

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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## Topics of the Week.

The attention of our readers, especially those who belong to the artillery branch, is called to the proposed new constitution for the Dominion Artillery Association, which Mr. L. Homfray Irving has given notice of his intention to move. Mr. Irving, who is secretary of the Ontario Association, is well known as an enthusiast in artillery matters, and in framing the new constitution he has aimed at encouraging the formation of provincial associations, and the bringing into the association of the many artillery officers now unfortunately conspicuous only by their absence.

The Halifax *Critic* thus endorses the proposed pension scheme: "We are glad to be informed, on what appears to be good authority, that it is at last contemplated to bring forward in the ensuing session of Parliament, a measure for pensioning staff officers of militia, when obliged to retire after many years' service, at a rate of some degree of equality with civil servants of the people. That an officer who has devoted 25 or 30 years of the prime of his life to a service which has in the past been by no means encouraging, should be turned adrift, when he attains the age at which retirement becomes a necessity, with a beggarly three years pay of his rank, is a thorough discredit to any country, and we shall rejoice if the information we have of intended reform is found to be correct.

General D. S. Stanley, U. S. A., in his recent annual report on the Department of Texas, has some interesting suggestions relative to the prevention of desertion. Recognizing that the entire cure is an impossibility, he suggests, as likely to abate the evil: first, make the eligible age of the recruit twenty-four years; secondly, give each recruit six months probation before administering to him the oath, giving half-pay and carrying the balance to the end of his third year; and, thirdly, prohibiting all officers from using a soldier for any menial service in any way or manner. As his reasons for these suggestions, General Stanley says: "Young recruits are especially prone to desert, but after a young man has reached twenty-four years of age his mind is better settled upon the realities of labour and of life. As to the second proposition, a very large proportion of desertions occur in the first six months of enlistment, simply because the recruit finds himself unsuited for the army; and, thirdly, employing men even as grooms or helpers outside of the house raises a spirit of envy and discontent in a troop, battery or company. These recommendations," says the General, "may not be worth more than hundreds that have preceded them, but it would cost nothing to try them as compared to the pecuniary losses consequent upon desertion."

## Britain's Rifles.

Although our militia is still armed with the old Snider, and many of the barrels are undoubtedly worn out and useless, we are perhaps happier than if striving after the most modern weapon. Nothing can illustrate the troublesome effects of a change better than the state of affairs in England at the present time.

The Snider is, after all, a good old reliable solid weapon, carrying a heavy bullet, which effectually checks an enemy wherever it strikes him. The parts are strongly made and not likely to get broken or damaged much, as is shown by the comparatively few damaged by the rough usage they received in the campaign of 1885. The Martini is better still. All its parts are shut up in a metal box, and cannot be got at to injure. Experience has shown that the percentage of Martinis injured upon actual service is even less than the percentage of Sniders, owing to the above-mentioned fact. Of course there was a loud outcry about its "jamming" from the dust and sand of the desert in the Soudan, but this has been conclusively proved, beyond all contradiction, to have been entirely caused by the faulty Boxer cartridge, a cartridge anathematised as having been "conceived and brought forth by the perpetration of one of the most glaring frauds that has ever darkened the annals of the War Office records."

Conclusive tests and trials with almost unimaginable severity of sand and dust upon the Martini action at Enfield have shown that the Martini will never jamb with the solid case ammunition, and for the last few years large supplies of this have been turned out at Woolwich, ready for any active service calls.

As for its shooting powers we have now the proof before us. We have heard the shooting of the new .303 Metford barrel lauded to the skies. Whatever might be said about the unsatisfactory state of the new Enfield-Lee action, we were told that the barrel was all right. Now, what are the real facts? Quite lately at the School of Musketry, Hythe, two teams of crack shots were selected to fire a match—the one with Martini-Henry's and the other with the Enfield-Lee Metford. In the first match the Martini-Henry men "wiped out" the men using the new rifle, and, of course, the cry went up from the spectators that "it was an arranged matter, the teams were unevenly selected, the staff of the School of Musketry were known to be ready to do anything to injure the new rifle, for had they not unanimously reported condemning it after its trials last year, and had not the Secretary of State for War been obliged to suppress their report and refuse, when asked in the House of Commons, to let it be seen," etc. But lo and behold, the teams then exchanged weapons, and with exactly the same result. The Martini again scored a victory over the new rifle, the former winning team being hopelessly beaten when shooting with the new rifle.

Practical men are reported to have said that the new rifle is nothing but a pretty toy, and that the committee who have obtained its adoption must be singularly prejudiced to be blind to the defects of a toy with which they have played so long and which they have built up themselves. Whatever truth there may be in this sweeping assertion, it is undoubtedly the fact that the new rifle has not been made perfect.

The trials by different regiments in India and England a year ago showed many defects, and these defects instead of being remedied and the rifles sent back to the troops for new trials are said to have been patched up and hidden from the public as far as possible. The manufacture of the rifles, with these faults, has been forced on, and now when the 1st army corps stationed in England are about to be armed entirely with these new weapons the true state of affairs is beginning to leak out. On the 7th December last the "*A. & H.G. Gazette*" publishes the following strong statement:—

