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Topics of the Week.

In the House of Commons, yesterday, Sir John Macdonald intimated as much as that the claim of the York-Simcoe Battalion for kit allowance in connection with their service in the North-West in 1885 is at last to be granted. The regulations do not entitle the militia to this allowance, and on this score the claim had been refused, notwithstanding that it was paid to all other corps. The battalion did not go without the kit, but were equipped at the expense of the county council. The claim was made after their return home, and it was held by the Government that the county should receive any grant made. That there is now to be a grant is assured, but no announcement of its disposition has been made. In the meantime, credit is due to Mr. Wm. Mulock, M.P. for North York, and President of the Ontario Rifle Association, for the untiring agitation he has kept up on behalf of the York-Simcoe Battalion. Two of its officers, Lieut.-Cols. O'Brien and Tyrwhitt, are also Members of Parliament, but as they are political supporters of the Government they could not take such an open part as Mr. Mulock did in pressing the claim, whatever persuasive force they used in private—and it is well known that they worked assiduously to bring about the happy result.

A graceful and well deserved tribute was paid Lieut.-Col. Panet, Deputy Minister of Militia, by his chief, Sir Adolphe Caron, in the Commons on Tuesday, when the estimates of Departmental expenditure were being discussed. Replying to a question asked, Sir Adolphe said it was not true that his deputy was about to be superannuated, and declared that he was a most valuable as well as painstaking officer.

For a few weeks past a good part of our space has been given up to publication of the contents of the Annual Report of the Militia Department, and we fancy our readers will agree that the importance of the matter justifies all the space occupied by and yet to be given to it. The blue book is read by a very limited number indeed, and we trust to enhance the value of the interesting suggestions and criticism it contains by giving the more important of them the additional circulation of this paper. The first instalment covered the reports of the Deputy Minister and the General Officer Commanding; then came those of the Artillery Inspectors, and this and the succeeding weeks the available space will be devoted to the reports of the officers commanding districts. It will be noticed with gratification that these reports are uniformly eulogistic of the praiseworthy spirit animating all ranks of the force.

The estimates for the fiscal year 1889-90, just submitted to Parliament, show the total amount of money asked to be \$1,290,000 or \$29,700 less than last year. There is a decrease of \$38,700 in the amount asked for the permanent force and the schools, but an increase of \$18,000 for the Royal Military College. The reasons for these changes are not shown in the estimates, but they are doubtless both caused through special expenditures. In connection with the College, for instance, a house for the Commandant has just been purchased at a cost of \$12,500. The appropriation asked for ammunition, clothing and military stores is \$5,000 less, and whereas \$4,000 was required last year for barracks in British Columbia, there is nothing asked under that head this time. These are the only changes in the appropriations.

Canada's military pension list amounts to the respectable total—though small comparatively—of \$46,160, as estimated for the coming fiscal year. Of this amount \$32,800 is on account of the rebellion of 1885. Close on \$7,000 is asked for for veterans of the war of 1812, and for militiamen engaged in it, and their widows. The rapidity with which this last account is being closed up by the lapse of time is shown by the fact that it is estimated for 1889-90 at \$1,540 less than for the preceding year. At that rate it would take but five years to end it altogether.

The Annual Militia Report—III.

The reports of the officers commanding the several military districts which it is proposed to review in part this week, are much more than ordinarily interesting, and go to prove were proof needed how zealous these officers are, one and all, to improve the standing of the force under their control. In this issue it is proposed to give only the purport of the general remarks, later on the reports on each individual corps will be presented, and there are passages relating to musketry instruction, and to the medical branch of the service, which require special chapters.

No. 1 District—Lieut.-Col. H. Smith, D.A.G.

In this district there were drilled two corps of field artillery—three batteries in all—and seven corps of infantry and rifles. The total strength drilled was 180 officers and 2,007 non-commissioned officers and men, this being 367 under the total strength authorized. There were relieved from drill 162 officers and 1,538 non-commissioned officers and men of the corps selected for training, the 7th Fusiliers performed its drill at its own headquarters, and the remainder in brigade camp. "The 7th Fusiliers, says Colonel Smith, seems to have been in a far from efficient state for some time back. On taking command of the district in May last, I endeavoured to bring about an improvement, but without success."

The Camp of Instruction for the year was formed at Stratford, on the 19th of June. The Brigade Staff were:—

In Command, Lieut.-Colonel Henry Smith, Deputy Adjutant General Military District No. 1.

Brigade Major, Lieut.-Colonel The Hon. Matthew Aylmer, Brigade Major, Military District No. 1.

Supply Officer, Major John B Smyth, Quartermaster, 7th Fusiliers. Camp Quartermaster, Major Wm. Wallace White, 30th Battalion. Instructor of Musketry, Captain Thomas R. Coogan, 24th Battalion.

Principal Medical Officer, Surgeon Major Vesey A. Brown, London Field Battery.

Orderly Officer, Major W. H. Lindsay, 25th Battalion.

The following passages are extracted from Col. Smith's report:—

"The Drill was carried on systematically and with energy, and more time proportionately was given to squad and arm exercises, than to Brigade, or even Battalion movements. In compliance with a memo from Headquarters, route marching was practised on one day, but owing to rain this was not carried out as fully as intended.

The prescribed target practice was performed by all the Infantry Corps, under the superintendence of the Brigade Musketry Instructor. This Officer was indefatigable in the discharge of his duties. In his recommendations I concur, particularly in those which relate to preliminary firing exercise and the expenditure of blank cartridge. Lack of time is the only thing to prevent those suggestions from being carried out. Shortening the ranges has been a step in the right direction, and when it is considered that out of the 1,249 men, who went to targets at Stratford, 929 never fired a rifle before, it might not be unwise to consider the advisability of going a step further and making the first range 50 yards as laid down for the Permanent Corps.

