

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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## Topics of the Week.

We would invite those of our readers who have any suggestions to make in connection with matters affecting the militia to come up in Parliament, or at the annual business meetings of the Dominion Rifle and Artillery associations, to make use of our columns for that purpose. Much good may be accomplished by such an interchange of ideas.

Indirectly, it comes to our hearing every now and again, that so-and-so would like to have ventilated a certain subject in the *MILITIA GAZETTE*, but refrained from sending a letter, as he had supposed it would not be inserted. Now, how anyone has obtained such an impression we do not understand, as we cannot recall an instance of the suppression of any communication of a nature such as to warrant publication in a paper of good standing. We invite fair comment, from any responsible person desiring to make it, on any subject coming within the scope of this paper. We do not wish to furnish facilities for anonymous political attacks, or personal reflections, from which no good can come, but honest, manly criticism has at all times been welcomed. The difficulty of ascertaining and fully understanding the desires, the necessities, or the grievances of the militia, more especially in the case of corps in the outlying provinces, would be minimized were more general advantage taken of the cordial invitation of the *MILITIA GAZETTE* to make use of its columns. And it is obvious that we can best help those who thus help themselves.

It is not at all improbable that a general efficiency competition for the Infantry and Rifles will be a feature of next season's drill. The suggestions in this connection made on several occasions by the *MILITIA GAZETTE* have, we are informed, led to informal discussions of the proposition in some of the chief militia centres, and a definite scheme is likely to be formulated in the near future.

Attention is directed to the proposition, published in our Rifle news of this week, of an annual competition for the permanent corps, this being promoted by Major Peters, of C Battery R.C.A., located at Victoria, B.C. The idea certainly is a good one, and we hope that a general disposition will be shown to join in the competition. We would suggest the choice of a date later in the season than that named, so that the

teams might have greater opportunities for practice, and thus derive more benefit from the competition. If rifle shooting does not become a popular pursuit with the permanent corps, it certainly will not be Major Peters' fault. In addition to promoting the scheme above referred to, that enthusiastic officer this week gives notification of a substantial prize he intends to annually present to the non-commissioned members of that body making the highest score in his class firing.

All Canadians, and especially friends of his Military College days, will rejoice at the distinction Lieut. Stairs has achieved by his connection with the Stanley expedition in the Dark Continent. The intrepid explorer made a wise choice, when out of a host of aspirants he took for his right-hand man the hardy young Canadian, whose crowning recommendation, no doubt, was that he had added to his theoretical training in our Royal Military College two or three years of practical surveying experience in the wilds of New Zealand, thus peculiarly fitting himself for a position of trust in the now famous expedition.

The Rideau rifle range at Ottawa is no doubt destined to be closed within a few years, unless the Government or the Dominion Rifle Association purchase the property. Looking forward to the end of Rideau, the Montreal riflemen are disposed to urge that future Dominion meetings should be held upon their range. A D.R.A. committee was appointed some time last year, to report upon the subject of a new range, but we believe it has so far failed to report.

President Harrison's first message to Congress contains these references to the subject of the national defence: "Judged by modern standards, we are practically without coast defences. Many of the structures we have would enhance rather than diminish the perils of their garrisons if subjected to the fire of improved guns; and very few are so located as to give full effect to the greater range of such guns as we are now making for coast defence uses. This general subject has had consideration in Congress for some years, and the appropriation for the construction of large rifled guns made one year ago was, I am sure, the expression of a purpose to provide suitable works in which these guns might be mounted. An appropriation now made for that purpose would not advance the completion of the works beyond our ability to supply them with fairly effective guns. The security of our coast cities against foreign attack should not rest altogether in the friendly disposition of other nations. There should be a second line wholly in our own keeping. I very urgently recommend an appropriation at this session for the construction of such works in our most exposed harbours. I approve the suggestion of the Secretary of War that provision be made for encamping companies in the National Guard in our coast works for a specified time each year, and for their training in the use of heavy guns. His suggestion that an increase of the artillery force of the army is desirable is also in this connection commended to the consideration of Congress."

Lieut.-Col. Hume, A.A.G., Inspector of Volunteers in New Zealand, has spoken out somewhat plainly in his annual report on the volunteer force of that colony. He has felt it his duty to state that many officers of the force are unfitted to command, and the Sydney service papers hint that he is perfectly right. Col. Hume objects to the prevailing system of allowing volunteers to elect their own officers. The report states that the strength of the New Zealand volunteer force on December 31 last was 7,685, divided into 140 corps.

### Suggestions for U. S. Army Reform.

Gen. Lew Wallace advocates the extension of the West Point system to the whole U. S. Army, and his suggestion is embodied in the annual report of the Board of Visitors to the U. S. Military Academy. He says :

"Gen. Grant said the number of cadets ought to be raised to 1,000. The opinion of the wisest soldier of his day leaves little room for debate except as to how the addition should be made, and to what extent. It is very remarkable that of a people martial in spirit as any in the world, the youth most desirable for soldiers cannot be induced in the present status of the Army to enter its ranks. Of the many reasons for this circumstance one must be given—as a rule enlistment is the end of social standing. To cure this evil every inducement to become a cadet—certainty of advanced education, hope of commissions, elevation socially—should be offered.

"The proposition is not to multiply West Points, but simply to extend the system of education and discipline to the whole Army. In that particular, every fixed post in the country, now or hereafter to be established, might be converted into a military academy. The company officer is the true instructor for his men. Indeed, given the right kind of men, if an officer should protest against the duty he should at once be suspected of incapacity and disposed of by retracy."