"The British public is congratulating itself on its recent acquisition of a rifle which is to 'lick creation,' and which has been asserted to be as perfect a weapon as it is possible to turn out, combining, as it does, high accuracy of fire, rapid loading, and an action which is second to none in the world. As regards accuracy, there can be but little dispute as to its merits on that score, and rapidity of loading has been secured subject to certain sacrifices in the way of handiness; but when we come to the action, we cannot altogether congratulate the British taxpayer on his new toy. The manufacture of the new rifle is proceeding apace, presumably on the assumption that the mechanism is perfect; yet it must be well known to some, at least, among the committee that there are serious defects in the new action, and that it is liable to get out of order in a very simple manner. Possibly the committee leave all the practical details to the Enfield folk, and are satisfied so long as they are assured by these people that everything is correct; yet, in view of the opinions expressed by many practical men unconnected with Enfield, as to the practicability and durability of the new action, it is surely time that some further enquiry were made into the working of this action and its liability to get out of order. However good the barrels may be, and however accurate the fire, the new rifle will prove of little service if issued with a faulty action. Some thoroughly practical men are already predicting that a change will have to be made ere long; but what would official life be worth without perpetual and ever-recurring changes? Altogether, in spite of the great delay which has taken place, we do not yet seem to be in possession of a rifle which can be thoroughly relied upon in every detail. Has sufficient attention and inquiry been bestowed upon the body and socket-piece of the new action, and is it not a fact that the whole action can be thrown out of order in a very simple manner? These are questions which require answer, and that promptly."

We should not be surprised to see Martinis still used upon active service and to note an official acknowledgment that the problem of the "best military rifle" is still unsolved.

The defences of Malta are to be strengthened by the establishment of a station for discharging the newly-invented Brennan torpedoes. Two stations have been established in England—one at Sheerness for the defence of the Medway, and one at the Isle of Wight for the defence of Portsmouth.

Capt. 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, substituting "fixed ammunition," which means a solid-drawn copper case containing the powder, with the projectile fixed in iron.

Amazing results are reported with the Lebel rifle, adopted by the French Army. In the experiments recently carried out at Marseilles, the extreme range of 200 yards was selected, and the targets consisted of sacks of flour, metal plates, wood, and a dead horse. The fact that the bullet entered the horse at one end and emerged at the other seems to have tickled the fancy of those present immensely.

A Frenchman (M. Bieunnait) is said to have found the means of replacing a metal shell of cartridges by one of a vegetable composition, which will be entirely consumed in firing. This cartridge scarcely weighs one-half of a metal cartridge, the price is considerably less, and M. Bieunnait has a contrivance, which may be easily affixed to every gun, at small expense, and which would give to his vegetable shell the same advantage as possessed by those now in use in closing the breech.

## The Dominion Artillery Association.

The annual meeting of the Dominion Artillery Association will be held at Ottawa on Thursday, 6th February, 1890. A meeting of the Council will be held the day previous at 2 p. m., in the office of the Inspector of Artillery. The following notices of motion—"Alteration to rules"—have been published for general information, by Capt. J. B. Donaldson, secretary:—

Toronto, 12th December, 1889.

Sir:—I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a proposed draft of New Rules for the Dominion Artillery Association, which I intend moving at the next general meeting.

Nothing in the enclosed is intended to remove the present patron, vice-patrons and life members from their positions in the association.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Capt. J. B. Donaldson,

Your obedient servant,

Secy. Dom. Art. Assn., Ottawa.

L. HOMFRAY IRVING.

### Draft of Proposed Constitution.

- I. NAME.—The Dominion of Canada Artillery Association.
- II. OBJECTS.—The development of gunnery skill and the dissemination of artillery knowledge throughout the Dominion of Canada.
- III. PATRONS.—The Governor-General of the Dominion and the Lieutenant-Governors and territories shall be respectfully requested to become patron and vice-patrons respectively of the association; and at any annual general meeting of the association other names may be added to the list of vice-patrons.
- IV. CONSTITUTION.—1. The association shall consist of ordinary members, corporate members, honorary members and associates.
  2. There shall be three classes of ordinary members.
  3. Any person who pays an annual subscription of \$2, or a life subscription of \$20 in cash at any one time, or a prize of not less value than \$40 for open competition at a general prize meeting, is an ordinary member.
  4. All members of provincial artillery associations, who shall contribute \$1 annually (through such association) to the funds of the Dominion association, shall be members of the Dominion association.
  5. Any public body, any provincial artillery association, any battery of artillery, either field or garrison, paying to the funds of the association an annual subscription of not less than:—public body \$10; provincial artillery association, \$2.50 per battery composing such association; field battery not in a provincial association, \$10; and garrison battery not in a provincial association, \$6, is a corporate member.
  6. An honorary member shall be one to whom the freedom of the association has been presented at a general meeting, for important services rendered the association or its representatives. He shall be exempt from the payment of any subscription, and shall be entitled for life to all the privileges of the Association, except those of holding office and voting.
  7. Any person who pays \$1 per annum is an associate for the annual meeting for which such payment is made.
  8. The officers of the association shall be a president, four vice-presidents and a secretary-treasurer, all of whom shall be elected by the members and associates at the annual general meeting, and shall hold office until the appointments of the following year are made.
- V. THE PRESIDENT.—1. It shall be the duty of the president to preside at all general meetings of the association at which he is present, and he shall regulate and keep order in the proceedings.
  2. In the absence of the president, it shall be the duty of the senior vice-president present to preside at the meetings and regulate the proceedings. But in the absence of the president and vice-presidents, the members and associates present may elect one of their number to take the chair at such meeting.
- VI. TREASURER.—1. Shall keep an account of all the moneys of the association and of all dealings therewith.
  2. All money received for or on account of the association, shall be paid over to the treasurer, who shall deposit the same in some bank to the account and for the use of the association, unless otherwise ordered by the council.
  3. No money of the association shall be paid out except by order of the chairman of the council, and cheques shall be drawn in such a manner as the council shall from time to time direct.
  4. He shall furnish to the council on the 15 January of each year a detailed statement of all receipts and expenditures.
- VII. SECRETARY.—1. His duty shall be to take minutes of all the proceedings of the association and on council meetings, and enter them in the proper books; to read at each meeting the minutes of the preceding meeting with a view to their verification, and, subject to the direction of the chairman, to bring before the meeting all business matters according to the order established in that behalf. He shall

also conduct the correspondence of the association and furnish provincial associations such information from the records of the Dominion association as may be required for the distribution of provincial prizes.

