

# The Canadian Militia Gazette

THE POPULAR ORGAN OF THE ACTIVE FORCE OF THE DOMINION.

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

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No. 12.

## NOTE AND COMMENT.

The postponed annual meeting of the Ontario Artillery Association will be held at the Canadian Military Institute, Toronto, on Friday, the 27th inst., at 11 a.m.

"Army Orders" of the 1st inst. proclaim that "A revised edition of the 'Manual of Garrison Artillery,' which will in future be styled 'Garrison Artillery Drill,' has been approved, and Vol. II. will shortly be issued to all concerned. The instructions therein contained will be strictly adhered to throughout the Service, and every officer of the Royal Artillery will provide himself with a copy. The publication of Vol. I. is postponed for the present."

The contest for the vacancies on the Council of the National Rifle Association, particulars of which we gave last issue in the report of proceedings at the annual business meeting, has been simplified by the discovery that Col. Villiers, one nominee of the Council, is not a qualified member of the Association, and the Council have graciously accepted Col. Bargrave Deane, the opposition candidate. There is, however, a fierce contest for the other vacancy between Lord Lathom and Quartermaster Gratwicke, the latter having the sympathy of the Volunteer press as well as the practical riflemen. Very free criticism of the Council is being indulged in, one journal endeavouring, for instance, to score a point against their champion, Sir Henry Halford, by belittling his prowess as a small bore shot! The election will be determined by ballot, one voting paper being sent to each member by the Secretary, to whom it must be returned within seven days.

Brigadier General W. L. Auchinleck, whose name will be familiar to many of our readers on account of his service in Canada, died at Umballa on the 13th February. He was a native of Crevenagh, Omagh, County Tyrone, and was born in December, 1840. He joined the Army as an ensign in December, 1857, and served with the 53rd Regiment with the Oude Field Force of 1858-59, and was present at the action of Toolespore and minor affairs, receiving the medal. He commanded the 63rd Regiment in the Southern Afghanistan of 1879-80 (medal), and served in the Egyptian War of 1882 in command of the 1st Bn. Manchester Regiment, receiving the medal and Khedive's

star. He also held the following staff appointments: Town major, London, Canada West, March, 1868, to May, 1868; adjutant, School of Instruction for Volunteers, Quebec, June, 1868, to June, 1869; adjutant of the 6th Royal Lancashire Militia, now the 3rd and 4th Bns. Manchester Regiment, from 1874 to 1877; and was one of the most popular men with all ranks and an excellent adjutant; brigadier-general, Bengal, from 18th December, 1888.

Lord Wolseley, in an article in the *New York Herald* on the art military, says: "I believe our race to be the bravest on earth, because of that innate love of danger which causes us to climb glaciers, ride steeplechases, and to go on foot to shoot tigers. I have no doubt in my own mind that our soldiers have more reckless daring about them than those of any other nation, which I attribute mainly to their love of boxing, wrestling, and of all other manly games." He concludes the article by urging that the "rank and file must be taught not only to drill and march past well, but they must be thoroughly trained as fighting soldiers." And, addressing the officers, he says: "In order that you, their teachers, their masters, should be able to train them effectively to the work they will have to do in battle, you must yourselves understand what a battle is like, and study the science as well as the art of your noble profession."

In a recent article in the *United Service Magazine*, on "Canadian Defence," Major-General Strange, in support of his contention that the five million inhabitants of this country would be found quite capable of defending themselves against invasion by the sixty-five millions of the United States, made the statement that "the population of the Southern States (of America) was about four millions against forty millions when they made their heroic defence." This has elicited from Col. Thomas M. Anderson, 14th Infantry U.S.A., a letter to the *United Service Gazette* in which he claims the population of the South to have been 11,451,000, and that of the North 18,000,000, at the time of the war. Col. Anderson, however, does not anticipate that Canadians will ever be put to the test against their southern neighbours, for he concludes: "We cannot look into the womb of Time to see what seeds will grow and what will not." But this we do know—that Republics can only annex States which are willing and anxious to join them."

An ill informed correspondent of the *Petit Journal*, of Paris, tells its readers that the descendants of the early French colonists "are now in movement to re-conquer Canada," "without war, revolution or violent struggle, by the power alone of the inherent expansion belonging to this prodigiously fecund race." For whom the French Canadians wish to "re-conquer" their own country does not precisely appear—certainly it is not for France, whose methods of government have no attraction for the French speaking Britons who form so large and important a part of the population of the Dominion. The French Canadians jealously resent any interference with their peculiar rights of language and laws under the treaty of cession, and like their English, Irish and Scotch fellow citizens, cherish the memories of their forefathers, but Queen Victoria has no more loyal subjects than those acquired through the cession of Canada by France to England.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

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

#### THE STATIONS OF THE BATTERIES.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE.—Rumours are again afloat that "A" and "B" Batteries are to exchange stations in the near future. I have asked many people the reason for these exchanges and the only reasons that I can elicit are, that it is an Imperial custom; that it is a bad thing for a corps to take root in a place and form ties there.