Gen. Wallace enumerates 14 essentials to the proposed re-establishment, among them the following :

1. A term of enlistment for five years.
2. Courses of education similar to those at the Academy.
3. Company officers personal instructors of the men.
4. Heavy penalties for humiliating personal treatment of enlisted men by officers, such as subjecting them to menial service or to manual labour not strictly within the limit of honourable duty.
5. Selections of a limited number (say 300 or 500) of enlisted men at the end of their fourth year of service for transfer to West Point, there to undergo a course of final instruction extending through the fifth year, the selection to be from the entire body of fourth year men, according to merit.
6. All enlisted men not chosen for the final course at the Academy to be discharged at the end of the fourth year.
7. Commissions to fill vacancies in the lowest grade to be issued at the end of the fifth year to the men of the best standing and greatest general proficiency, all other modes of original appointment to the Army to be abolished.
8. Men who fail to receive commissions to receive diplomas and be discharged.

The General thus sums up the results of the system he proposes : "Giving three officers to each company of 100 men, a calculation, upon the hypothesis of an annual discharge of 3,000 soldiers, can be easily made of the supply of commissioned officers furnishable by the new system. In a marvellously short period there would be officers ready-made for a million men. In the next place the popular dream of a democratic army is nonsense. Discipline implies despotism. It is not idle, however, to talk of an army democratic in personnel and sentiment. The retracy of educated soldiers in the walks of civil life would, it is believed, accomplish this end. Certainly the present system does not contribute to it. The foregoing is not aimed as a blow at West Point. If one thinks otherwise the reply ought to suffice that the Army of the United States is not a toy kept for the amusement of anybody."

The Board in conclusion say : "The United States Military Academy at West point belongs to the people, and it deserves the love, admiration and love of the people."

The *Naval and Military Argus* is severe upon British naval chaplains. We have no objection, it says, "to naval chaplains as individuals, we object to them in their official capacity. We have tossed many of them for a whiskey and soda, we have been rooked by them at loo, we have heard them utter very elongated d—s, etc., especially etc., but we have never once been asked by any of them as to our soul. We were once inquisitive on the subject ourselves, but failed to get any answer except an offer to 'flutter for a split.' £31,900! (the cost of the chaplains); 31,900 golden reasons for getting rid of white-necked gentlemen from H. M. ships, where they eat the bread of idleness, and lay up treasure, but not for Heaven."

### The Australian Defences.

From the last Australian mail further particulars have been obtained of Major-General Edwards' report on the organization of the defence forces of Australia, which has recently attracted much attention. Gen. Edwards considers that the Australian colonies offer such a rich and tempting prize that if they had to rely on their own resources they would certainly be called upon to fight for their independence, and without any cohesion or power of combination their position would be one of great danger. He recommends that the defence forces be placed at once upon a proper footing by such organization as will enable the colonies to combine for mutual defence. To effect this he proposes that on a population basis Victoria and New South Wales should furnish three brigades each, and South Australia and Queensland one each. The Governments should agree to organize their forces on the same system, and an officer of the rank of lieutenant-general should be appointed to inspect in time of peace, and command the whole in time of war.

The following are extracts from the General's report :—"A common system of defence can only be carried out by a federation of the military forces of the colonies, each state agreeing to organize its forces on the same system, although they may continue to pay and maintain them separately. Some additional expenditure will be required to carry out these proposals, but its amount is inconsiderable in comparison with the results which will be obtained. Comparing the present expenditure of the different colonies with that of the mother country, and even with the United States of America, it cannot be said that the burden of defence presses heavily upon the great resources of the Australian colonies. While England expends one-third of her income on defence and the United States one-sixth, Australia expends one-fortieth. There are other, but not less important, points which cannot be considered in detail, such as the supply of rifle ammunition, the difficulties of which will be overcome when the manufactory now being established at Melbourne is finished, and which must be in sufficient quantities to meet the demands which would be made when a state of war becomes probable and the whole of the forces are mobilised for further training. Also the supply of ammunition for the field artillery and a common armament for the field batteries, the establishment of a railway corps, and of proper cadres for the medical—a well-thought-out scheme for which has been prepared by the principal medical officer of New South Wales—and commissariat corps, and a common federal ordnance store and gun wharf, and a federal camp of instruction to be formed from time to time by the forces of contiguous colonies.

"My proposals, briefly summarized, are as follows :—

- "1. Federation of the forces.
- "2. An officer of the rank of lieutenant-general to be appointed ; to advise and inspect in peace, and command in war.
- "3. A uniform system of organization and armament, and a common Defence Act.
- "4. Amalgamation of the permanent forces into a 'Fortress Corps.'
- "5. A Federal Military College for the education of the officers.
- "6. The extension of the rifle clubs.
- "7. A uniform gauge for the railways, and their extension to Western Australia and Port Darwin.
- "8. A federal small-arm manufactory, gun wharf, and ordnance store.

"In making these propositions I wish it to be understood that I do not commit myself in any way as to the sufficiency of these forces for the defence of Australia. The proposals which I have made are based upon the number of troops now maintained by the different colonies ; but what the actual strength should be depends upon political considerations, and the possible combinations among the different foreign powers. Looking to the state of affairs in Europe, and to the fact that it is the unforeseen which happens in war the defence forces should at once be placed on a proper footing ; but this is, however, quite impossible without a federation of the forces of the different colonies."