2. There may be an assistant secretary, appointed by the council, whose duties shall be defined from time to time by the council.

3. An annual report from the secretary is to be submitted to the council before publication.

4. Due notice of all council meetings shall be sent by the secretary to all members of the council.

VIII. COUNCIL.—1. The president, or secretary-treasurer, the inspector and the two assistant inspectors of artillery, and as many other members as may be necessary to complete the number of 11 members shall constitute the council, and shall have the entire direction and management of the affairs of the association.

2. The council shall meet on the day previous to and immediately after the annual general meeting; also during the annual competitive gun practices.

3. Extraordinary meetings of council shall be summoned by the secretary when required by the chairman thereof, at such place as he may direct, either at his own discretion or upon the request in writing of two members of council entitled to vote at such meeting; notification being sent to each member of the council at least 14 days previous to such meeting, and the requisition for the meeting and the notices to the members must state the object or objects of such meetings. Members of the council shall be permitted to send a written vote to the secretary upon subjects to be discussed at such meetings.

4. At any meeting of council five members thereof shall constitute a quorum.

5. The council shall have power to appoint committees from amongst themselves and the members, or from amongst themselves, for special or technical purposes, not exceeding five members, and such committees shall, as soon as their business is concluded, report to the council; the duties of these committees shall cease with the presentation of each report.

6. The council shall present to the annual general meeting a report on the state of the association, in which shall be given an abstract of all the proceedings during the year ending 15th January, before such meeting.

7. The council shall have the power of establishing such competitions as they may deem advisable.

8. In the event of any office becoming vacant before the annual general meeting, by death or otherwise, the council shall have power to fill the vacancy.

IX. AUDITORS.—Two auditors, to be elected at the annual general meeting, and not being members of council, shall audit the accounts of the association for the year ending 15th January next after appointment, and they shall present their report to the Council at least one week before the annual general meeting.

X. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.—The annual general meeting shall be held at Ottawa on the third Thursday after the meeting of the Dominion Parliament, for the purpose of receiving and considering the reports of the council and auditors, the electing of officers, auditors and members of council, and the transacting of all business.

XI. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING.—The secretary shall convene a special general meeting on the written requisition of at least 20 members or associates, or both, to be held within 14 days from the date of the receipt by the secretary of such requisition. Such requisition shall state the particular object of and business to be transacted at such meeting, notice of which shall be given by advertisement in the CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE. At a special general meeting no business other than that for which it was convened shall be transacted.

XII. ALTERING THE RULES.—A motion to alter any rule may be made at the annual general meeting, provided that sufficient notice of the intention to do so shall be given by the publication in the CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE of the proposed alteration for at least two issues of that paper.

XIII. PRIVILEGES.—Every ordinary member has the right of attending and voting at the annual general meeting and all other general meetings of the association, of being eligible to any of its offices, and of receiving gratuitously its annual report.

2. Every corporate member receives gratuitously a copy of the annual report, and may nominate two representatives to attend at, and vote at the annual general meeting of the association. Field and garrison batteries as enumerated in Section IV., sub-section 4, shall further enjoy the privilege or participating in such prize list as may be issued by the council.

3. Every associate has the right of attending and voting at the annual general meeting.

4. Artillery officers are not eligible to become associates.

XIV. SUBSCRIPTIONS.—The annual subscription of each member or associate is payable in advance on the 15th April in each year.

2. The annual subscription of batteries not in provincial associations is payable in advance on the 1st June.

3. The annual subscription of provincial associations is payable in advance on the 15th June.

4. When a member joins the association on or after the 1st October, having paid his first subscription, he will not be charged a second subscription on the following 15th April, but it will become due and payable on the 15th April of the second year.

5. Any person becoming a member of the Association shall continue to be a member, and be liable for his subscription until the 15th April next succeeding the time when he shall give notice in writing to the secretary of his intention to withdraw from the Association, or until his subscription shall be in arrear for one whole year, in which case his name may be struck off the register of members; but any member whose name shall be so struck off shall be liable for all subscriptions in arrear at the time.

XV. REPORTS.—All competitions to be closed by the 31st December of each year, and all returns thereof must be sent to the secretary by the 15th January following.

XVI. PROVINCIAL ASSOCIATIONS.—For the purposes of these rules a provincial association must consist of at least four batteries of artillery.

XVII. ORDER OF BUSINESS.—At all meetings of the association, the following order of business shall be observed as closely as circumstances will admit:

1. The minutes of the previous meeting shall be read and confirmed and signed by the chairman, and no entry shall be considered valid until this is done.

2. Business arising out of the minutes.

3. Communications received since last meeting.

4. Reports from council, auditors, etc.

5. New business.

Proposed by Lieut.-Colonel Macdonald:—

That the word "others" in line 2, rule 4, be struck out and the following substituted: "officers on the active or retired list."

Proposed by Captain Donaldson:—

1. That the following be substituted for rules 20, 21, 22 and 23:—Whenever an artillery association is formed for any of the provinces of the Dominion, the secretary of this association shall be required to furnish such information from the records in his charge as may be required for the issue of provincial prizes.

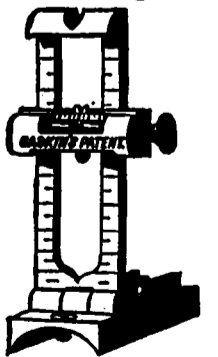
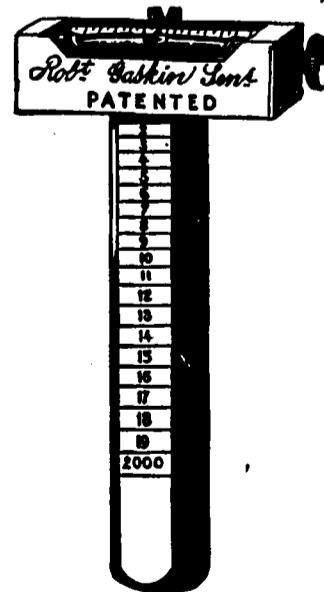
2. That the necessary alteration be made in rule 6 (last sentence) and rule 24 to prevent them conflicting as to time.