In the Imperial army *foreign service* is the peculiar characteristic, and troops are frequently moved from one station to another, and this moving is closely connected with long service, without reference as to whether they are best suited to our circumstances or not.

If it be true that it is a bad thing to let the troops sympathize with the civil population around them, and must therefore have a "moving army," then let us, at once, enlist men for long service with a good pension to look forward to at the end of it.

When it is remembered that the usual time heretofore spent on a station has been *five* years, and the term of enlistment *three* years only, I fail to see the necessity of moving.

If these periodical changes are necessary for the artillery, why not also for the cavalry and infantry?

If all the permanent corps are moved (and if two, why not all (it will entail an expenditure of, at least, twenty thousand dollars by the Government, and in addition considerable loss and expense to married officers and men. This sum could be much more profitably employed for other militia purposes, notably teaching the men how to shoot.

On both occasions when "A" and "B" Batteries exchanged stations, many men whose time had expired, or nearly so, obtained their discharge by purchase or otherwise, and after the new battery had settled down, enlisted again, thus defeating the presumed object for which the exchange was made. Many others who could not obtain their discharges at the time, refused to re-engage at the expiration of their term, and were in accordance with regulations, furnished with transport to their homes at public expense.

"If a corps lived permanently in one city or town, the men would become neighbours of the people and the corps a local institution. In a short time it would be found that soldiering meant passing a few years in a school of order and discipline in the midst of the soldier's friends and little

dread of it would remain. A permanent home for the corps would also stop in a measure, desertion, making it a more difficult and dangerous undertaking." Such is the opinion of a very able British officer on the subject.

Officers may be said to be permanent and they might be changed occasionally with benefit to the service, enabling them to obtain a local knowledge of a larger extent of country, very useful to the officer, especially if he should be some day called to command, but of little value to the private.

AUDACE.

#### CONTINUOUS PROMOTIONS.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE, "It is uncertain, when a general has taken the field, how long his services may be required therein." The reply which the Duke of Wellington gave, upon one occasion, to an enquiry from the great Napoleon as to how long he (the Duke) contemplated the, then, coming campaign to continue, is quite true, applicable and germane in more instances than on that special occasion.

Despite the length of my former communication and quite explicitness of the points taken up therein I find, by your correspondents "N. C. O." and my friend "Sergeant," that some of the readers thereof require a little more explanation (which I am always happy and ready to give) to further facilitate their comprehension on one point therein mentioned, viz: the compulsory or establishment of appointments of commissioned officers from the ranks of the non-commissioned officers and privates respectively—a continuous promotion from private to commander-in-chief—as by me suggested in my first letter, as a remedy for the first and great evil now existing in our militia force.

I will now take up "N. C. O." and "Sergeant's" questions, in your issue of the 5th instant, in their order and thereto reply where practicable and severally where necessary.

1st. N. C. O. asks "are those to be appointed to have no say in the matter?" Now if "N. C. O." is a British subject (possibly better a Briton) who feels proud of the constitution under which he lives, which I hope he is and does, but would feel sorry should he not know of the fountain from whence came that pride and glory, *i. e.* servility is unknown to Britons—"Britons never, never shall be slaves," and British law, both municipal and military, contains a maxim that "no individual shall be compelled to accept of any gift, present or offering against his will."

Now the non-com. who is offered a commission may not accept the offer if he does not see fit, or his way clear to do so; but let the offer pass by to the next in rank and so on till one is found who is willing to accept, can and will qualify and make himself competent, to the best of his ability and the country's offer by the various military schools, for the office to which he is appointed, aspires and accepts. Understand me properly, the compulsory I mean is not to accept, but to give; not to destroy, but to improve and fulfil the present law so that promotion would become a non-com.'s right and when wrongfully withheld and given, as is too frequently practised now-a-days under the present rules, to some political or social favourite picked up from the street or club-house, and who soon thereafter leaves not only the limits but the country as I stated in my first letter, he could by the afore-mentioned maxim's sister maxim "there is no wrong without a remedy" enforce the same as by me pointed out in one of my first letters, a right of which under the present system he is unjustly deprived.

2nd. "Sergeant" and "N. C. O." both are (the former deeply, the latter perhaps not so much since reading my second letter) under the impression that the non-coms. would or could not, and finally be compelled to refuse the offer of a commission in the service for lack of cash.

What, excluded on account of not having good financial standing? None but the wealthy need apply, the commissions to be held solely and exclusively by the aristocracy, as it were, of the country? never! I say, what has been done heretofore can be again done, and the examples, a few of which I will furnish further on, can be repeated and ought by all means and in all justice to become law.

"Sergeant" says "there are plenty of vacancies and it does not require any new laws or re-organization to enable some of C. F. C.'s highly qualified and willing non-coms. to step forward and upwards."

"N. C. O." asks "would they" (the non-coms.) be more qualified than those already holding the position?" and then proceeds to say "I (he) fear not. How many regiments are there in the force who require any qualification other than length of service to entitle a private to receive promotion? I (he) have seen many non-commissioned officers who, had they been required to pass even the most simple examination, would have remained in the ranks?"