Three Batteries of Artillery were brigaded under Lieut.-Colonel Peters, London Field Battery, and worked to my entire satisfaction. This branch of the service is entitled to much praise. True it has advantages not possessed by the Cavalry or the Infantry, in that it is drilled annually, and has longer been favored with good schools for the training of its staff, yet the spirit evinced seems to be due to other causes as well. The general efficiency of the Artillery could, I think, be still further promoted by forming all the Batteries in the same District into one permanent Brigade and I recommend that this be done here. The technical inspection of this Arm was made by Lieut.-Colonel Irwin, Dominion Inspector of Artillery. The loss of two horses through kicks suggests the desirability of adopting some better mode of "picketing." Accidents of this kind should not occur, and I will endeavor in future to have such a system as will make them very improbable.

SUGGESTIONS.

Though what I have said has been more commendatory than otherwise of the force in this district, it must be understood that I have been speaking relatively, and with a due consideration of the limited opportunities for training. That so great results are obtained in so short a time, that there is so much cohesion, so much "touch" in a battalion after it has been embodied 8 or 10 days, says much for the intelligence of the men, and for the capability of the comparatively few qualified officers, but that there are defects in the system and great lack of efficiency amongst officers and men must be clear to even an ordinary observer. The chief cause of this inefficiency is the shortness of the time allowed for training. That 7 or 8 days drill every two years is utterly insufficient, goes without saying. It scarcely suffices to preserve the organization much less to make it in any way reliable. As a remedy I would take the liberty of urging that each rural corps be drilled every year. If through lack of means, it cannot be taken out "full bodied," let it by all means come as a "skeleton." Much better that the skeleton, the "framework," should turn out than that the whole body should be left at home to die of inanition. Officers and non-commissioned officers are the framework of even the most complete regiment; in a Canadian militia regiment they are something more. They are its very life, of necessity, they are its trainers as well as its leaders. If they are not fairly good the corps is worth little, and if they are bad, to retain them is a positive evil. Their efficiency, then, is the first thing to be secured, and it is infinitely more important that they should be brought together every year with comparatively few men, than that the biennial system should be continued with double, treble, or even quadruple the number of rank and file. It must not be understood, however, that I advise a reduction of the force. On the contrary I feel that the organization should be extended, and that an infantry corps of at least 8 companies should be maintained in each county, but maintained in such a way as to have a greater feeling of reality infused into it. For many years to come our militia must be our main defence, and it should be placed on the best footing possible as to both efficiency and numbers, but numbers of corps rather than numbers of men. If we have a large number of well organized and expansive bodies, they can be rapidly filled up when the need arises, but it is a difficult task to organize the bodies in the face of danger.

THE SHORTAGE OF OFFICERS.

We are met with the difficulty of obtaining, I would not say qualified officers, but officers of any kind. (The same difficulty, by the way, is met with in regard to the militia and volunteers in Britain.) To overcome this difficulty, more encouragement should be given to officers. This would be done to a great extent by taking them out yearly as suggested, but in addition to that they should be put on a more permanent footing by giving to such of them as qualify a yearly allowance according to rank, payable quarterly, and made contingent on their attending the annual drill of their corps. In view of the fact that many eligible gentlemen are deterred from accepting commissions owing to the attendant expense, some such scheme must be adopted in order to give a supply at all approaching the demand. It is folly to say that officers in sufficient numbers will come forward in time of need. That will be too late. They are required now, they should be trained now, and be made ready for the task of instructing the willing but raw material which will come forward at the approach of danger.

What I have said of officers is truth, though in perhaps a less degree, of non-commissioned officers. There is an amazing lack of competent Sergeants, especially in the rural battalions, they not having facilities for forming N. C. O. classes as is done in the cities. The absence of suitable sergeant-majors is very marked. No effort should be spared to induce good men to qualify for this latter rank, and to remain in the position after qualifying.

SMALLER CAMPS ADVOCATED.

Another suggestion that I would make is that the camps of instruction be on a smaller scale. There are three main objects in view in bringing corps together in brigade—to create emulation, to afford opportunities for larger manœuvres, and to provide supervision by a brigade staff. The first two of these could be quite as well secured, in some cases better, by assembling at one time fewer corps than is generally the practice. As to the third object it may be said that owing to a general lack of knowledge respecting interior economy and duties, regiments require much supervision from the brigade staff. To be of real value that supervision should be applied to fewer bodies. For example, in this district where six infantry corps are usually brought out in the same year, it would be desirable to have half the number come out in June, and the remainder in September, or, if possible, half in the early part of June, and the other in the latter part. This would not make so big a show on paper at the time, but the increase of percentage in actual good would be very great, and the additional expense occasioned by it, only that of the staff, would be trifling. Under that system target practice could be much more satisfactorily carried out than it is at present, for there would be less rush, and more time could be given to preliminary instruction before going to the butts.

In closing this report, Colonel Smith concludes: It becomes my duty to acknowledge the valuable assistance rendered me by Lieut.-Colonel Aylmer of the District Staff. In camp, in the brigade office, and at the half yearly inspections, his duties have been performed to my entire satisfaction. His local knowledge has been specially useful to me, I being comparatively new to the district. To those officers who served on the brigade staff at Stratford my best thanks are due. All were zealous, painstaking and vigilant, and always ready to assist in promoting the general efficiency, as well as to perform their own special work.

No. 2 District—Lt.-Col. W. D. Otter, D. A. G.

The authorized strength of corps in this district is 538 officers and 5,517 non-commissioned officers and men. All told 3,772 were authorized, and drill in the year under review, and the corps selected for drill consisted of one troop of cavalry, three batteries of artillery, one-half battery of mounted artillery, and ten battalions of infantry and rifles. To these must be added C. Company of the I. S. C., not counted in the authorized strength. Colonel Otter recommends that "an increase should be made in the garrison artillery of the district, at present there being only one battery (Toronto), while at least four should be maintained; no difficulty would be found in raising that number in this city, which I consider is the best point for such a force."