### New Sighting Appliances.

Mr. Robert Gaskin, sr., of St. John N. B., has just patented a simple combined wind gauge, plumb and elevation back sight for fire-arms and ordnance, in which our readers will doubtless be interested. The ordnance appliance shown on the left, will, it is claimed, enable the marksman quickly to find the vertical line through the centre of plane of the bore of the gun. By simply traversing the sight point to the centre of the bubble, a true central shot is obtained. Any deflection, right or left, is quickly ascertained by the scale in front. Whether or not the platform on which the gun carriage rests be level is immaterial. It is claimed that when this is used the necessity for experimental firing disappears, and

that no complicated calculations nor waste of time is necessary.

The rifle back sight shown on the right, being a combined wind gauge, spirit level and elevation back sight, is claimed to be a military sight that will insure accuracy in shooting and make crack shots of the masses at long ranges. It possesses the advantages of being very simple, strong and compact, and is claimed to have been thoroughly tested by experts and found to meet all requirements. It is the result of the inventor's life study and experience.



## Correspondence.

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

## ENCOURAGEMENT FOR YOUNG SHOTS.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE,—Will you kindly inform me if there is any chance in the future of having D. R. A. rules so changed, that "old shots" will be debarred from carrying off the majority of prizes at the association matches. Year after year the same set of men generally attend those meetings, and it is not uncommon to see the same men chosen (of course legally as the rules are now) to go to Wimbledon. What sort of a college would permit a scholar to compete for a gold medal year after year? When a scholar gets all the degrees he can, he steps down and out, and makes way for others to win scholarships, medals, &c., but not so with our "old shots." They keep on year after year, generally scoring the same and discouraging young shots. As the rules are now a glance at rolls of competitors on ranges would lead one to believe that Canada had only about 100 good shots, as on an average that number will cover those who year after year attend the range meetings as religiously as they would church parade. I have heard dozens say, "Oh what is the use of going to the range this year, So-and-so will be there and carry all off." I should think when a marksman has had the honour of being once on the Wimbledon team, his ambition should be satisfied, but such is not the case and consequently old England must think our *shots* are composed of about 100 men.

There is no doubt if a rule of some sort bearing on the case could be framed, that our annual matches would be better attended, as it would draw out, without fear of defeat, those who will not attend the matches now. Rifle shooting has got down to a science now, in fact to such an extent that in order to assist the "crack shot of the range," were he on active service, the quarter-master would have to have all sorts of appliances in store. Imagine a skirmisher—under fire—touching up his fore and back sights, and placing on wind gauges, &c. No sir, to my mind the steady old shot, of the old school, with a good Snider, who carries his yearly score right along between 65 to 70 and 75, all shots on the target, is *the* man in the field. He does not use these "assistors," but takes a pull at his pipe, looks around to see how the sun is, and like a sailor squints at the direction of the wind, and then gets down to work—not to make a big score, but every shot *hits*. This is the man who will use the rifle, *as it was made*, and to good effect, in the front of the foe. Four times under fire in defence of our Canada has taught me that this scientific shooting is no use when you have to draw a bead on a human being. You know the fellow you have your eye on will shoot you unless you "pink" him. Then comes the cool shooting—the coolest man generally gets an "inner," not the man who on the range, using all appliances, carries off the prizes. I do not think it fair to put a man in the front of an enemy and expect him to shoot as well without these appliances, to which he is so accustomed. This puts him to a disadvantage and yet these appliances are not in his quarter-master's store list.

I presume a discussion on these points is not wrong. I have only the honour of our Militia at heart, having served in it for over 24 years—and am good for 24 years more.

"OLD SCHOOL."

Winnipeg, Man., 28th Dec., 1889.

## THE CANADIAN MILITARY RIFLE LEAGUE.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE,—In your issue of December 26th, I read with interest, and I must say surprise, the letter of George A. McMicking, Niagara Falls, on the Canadian Military Rifle League, and I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without challenging some of his suppositions. He seems to have taken a dislike to the personnel of the League, otherwise this morbid fault finding could only be ascribed to a desire to throw cold water on a red hot stove. Now, every one knows our friend lives near the rapids, but that is no reason why he should throw cold water. We are not needing any this winter.

With the list of provisional officers before me I find that one is on headquarters staff, one on retired list, seventeen from city corps and twelve from rural, without counting the secretaries or treasurer, who for purposes of prompt action should be together, and in a city within easy reach of telephone and telegraph. Again, does my friend suppose because we have 94 battalions we should have 94 officers on the league staff. "What an aggregation." If we require not 94, but only 34, as the circular states, what are we to do with the other 60. They must be left off. Can our friend suggest a personnel that would work better than the one named: for as there are more rural than city corps there must be more colonels of rural corps left off the list. What would the League accomplish with officers from rural corps who do not shoot. What help could they give superior to that of such old tried shots as we find on

the list. Geo. A. thinks the rurals' money would go just as far as citizens'. I say yes; but money is not the object of the League. I do not see how, if every rural corps were given an officer on the staff, it would cause them to spend \$10 to join a league to which they could not send five, let alone ten men who would have any chance of success. Geo. A. is always supposing, but he is mistaken if he thinks the C. M. R. L. is. It is basing its operations on facts. D. C. R. A. reports show that less than 50 corps are represented at the annual prize competitions, where the fee is much less than \$10, and rural corps are not generally made of such stuff, if not shooting corps, as to enter in a competition in which they have no possible chance of success. Then again he supposes 94 battalions at \$10 each. Absurd! Say 30, a high estimate, which would give \$300, every cent of which would be used to buy a trophy and pay other expenses. As it appears to me, the whole drift of the circular our friend writes about with such alarm is to show the possibilities of the League in future, naming a fee of \$10 per team per annum, number of men on team as may be arranged, 2nd and 3rd teams \$5 each.