### New Military Books.

[Published by Gale & Polden, of Chatham, Eng.]

COMPANY DRILL MADE EASY. By Sergt-Major Gordon. 2nd edition, revised, with 54 illustrations, in accordance with Army Orders of March 1889. Cloth, pp 94. Price, 1s. 6d.. or 15 shillings per dozen.

The title of this work is no misnomer. It does make company drill easy of comprehension. This is in a great measure due to the excellent plates and the clear way in which the work is arranged. It is as simple as A B C, and while it is thorough and comprehensive, it leaves nothing to be imagined by the student, as every single movement is explained under all the various positions. The directions for all ranks, and the explanations of the words of command are clear and concise. The book is an admirable one and should be possessed by all who are endeavouring to master the intricacies of drill.

**BATTALION DRILL MADE EASY.** By W. Gordon, late Sergt.-Major 2nd Scots Guards. 5th edition. Enlarged and rewritten on an entirely new and improved principle, with 57 illustrations. Pp 250. Price 2/ or 20/ per doz.

We have carefully examined Mr. Gordon's manual upon battalion drill and find it to be a complete and accurate elucidation of Part III. of the new Infantry Drill. The sections, though taken in the same order as in the drill book, are so arranged that on completion of each movement the battalion is left in correct position for taking up the next. The work may therefore be said to comprise one continuous field day. Every single movement in battalion drill is explained under all the various positions, and the illustrations being full as well as numerous, help to simplify the study of each section. In the Infantry Drill references are constantly being made to preceding paragraphs, which have to be turned up, read and examined, and the result is confusing and troublesome. Mr. Gordon has entirely obviated this defect in his book, and the work is one of the best handbooks on battalion drill we have yet seen. The official changes and additions to the new drill book recently laid down in Army Orders have been included. We venture to say that every officer and non-commissioned officer who masters this book, has practically absorbed the essence of battalion drill. In size, the book is handy, and the price cheap.

**BRIGADE DRILL MADE EASY.** By W. Gordon, late Sergt.-Major 2nd Scots Guards. 4th edition, revised and enlarged. 41 illustrations. Cloth, pp. 128. Price 2/ or 20/ per dozen.

The book, which is illustrated by many diagrams and illustrations, is a most useful handbook to all students of infantry drill, and should certainly be read by all field officers and adjutants. All explanations requisite for comprehending and executing any movement are given with the description of the evolution under notice, thus enabling the student to perceive at a glance the details for carrying it out, together with the place assigned to each individual connected with the brigade thereby accomplishing the object of rendering each movement intelligible in itself. The work is compendious, the design clear and ably carried out. We feel sure those who purchase it will be satisfied with their investment, and those who study it will be repaid for their trouble.

**GUIDES AND MARKERS' DUTIES IN COMPANY, BATTALION AND BRIGADE DRILL.** By W. Gordon, late Sergt. Major 2nd Scots Guards. 5th edition, fully illustrated, pp. 300, cloth, price 2/ or 20/ per doz.

This handbook is intended to enable guides and markers to perceive at a glance the several posts assigned to them in each movement, sparing them waste of time in the perusal of each section and ever-recurring references which are made to preceding sections during the explanation of movements in the Infantry Drill. The places assigned to guides and markers are given in well executed plates, with the description of each movement. It supplies a want long felt, and is highly recommended to all officers and n. c. officers who desire to possess an intelligent knowledge of their duties on parade.

**PHYSICAL DRILL WITHOUT ARMS MADE EASY,** in accordance with the new Infantry Drill. Cloth, 3rd edition, illustrated with 26 plates, pp. 20. Price, 1/; in paper covers, 9d. each or 7/6 per dozen.

Endeavours have been made in this little book to give examples of how to practise physical drill. The system is the one taught at Aldershot. To facilitate instruction, the author has added at the end of the book 26 plates, giving the various positions throughout the drill. Its hints and directions are invaluable, not only to military men, but also to civilians as affording a valuable gymnastic training without the necessity of an instructor.

**PHYSICAL DRILL WITH ARMS, NEW BAYONET EXERCISE, AND ATTACK AND DEFENCE.** Arranged by William Gordon. Cloth, pp. 72, illustrated with 36 plates. Price, 1/; in paper covers, 9d., or 7/6 per dozen.

An invaluable book, thanks to the numerous and well executed plates contained in it, as well as the directions and explanations of the various movements, and a list of the times at which the exercise can be performed. As the "Physical Drill," both with and without arms, and the "Bayonet Exercise," are now features of regimental inspections, we commend this work, as well as "Physical Drill Without Arms," to all officers. They are capital little books and well worthy of study.

Col. R. H. Hall, U. S. A., Inspector General, Department of Arizona, recommends that "the colour of the facings of the cavalry arm of the service be changed to orange," the yellow of the cloth as well as of the plumes not being durable, and it not being difficult to procure a durable orange colour.