Now as to the non-coms. would not accept of commissions, etc., "Sergeant" says "the majority would not." This is just what is required. We do not want all. Three c. o.'s in a company is sufficient under the present system. The financial question, or "cash" as "Sergeant" calls it, (boodle) I still contend is foreign and no obstacle whatever to the question at issue, it has no justifiable right here, therefore, if present, it is a trespasser and a usurper. A man's private pocket ought not to be looked to any more in the militia, army or naval service than in any other calling or occupation of life. In this, "Sergeant" and others who are of the same impression, I am confident, will agree with me in every particular when the light dawns upon him and them how it ought and may be accomplished, which is so simple I deemed it necessary to explain and comment thereon in my former letters and also omit doing so in this.

"N. C. O." says "no doubt there might be instances in which this would be an improvement," *i. e.* "to make the appointments of officers compulsory from the ranks" as I suggested. Right thou art "N. C. O." Such would be an improvement of untold and unknown advantage. How many examples may be given where the best officers rose from the ranks? Napoleon, Ney, and I might say the majority, if not quite all, of Napoleon's officers, for he awarded merit wherever found. Nelson, Sir Cloudsley Shovels in the Navy, General Sir Archibald Allison and General James Wolfe, the hero of Quebec, and numbers of others may be given if this list be not sufficient, who rose either from the ranks or from poor boys without money. "No comrades, I have not the money to spend" was Nelson's oft repeated reply to as many invitations to go ashore by the other officers of his ship. Did he or they succeed in rising to a post of honour? History will answer.

As to the great number of vacancies existing, of which "Sergeant" speaks this is no less than a *point in support* to my contention of the deplorable state of our militia, but for some of "C. F. C.'s highly qualified and willing non-coms." to fill these vacancies is as sensible as his statement in his prior letter, "I (he) could get a commission if I choose," etc., which statement I fully answered in my reply of the 23rd ult., and asked for his authority or non-coms. to appoint themselves to, or take, a commission whenever they choose to do so. This authority "Sergeant" has failed to give for the simple reason we all know he has none to offer, therefore it is unnecessary for me herein to repeat the request.

Next, would the non-coms. be more qualified, etc., asks "N. C. O." Yes, I answer most emphatically, when we have C. O.'s competent to fill their positions, take an interest in, teach, and enforce the duty of each and every non-com. and men. Of the present inefficiency of the non-coms. I have herein given "N. C. O.'s" words which are too true,

all this I have witnessed while at camp and recalls to my mind many laughable instances. One of which was in relieving guards the Sergeant in charge of the new guard arranged his men (the new guard) with their backs towards the old guard, and in that manner (in his mind) relieved them. All this is evidence supporting my contention—how little is known as to military drill and duty by many of our so-called officers and non-coms. And I ask how otherwise can it be expected under the present system of appointing officers. To expect the non-coms. to be good, competent and qualified for their position is an argument like I frequently hear some parents make use of regarding schools. They want and expect their children to study two or three different languages and other subjects accordingly, in fact receive a first-class education at a school where and when they (the parents) advocate and practise, when in authority to do so, the hiring of teachers who cannot speak one language correctly and are equally learned in other branches. We sometimes meet with a non-com. who has an interest and qualified himself in every respect for the position he holds with a view to rising higher, but what is the result of all his trouble when a vacancy occurs? He is in nine cases out of ten left remaining in his old position, and some political or social favourite of his superior officer, picked up from the street or club house, is recommended for the vacant position and palmed off on the authorities as some Sergeant receiving promotion.

Let there be but one entrance to our militia force and that at the ranks, not at side doors as at present, then let promotion follow as rapidly as the officer commanding deems expedient providing always that the candidate is or will qualify within the allowable period. No one who desires to enter the service aspiring to a high position therein, wishing to acquaint himself with the details and duties of each and every office, and be competent for the position he aspires to, should object to this any more than he who aspires to be a judge of one of our superior courts should object to be at first a student-at-law. "There is no royal road to learning" is an adage as antique as the days of Euclid.

This finishes the questions asked in the issue of the 5th inst., and I now retire for a holiday from the field of strife leaving the subject, Mr. Editor, with your readers to determine whether or no I had given my quota, argued the question and set forth sufficient serious results arising and may arise from the evil of the present practice of appointing the class of men too frequently picked up for officers, to warrant a change in the present system of appointing officers. Bidding you all adieu *pro tem.* and thanking you for your patience in reading and for the space granted to my lengthy letters.

I remain, the country's obedient servant,  
E-town, March 11th, 1891. C. F. C.

### Militia General Orders (No. 4) of 13th March, 1891.

#### NO. 1.—ACTIVE MILITIA—PERMANENT CORPS.

REGIMENT OF CANADIAN ARTILLERY.—Lieutenant Wm. Peter Burroughs has been permitted to resign his commission.

INFANTRY SCHOOL CORPS.—To be Lieutenants, provisionally: Alf. O. Fages (formerly Captain No. 6 Company, 9th Bn.) vice J. W. Sears, resigned.