I am afraid our friend Geo. A. used the small hole in the orthoptic when reading the circular. What rural or other enthusiastic rifleman would miss the time spent in a league competition, and let me tell Geo. A. that a league competition would not be the place to give instruction to young shots. They would have to be past the instruction period before they could hope to get a place on the list of teams that would win. But, "ye trojans of war," listen to what he says in the last part of supposition No. 2: "In rural battalions good young men enroll at 18 years and serve 3, and then leave because their business prevents them going to camp." But this only when they have not been taught to shoot. There has been no one in their corps with enough enthusiasm to teach them. If so, the 3 years would run to 6, 9 and longer.

What does a rural lose when he goes to camp—not much over 50c per day, once every two years. Generally he just makes 50c per day, or \$6.00. The city man loses his pay to the company fund, \$6.00, and in many cases has to buy his uniform; but, "by the powers that be," here is where the comparison shows the advantage the rural has over the city shot. The rural gets \$6.00 drill pay, free ammunition, can have a range on his farm, practice when he desires, nothing for marking or carfare, and the pick of a rifle that has never been used. Man of a city corps loses his drill pay, \$6.00; ammunition for 3 months, \$12.00; car fare, \$4.00; marking, \$3.00; practice at 5 p.m., to which he has to walk 4 miles, and often loses his Saturday afternoon pay, and on top of all this he has to pay \$26.00 for a new rifle to be on the same footing as the rural; total, \$51.00. Then Geo. A. finds fault with Saturday afternoons being set for the various competitions, and has arranged for a thunderstorm to arrive precisely on Saturday nights to destroy the farmer's crops because he wasted a couple of hours in a League competition. Now, what crops are harvested in June and July, and what could the time lost in our August competitions lose to the rural. And does not Geo. A. know that all marketing is done before 12 o'clock, when markets close. So much for supposition; but when will the 44th trot out the 50 Leaguers, nay, "10." I only know of one—but bring on your ten and we will defeat them first. The League says it does not require an umpire to be an officer of any corps, but may be an individual who understands scoring, and who is approved of by the League, and may act on one or all occasions. It is to be regretted that such an old tried shot as Geo. should make such hostile criticism as appears over his name. All ridiculous supposition bordering on romance, equal to Jules Verne's tale of "Thirty Thousand Leagues under the Sea," implied paying of large salaries to someone or a scheme to bring benefit to city corps. What on earth can the officers of the League, whether city or rural, have to do with its object, so long as they are men who understand rifle shooting and will work? I am told that the League is endorsed by riflemen over the length and breadth of Canada, and must be worthy of support. I will conclude by supposing just one gigantic supposition equal to our friend Geo. A. Supposing that city corps have done all that has been done in Canada to uphold rifle shooting, and supposing they have always been first to do so, and supposing they have still the enthusiasm to do more, should they be condemned for it?

W. S. DUNCAN.

Toronto, Jan. 7th, 1890.

The Queen has presented Sir John Commerell with a large bronze medal, struck to commemorate the late naval review. The obverse bears the portrait of the Emperor of Germany, and the reverse a miniature portrait of the Queen and a representation of the fleet.

Whilst death by suicide is increasing in the foreign armies, the number in the British Army is decreasing. From a return just issued it appears there were eleven cases during 1887, the number during the previous year having been twenty-nine.

## The Rifle.

### THE MILITARY LEAGUE.

The secretary of the Canadian Military Rifle League has received from Major Peters, of C Battery, R.C.A., an interesting letter in reply to his invitation to the battery to take part. "I should like very much to enter a team," he says, "but being armed as we are with the short Snider the ranges make it impossible for us to enter. As you are aware, at 600 yards the short Snider is useless. It is essential that the men should use only the rifle with which they are armed. If your object is to encourage young shots I should suggest 200, 300 and 400 yards, for hundreds of young men will enter and possibly make a good score for the shorter ranges who will not think of attempting the longer ranges. Besides, don't you think it is a pity that 300 yards, the most useful for actual service, should be neglected. The 500 and 600 ranges are, of course, the favourite distances for the older shots, and it seems impossible to get up a match without these ranges. But rifle shooting will never be as popular as it should, till some one cuts down the distances to those most useful on service. Many shots who are disgusted and discouraged by distance will readily compete when the range is reduced."

## Regimental and Other News.

A happy compliment was paid to Lt.-Col. the Hon. J. M. Gibson as the midnight bells of Hamilton tolled out the old year. The officers and men of "D" company, 13th battalion, marched up to his residence and after firing a *feu de joie*, gave him three hearty cheers. The gallant Colonel replied feelingly, and invited the stormers to come in. This, however, they would not do, owing to the lateness of the hour, but marched back to the armoury.

The New Year receptions were well attended by Montreal military men. In the absence of Lt.-Col. Henshaw, Major Radiger and other officers of the Victoria Rifles received numerous callers throughout the day. The Sixty-fifth had their quarters beautifully decorated. Lt.-Col. Dugas, assisted by Major Prevost, Major Ethier and other officers received a large number of callers. Deputations were sent to all the English regiments and vice versa. Lt.-Col. Caverhill, assisted by Mr. Ewan McLennan, received at the Royal Scots quarters. There was a continued flow of visitors including many of the officers of other city regiments. Sergt. Clarke with his pipers made things lively for a time. The Sixth Fusiliers made merry in the armoury. A number of military callers were received and congratulations exchanged. Lt.-Col. Massey, assisted by Lt.-Col. Lyman, Lt.-Col. Linton and Lt.-Col. Gardiner, did the honors.