Of the camp at Niagara, opening on the 12th June, Colonel Otter thus speaks:—The weather was fine, though very hot throughout, and consequently no time was lost. The field batteries were placed in the charge of Major Frank King, W. C. F. Baty, under whose superintendence their routine of drill was carried out; for the progress made I must refer to the report of the Inspector of Artillery, Lieut.-Col. Irwin.

Following the system I inaugurated in 1886, the various drills for infantry were detailed daily from the brigade office, and a constant supervision of them kept by myself and staff. The presence of "C" Company, I. S. C., under the command of Major Vidal, together with a number of "attached" officers from the Royal School of Infantry, Toronto, just completing a course of instruction, was the means of fur-

nishing a number of instructors, and I am glad to record that the establishment of the last named institution is now beginning to make itself felt in the increasing number of young officers who have obtained certificates therefrom and who are now able to perform the duties required of them with increased intelligence.

A daily class for sword exercise was again conducted by Captain Sears, I. S. C., with profit to the large number who attended, and the same officer gave a course of four lectures on "duties," which were listened to with evident interest by all the officers in camp. What with the regular drills, duties, classes and lectures the time of the officers was pretty fully occupied, though none complained of overwork.

The regulations prescribed for target practice were carried out as fully as possible under the circumstances, but until more time is available for this important part of a soldier's education I fear little can be done towards teaching him "position" and "aiming" drill previous to going to the targets. The actual firing was zealously carried out by Captain Adam, 13th Batt., Musketry Inspector, a well-known enthusiast in rifle shooting, whose report, may, I think, be considered fairly satisfactory. The reduction in the ranges fired has proved most decidedly a move in the right direction. I would call attention to Captain Adam's suggestion, that an addition should be made to the marker's pay, which has my cordial recommendation. The extra cost will be more than compensated for by the increased efficiency of the men and time saved.

The report of the Principal Medical Officer, Surgeon Major Riddall, 36th Battalion, shows that the health of the men was good, although owing to the extreme heat several slight cases of sunstroke occurred. One serious casualty, I regret to say, happened on the first day, in the accidental drowning of Private Young, No. 6 Company, 77th Battalion; the proceedings of the Court of Inquiry were duly forwarded at the time. Surgeon-Major Riddall, makes in his report a similar complaint to that of his predecessors, viz., the want of proper appliances and scarcity of medicines.

I must again call attention to the state of the arms and accoutrements now in use by corps in the district. With few exceptions they are worn out and unserviceable. So far as the care that is bestowed upon them is concerned I have little to complain of, for, with few exceptions, these articles are well looked after. Among the best kept armories are those of the following corps: "A" and "B" troops, Governor-General's Body Guard; Nos. 4 and 5 troops, 2nd Cavalry; Queen's Own Rifles; Royal Grenadiers; Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 8 companies, 12th Battalion; 13th battalion; Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 companies, 19th battalion; Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 6 companies, 20th battalion; Nos. 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7; companies, 31st battalion; Nos. 1, 2 and 3 companies, 34th battalion; Nos. 1, 3 and 5 companies, 35th battalion; No. 7 company, 36th battalion; Nos. 1, 3 and 5 companies, 37th battalion; 38th battalion; Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 8 companies, 39th battalion; Nos. 1, 2, 5 and 6 companies, 44th battalion; Nos. 1, 2 and 3 companies, 77th battalion; No. 5 company, 95th battalion.

Rifle shooting is decidedly on the increase in the district; the great drawback, however, is the cost of ammunition. If the issue could be increased so as to enable the several corps to have a few rounds per man for private practice in addition to the annual training, more interest would be taken in the use of the rifle, but I would only recommend this issue to such companies as were known to be enthusiastic. An issue also to those corps who are unfortunate enough as not to be selected for the annual drill would also prove beneficial and tend to keep them "in touch."

The duties of Brigade-Major have been most assiduously performed by Lieut.-Col. Gray since he took up the appointment in December last, and every assistance freely accorded me by him. To Lieut.-Col. Alger, district paymaster and superintendent of stores, I am under many obligations for his ready attention to the wants of the district.

Nos. 3 and 4 Districts—Lt.-Col. Van Straubenzee, D.A.G.

The strength of these combined districts is 5,529 of which 3,257 is in No. 3 and 2,272 in No. 4. The strength authorized for drill was 3,092.

Of camp Gananoque, which opened on the 19th June, the D. A. G. says: The 4th Cavalry, Prescott Troop, two gun detachments from A Battery, Ottawa, Durham, Kingston and Gananoque Field Batteries, 16th, 42nd, 47th, 49th, and 59th Battalions of Infantry, assembled in Camp Gananoque, on the 19th June, with the following Officers on the Staff of the Camp, viz:—The Deputy Adjutant General in Command; Lt.-Colonel Lewis, Brigade Major; Lt.-Colonel Graveley, 40th Battalion, Instructor of Musketry; Major Jackson, 41st Battalion, Camp Quartermaster; Captain Heron, G. G. F. Guards, Supply Officer; Captain Galoway, 14th Battalion, Orderly Officer; Surgeon Tracey, 49th Battalion, Principal Medical Officer.

Lieut.-Colonel Cotton placed two non-commissioned officers at my disposal and Lieut.-Colonel Otter one. These non-commissioned officers rendered good service.

The Instructor of Musketry and Sergeant were most assiduous in their arduous duties and being favored with fine weather throughout were enabled to put nearly every man in camp through a course of firing, together with a short course of aiming and position drill.

The members of the camp staff, with one exception, performed their onerous duties entirely to my satisfaction, and I think it but right to bring to the notice of the General commanding the services rendered by my Supply Officer, Captain Heron, who was indefatigable at his work and gave great satisfaction to all.