Cyprien Frederic Olivier Fiset (formerly Lieutenant No. 3 Company, 9th Bn.) vice J. C. G. Drolet, retired.

Lieutenants Fages and Fiset have been detailed for duty with "B" Company until further orders.

Lieutenant and Brevet Captain J. K. Oswald is transferred from the Company of Mounted Infantry to the Infantry School Corps, and posted to "B" Company.

BREVET.—John Davis Roche, Infantry School Corps, to be Captain, from 29th January, 1891.

By command,  
WALKER POWELL, Colonel,  
Adjutant General of Militia,  
Canada.

## EXPERIENCES AT OKEHAMPTON IN 1890.

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

*(Continued from page 85.)*

I think I have said enough to convince you that the early distribution of fire is a subject of the very highest importance; it must be left to the skill of the commander to adapt himself to local circumstances to decide how early this distribution may take place, but we may rest assured that the earlier it does take place the less likely are the enemy to find our range.

In considering the concentration of fire a very marked distinction must be drawn between the concentration against a, so to speak, mathematical point, such as one gun in a battery to the neglect of the remaining portions, and the concentration of fire against a tactical point, which, as bringing the greatest force to bear on a decisive portion of the enemy's line, is one of the highest exhibitions of the skill of the tactician, and to which the above strictures can hardly be considered to apply.

"(h.) Laying and observation showed an improvement on that of the previous year, though bad examples of both can be found. These are points to which too much attention cannot be paid. An advance has been made in fire discipline, but more is required."

As I pointed out before, the accuracy of the laying has not improved during the past year, but, on the other hand, it has not fallen off, and as the rate of fire has increased by 42 per cent. we may take the result, as regards laying, to be fairly satisfactory. The same remark applies to observation.

A decided advance has been made in the fire discipline, and the most marked advance has been the adoption of a drill by signals. The very great advantages of this system are:—

1. It saves the Major's voice, and renders command easier when the surrounding noise is great.

2. It involves the sectional officers keeping a sharp look out on the C. O. during ranging, and not trusting to the chance of hearing his word of command, which, by the way, they often fail to do.

3. It ensures much greater attention being paid to verbal orders when they are issued.

4. Anyone who has seen it will corroborate the statement that the whole battery works more smoothly, and this, I think, partly arises from the fact that this system involves a more intelligent knowledge of the system of fire discipline on the part of all subordinates than the former verbal method did.

The remark may be repeated this year that a further advance in fire discipline is required. The following are some of the principal points noted during the practice of 1890.

(z.) There was too much looking over the sights by the subaltern officers, this leads to delay and tends to draw away their attention from the C. O. during ranging. If the layer cannot be trusted he is not fit to be a qualified layer. A mere glance over the gun without disturbing the layer, should be enough to satisfy the sectional officer that the gun is being laid on the right target, and his attention is thus not withdrawn from the C. O. The detailed looking over the sights has only properly a place at elementary practice.

(y.) Abuse of the whistle.

Many officers introduced the whistle to draw attention to their orders with marked success, and those who used it least were the most successful. When it is used on every possible occasion, such as whenever a shot is to be fired in ranging (generally communicated by signal by most officers) the men get too much accustomed to the sound, and it would be likely occasionally to fail in attracting their attention.

The best idea of the use of the whistle is that it is only to be used to draw attention to the C. O. when he is about to issue a particularly important order that every man in the battery should hear, and that, when the whistle is heard, no man is to move in the battery until the forthcoming order has been issued.

Thus a short chirrup on the whistle is followed by the order "Keep to . . . yards" or "Keep to fuze . . ."

A prolonged blast is followed by an order for a sudden and rapid change of target, as for instance, cavalry appearing on the flanks. This, followed by a second prolonged blast, would warn everybody to prepare for case.

This restricted use of the whistle promises the best results, as it could not fail to speedily attract the attention of everyone, and it is necessary that everyone in the battery should be aware of the above orders if casualties are to be replaced without disturbing the even succession of fire in the battery.

If the whistle is used too much it will be the old story of the cry of "wolf" over again.

(x.) As has been noted before, the handling of the ammunition at the limbers was, in many cases, slow and awkward. This can easily be remedied by paying more attention to the matter in the future at drill.

(w.) There was too much pre-arrangement in the practice at the running target. This can hardly fail to take place when the run is so short and so well known. As a rule, after the first run, every officer in the battery knew at what elevation the first shot would be fired and with what length of fuze, and also what the succeeding commands would be. This can only be remedied by getting some form of running target suitable for the rough ground at Okehampton, that can be started at unknown ranges and at an unknown pace.

(v.) Scott's sights.