The 53rd Battalion, of Sherbrooke, Que., have issued a neat and attractive holiday card bearing the regimental crest, and the words, "We wish our comrades the compliments of the season." Thanks, same to you.

### The 21st Fusiliers.

Corp. Hunt, of No. 1 Co., was instantly killed at Walkerville by a G. T. R. engine on Thursday, December 19th, and buried with military honours at Windsor on the following Sabbath. The members of Nos. 1 and 5 Companies, staff and band attended almost en masse. The service was conducted by the chaplain of the regiment, the Rev. Mr. Gray, and held in the Presbyterian Church. Corp. Hunt, whose untimely death is greatly regretted by all, was a fine soldier, an excellent rifle shot and a good citizen.

Pte. Joseph Ley, of No. 2 Co., Leamington, died suddenly of heart disease on Christmas Day, and was buried with military honours on Thursday, the 26th December. No. 2 Co. turned out very strong, under the command of Lieut. Alderton. Col. Wilkinson was present in uniform. The deceased was a brother of Capt. Ley, and served continuously in No. 2 Co. for 27 years. He served with his company on the frontier during the Fenian raids of 1866 and 1870. He was a useful, genial and kind-hearted soldier, and a good citizen, and will be greatly missed by all.

No doubt the regiment will enter the "Rifle League" with at least one team.

Col. Sergt. Laing, Corp. McAnnany, of No. 3 Co., Corp. Kettles, No. 2 Co., and Corp. Lodge and Pte. Dobson, of No. 1 Co., join D School of Infantry at London, for a short course of instruction, on the 1st January. Others of the regiment were excluded from want of room at the school.

FUSILIER.

## Fancy and Trick Rifle Shooting.

(Shooting and Fishing.)

Doubtless many who have witnessed exhibitions of fancy rifle shooting, at both stage and circus performances, will be surprised to learn that the almost incredible shots they have so often witnessed, and by the hour looked upon as marvellous tests of skill with the rifle, are nothing but a mere sham—tricks which, by their ingenuity of invention, are likely to deceive not only the few, but the many, novice and expert riflemen among them. The public see the shots apparently made as announced, and takes it for granted that the feats, although remarkable, are really accomplished. To show they are not, and the manner in which many of the shots are made, and the devices resorted to to make them, the writer gives the result of a talk with a once noted rifle expert, who, for five successive years, gulled the public of almost every city in the United States with his wonderful skill.

The audience, said he, sees the shots apparently made as announced, and takes it for granted the feats, though remarkable, to say the least, are really done. Sometimes some smart Alec in the audience gets an idea this or that shot is not just as legitimate as they are announced, but when he wishes to convince himself and investigate, the performer guys him into submission. The public expect impossibilities, and a stage shooter that cannot gratify it with a rifle can expect no engagements. He did not wish to infer that all stage shooters resorted to trickery in performing their acts, but those that do not are few, and of the many "champions" now gaining a livelihood with the rifle, filling stage and circus dates, only three or four are giving a strictly legitimate performance. Dr. Wm. F. Carver to-day stands preëminent as the finest fancy rifle shot in the world, but even he resorts to trickery to create the requisite amount of sensation the American people are always looking for, and also to avoid infringing on the city ordinances governing the shooting of rifle bullets in all large cities. Shooting glass balls thrown up by an assistant on foot, while the shooter rides a broncho at full gallop, and apparently breaks them with a .45 calibre bullet, shot from a repeating rifle, is a farce. In place of a solid ball the .45-calibre shell is loaded with ½ oz. of No. 9 shot, which, when it attains the distance the ball is when thrown has a spread of, at the very least, two feet. The once famous Austin brothers, though they had some rather unsolvable fancy rifle tricks in their list of stage shooting, were considered square and fair, as were also Butler and Bahman, the former now the lucky half of Miss Annie Oakley. As a team, Butler and Bahman never had their equal. They were always concocting and scheming new acts together, their last being shooting peanuts off one another's bare heads, firing simultaneously. This was abruptly ended one night by Butler feeling a peculiar sensation in his forehead immediately after his partner had fired, the .22 calibre bullet from his rifle having struck him a little above the centre of the forehead, glanced and circled under the scalp, almost back to where his collar button was.

The performances of rifle bullets are equally as dangerous by their unreliability and queerness of flight as they are accurate, and the phrase "as straight as though shot from a rifle," is, to be funny, not exactly straight. Only the most expert riflemen alone know the real danger attending rifle shooting. Never venture to stand within 100 yards of where the bullet is sure to strike, either side or back of where any rifle shooting target has been placed. The things that will change a rifle bullet's flight from one inch to one mile are as innumerable as they are curious and unaccountable. To cite Bret Harte, who relates in one of his novels of two gamblers getting into a dispute over a game of billiards, both simultaneously standing on opposite sides of the table, whipping out their revolvers and firing, and the bullets meeting half way between the two and falling as one welded together, on the billiard table! That may be fiction, but truth and reality will outdo that, as many soldiers who have seen active service will verify.

As regards certain fancy stage rifle shooting which, by the way, at its best now does not pay, the retired expert, after requesting the writer to classify by number the different shots, explained them by starting off with:—

Shot No. 1. A composition ball, made small for the purpose, is hung upon a nail fixed into a round iron plate target. The ball is easily broken by shooting anywhere within two inches about it by the bullet, at that short range, splattering to pieces upon hitting the iron plate. Surrounding the plate the bullet strikes is generally placed a projecting 1½ inch iron plate to confine the splattering.