All corps turned out full strength with the exception of the 47th Battalion, which paraded only nine full companies, No. 4, Captain Kelly's Company, failing to put in an appearance. This officer reported high wages the cause of his not being able to get his men to turn out.

No. 5 District—Lt.-Col. C. F. Houghton, D.A.G.

The strength of the district is 4,817, and drill was performed by 3,143, about half at head quarters and half at camp. Following are extracts from the D.A.G.'s report on Camp Sherbrooke, which opened on the 26th of June:

The Brigade Staff was as follows: The Deputy Adjutant General in Command; Lt.-Col. Mattice, Brigade Major; Major Radiger, 3rd V. R.C., musketry inspector; Surgeon Major Mayrand, 11th Battalion P. M.O.; Captain Wright, 58th Battalion, Camp Quartermaster; Lieut. Dixon, R.M.C., Supply Officer; Lieut. Guy, 3rd V.R.C., Orderly Officer.

The musketry instructor, Major Radiger, also gave me the greatest satisfaction by the zealous and untiring manner in which he performed his arduous duties, but in consequence of the distance of the rifle range from the camp, I found it an absolute impossibility for him to keep up with his work without an assistant, and I therefore gave him the services of Lieut. Guy, my orderly officer, who proved himself a most valuable acquisition, performing the share of the work allotted to him with ability and zeal. Nearly every available non commissioned officer and man performed his rifle practice with a result which, under the circumstances stated by him, I consider a very fair one. I beg to draw particular attention to paragraphs 2, 3 and 5 of the report above referred to, and in reference to No. 8 I may state that had the matter been reported to me in time, I would have had it at once corrected, and I shall now take particular care that no such cause of complaint shall be permitted to exist in future camps.

I have to thank the department for the valuable services rendered me by three non-commissioned officer instructors, and one bugler of B Company Royal School of Infantry lent to me during the encampment. All four did capital service and were most zealous and indefatigable in the performance of their duties. I must, however make particular mention of Sergt.-Major Phillips whose services were absolutely invaluable to me throughout the whole encampment, not only performing the regular duties of his office as Brigade Sergt.-Major (which were most arduous) to my entire satisfaction, but also giving lectures and special instructions in drill, interior economy, etc., to the officers and non-commissioned officers in the evenings after working hours, which, though voluntary, were generally very well attended.

I have, with much regret to report the accidental death from drowning of Private McKay of No. 5 Company (Marsden) 58th Battalion, which took place on the 28th June, in St. Francis River, just below the camp. Being aware of the dangerous and treacherous nature of this river (a private of the 53rd Battalion having been drowned in almost the same spot a couple of days before our arrival in camp) I had taken the precaution to issue an order prohibiting the men from bathing in it, except in small parties accompanied by a non-commissioned officer in possession of a special pass for that purpose, signed by the officers commanding corps for the men of their respective regiments. This young man appears to have disregarded this regulation, and unfortunately met his death by so doing, as reported in the Sherbrooke papers of the 6th July. A subscription given by the officers, for the games of the men on the 2nd July, was by the unanimous consent of all ranks diverted from that purpose, and forwarded by Lt.-Col. Pope (about \$130.00) to the father of the deceased, who it appeared, was in straightened circumstances, and mainly dependent upon his son for support.

I have to thank my Brigade Major, Lt.-Colonel Mattice, for his valuable assistance, and his untiring zeal in the performance of his arduous duties, throughout the entire period of the encampment, is worthy of all praise.

There are seventeen rifle associations in this military district, seven of which, I am sorry to say, have been unable to perform any target practice this year in consequence of the unfinished state of the new range at Cole St. Luc. None of these—with the exception of the Province of Quebec Rifle Association, which held its annual meeting at Ottawa this year, at a heavy expense, have, for the same reason, been able to hold their annual matches this year, nor have any of the city corps of Montreal been able to perform their annual class firing. This state of affairs is most dis-

heartening to the associations and corps of the district which are suffering from this disability, and I beg to express the hope that the range may be put in serviceable shape at the earliest possible date.

No. 6 District—Lt.-Col. E. Lamontagne, D.A.G.

The established strength for this district is 2,306, and there were authorized to drill for 1888 1,309. In his report on the camp held at Three Rivers, commencing on the 26th June, Lt.-Col. Lamontagne says:

The staff was composed of: Lieut.-Col. E. Lamontagne, Deputy Adjutant General, in command; Major H. Prevost, 65th Battalion, Brigade Major; Lieut.-Col. Baker, 64th Battalion, Supply Officer; Surgeon Lafontaine, 86th Battalion, Principal Medical Officer; Capt. C. Bosse, 65th Battalion, Musketry Instructor; Capt. A. H. Gagnier, 76th Battalion, Camp Quartermaster; Sergt. Copeman, of "B" School, acted as Brigade Sergeant Major.

The tents were pitched and blankets distributed by Camp Quartermaster, Captain Gagnier of the 96th Battalion, and all returned into stores in good order.

The medical chest was placed in charge of the senior surgeon in camp, Surgeon Lafontaine, 86th Battalion. The health of the troops was very good and no sickness of any consequence reported, the camping ground being very dry and elevated.

Muster parade was ordered on the arrival of Lt.-Colonel de Bellefeuille, paymaster of the district, and every man on pay list was accounted for. Major-General Sir Frederick Middleton inspected the rifle range and brigade on the 4th July and expressed himself pleased with what he had seen.

I must say that the arms and accoutrements have been neglected in this district, and in many instances the arms were found rusty and the rural armouries with few exceptions in a very bad condition, which I am glad to say are improving.

As we have a number of paid officers that are yet without certificates I would recommend that pay of rank should be given to officers joining school or a uniform price \$2.50 a day, which would be paid only to successful men, others should secure only the actual expenses of the school.

No. 7 District—Lieut.-Colonel J. J. Duchesnay, D.A.G.

