. A poll was then demanded on behalf of the latter.

Quartermaster Gratwicke was then proposed as against Lord Lathom, one of the members retiring in rotation, but seeking re-election. Instead of Mr. Gratwicke (who is Secretary of the English Twenty), Major Thorburn (the Captain of the Scottish Twenty) was proposed, the Council seemingly accepting Major Thorburn as a compromise. A show of hands resulted in 34 votes for Mr. Gratwicke, 27 for Lord Lathom and 20 for Major Thorburn. A poll was then demanded. The result of both polls, in which every member of the association has the right to cast a written ballot, will be announced at an adjourned meeting to be held as soon as possible.

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## Gleanings.

With the view of obviating the necessity for markers at rifle ranges, and thus doing away with the elements of danger, delay, and uncertainty, an Australian, Mr. A. T. M. Johnson, of Melbourne, has invented a new automatic signalling target. The face of the target consists of rings divided into a total of twenty-three separate moving pieces or sections, the back of each section being attached to oblique oscillating levers connected with a horizontal balancing bar. When any of the sections are struck the levers oscillate, and, in so doing, raise the horizontal bar running horizontally above it. This latter, being forced up, releases a signalling lever, in which is fixed a signalling disc, which instantly appears in view. Each section of the target has a different signalling disc, so that it is at once seen from the firing point where the bullet has struck. After remaining in sight for a few seconds, the lever with the disc turns to its place, and the target is ready for the next shot. There are also two attachments which can be fitted to the target. The first shows the position of the shot by means of a recording instrument placed at the firing point and connected up electrically with the target; the second is an arrangement by which each shot is registered on a roll of paper placed inside the target, and this roll can be compared with the manual record at the end of the practice.

For some months past the cuirassier regiments quartered in Paris have had Lebel repeater rifled carbines supplied to their flank horsemen, carried in leather cases on the right saddle flap under the thigh. It is affirmed that the fire experiments were sufficiently conclusive to recommend the innovation of arming the French heavy cavalry with carbines, like the dragoons with lances. It is not the first time that French cuirassiers have carried fire-arms similarly with the British Life and Horse Guards of the present day. Already in 1812, the cuirassiers of the Grand Army of Napoleon the First, when invading Russia, were provided with a bell-mouthed brass musketoon (the vulgar "blunderbuss") which was carried on the right thigh, the butt being inserted into a sort of shoe that was fixed to a strap round the chest of the horse. These peculiar fire-arms were nearly all left behind in the retreat from Moscow, along with their bearers, but remained in vogue many years afterwards in England, where they were much affected by the guards of the Royal Mails on the highways and by residents in outlying rural districts.

The following examples, taken from military history, show the effects of infantry fire: Frederick the Great defeated the Austrians at the battle of Czaslau, 17th May, 1732, and out of every 357 shots fired by the Prussians only one Austrian was killed or wounded. In the campaigns of 1805 and 1806, when the Great Napoleon was victorious everywhere, only one man was killed or wounded out of every 3,000 shots; and in 1813 and 1814, 10,000 shots were fired to kill or wound one man. Bautzen was an exception, for there 714 balls were fired for one man *hors de combat*. At the battle of Victoria, Wellington's army fired 500 shots for one man killed or wounded. In 1849, at Kolding, the Prussian infantry fired 77,248 cartridges, and put 473 Danes *hors de combat*—that is one hit out of every 163 shots fired. In 1859, Napoleon III. defeated the Austrian army at the great battle of Solferino. The Austrians fired 8,400,000 cartridges, and only killed and wounded 12,000 French soldiers, or one man out of every 700 shots. In the campaigns of 1864 and 1866 the average was about 66 shots for one man *hors de combat*. In the battles of 1870-71, 250 shots were fired for every man killed or wounded.

Much discussion has been caused by the lengthy letter recently addressed to the *Times* by "A Commanding Officer" upon the subject of England's Cavalry. He ascribes the existing condition to the two following evils—the deficiency of able and experienced officers, and the absence of a system of sound organization. As regards the first, most are in accord with him that, to induce the best officers to enter the Cavalry service, the expense of serving must be brought within the means of the great majority of those young gentlemen who officer the army. There is, however, greater difference of opinion as to the means by which he proposes to gain this end. These are, that Government should give to each young officer upon joining two remounts, suitable as first and second chargers; that each officer should receive £25 per annum, or, if he so elect, a remount free every two years; that regimental drags should be abolished; that inter-regimental polo should be discontinued (as is about to be done in India); that a rigid economy in the mess should be enforced; and that a suitable working dress, devoid of gold lace, should be instituted, and the present amount of ridiculous and expensive uniform be curtailed. It would be no small gain, it is felt, if unsuitable Cavalry officers should be transferred to Infantry and suitable Infantry officers transferred in like manner to Cavalry. Most Cavalry officers who take any strong interest in their profession are at one with "A Commanding Officer" in desiring to see the authorities enforce the introduction of the squadron system.