## In the Mother Country.

The Bingham Challenge Shield, value £250, which has been won twice in succession by the Leeds Rifles, was recently presented to Col. Wilson, the commanding officer, on behalf of the corps, in the Victoria Hall, Leeds. The presentation took place at eight o'clock, but previous to this, the Mayor and Mayoress of Leeds (Alderman and Mrs. Ward) received in the Mayor's Rooms, Town Hall, the President, Vice-Presidents and Council of the Yorkshire V.B. Team Competition and the Volunteer Officers of Yorkshire. The function was a brilliant one, the attendance of officers and other guests being very large. By eight o'clock the Victoria Hall was quite full. Dr. Spark played selections on the organ, and the Leeds Artillery band was also in attendance, so that the interval which elapsed between the opening of the doors and the commencement of the presentation proceedings was pleasantly beguiled. The competition is for teams of 12 men per regiment, and is open to Yorkshire. This year 16 regiments entered and balloted for opponents in the first round, then the eight winning teams were paired for the second round, and so on until two teams were only left (York and Leeds), when these, on Aug. 31st, shot off for the Championship and the shield. The Leeds 12 scored 1,052 over Queen's ranges, and York 1,018, leaving Leeds the winners for the second time of the magnificent trophy, with the excellent average of 87 $\frac{2}{3}$  points per man.

The annual engineering competition took place at the headquarters of the 1st Lancashire Engineers recently, there being a fair muster of members to witness the competing squads do the work assigned. Major M'Pherson, R.E., commanding Royal Engineers (Liverpool), kindly acted as umpire. For recruits the competition was the construction of four fascines, full size. The principal competition, however, was the construction of two barrel piers and the formation of a raft. Only two squads of sixteen men each competed; but the work of both was so excellent, and the time occupied so short, that great excitement and curiosity prevailed as to the result. Ultimately, Capt. Green, R.E., read out the decision, the first prize being awarded to I Company (No. 2), Sergt. Fisher, time 13 $\frac{1}{2}$  minutes; D Company, Sergt. Delaney, taking second prize. In the recruits' competition No. 2, 3, and 1 Companies took first, second, and third prizes respectively. Major M'Pherson, R. E., said it had given him great pleasure to act as judge. He thought the work was well and creditably done. If the time came when their services would be wanted for their country, they would in a very short time be of immense assistance.

On the much discussed subject of equipment, the *Volunteer Service Gazette* says: "We look, we must confess, with much anxiety for the results of the extraordinary action which it pleased her Majesty's Government to take last June in regard to the volunteers. Until the issue of the Adjutant-General's letter in that month on the subject of equipment, it had been supposed that the volunteer is not, in theory at least, bound to give anything to the state except his time, and that the state had to provide everything else necessary for his military efficiency. Practically we know the state takes such a very peculiar view as to what is necessary, that the volunteers in most districts could not exist at all unless either their friends or their officers put their hands into their pockets to defray the expenses which cannot be met out of the funds given by the Government. The announcement of the Adjutant-General last summer that the Government expected that a number of articles of equipment should be provided in each volunteer corps as a new condition of efficiency, was therefore a great blow, especially to corps in country districts. The late Lord Mayor of London, Sir James Whitehead, appears to have foreseen the new requirement, and by his energy and influence, the Metropolitan Volunteers will, at any rate, have no difficulty in appearing at their inspections fully accoutred. The same will be the case in many counties such as Staffordshire, where the volunteers are popular. And in great towns there will be no difficulty. But in rural districts, it may not be so easy to comply with the new requirements of the Government. However, we are disposed to think that on the whole, there will be sufficient local *esprit de corps* to find funds for the comparatively small amount of equipments with which the volunteers will have to be supplied."

Captain Palliser has written to the press correcting the announcement that the French and Germans are about to change their steel guns for gun-metal guns. He believes that the Germans are about to give up powder-bags for field artillery, substituting "fixed ammunition," which means a solid-drawn copper case containing the powder, with the projectile fixed in front. Should the Germans take this course all large nations will probably do the same.

### Regimental and Other News.

A meeting was held in Hamilton last Friday afternoon of gentlemen interested in the formation of a cavalry troop. Mr. W. A. Kerr was elected chairman, and Charles Vosper secretary. The chairman stated that he had received over forty names of those willing to join the troop, and that the city and county members of Parliament had promised to use their influence to have it equipped by the Dominion Government. A committee composed of W. R. Pray, D. J. Peace and J. C. Vosper was appointed to enquire into the cost of uniform, which, it was decided, should consist of scarlet with white or buff facings.

The portraits of the Charlottetown team victorious in the recent inter-city telegraphic rifle match, appear in the last issue of the *Dominion Illustrated*.

Lt.-Col. Lewis, Brigade Major, was in Ottawa last week to transfer the command of No. 1 Co. 43rd from Capt. Rogers to Lieut. O'Grady. He is looking remarkably well—growing younger in appearance, his friends told him. In Ottawa Col. Lewis was the guest of Capt. D. C. F. Bliss, of the Field Battery.

Capt. S. Maynard Rogers has been appointed adjutant of the 43rd Battalion, Ottawa and Carleton Rifles, vice Evans, now with D Co. Infantry School Corps. Lieut. J. W. de C. O'Grady will be captain of No. 1 Co., vice Rogers.

A bowling team of eight members of the Victoria Rifles, Montreal, on Saturday last met and defeated, at Ottawa, a team of the O. A. A. C. The latter will visit Montreal for a return match.

Lieut. Streatfeild, who will shortly succeed Capt. H. E. Wise as Aide-de-Camp to Lieut.-General Sir Fred Middleton, has been very ill with typhoid fever at the Belfast barracks, but is now convalescent. The *United Services Gazette* says in this connection: "We are glad to learn from Belfast, that in connection with the outbreak of typhoid fever at the Victoria Barracks and Willowbank Camp, Lieut. Streatfeild, Gordon Highlanders, who was suffering from this disease at the former, and Lieut. Grant-Duff, Black Watch, at the latter place, are now convalescent. The Royal Engineers are still working at the drains, which are in a defective state."