The establishment in this district is 3,873, and the strength authorized for drill was 2,117. Of this number 1,095 drilled at Camp St. Thomas, of which camp the staff was made up as follows:—

The D.A.G. in command, Lt.-Col. Taschereau, B.M., Lt.-Col. Forrest, camp quartermaster, Lt.-Col. Hudon, 89th battalion, musketry instructor; Captain Vieu, Levis garrison. Artillery, supply officer; Captain R. G. Bourget, 17th battalion, orderly officer, and surgeon, J. E. M. Turcot, Quebec field battery, P.M.O.

The musketry instruction was fairly carried out, but owing to boisterous and wet weather and the delays occasioned by the frequent passages of schooners, lighters and other boats, firing could not take place at all the distances required by the general orders.

Notwithstanding the stormy weather experienced the new tents stood the test well. I had for my personal use a tent fitted with the Lewis patent pole and ventilators, and I can safely say that it is most comfortable in warm or cold weather. On a very wet night with the wind blowing a regular gale, I was able to loosen from the inside the tent ropes without being obliged as with other tents to go outside and be exposed to be drenched thoroughly. I would recommend the fitting of a few with the patent poles and ventilators and to have them distributed through the different camps in the Dominion and give them a fair test.

In some corps I found the officers deficient in the drill notwithstanding that they are in possession of qualifying certificates from former military schools. It would be desirable to arrange so that they might be made to go through a course of one month at one of the infantry schools to learn their drill and get acquainted with the new changes.

No inconvenience has really been felt by the change of camp from Levis to St. Thomas as far as the infantry corps were concerned. The commanding officer of the Quebec field battery having had all the proper accommodation in the way of stabling his horses and other comforts complained that he was debarred from the competition for the Gzowski cup, owing to the unevenness of the drill ground.

I again state the urgency of putting the Levis rifle range in a state in par with that of Ottawa and other cities. The expenditure will comparatively be small and the change and improvements will give good satisfaction to the force of this city and of Levis. The Beauport flats range is now crossed by the Quebec, Montmorency and Charlevoix Railway, and considerable repairs will be required in order to utilize it during the winter months, as the annual target practice of city corps is generally carried out at that period of the year.

No. 8 District—Lieut.-Col. G. J. Maunsell, D. A. G.

The authorized strength in this district is 2,437. During the year renewed the maximum number of Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers

and men to receive pay for drill in the district was, 1,378, exclusive of the Infantry School Corps.

The actual strength present at inspection was 1,397. The full number authorized to receive pay performed drill for 1888-89.

The D. A. G. remarks as follows:—Although the period since last report—from November, 1887, to November, 1888—has not been marked by much that is important, and unfortunately biennial not annual drill of country corps (Cavalry and Infantry) still continues. There has been, I consider, steady progress in drill and discipline in the force generally, and besides increased attention to target practice, both in Corps and in Rifle Association.

On the brigade camp held at Chatham, commencing on the 26th June, the D. A. G. thus reports:

The following were the staff: Lt.-Colonel Maunsell, D. A. G., Commandant; Major Gordon, I. S. C., Brigade Major; Lt.-Colonel Blaine, 62nd Fusiliers, Instructor of Musketry; Surgeon Bishop, 73rd Battalion, Principal Medical Officer; Quartermaster (Hon. Major) A. Lipsett, 71st Battalion, Camp Quartermaster; Captain Seely, No. 3 Brigade Garrison Artillery, Supply Officer.

From the time of the camp being authorized until its breaking up, Lt.-Colonel McCulley, 73rd Battalion, whose headquarters are at Chatham, was untiring in his efforts for the success of the camp; securing and preparing excellent grounds with a good and convenient rifle range, and an abundant supply of pure water. Lt.-Colonel McCulley, in his efforts, received the cordial support of the citizens of Chatham. In proof of the kindly spirit of the citizens I may mention the generous action of one citizen in particular, J. B. Snowball, Esq. On hearing that the Brighton Engineers were in want of material with which to construct a bridge of considerable length, capable of taking 9 pr. field guns—Gzowski Engineer competition—this gentleman placed at the disposal of the corps, free of cost, an abundant supply of timber from his extensive lumber yards.

Distances by rail to Chatham not being great (the Infantry School corps and Brighton Engineers proceeded by the recently opened Northern and Western Railway) corps arrived in camp at an early hour on the afternoon of the 26th June. Drill commenced in earnest on the following morning.

When country corps have not been in camp for a period of two years it is unquestionably a difficult matter to take up drill where it had been left off so long ago; officers become "rusty", in their manner of imparting instruction. Better things cannot be expected from non-commissioned officers. (The men are, it is true, eager to acquire knowledge). It is marvellous, therefore, in view of this, to observe the steady progress from day to day. This progress could only be secured by the attendance from time to time of officers and non-commissioned officers at the schools of military instruction of the different arms of the service to which these officers and non-commissioned officers belong. I need only here refer in brief to my remarks in previous reports as to the advantages accruing from the presence in camp of "A" company and staff infantry school corps. These advantages were not less appreciated in this camp.

I regret extremely that the general officer in command was unable to inspect this encampment, for highly as he commended the brigade camp at St. Andrews last year, I am of opinion that the force in Chatham camp was not a whit inferior in point of zeal, nor as regards efficiency; the conduct of the men being exemplary and all ranks did their duty in an admirable manner.

I was most fortunate in the selection of staff. In Major Gordon I found an efficient brigade major, accurate in detail, attentive to general results. In an officer of Lieut.-Colonel Blaine's standing in the force, I had an instructor of musketry who carried out both in letter and spirit the orders relating to target practice. The duties of camp quartermaster were correctly performed by Major Lipsett.

I must again bear testimony to the satisfactory working of the plan recommended by the general officer in command, of appointing a principal medical officer, with one large hospital tent where the patients of each regiment or corps would be treated by their own medical man. The report of Surgeon Bishop is submitted herewith. I beg to support that officer's suggestion as to the issue of a few rubber sheets for the hospital tent. I also direct attention to the recommendation for the improvement of the supply of medicines.