Shot No. 2. Crackers of two inches in diameter, are used for targets, and can be readily broken by hitting anywhere within four inches of them, using the same plate as used for shot No. 1.

Shot No. 3. Another way of breaking crackers, without hitting them, is by using a board 12 x 2 inches for a target, and having a small wire passing through the board with a small hole in it at the end where the cracker is placed. The cracker is then stuck on the wire and a

small brad is placed in the hole at the end of the wire. At the crack of the rifle the assistant back, of the scenes, pulls a string attached to the wire, which forces the brad through the cracker, and, of course, breaks it nicely.

Shot No. 4. Lighting a match or matches is usually done by placing the match on an iron plate, the splatter of the bullet igniting it. Another is to place the match in a little clamp-holder so that the head lays on a small piece of sandpaper, connected with a string, which, at the crack of the rifle, is jerked by the assistant, and the friction caused by the sandpaper ignites the match. No bullet is needed in this shot, but be sure and have your match and paper just so.

Shot No. 5. The cigar shot is made by the assistant having a wire (shawl pin) running through the cigar to about one-half inch of the fire. As the gun is fired he presses his tongue against the wire at the end held in the mouth, and the ashes fall off the lighted end.

Shot No. 6. Red fire is ignited by a small phial of sulphuric acid being placed against an iron plate with the fire substance just below. The splatter of the bullet breaks the phial, and the sulphuric acid dropping in the substance lights it.

Shot No. 7. Cutting a rope with a bullet is done by cementing a piece of glass about the middle of the rope, which, when the bullet strikes it, immediately parts.

Shot No. 8. Trick target, is made as follows: An iron frame, with a 10-inch steel bell, generally round, is used, over the face of which is stretched white crepe or other similar material, with a small one-quarter inch black bullseye in the centre. The shooter is apparently placing all the shots in the one-quarter inch bullseye, but, in fact, has a 10-inch circle to shoot in. This act never fails to get applause.

Shot No. 9. The swinging trapeze shot, in which the shooter hangs by his legs or feet from a trapeze, is done by shooting cartridges loaded with shot.

Shot No. 10. Splitting a bullet on a knife blade and snuffing out two candles at once, is done on an iron plate by placing the knife blade out from the plate one half inch, the lead thus splattering under the blade to each candle.

Shot No. 11. Cutting a swinging hair is done with cartridges loaded with very fine dust shot, the audience being made to believe, through all sorts of manoeuvres by the performer, the hair must be placed just so, and otherwise taking up much time.

Shot No. 12. Most cartridges used for stage wing shooting, though they are supposed to be solid bullet, are loaded with shot. Some load with shot, then over that place a bullet in the end of the shell, to show the audience there is no deception.

Shot No. 13. Card shot.—White cards are used, with a black bullseye about the size of a 10 cent piece. A dozen or more, packed one on top of the other, are held up by the assistant, and a bullet is apparently sent through the centre, after which the cards are sailed out to the audience as mementoes. The fact is, the cards are shot through the centre at close range before the performance opens, the bullet hole in the centre, in the black bull, being invisible from where the audience are. This shot is hastily made, which increases the wonder of the audience.

Shot No. 14. The mirror shot, placing the gun over the shoulder, and firing by aid of the mirror, requires knack, but is dangerous and should be discouraged. To make the shot and be safe, one should hold high.

Shot No. 15. Swinging shot—shooting at two swinging balls, though possible to make it with naked bullets, is done with cartridges loaded with shot, owing to the invariably bad stage light.

Shot No. 16. Shooting from the hip without sighting, is done with shot cartridges, but even then requires considerable calculation and practice.

Shot No. 17. The blind-fold shot, in which the shooter is blind-folded, is done similar to the swinging ball and snuffing the candle shot.

Shot No. 18. Combination shot, hitting a trigger of a gun, that hitting another and the third breaking a table plate, is easy, but requires some precision and practice.

Shot No. 19. The card shot, supposed by the audience to be all calculation, is made as follows, and is a sure shot: A card, about 4 x 5 inches, with a hole the size of the barrel end, is put over the muzzle of the rifle. Now, if the right eye is closed, no sight can be had at all, but, upon opening the right eye, it looks to one side of the card and beyond, while the left eye sees no further than the card at the muzzle. It is only necessary in this shot to aim a little to the left, because the eyes are not focussed on the subject, but are looking in parallel directions, the distance of aim, to strike the object, being the distance between the eyes.

Shot No. 20. Potatoes are used, suspended on a string; the idea is to split in halves. This is done by first splitting the potato with a knife nearly through. In this shot it is necessary, though, to really hit the object with a bullet.

Shot No. 21 is, to the audience, a remarkable one. A hat or any other article is placed behind a scenic stump of an old tree, and the shooter perforating it with a bullet. This is accomplished by the shooter placing a shovel at an angle so that when the bullet hits the shovel it will throw or glance the ball behind the tree into and through the hat.

Shot No. 22. The shooter shoots at a two-inch bullseye ahead of him, and breaks a glass ball, or other object back of him. This is done by shooting a solid bullet into a two inch gas pipe, which is twisted about behind the scenes, and brings the next opening to where the glass ball back of him is placed; the fired bullet follows inside the line of pipe, and naturally breaks it on its exit.

Shot No. 23. The dangerous head shot is done by having the male or female assistant stand facing the audience, with an apple or other destroyable object on the head, which, at the crack of the rifle, is pulled off from behind the scene.

Shot No. 24. Breaking eggs held in the hands of the assistant without sighting the rifle, is done by the assistant at the report of the rifle by simply crushing the egg between his forefinger and thumb.

Shot No. 25. Shooting an orange from the assistant's head, and making it disappear entire, is done with an electric battery hidden in the pocket of an assistant, a wire connection conductor being connected with a .22 fulminate cap in the orange, and the connection sprung with the report of the rifle.