The band of the Governor General's Foot Guards, Ottawa, is showing marked improvement under the charge of Bandmaster Carter, who has lately resumed this position. At the St. Andrew's Society concert last week the band selections at the opening and during the intermission were found to be exceedingly well appreciated features of the programme.

### Stanley's Right-Hand Man.

Lieut. Hooper, of the Montreal Field Battery, was a classmate of Lieut. Stairs, who has proved himself such an invaluable assistant to Stanley in Africa. Mr. Hooper has the following to say about the Haliogonian:—

"When Mr. Stairs was at college he was a general favourite among the cadets. He was well up when he joined, having had a college education in Nova Scotia; he always showed up well in examinations, and finally graduated with honours in 1882. There is no doubt he was a clever fellow, and we always thought a manly and plucky one as well. Was he the sort of man I should expect to turn out an adventurous explorer? Yes; if I had given the matter any thought when we were cadets together, I should have expected that Stairs would make a reputation for himself by his skill and pluck. His was just the character to make an explorer out of. He was a tall, strong built lad in our cadet days, always up to a lark, and very fond of athletic sports. Stairs quite excelled on the football field, and many Montrealers must recall his steady play in the matches played here between the cadets and the Montreal, McGill and Britannia teams. After graduating Stairs went out to New Zealand to take a good position on the engineering staff of a railway under his uncle, who is also an engineer. There he had charge of the construction of a line through the bush, and was greatly praised for his energy. When the Imperial authorities offered a number of commissions to graduates of the Royal Military College in 1885 Stairs accepted a commission in the Royal Engineers and was stationed for about a year at Chatham, when he joined the expedition under Stanley. The circumstances under which Stairs joined Stanley were decidedly honourable to him. Stanley, having obtained permission from the army authorities to take a royal engineer officer with him to take charge of the astronomical and other scientific departments of the expedition, called for volunteers among the officers in the corps of engineers. I understand that about a hundred engineer officers, some of them with long service and most of them with great influence, volunteered. Stanley, after inquiring into

the physique, characters and abilities of the applicants, chose Stairs, to his intense delight. I can understand pretty well why anybody with Stanley's keen perception would select Stairs. Then, of course, the fact of his early training in Canada and his experience in the New Zealand bush would be very much in his favour. Oh, yes, all of us who were classmates of Stairs have followed him in his wanderings as far as we could through the papers, and needless to say we have felt proud of the praise showered on old Will by Stanley.

Lieut. Stairs was born in Halifax in 1863, and is therefore just twenty-six years of age.

F. W. Bullock, of Halifax, received a private letter last week from Lieut. Stairs. The letter, which is dated from Usambiro mission station, Victoria Nyanza, August 30th last, contains some interesting details of Lieut. Stairs' experiences. He had just received the intelligence of his father's death from Halifax. Following are extracts from the communication:—

"I wrote you last from Yambuya. Our starvation periods, fighting, fevers and other trials would occupy pages. You must read Stanley's letters to the English papers. Directly on leaving Yambuya some had bad fever. Then we got into countries without food and lost men at a terrible rate. Natives shot a great many. When, on December 16, 1887, we reached Albert Nyanza we had 170 out of 414 men that left Yambuya. We could not then connect with Emin and had to return 120 miles west of Albert Nyanza. Here we built a strong fort and I started back to a place 228 miles down the river to bring up our sick. Meantime, Stanley and two of our officers went east to the lake and connected with the pasha. Then our return march to Yambuya commenced April 12; the united expedition left Kavallis, on the Albert, for the Indian ocean. Our numbers were then 1,175. Now, on reaching here, Ursalala, we have about 670. We have made many important geographical discoveries, one of the most important being Mount Ruangori, which for all these 3,000 years has been undiscovered. The very source of the Nile is from its snow-capped peaks. It is a wonderful sight. I went up 10,700 feet, but was stopped by ravines 2,000 feet deep. Anchori and the Albert Edward Nyanza are new places to Europeans at least beyond the mere names. There in Karagive we found the Urigi to be a large lake, instead of the petty thing laid down on our maps. After a hard march of four months we reached here (Ursalala) and found Mr. McKay and Mr. Dreaks, of the Church Missionary Society. We have been here three days, and from these kind-hearted people received a most hearty welcome and rejoiced again in a cup of tea with meat and biscuit. We fortunately found that cloth and beads for us had come up from the coast, enough to buy our way out to the coast. Everything has been stopped on its way inland by the Arabs, making affairs assume a very critical aspect for missionaries and attached whites living inland. From here to the coast, should we have open roads, is a four and a half months' march for this caravan. If the Arabs, however, oppose our progress, no one can say how long it will take. Of our trials, suffering, etc., I have said very little, but so far our expedition has been an immense success, in spite of sneers seen in some of the English papers. I hope we will emerge triumphantly to the coast. The pasha we have; all Casati, the Italian, beside Egyptian and Turkish officers, soldiers, men, women and children and convicts. We have no news from the coast here for over one and a half years, and we are all in uncertainty. If pluck and determination can carry us through we shall reach the coast."

Trials are about to be made in different Austran cavalry regiments to decide how the 8-millimetre Mannlicher carbine is to be carried by troopers, and how the saddle accoutrements are to be arranged. It is proposed that the carbine shall hang in a leather case to the right of the saddle. The new cavalry knapsack, which has two cartridge pouches outside it, is to hang to the left side of the saddle, and the trooper will have two other pouches, holding ten cartridges each, slung across his body. Every trooper is to carry fifty rounds of ammunition.