No. 9 District—Lt.-Col. P. W. Worsley, D.A.G.

The total established strength in this district is 3,708. The strength authorized to drill last year was 2,004, of whom 1,017 drilled at Camp Aldershot, opening on the 4th September. The corps there assembled were the Kings Troop of Cavalry, the 69th Battalion, Lt.-Col. Starratt; 72nd Battalion, Lt.-Col. Spurr, and 75th Battalion, Lt.-Col. Kaulbach.

The undermentioned were the Brigade Staff:—Major Gordon, R.S. I., Brigade Major; Lt.-Colonel Irving, B.M., No. 12, Musketry Instructor; Lt.-Colonel Chipman, 68th Battalion, Supply Officer; Lt.-Colonel

Murray, Quartermaster; Dr. Primrose, P. M. O., in his report the D. A. G. says:—I received valuable assistance from the R. S. I., Fredericton. Maj. Gordon is an excellent officer, and most zealous in his work, and four instructors also, whose conduct was all that could be desired, and showed good examples. Sergt. Major Lochart, 63rd Rifles, was our excellent Sergeant Major, and was most industrious.

The target practice was carried on under Lt.-Colonel Irving, who is painstaking and has got quite into the work, the targets worked well, eight of them, and all fired. The men were classified and instructed in aiming and position drill and cleaning of arms.

The health of the camp was good, generally, all claims for sickness incurred in camp have been rendered. I regret, however, to report that the medical arrangement were not such as to call forth praise, on the contrary I think the medical system of our militia should be reconsidered and altered, it should be less expensive and should be efficient. Now it is anything but that. I referred to this in my report of 1886.

I introduced into my camp this year, with great success, a Signal Class taking one man per company. They were willing to work principally out of the drill hours, and became in the few days so proficient, that on the last review day of the whole force, I was able to work the force without any other assistance from buglers or mounted officers. It is a most valuable system, and in the present day you can't do without it. Corporal Fancotte, Infantry School Corps, was the instructor and to him all the credit is due.

The 69th battalion turned out full strength; 72nd and 75th battalions rather under. I was, however, much pleased to welcome Lt.-Colonel Kaulbach's battalion into district camp, it being their first appearance since Confederation. I know that it was the opinion of the officers commanding this battalion, that it was better to bring instruction to the men than the men to the instruction. I have reason to know that he did not leave camp with this opinion. Nothing can be better than the camp for the rural militia. Inspection day I found the 69th battalion the best drilled and by far the best commanded battalion. The 75th battalion had five companies, very clean. The 72nd had much to learn, and in No. 4 company were some of the dirtiest rifles I have seen since I have been in this district.

The District Armorer examined all rifles in camp, and in my District. I have satisfaction in reporting that the snider is not all worn out, and is an excellent rifle still. The rifling is still fresh and good.

I have quite changed my opinion about rural corps, in many important, soldierly qualities they are superior to, and if they were drilled every year for 16 days the men would be quite as smart as city corps, as we should not then have so many recruits; with the two years system two-thirds are now about what come in. A Colonel of one of my smartest city Battalions, who came down to see the camp, acknowledged that it would put his Battalion on their mettle to equal some of the Battalions, and of course the city Battalions drill every year.

The bands were generally excellent, and in camp they were a great pleasure to us all. The 75th Battalion excelled. I now think the allowance given by the Government is fairly earned. They should certainly be inspected yearly by a staff officer who should hear them play the music furnished by the Department, and report to headquarters.

I must again draw your attention to our equipment, in my two districts we have only the means by ball bags of carrying ten rounds, and we should carry over a hundred per man. The great coat strap cuts the men's shoulders carrying the coat, and therefore it is much better to roll it. I do trust we may yet have the Oliver equipment tried.

I have pleasure in pointing out to you, that nearly every officer in my two districts with the exception of the 76th Battalion, and detached batteries, is qualified: some of many years standing it is true, are getting rusty and will have to make room for younger blood, but on the whole the way the young officers in this District have attended the schools is deserving of praise. And the schools are the chief reasons of the great advances made in the instructions given at the camps. It may not be as thoroughly as we could wish but a great deal is done.

MUSKETRY AND RIFLE ASSOCIATIONS.

Target practice was carried out under different conditions. At the camp I made all who did not obtain 15 points at two distances return to the short ranges again. This was not done by the city corps. The musketry is carried out much better at the camp than in the city, and under Lieut.-Colonel Irving it was all I could desire, in so short a time. In my last two reports I have asked for some small prizes to be given to the rank and file at their annual shooting both in the city and in camp. This was also recommended by the general officer commanding the militia (see annual report, 1886). The handsome sums given by the Government do not reach the rank and file to any extent in my districts, Nos. 9 and 12.

The competitors, from here, at the Dominion matches, amounted to half per cent., of my established strength, at the Provincial matches 3 per cent., and at the eleven county rifle associations all told 8 per cent. Now in looking over the names of the men entitled to go to

Wimbledon next year, I find that fifteen out of the twenty are members of the force who are not armed with the rifle, in fact either officers, combatant or non-combatant or staff-sergeants. In the first sixty in the Governor-General's match forty-one (41) are in the same position, either officers or staff-sergeants. In our Nova Scotia Provincial match there are 119 competitors; in looking over the report I notice in the first match that caught my eye that it had 32 prizes. That the winners consisted of 13 non-combatants and staff-sergeants, and 10 other officers.