I think I may say that these sights were used in the 12-pr. batteries at Okehampton this year to the almost exclusion of the tangent-scale, except in practice at the running target. I cannot help thinking that this is rather overdoing it. Time after time these sights were used at long lines of dummies representing an advancing line of infantry at ranges of 1600 to 1700 yards, when the target was perfectly visible to the naked eye; surely this was unnecessary? When speed is a *desideratum*, and there are no difficulties of seeing, it is surely better to use the tangent scale; I think, too, that it will possibly be rather difficult to pick up the required target with the telescopic sight in the confusion of the battle-field, when there probably will be line after line all very much like one another. If the tangent-scale is neglected the men will become less skilled in the use of it.

Sufficient is hardly yet known about these sights, and there are but few officers who will venture to adjust them.

In spite of the instructions, orders for elevation are often given in odd minutes, and this was specially noticeable in ranging, when the nearest ten should be taken.

(u.) A very common mistake by C. O.'s was to repeat the range for each shot of the verifying series. The sectional officers, hearing a number given, often thought that some change had been made, and slight delays arose. It is only necessary to give the signal for the next round, and then everyone knows that no change in elevation is desired.

(t.) The supply of ammunition from the waggons has yet to be systematised, for the *pros* and *cons* of the various proposals I refer you to Colonel Walford's lecture on the subject, delivered at Shoeburyness during the present year (1890), and appearing in the September number of the "Proceedings."

The different establishments of the batteries practising at Okehampton and the comparatively small daily consumption of ammunition did not allow of any but very general ideas being formed of the question. What appeared to me to give the best results was to have two waggons

brought up in rear of the guns and the teams removed, this would allow of two other echelons, of two waggons each, to come up afterwards and permit the early despatch of the first echelon when empty to the divisional reserve.

#### RESULTS OF THE PRACTICE.

The results are sufficiently explained by the accompanying tables, and I will only draw your attention to a few of the most striking points.

If you consider the results of fire against artillery in gun-pits and against artillery in the open you will see that the former has suffered a greater percentage of loss than the latter, and the explanation of this phenomenon illustrates in a very striking manner the value of concealment behind natural features of the ground.

In most cases targets representing artillery in the open were placed so as to take full advantage of the natural features of the ground, the majority of the targets being withdrawn about 200 to 300 yards from the crest of their position, and, in many cases, having deep hollows before and behind them. The ranging was thus rendered extremely difficult, and the effects obtained were often very small; indeed, in the case of guns in the position known as "the Bluff" the ranging is so difficult that Colonel Murch told me that he could not recall a case of a battery ever making good practice at them.

In the case of artillery in pits it was argued that if natural cover did not exist then artificial cover must be provided, and, therefore, the pits were generally more or less in full view from the battery, and, therefore, comparatively easy to range upon, thus, in spite of the protection afforded by the earthwork, their detachments suffered more severely than those of guns which were concealed rather than protected.

In the case of the infantry in shelter-trenches, these were so placed that they profited by the concealment of the ground as well as by the protection of the earthwork, the percentage of loss is, therefore, in a marked degree less than that of infantry in the open.

Another curious result is that of time shrapnel fire as compared with that of percussion shrapnel fire, showing an immense improvement in the handling of time shell over last year.

You must remember that at battery service practice fire is stopped just when it begins to get effective, and during almost the whole time it is going on it is slow fire for ranging purposes, also that the targets are comparatively small; the time and effect are, therefore, not what they would be under actual service conditions.

### THE MAGAZINE RIFLE.

(United Service Gazette.)

The House of Commons having decided, after a careful hearing, that Mr. Stanhope should have a fair field with the new rifle, the reasonable course would be to assist as far as possible in its development and establishment in the Service with ammunition that will show it at its best. It must have been plain to our readers that its manufacture and issue were hurried, and the ammunition more or less a makeshift. These conditions handicapped the weapon and left the doors open to the attacks of its numerous rivals. It is true that the ammunition is in preparation, and also practice cartridges for instruction in magazine fire, so that before long these necessary adjuncts to the rifle will be supplied to the troops. We do not cavil at the delay. We know that cordite power, which we hope to see issued soon, must first be carefully tested in hot and cold climates, our conditions of service being different to those of other Powers. Those who attacked the War Office and the rifle were careful to evade the unfair conditions under which the latter was placed.

At Enfield the new rifle was tested with smokeless powder and beat all rivals. At Bucharest last summer a most important contest of eight rival magazine rifles took place before the Ordnance Committee of the Roumanian Army, when the English rifle was the only one to reach the rifle range, the remaining seven having broken down in the other tests.

Germany and Austria were represented in the competition; but the British Army rifle beat its two rivals hollow. The Austrian rifle blew up its magazine. It is a remarkable fact that the bolt, so long an object of attack in our rifle, should have stood so well. To test it the Roumanian committee cut three cartridge cases through with a file so that the explosion came out to the rear. Here the Austrian and others blew up their magazines, but our rifle stood the test. The committee were so impressed that they cut through seven more cartridges, so that our rifle had ten explosions to the rear, and stood the lot perfectly; indeed, we are informed the particular rifle used is still in perfect order. It is to be regretted that Colonel Nolan did not appear aware of this important trial, for he would doubtless have brought it to the notice of the House in his able speech.