*Le Progres Militaire* says that during the last Belgian manoeuvres, Gen. van der Smissen had ordered some photographers to be stationed at various points on the manoeuvre field. At the end of the operations he had the proofs brought to him, and could thereby ascertain that frequently his instructions had been neglected. Thus at the passage of a ford he could see that many soldiers, instead of fastening their cartridge pouches to their rifles, as the instructions prescribe, left them where they were, whereby they got wet. He also observed that no ropes were stretched across the stream to mark the ford, and to enable the soldiers to hold fast on, in case the current proved too strong. A good many other things the general is said to have found out; and so the photographers will probably become *la bête noire* of the Belgian Thomas Atkins.

## The Rifle.

To add interest to the class firing of the permanent corps, Major J. Peters of C Battery, R.C.A., offers a prize of \$10 annually to be given to the non-commissioned officer or man making the highest aggregate score in the first and second stages of the regulation annual firing. The prize will be given this year as a beginning.

### THE MILITARY RIFLE LEAGUE.

Further reports are to hand respecting participation in the competition of this proposed league. Lt-Col. Smith, D.A.G., commandant of D Co., I.S.C., London, Ont., says the company will certainly enter a team. He thinks the idea a good one, and will do what he can to encourage it in his district. Lt-Col. Tracy, of the 7th Fusiliers, London, says they will certainly be represented.

Lt-Col. Hon. J. M. Gibson, 13th Battalion, Hamilton, favours the league, and promises keen competition from his doughty sharpshooters. The Hamilton boys are eager for the spring, so that they may have a chance at another city match.

Complaint comes from Kingston, likewise from London, that no 600 yard range is available at either of those places.

The MILITIA GAZETTE has been asked of late to whom should letters on business of the proposed league be addressed. In reply we would say that Mr. W. R. Pringle, lately of Montreal but now of Toronto, was the prime mover in the affair, and we would suggest that he be acting secretary until permanent organization be effected.

### ANNUAL MATCH FOR THE PERMANENT CORPS.

Major J. Peters, of C Battery, R.C.A., who was the organizer of the recent telegraphic contest between teams of the permanent corps, has forwarded the conditions printed below for a proposed annual match open to the permanent corps, and desires us to request that intending competitors will communicate with him as soon as possible. C Battery, he says, will subscribe \$30 towards a trophy, and he has no doubt other corps entering will contribute like amounts. It is proposed that this annual match be fired with either the long or short Snider, upon the following conditions:

Thirty (30) officers, n. c. officers and men in drill order with expense pouches; one field officer in command, with army revolver.

Squad in extended order at 400 yards at the "Ready."

Target appears on the "commence fire" and remains up for 90 seconds, during which time as many rounds as possible may be fired, independent firing. At the expiration of the 90 seconds the target disappears for 25 seconds when the squad must advance at the *double* and not halt until it again appears for 90 seconds, when firing is resumed again.

On the second disappearance of the target for 25 seconds they will advance as before, halting for the final firing when the target is raised for the last 90 seconds.

The umpire will see that the target is raised on the "commence" sounding, that the squad does not advance till target is lowered, and, when lowered, that skirmishers are advancing at the "double," halting only as it appears; *i.e.*, men must not double to any fixed point, lie down and be waiting for target to appear.

The umpire to be the D. A. G. or commandant of the school. Two officers to be in the "butts," one of whom must belong to an outside corps and not be going through a course of instruction.

The umpire will check the time of exposure of target from firing point, and will count hits at end of match according to D. R. A. rules, telegraphing result to Adjutant General on date named below.

Targets to be all white, 6' x 2½', lines as directed in D. R. A. skirmishing target, but lines to be invisible to marksmen.

Any number of targets may be used in line, provided they are not less than nine feet apart from inside edge to edge.

It will be at the option of each corps to shoot on either June 1st, 2nd or 3rd, result to be wired to Adjutant General on the last day.

No firing to take place on these dates except for the match, and no squad may have a second trial. No sighting shots.

As it is impossible to prevent the loss of cartridges from the expense pouches and pouches while "doubling" and "lying down" in skirmishing, squads may wear cartridge belts with loops.

### HOW TO SHOOT.

The value of winter instruction in the matter of rifle practice is coming more and more to be understood by those in charge of troops, and in a recent order the Adjutant-General of the State of New York goes over this matter with such detail, that his instructions are of value to everyone having a rifle. He directs: Commanding officers of companies will see that the enlisted men of their respective commands receive the necessary preliminary instruction in rifle practice, and, where possible, that they have gallery practice, before they are sent to the ranges.

The following instructions prepared by the General Inspector of Rifle Practice (Gen. Robbins) are prescribed:

Sighting.—I. A sand bag for each squad will be placed on a rest, which may be a table, a tripod, or a stack of arms, and so arranged that the bag will be about 4½ ft. from the ground. The men will be formed in single rank, and in squads not to exceed ten men in each. The instructor will then flatten the sand bag with the back of his hand, lay a full cocked rifle on it, aim at some small object at as great a distance from it as the drill room will permit (a wafer on the wall, for instance), and explain to the men the following simple rules:

The sight should not incline to the right or left. The line of sight should be taken along the centre of the notch of the rear sight and the top of the front sight, which should cover the middle of the mark aimed at. The eye should be fixed on the mark, and not on the front sight. Particular attention should be paid to this rule, as beginners are apt to fix the eye on the front sight and not on the mark, which prevents the latter from being distinctly seen, and greatly increases their difficulty in aiming.