Shot No. 26. Springing a glass ball trap with the first shot from a repeating rifle, immediately reloading and breaking a ball thrown from the trap with the second, is an easy shot. In place of the inch or less space the audience see for the shooter to shoot in to spring, the trap being at least a foot wide, and the ball sprung in the air being broken with a shot cartridge in place of, as the audience suppose, a solid bullet.

Shot No. 27. The hatchet shot requires some calculation. A hatchet is placed in the middle of the stage, the sharp edge facing the shooter. On each side of it, back some distance, and about 10 feet apart, are placed two glass balls; the shooter then hits the sharp edge of the hatchet plump, splitting the bullet, one half going to the right and the other half to the left, breaking the two glass balls.

Shot No. 28. Gallery shot. Bells in shooting galleries are made out of old pieces of saw plates, hung loosely back of the target proper, a bullet through the bull being the only means to ring. By offering you big inducements, a dollar if you ring her three out of five, if you are any sort of a rifle enthusiast and vain, you bite. Say you missed one of the first three shots you fired; your next shot is sure not to be a ringer. Why? The gallery man has lowered, by means of a wire over a pulley, the bell plate out of reach of the bullet. If you claim you went in the bull he will smilingly tell you you are mistaken, and that it hit directly the same place as such and such number of shot the white face of the target shows.

Shot No. 29. Snuffing a candle. Place the lighted candle an inch from the scene, back of the stage; fire at it, and have your assistant blow it out from behind the scene the instant you shoot. To do this successfully, never risk miss-fire shells, an assistant with weak lungs, or a sleepy fellow.

Shot No. 30. Shooting so many glass balls per minute, or in a time, with a repeating rifle, "nipper" your glass balls first, which, then, by merely coming in contact with the stretched white canvas against which the trap throws the balls, they will break of their own accord. A "nippered ball" defined, means one weakened by breaking off parts about the neck of the hole.

Farther, my kind informant saideth not.

HOTTENTOT.

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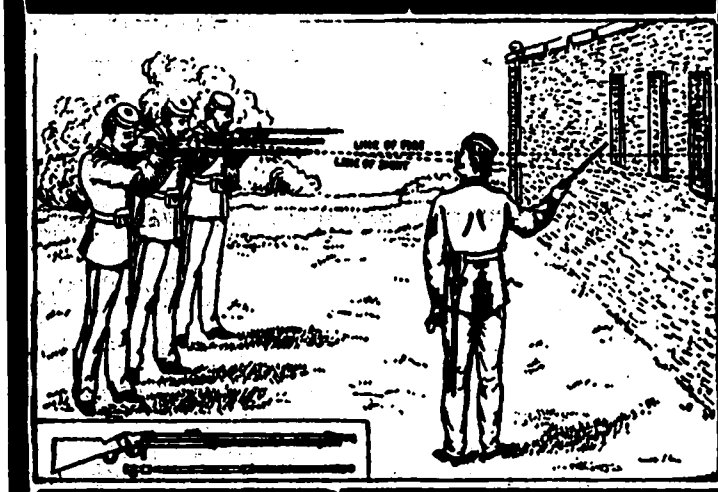
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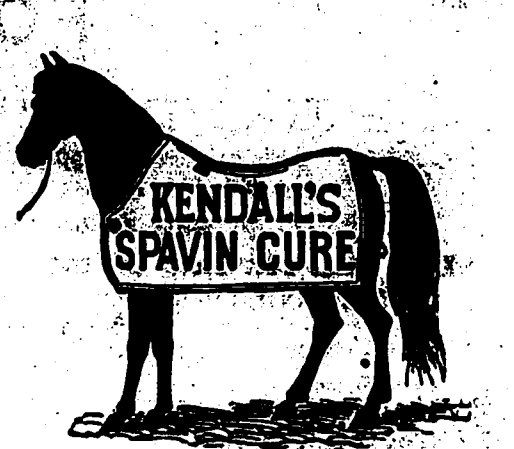
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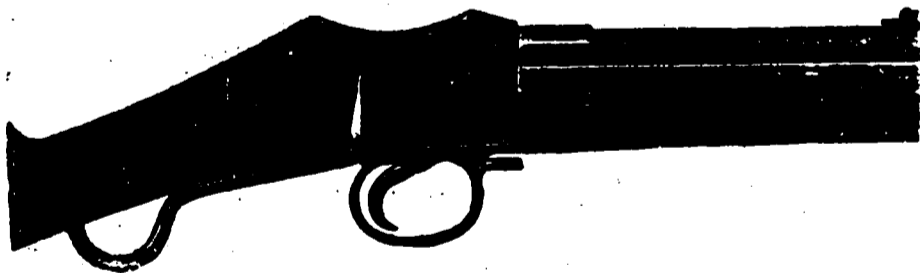
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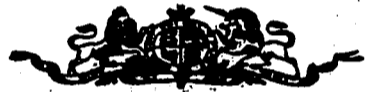
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APPLICANTS must be between the ages of Twenty-two and Forty, active, able-bodied men of thoroughly sound constitution, and must produce certificates of exemplary character and sobriety.

They must understand the care and management of horses, and be able to ride well.  
The minimum height is 5 feet 8 inches, the minimum chest measurement 35 inches, and the maximum weight 175 pounds.

The term of engagement is five years.  
The rates of pay are as follows:—  
Staff-Sergeants ..... \$1.00 to \$1.50 per day  
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	Service pay.	Good conduct pay.	Total.
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2nd "	50c.	5c.	55 "
3rd "	50c.	10c.	60 "
4th "	50c.	15c.	65 "
5th "	50c.	20c.	70 "

Extra pay is allowed to a limited number of blacksmiths, carpenters and other artisans.

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