They copied some points of our rifle on the Continent. The Germans and Austrians both copied the position of the magazine, for instance, and it is said they are now busy copying our means to prevent their magazines blowing up. Yet their numerous friends in England are never tired of impressing in season and out of season, in the House, War Office, and in the press, that these foreign copyists have a better weapon than we have. One member in the House of Commons read a letter from the wife of the Minister of War in Roumania, saying her husband had told her that the English rifle would not enter the Roumanian service. That may be so for many reasons; but it is most satisfactory to know that the rifle beat all others before the committee, and that it is thus established before the King of Roumania, who is an expert, as by far the best rifle submitted to His Majesty's committee. We think it a pity that a lady's name should have been read out to the House in a matter of rival rifles, but we only allude to the circumstance to warn our military readers of the heat which has led to such proceedings to damage the rifle they will have to use in the field; it is very important, and will enable them to weigh justly the objections they have heard. We should further inform those readers that the practice before the Roumanian committee was carried out with smokeless powder, and when our regiments have smokeless powder issued to them the rifle will then give the fullest satisfaction.

The practice cartridges now under selection by the War Office are also exceedingly important. They enable the magazine to be used at all practice firing, and, if we are not mistaken, will lead to some very smart snap-shooting in the ranks at short ranges, of which sort of shooting our soldiers had considerable experience in the last campaigns. We trust that the use of these practice cartridges and of dummies may put a stop to the working of the bolt backwards and forwards, and snapping of the lock in the empty gun. We believe there has been too much of that at drill. We all know that no sportsman would allow his rifle to be treated thus, it could but lead to injury, and undoubtedly our rifle has received injury from the practice, and those injuries have been wrongfully held up as faults of the system.

When smokeless powder ammunition is ready for issue, it would be well to place some magazine rifles at the disposal of the Volunteers. The increased range and absence of recoil would give such satisfaction that we believe there would be before long an urgent demand in that important portion of our reserve force for the new weapon. Those who used the new rifle and new ammunition would hardly care



to revert again to the Martini-Henry. The recoil would prove doubly distasteful, as they would find it an unnecessary piece of violence, spoiling their aim, and solely due to a now expiring system. It is said that the War Office are somewhat inclined to adopt practice cartridges which will give good shooting at 300 yards. This would be valuable as a means of improving long-range service shooting, without the expense of ammunition. Practice cartridges are made up to represent the service cartridge; but only the front portion contains the miniature cartridge and bullet. The body of the cartridge-case contains a striker. On firing the rifle the striker of the lock impinges on the striker in the cartridge-case, which, being pushed forward, strikes and ignites the primer in the miniature cartridge. About four grains of fine bright powder in the latter answers for barrack practice, whereas ten or twelve grains give, it is said, very good accuracy on the range at 300 yards.

Here we have another distinct advantage in the service magazine rifle, which, we firmly believe, only requires to be better known, and, above all, to be provided with the ammunition designed for it, to become not only a popular but very valuable weapon.

### CAVALRY.

(United Service Gazette, 7th March.)

Lord Wolsely presided on Wednesday at a well-attended meeting of the Military Society of Ireland, held at the Royal University, Dublin, when Major-General J. Keith Fraser, C.M.G., commanding the Dublin District, read a paper on the subject of "Cavalry."

Lord Wolsley, in introducing the lecturer, said they should be obliged to General Fraser for giving a lecture on a subject he was so well qualified to lecture about. He hoped that the example would be followed by others, and that numerous instructive subjects would be selected. There were a great many Cavalry officers present, and he earnestly hoped that they would give the society the benefit of their opinions on the subject, whether they were lieutenants or colonels.

Major-General Fraser, in the course of his lecture, said that he himself had been thirty years in the Cavalry, and that all his family belonged to it. He thought that it was necessary that a Cavalry officer should know a lot about Artillery and Infantry, and that, in fact, a man in one arm should be acquainted with the workings of the others before he was qualified to take control of the combined forces. Up to a very recent time little had been written about Cavalry, but since the Franco-German war the whole of Europe had been flooded with literature by brilliant writers on the subject of Cavalry, and all that had been written and said on the subject lately proved how hopelessly wrong were those persons who had predicted that the day for the Cavalry in Europe was completely past. A brilliant writer the other day had paid the Cavalry a great compliment by stating that the Infantry were afraid of them; but, be that as it might, the fact remained that of late a considerable revival had taken place on the subject throughout Europe. A number of authorities recently, when writing on Cavalry, had come to the conclusion that with the longer distances that arm of the Service would have to go they would come to the front again with better leaders. As a matter of fact, the Cavalry of the present day was as good as the Cavalry in the days of Hannibal, notwithstanding inventions—such as good muskets, percussion caps, breech loaders, etc.—after each of which the disuse of the Cavalry was predicted; but yet the Cavalry record had gone on as before. With better leaders he thought the Cavalry would hold their own, but at any rate as long as there were Cavalry they would have to keep Cavalry to meet them. After referring to some of the great victories that had been won by Cavalry, the lecturer went