You will see by these figures that the rank and file benefit very little by the generous grants of the Government. In our County Associations the principal prizes are, I find, invariably won by the Officers, or Staff N. C. O's, who attend the Dominion or Provincial matches, and I do think that a Field Officer competing for a dollar, on a shooting butt with a private, is detrimental to good discipline. If the Government cannot afford to give the Militia prizes I would suggest that twenty-five per cent. be taken from the Annual Rifle Grants to those Associations, and that only ten men be sent to Wimbledon, and give that amount to the men of the Dominion Militia for prizes, to men who are actually armed with the rifle. Volley firing is conceded by the authorities to be most important, and this can only be learnt on parade, or where the non-combatants and Staff Sergeants do not go. The shooting of the Militia is very bad, and some steps should be taken to improve both by instruction, which is the only way to make the mass good, and by a little encouragement in prizes.

No. 10 District—Lt.-Col. H. V. Villiers, D. A. G.

The established strength in this district is 87 officers and 944 N.C.O. and men. "There appears," says the D. A. G., "to be also an independent infantry company, St. Jean Baptiste, which has been reported non-effective, and all arms and accoutrements were recalled, and returned into district stores here during the command of my predecessor. I would recommend that the name of this company be erased from the militia list, as it now only exists on paper. The number authorized for annual drill was 803 of all ranks."

There are at present twenty organized rifle associations in this district, eleven in the Province of Manitoba, and nine in the North-West Territories, most of which have held matches during the year, and the amount of ammunition supplied to them by the Militia Department on repayment for practice, amounting to 84,000 rounds, speaks well for the interest taken in rifle shooting, it being the third highest on the return of single military districts in the Dominion as shown in the report of the director of stores.

The Manitoba Provincial Rifle Range at Stony Mountain is a ten section one, and laid out from 100 to 1,000 yards, and is one of the best and safest in the Dominion, and is always open free of charge to any of the militia corps requiring the use of it. The annual prize meeting is a very attractive one, over \$3,000 in cash and kind being distributed in prizes. The Association have gone to great expense in laying out the range, and have built substantial offices for the council, secretary and treasurer, and I would respectfully recommend that the annual grant from the Dominion Government be increased to \$1,000.

On the 20th of October the Mounted Infantry were confined to barracks on the requisition of three magistrates, on account of an anticipated railway riot between the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Manitoba and Red River Valley Railway. The men remained in barracks until the evening of the 31st when their presence was demanded at the scene of contention by the said magistrates. The mounted division under command of Lieut.-Colonel Taylor started at 8.30 p.m., ten minutes after receiving the order. I followed with 32 dismounted men at 1 o'clock, a.m., per rail, and I am confident that the timely arrival of the mounted infantry prevented a serious collision between the opposing parties. The mounted infantry remained on the ground from the evening of the 31st October until the morning of the 7th November, during all this time the men behaved in a most exemplary manner, never meddling, or in any way interfering with the workmen. The Canadian Pacific Railway placed a Pullman at the disposal of the officers, and two Colonist cars for the men. *Vide* my report.

From a return received from the Commissioner of the North-West mounted Police I find that besides other stores, they have 1,124 Snider Rifles and 555,400 rounds of ball ammunition, the property of the Militia Department in charge at their different posts.

This is a small district as regards the strength of the Volunteer Force in comparison to other districts, but at the same time I consider it one of great importance, being as it were the outpost of the Canadian army, and in case of any disturbance, as happened in 1885, the little force here would have to act before reinforcements arrived, and it is for this reason that I would like to see the several corps better equipped with the best accoutrements and rifles and so be ready for any emergency. The rank and file composing the force is of a superior class and would fully appreciate the liberality of the militia department by being supplied with a new issue of rifles and the Oliver Equipant.

No. 11, District—Lieut.-Colonel J. G. Holmes, D.A.G.

The established strength of this district is 278 officers and men. There were authorized to drill, 270.

I am sorry to say, says Colonel Holmes, that the Rifle Company is in such an inefficient condition that I have been obliged to decline certifying the acquittance roll.

The artillery practice has not yet been completed, as soon as it is I shall forward the practice returns. In this connection I would suggest that the inspection of the Artillery in this district might be made by the Commandant of the Royal school of Artillery here who might be *ex-officio* an Assistant Inspector of Artillery. This would secure all the Artillery corps being inspected similarly and returns made together in the report of the Inspector of this branch. This would be much more satisfactory to the corps here as permitting of comparison with other corps in the Dominion. The returns used by D. A. G.'s are not suited for this purpose.

I would again earnestly press the claim of this district for an increase in the numbers of corps allowed to it. Nanaimo should have a battery of artillery. This could be given without any increase, as this corps would take the place of the rifle company disbanded in 1884. Vancouver, a growing city, has none. I would strongly recommend that a battery of artillery and a company of rifles be sanctioned in that place. The mounted rifles, already often recommended, would prove an effective and useful corps, and its organization, it is hoped, will be sanctioned at an early date.

I would again call attention to the incompleteness of district stores here as regards artillery accoutrements, also to the fact that there are no black haversacks in store for the rifles. A reserve of artillery clothing in district stores is much needed.

The question of re-arming the corps in this district, giving them the Martini-Henry, in lieu of the Snider is again strongly recommended for reasons given in previous reports.

The armament of the battery at New Westminster is badly in need of a change. The 24 pr. smooth bore Howitzers would be of little use for any service this battery would be called upon to perform and should be replaced by rifle guns.

(See also report of Commandant R.S.A.)

On the 14th July last a requisition signed by three magistrates (also members of the Provincial Government) calling for the service of the militia for duty on the Skeena River was received by me. I ordered out "C" battery, R.C.A., which corps proceeded at once on this service. A full report was forwarded to headquarters as soon as this duty was completed.

There is no questioning the fact that with price of labor and consequent cost of living one-third more hire than in the eastern provinces, a corresponding increase should be made in all allowances, that is if the force here is expected to be equally efficient.

The district has, during the year, lost the service of a very efficient officer; Lt.-Col. Wolfenden, B.C.G.A., who has retired retaining rank. This officer has been connected with the militia of the province since its first organization. From my knowledge of this officer, extending over a period of five years, I can safely say that his loss will be felt for some time by the force.