2. The instructor will also explain the different kinds of sights, *viz*: Fine Sight—When the point of the front sight is just seen through the notch of the rear sight, the effect of which is to shoot low. Full Sight—When the whole of the wedge shaped portion of the front sight is displayed through the notch on the rear sight, the effect of which is to shoot high. Half-Sight—When but half the front sight is seen.

3. At times during this drill the leaf of the rear sight should be required to be raised.

Aiming—(One.) Come to the position of ready and raise the leaf of the rear sight.

(Two.) Raise the rifle smartly in front of the right shoulder to the full extent of the left arm, without moving the body, head or eye; the arms to move close to the body; barrel nearly horizontal and pointing a few inches below the mark; the eyes fixed upon the forefinger inside the trigger guard; both elbows inclined downward.

(Three.) Press the piece smartly with both hands against the hollow of the shoulder, which must neither be allowed to give way nor pressed forward or raised to meet it: the left elbow at the same time being brought as far under the rifle as is possible without assuming an unnatural position; the right elbow slightly raised, being nearly squarely with the right shoulder; the centre (or rather the upper than lower) part of the butt to be pressed firmly against the shoulder with the left hand without touching the collar bone, the top of the butt being as nearly as possible even with the top of the shoulder, the forefinger will be placed around the trigger like a hook, but without pressing it; the head and body will be kept perfectly perpendicular the whole time, no attempt being made to look through the sights.

(Four.) Close the left eye and incline the head to the right over the small of the stock so that the right eye may quickly perceive the coincidence of the rear and front sights, and the object aimed at.

(Five.) Raise the head, look squarely to the front and bring the piece smartly to the first position.

Practice in aiming will be continued until the men aim quickly and correctly from the shoulder, after which they should be taught how to discharge the arm by pressing or squeezing the trigger, and especially to avoid a pull or jerk in so doing.

### MOUNTED RIFLE PRACTICE.

Major E. V. Sumner, 5th U. S. Cavalry, Inspector of Small Arms Practice, Department Missouri, in his annual report, presents some interesting data and pays especial attention to the practice of mounted men. On this head he says: "In all mounted practice with arms the horse is almost as important a factor as the man; therefore, the necessity for purchasing better horses and having them undergo a certain amount of training before being pushed into the ranks with the service bit now in use and while they are perfectly green, should be understood. Under existing conditions the opponents to the use of the revolver in the ranks of the cavalry are quite well supported in considering the weapon more dangerous to friend than foe; and, unfortunately, those who enlist the recruits and those who purchase the horses have little to do with their coming together as implements of war in the cavalry sense. The reduction of the target season to two months gives ample time for rifle and carbine practice. Cavalry should have one month additional for revolver practice, mounted and dismounted. Men may differ in opinion as to the importance that should be given to each of the parts of a soldier's duty, but in acting together in harmony and friendship we wear off the rough edges of prejudice and are able to accomplish a result gratifying to all and of inestimable benefit to the service."

### THE NEW RIFLE.

The *Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette* says: "On dit that the new magazine rifle is to be issued to the First Army Corps next February. The Government factories at Enfield and Sparkbrook are working

full time, and we are glad to hear that several private firms have been given large contracts for the rifles, and for especial parts which will be put together afterwards at the Government factories. Large orders for the necessary ammunition have also been given, so that it really looks as if the arming of the First Army Corps with the new magazine rifle will soon become an accomplished fact.

#### TROUBLE ABOUT THE POWDER.

A London correspondent of *Shooting and Fishing* says that the British military authorities are in rather a hole as regards the smokeless powder which has been worked out for them by Professor Sir Frederick Abel, K.C.B. Says the correspondent: "This article, which is called Cordite, is reported to be composed of gun cotton, nitro glycerine and gelatine, and gives a muzzle velocity of 2,200 feet per second, or thereabouts, in the new .303 Metford barrel, but produces some very remarkable results. The fumes given off are very offensive to the smell, and the gases are poisonous. If used with the Rubin bullet, in which the copper or nickel skin is not soldered to the inside lead core, the latter is sometimes driven clean through the hard metal skin which remains behind, and the next shot bursts or bulges the barrel. If the Lorenz bullet is used, in which the hard metal skin is soldered to the lead core and forms one solid homogeneous mass consolidated by hydraulic pressure, the gummy fibre left by the powder on the inside of the barrel causes such a degree of friction, and consequent heat, as sometimes to melt the solder and the lead core, and occasionally the nickel skin itself; so that, in their despair, the authorities are experimenting with solid copper bullets, to meet the terrible conditions of the Cordite, which they regard as their master. In the meantime, the new British magazine rifle with the improved (?) Lee breech action, Metford barrel and Lewes sights, is being turned out at Enfield and Birmingham at the rate of several thousand a week, and the sights are scaled for the angle of this terrible Cordite with lead bullets; so, whatever may be the ultimate results, a change in the sights seems inevitable.

#### Gleanings.

There have been any number of gaieties provided for the West Pointers lately, ostensibly for the cadets, but enjoyed to the full by the garrison and their many guests. A sister of a member of the corps of cadets, who is a wonderful violinist, was prevailed upon to give a violin recital in the post library recently and made a charming picture standing there, lovingly holding her instrument and facing a spellbound audience of officers and cadets, conspicuous among whom was her proud and delighted brother, exchanging congratulatory glances with someone who is not a brother—and thanks Providence for it.