on to say that, in his opinion, in future large masses of Cavalry in front of armies would do a great deal of the fighting against Cavalry. The idea was to send Cavalry sixty miles in front of the Army to discover what the enemy were doing. A general would have to get his information that evening in order that it might be of any use to him, and they could not depend on the Cavalry coming more than sixty miles in the night. The idea now was to have a war of masses, having the whole nation in arms, with the Cavalry massed. That did not affect them here, because they could not hope for masses of Cavalry. They here looked at things in a different light. They did not know that they would use Cavalry in Europe again, but they might suddenly require them in a smaller war, and therefore they must keep them up. In most Continental countries the Cavalry were about from one to three or one to four in the Army, but in England they were about one to seven. As to the troop system of Cavalry in use in the British Army, he disapproved of it, and thought that the squadron system would be much better. It was well known that every experienced officer was in favour of it. In conclusion, he spoke of the formation of a regiment, urged an improvement in the matter of peace and direction amongst their own Cavalry, and also expressed the hope that they would see a repetition of the manœuvres which they had had last year. He had only further to say that he hoped their Cavalry officers would try to work and study so as to make their Cavalry what it should be. He particularly recommended constant Cavalry exercise during five days per week.

Colonel Phillips opened the discussion on the lecture. After referring to some other subjects, he spoke of the responsibility of a Cavalry officer. He said that in the Infantry it was possible for a commander to make a mistake and yet to put the men into their places after all, but in the case of Cavalry it was different; a mistake was fatal. Therefore it was more necessary that the Cavalry leaders should be well trained, should possess great self-reliance, the eyes of a hawk, and should be firm riders. Every barrack should have a lecture room where the men could be instructed, for this class of instruction was better than any other. There was no time in the field for practice. He thought their Cavalry would be brought to a higher pitch if a higher standard were required. He thought it possible to bring the English officer to any standard required. The Cavalry officer more than the Infantry required a high training, because at any moment he was liable to find himself alone, with nothing but his own knowledge and courage to rely upon. He advocated more time at training and more reading.

After some remarks from Colonel McCalmont,

Colonel Morrison said in his opinion in the cavalry regiments the door was often closed to men of talents because of the very heavy expenses which it was absolutely necessary for the officers to incur. Even the abolition of the purchase system had not much reduced the expenditure. He considered this question one of vital importance, and one that should be looked into at once.

Lord Wolsley said, in reference to Colonel Morrison's remarks, the subject that that gentleman had referred to had occupied the attention of the authorities for a great many years, but it was found very difficult to lay down any regulations to prevent men spending money that they wished to spend, and that they had. It was a most difficult thing for the Government to take up. At the present moment the officers who belonged to their Cavalry regiments were second to none in the world, and although the expenses of their living were considerable, there was no difficulty in obtaining the numbers required. Now, in reference to the lecture, he had taken the greatest possible interest in it, and he had gained great benefit from it. He agreed with the views of General Fraser in reference to the Service of which he was such an ornament. General

Fraser had commenced his lecture with a most useful remark that each man should consider his the highest branch of the Service. This was a thing that should be instilled into every soldier. General Fraser had gone back as far as Hannibal, and had also referred to the wars of the time of Napoleon. In those wars the places occupied by troops were much more restricted than at present, and as they went into closer action there were less chances for Cavalry. But at the present time, when they fought at long ranges, and covered a greater extent of country, the Cavalry would evidently be of greater use in travelling and acting suddenly and promptly than they were in the past. The General had also told them how in wars in the future cavalry would probably be used against Cavalry at the beginning. Well, that was certain, but still while such contests might be temporarily very important, still they could not finally decide the struggle, and in his opinion the man who reserved a large force of Cavalry until the Infantry were seriously shaken would have a better chance of winning. As to the Mounted Infantry, he was certainly in favour of them in the form of something like the old Dragoons. It would not do to have them mounted on any jackass or mule, or cab horse, because there undoubtedly was duty which could and should be done by them which it was unfair to ask the Cavalry men to do. All the same, he thought a Cavalry soldier should be able to get off his horse on occasions. Now, as to the squadron and troop system that had been touched upon, there could be no two opinions on the question. He was in favour of the squadron, but he should mention one of the reasons why the present system was adopted. There were many members of Parliament who were always on the look out to reduce the Army, to cut down the Cavalry, and reduce the regiment, and if there were four squadrons, they would try to have four captains and a correspondingly reduced number of troop officers, so that they would gladly accept that system. Many civilians in the War Office were anxious to introduce the system for the same reason, so that they could turn round and show this saving. The same thing would be done with the Infantry. So this was one of the reasons for maintaining the present system of small companies and troops instead of squadrons. He agreed with Col. Phillips in some of his remarks and joined in the hope that there would be a repetition of the manœuvres, which had been gained last year principally by General E. Wood. In conclusion he thanked General Fraser for his lecture.

#### WATERLOO FICTION.

An English exchange has at this late day discovered authority for an incident of the Battle of Waterloo, that has probably never before been in print. It says:

The only prisoner made by the English reserve at Waterloo was a French general, whose capture was due to the cool head and stout heart of a young brigade major, anxious for an adventure.