Captain Jones, district paymaster, has performed his duties in a most satisfactory manner. This officer has, in addition to his ordinary work, the pay of "C" Battery, R. C. A. This service is one for which he receives no pay and for which in Eastern stations, I understand, extra pay is allowed. I would strongly recommend that some allowance be made to this officer for this as well as to meet the increased cost of living, as is done in the other departments of the public service.

No. 12 District—Lieut.-Col. P. W. Worsley, D.A.G.

The establishment of the district is 581, and there were authorized to drill 444.

The following is Col. Worsley's report: "The Georgetown and Montague batteries came into camp, Brighton and Charlottetown on the 3rd July, and were then able to drill on the guns, under an excellent instructor. They made rapid progress. The Charlottetown batteries were inspected by the Inspector of artillery, who, I know, found them as usual in excellent condition. No. 2 battery, Captain Longworth, obtaining the proficiency prize given in competition amongst the whole of the garrison artillery. I need not point out the importance of giving the brigade here rifled guns. It was understood they had been ordered.

"The engineer company was inspected during the time the camp was going on by Captain Davidson, R.E., and I had the pleasure of seeing as smart and good-looking a company as need be. I know they will be favourably spoken of by the Inspector."

The 82nd Battalion, under command of Lieut. Col. Doherty, came into camp, Brighton, on the 3rd July; they improved in drill very much,

but I find it very difficult on the Island to get the country companies to put on their equipment properly or to smarten up their belts, dress, &c. This would soon improve if they had the example of others in a large camp. They, however, make excellent soldiers, being obedient, and are exceedingly well behaved. The Guards, I daily noticed, as being very untidy. I trust that at next year's camp the General Officer will be able to see the whole force in this district, which is, I think, the only one he has not visited in the Dominion.

The musketry was not as well done this year as last; a musketry instructor was not allowed this year, and in consequence I could see it was done in a very slipshod manner; no camp should be without one, and a really good one is quite a rare article. It was, however, carried on the same principle as at my camp at Aldershot, viz., that unless 15 points were obtained at the short distances of 150 and 200, the men were sent back again. I enclose a return of the practice together with the target practice registers.

Regimental News.

The Tenth Royal Grenadiers will not be behind the times if their enterprising Sergeant-Major can help it. The following paragraph from the *Telegram* of the 6th illustrates his enterprise: "The Sergeants' Mess of the Grenadiers was well filled last night by the members of that corps and a few friends, the object of the assembly being to listen to a lecture on the new infantry drill, by Sergeant-Major Cox. The lecturer handled his subject well, and, considering that the new drill-book is scarcely a fortnight in the Dominion the Grens. may well be proud of their energetic Sergeant-Major."

The members of No. 6 company, 56th Battalion, with the staff officers residing in Spencerville and vicinity, met on the invitation of Capt. Drummond, and partook of an oyster supper at Duclos' Hotel on the evening of the 10th ult. The attendance of members was very good, over thirty sitting down at the tables. After the eatables were disposed of several of the company, with the staff officers present, made patriotic speeches. Having toasted the Queen, the Governor-General and the Minister of Militia the company dispersed after singing "God Save the Queen" and having spent a very pleasant evening.

THE THIRTEENTH BATTALION.

The following formed portion of the regimental orders of the 8th of February: Until further orders Lieut. Ross is attached to D company and Lieut. Osborne to A company.

It is notified for general information that the prizes for efficient companies, as provided for in regimental order No. 49, September 14th, 1888, have been awarded as follows: First, C company, Capt. Zealand; second, F company, Lieut. Tidswell; third, H company, Capt. Moore. Four prizes will be awarded at the end of this year's annual drill for efficiency in drill, regularity of attendance and general appearance and set-up of companies. They will be respectively, \$40, \$30, \$20 and \$10.

A class for the instruction of non-commissioned officers and those desirous of qualifying for the non-commissioned officers' ranks will be started on Tuesday evening, February 12th, at 8 o'clock, and meet every Tuesday evening until further orders. All junior officers who have not yet qualified will attend these classes.

NOVA SCOTIA RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

The newly elected council of the Nova Scotia rifle association have chosen the following officers:

President—Lieut.-Col. Curren, 1st H. G. A.

First vice-president—Lieut.-Col. Mackintosh, 63rd Rifles.

Second vice-president—Lieut.-Col. Murray, superintendent of stores.

Treasurer—Lieut.-Col. Mackinlay.

Secretary—Major Weston, 66th P. L. F.

Council—Lieut.-Gen. Laurie, Lieut.-Col. MacDonald, 66th; Lieut.-Col. Chipman, 68th; Major Walsh, 63rd; Major Egan, 63rd; Major Marshall, 69th; Major Church, 93rd; Captain Barnhill, 78th; Captain Brown, 66th; Captain Bishop, 63rd; Captain Crane, 63rd; Captain Adams, 1st H. G. A.; Captain Stewart, 1st H. G. A.; Captain Maxwell, 1st H. G. A.; Captain Spike, 66th; Lieut. Dimock, 78th; Lieut. Jacques, 68th.

Major Walsh and Captains Browns and Maxwell were appointed the range committee. The treasurer, secretary and Captains Barnhill, Crane, Bishop, Brown and Adams were appointed the programme committee. Lieut.-Col. Murray, Major Weston and Captain Bishop were elected members of council of the Dominion Rifle association. It was determined to affiliate with the National and Dominion Rifle Associations. The president, treasurer and secretary, together with Major Walsh and Capt. Adams, were appointed the committee to carry out the inter-militia match. The secretary was directed in future to insist upon production of certificates of efficiency by members of the active militia entering for the annual matches.

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A. P. BRADLEY,

Secretary.

Department of Railways and Canals,
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