The course of military science and tactics which is to be established in the Sheffield scientific school at Yale is not yet completed, but Lieut. C. A. L. Totten, U.S.A., expects to commence his lectures early in January. The course will consist of probably twelve lectures, which will be delivered weekly. Lieut. Totten is hard at work on about fifty different topics, and from these the course will be selected. Lieut. Totten is a very interesting and companionable gentleman, and his personal influence among the students will aid largely in establishing a thorough and valuable course of military instruction in the scientific school.

Writing of the German manœuvres, the special correspondent of the *Morning Post*, in a letter dated Hanover, Sept. 17, says: "The events of the last two days are eminently significant, as showing the belief of the best tacticians in Europe that a new era has dawned for cavalry, owing to the new cautious tactics of infantry which forbid the near approach of hostile armies owing to the deadly destructiveness of the repeating rifles and the treacherous fire where the smoke of the new powder is scarcely visible. Military opinion is at present divided as to whether in close encounters of cavalry against cavalry the spear or the sabre is the most efficient. At present the German opinion inclines in favor of the spear, but one object of the manœuvres of the last two days is to settle this question, and their result may shortly be expected to bear practical fruit."

The Austrians would seem to have got hold of a new and valuable explosive called ecrasite. It is the invention of two engineers, by name Siersch and Kubin. It is impervious to damp, shock or fire. Its power is to dynamite as 100 to 70, and it can be carried from place to place with the utmost safety. It is not smokeless, but emits a thick black smoke, and the detonating noise is louder than that of gunpowder, but shorter, sharper and clearer. It can be used for rifle cartridges or as priming for cannon, and a bomb-shell loaded with it explodes with such terrific results that experiments against palisades representing 100, 250 and 500 men at ranges of 300, 750 and 1,200 metres recorded marks on every division of the palisade standing for a soldier. The Austrian military authorities are of course keeping the invention a close secret.

Smokeless powders promise to be as numerous as explosives of the nitro-glycerine group. Every new moon brings into being a new smokeless powder; and, if we may believe the accounts of it, that now invented by Herr Schwab, of the Stein powder factory in Austria, beats everything of the kind in point of efficiency. It burns slowly in the open air, giving off so slight a smoke that it resembles the haze above an ordinary chamber lamp. It has scarcely any smell, but it ignites with extraordinary rapidity, giving to a projectile an initial velocity of 630 metres (693 yards) instead of 530 metres (583 yards). The invention of another smokeless powder by Herr Siersch is reported from Preshurg, in Hungary. It is described as a "slate-coloured triple azotate" (nitrate), and "most powerful."

The Delagoa Bay railroad war, says the *Railroad Gazette*, is not a large one, but it presents several interesting features. Some four years ago Portugal granted a charter to an Anglo-American company authorizing it to build a railroad fifty-eight miles long, connecting Delagoa, in Portugese Africa, with the Transvaal gold fields. Fifty-four miles were completed more than a year ago, and have been open for traffic ever since; but the remaining four miles lay in an extremely difficult country, and could not be finished within the time limit contemplated by the charter. On this account the Portuguese Government declared the concession forfeited, and apparently attempted to take possession of the road without regard for the rights of the company. But this was not so easy. England took the matter seriously, and promptly arranged to send a gunboat to the point threatened. We seemed to be on the eve of a railroad war between England and Portugal. But more peaceful counsels prevailed. The gunboat frightened the Portuguese more effectively than a general freight agent could have done. This is not because a gunboat is in itself more dangerous than a general freight agent. On the contrary, we are convinced that more property has been destroyed in the last ten years by general freight agents than by gunboats. But a gunboat, armed with modern weapons of precision, usually hits what it aims at, while a general freight agent, armed with irresponsible authority, does not. We commend the study of this distinction to presidents who think of engaging in railroad wars.

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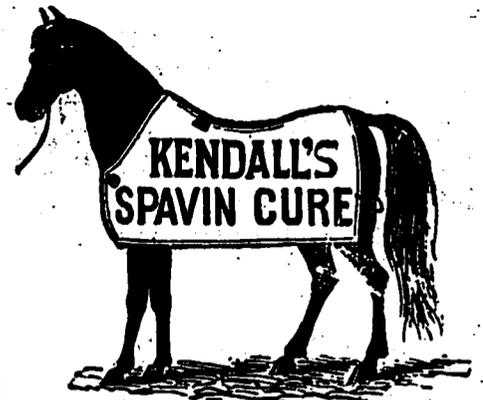
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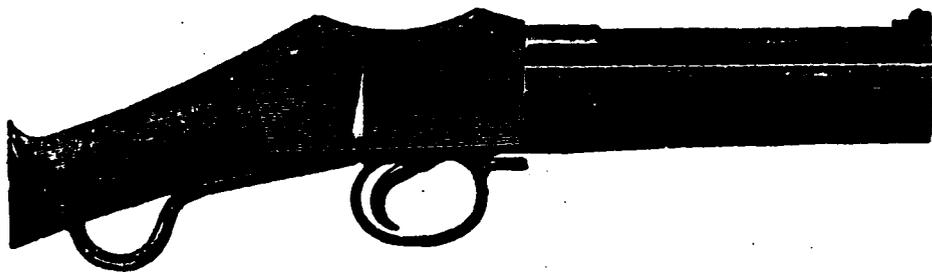
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