During the battle several regiments of cavalry and infantry were kept in reserve, under a heavy fire from the French guns. Great was the havoc, and neither men nor horses relished the passive attitude to which they were condemned.

While a group of young officers, in front of the left wing of the reserve, were discussing the situation, their attention was attracted to a French general and his staff, all on horseback, who were looking through their glasses at the Englishmen. One of the group was Captain Halkett, a young brigade major, mounted on a thoroughbred. Suddenly he exclaimed: "I'll lay any one £5 that I will bring that French general over here, dead or alive. Who'll take my bet?" "Done, done, done!" shouted several officers.

The captain examined the saddle girths and his pistols. Then shouting "good-bye" and putting spurs to his horse, he dashed at a furious pace across the plain between the British and French lines. His comrades followed him with their glasses, not speaking a word. The Frenchmen opposite seemed puzzled. Believing that the Englishman's horse had bolted and that the rider had lost control of him, they opened their ranks to let the runaway through. Halkett steered his steed so as to graze the mounted general on the right side. At that instant he put his arm around the Frenchman's waist, lifted him bodily out of the saddle, and, throwing him over his own horse's neck,

turned sharp and made for the English lines. When the general's staff realized the meaning of the bold rider, they dashed after him, but he had a good start, and not a Frenchman dared to fire for fear of killing the general.

Half a squad of English dragoons, seeing Halkett chased by a dozen French officers, charged them. They opened their ranks to let Halkett through, closed them up again the moment he was in the rear and then forced the Frenchmen to turn swiftly and seek shelter under their own guns. Amid the maddening cheering Halkett stopping in front of the British lines, with the general half dead but securely clasped in his strong arms. He jumped from his horse, apologized to his prisoner for the unceremonious way in which he had been handled and, in reply to the congratulations of his comrades, said simply, "Praise my horse, not me." The captured general was treated with the utmost courtesy and consideration.

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

#### To Rifle Officers.

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

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### MONTHLY DRAWINGS FOR THE YEAR 1891.

January 14, February 11, March 11, April 8, May 13, June 10,  
July 8, August 12, September 9, October 24,  
November 11, December 9.

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THE RHYMER'S WAIL

O'ER THE LOSS OF THE GARRISON COMMONS.

The fiat has gone forth, the Common is surrendered ;  
 On fields far distant the butts we now must raise ;  
 Yet in our hearts will fondly be remembered  
 The dear old Commons, dear to us always.  
 No more we'll rise at four of early morning,  
 From downy couch in cottage by the Don,  
 And snatch a hasty bite while still adorning  
 Our person, in our hurry to be gone,  
 No more we'll walk a good six miles or more,  
 Before the sun has got quite out of bed ;  
 To try our best if we can make a score,  
 That on our name great lustre may be shed.  
 No more in Mrs. Curran's parlour shall we meet,  
 To paint on sights artistic lines of white,  
 And history of ancient scores again repeat,  
 While o'er the festive *ginger* all unite.  
 Ah, me ! those happy days have faded in the gone,  
 There's something dewy gathered in my left hand optic ;  
 A haze has gathered where once brightness shone,  
 I fear I'll have to try a Ronan's new Orthoptic.  
 I use the sling and twist it round my arm,  
 I sometimes try the bar, sometimes the V ;  
 But all in vain, the Bull I cannot charm.  
 For when I shoot my steadiest, the magpie's all I see.  
 Oh ! would I had the steadiness of Bell,  
 Tom Mitchell's eyes that ever brightly twinkle ;  
 The grasp of Ogg, that's ever sure to tell,  
 Or even Ronan's latest improved wrinkle.  
 Vain, vain, the wish, I must contented be

To follow in the footsteps of the great ;  
 The little prizes at the bottom are for me,  
 Why, therefore, should I grieve and rail at fate ?  
 But now the Commons are forever closed,  
 My Snider on the wall I'll hang up high ;  
 With all the dignity of a king deposed,  
 That memory of it may never die.  
 And when September's annual show comes round,  
 We'll wander to the old familiar place,  
 And pay our money to get on the ground  
 To see the oxen and the porker's homely face.  
 And once, perhaps, we'll go to see the range,  
 Toronto city gives her volunteers,  
 In lieu the Common, as a fair exchange  
 To help *their* shooting and to calm *her* fears.  
 Then fare thee well, for ever fare thee well,  
 As volunteers we'll never view thee more :  
 As citizens we now, perhaps, may swell  
 The crowd that pay their quarter at the door.

THE RHYMER.

A London despatch of March 10th says : "The test at Shoeburyness of the (so called) Zalinski pneumatic gun, built for the Victoria government, is a pronounced success. At 4,000 yards range six projectiles were thrown into a rectangle two and one half yards wide. The head of the British artillery says that such accuracy is beyond anything he ever conceived possible. The navy is still opposed to the gun for sea purposes."

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3rd "	50c.	10c.	60 "
4th "	50c.	15c.	65 "
5th "	50c.	20c.	70 "

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