William Ehrensport, who represented the New York Shuetzen Verein at the Berlin Bundesfest last summer, gives the following description of the new magazine military gun which has superseded the Mowser as the national arm of Germany. Mr. Ehrensport explained that he was not permitted to handle or even to examine the rifle except at long range, and that his description is only a general one. "It is composed," he said, "of two barrels, one inserted within the other, fitted very loosely, but held by bands or rivets, thus allowing a free circulation of air all around the inside one and precluding the barrel from getting red hot and falling to pieces. The magazine contains five shots, which are inserted in the slot altogether in a little box just in front of the trigger. By pushing the lever down, as on the Winchester, the empty shell flies out, and when the fifth shot has been fired the empty frame and shell are automatically thrown away. It is as simple and durable as our Springfield, about as heavy, and of thirty-two caliber, although the bullet is probably a little longer."

### INFORMATION WANTED

AS to the whereabouts of JOHN TONSTILL or Tonstell, who served in Co. B, No. 64, New York Volunteers, under Capt. Hilldreth, during the late American war, and who afterwards joined some of the battalions of the Canadian Militia, and was in Thorold during the Review after the Fenian raid. Information to be sent to WM. MONRO, Captain No. 2 Company, 44th Battalion, Thorold, Ontario.

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FOR SALE AT A BARGAIN—the owner having duplicates of the same—One Major's Tunic with Rank Badges complete, a first-class article, cost £12, made by Buckmaster, London, Eng., and as good as new, having been worn but once. One REGULATION Waterproof Cloth Great Coat and Cape, made by Maynard Harris & Co., London, and cost £6 10s., and in first-class condition. For particulars address "Rifleman," care Militia Gazette.

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(By One of Them.)

Some people wonder who I am, and think me rather tough,  
But those who know my pedigree say that I'm just the stuff;  
For look upon my shoulder-strap and you can plainly see  
I'm a fascinating Private in the 10th R. G.

CHORUS--

Here's to the Army, the Navy and the Queen,  
For we have done our duty wherever we have been;  
When out on active service we made the rebels flee,  
We've got the true old British pluck in the 10th R. G.

And when upon parade, you know, we look so neat and clean,  
With our snow-white belts and busbies, our knapsacks and canteen,  
For marching past we take the cake, and we will always be  
"Ready, aye ready" in the 10th R. G.

Look at our roll of officers—no better can be found  
In any other regiment in all the world around;  
And with their aid we well can meet the friendly rivalry  
Against our dashing regiment—the 10th R. G.

And in the 10th we've got a band, well worthy a proud boast,  
And to our gallant drummer boys we'll drink a hearty toast;  
For they're the lads who cheered us on when on the prairie sea,  
We soldiered with our regiment—the 10th R. G.

You boys that wear the scarlet coat, the forage cap and cane,  
Keep up your reputation, for you have won a name  
That will always hold an honoured place in Canadian history,  
And that's why I'm a Private in the 10th R. G.

That excellent journal, the *Dominion Illustrated*, is steadily improving under its present energetic management, and is as steadily growing in public favour. The enlargement to 24 pages weekly afforded opportunity for great improvement in its literary contents, the contributors to which now include many well-known writers. Historic sketches, healthy fiction, crisp editorials on current topics, bright correspondence from London, New York, Toronto and other cities, sports and pastimes, humorous sketches, etc., make up with the numerous illustrations, dealing chiefly with Canadian scenes, events and personages, a charming journal for Canadian readers and a welcome weekly visitor in every home. The prize competition which the publishers have so successfully inaugurated is not an effort to work off some bogus silverware, but a straightforward agreement made in good faith with their subscribers. The result, from the nature of the competition, must be beneficial to the readers, and the publishers' only hope of adequate return is in an enlarged and permanent circulation, which was their object at the outset. On receipt of 12 cents in stamps they (the *Subston Litho. and Pub. Co., Montreal*) will forward to any address a sample copy of the journal with full particulars of the competition.

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