

A Debate on the Military College.

The concluding portion of a debate in Parliament on general affairs of the Militia, was crowded out of last week's issue. This, as will be seen below, deals mainly with affairs of the Royal Military College, though at the end there is a reference to the Manitoba battalions:

Lieut.-Gen. LAURIE—I wish to refer to a subject which has been touched upon, though not pursued, by the hon. member for South Oxford (Sir Richard Cartwright) and the hon. member for Halifax (Hon. Mr. Jones), and that is the employment of cadets after they leave the college. The returns show that 190 have gone through the college. Of that number 69 have gone into the Imperial service, 10 into the Canadian Permanent Corps, 20 into the Civil Service or the North-West Mounted Police Force, 79 have entered civil life in Canada or out of it, besides 12 who have died. Now, it seems to me that as the college has cost the country a great deal of money, it is very desirable that the young men should be where we can lay our hands upon them, that they should not be in civil life, or out of the country altogether. I have taken considerable pains to find out what is done under similar circumstances in the United States. I hold in my hand a list of the engineers of the United States army, and I have analysed that list. I have also a letter from Gen. Deane, Chief of Engineers, United States Army, Washington, stating how the graduates are employed. He says:

"The officers are selected from the highest men each year graduated from the United States Military Academy. Upon the recommendation of the Academic Board these officers are commissioned as second lieutenants in the Corps of Engineers, and sent to the Engineers' School of Application at Willet's Point, near New York city, where they remain for two years on duty as officers of the engineers troops (sappers and miners), and under instruction as to their general duties as engineer officers. The engineering curriculum at both West Point and Willet's Point includes a full course in civil engineering. Upon completion of the course at the Engineers' School of Application the young officer is subject to detail as assistant on any of the works under the supervision of the Engineer Corps, and in the routine of his service as a lieutenant he may have practical experience in all branches of civil and military engineering. By the time he reaches the grade of captain, and often before, he is fitted for the charge of a district, and as the exigencies of the service permit he is assigned to the command of a district consisting of such military and civil works as it may be advisable to group together under one officer. In the discharge of his duties as said district officer he is entirely independent of the general officer of the line of the army, such as department and division commanders, and reports directly to the chief engineer; in making his disbursement, whether civil or military, he is accountable to the Treasury Department through the War Department, and is not required to give bonds, no matter how large his disbursements. The officers of the Corps of Engineers have charge of (1) permanent and field defences and fortifications, torpedo defences, military maps, pontoon trains, military bridges, mining, &c., and the command of the engineer troops. (2) Improvement of rivers and harbors for which appropriations are made annually by Congress. (3) Construction and repairs of lighthouses, light keepers' dwelling, beacons, fog signals, &c. (4) Instructors and assistant professors at the United States Military Academy. The first, second and fourth functions are exercised under the direction of the Secretary of War, and the third under that of the Secretary of the Treasury. The same officer may, and often does, exercise several of these functions at once.

By examining the list, out of 106 officers of the Engineer Corps, I find that 20 only are employed solely in military duties, 21 partially in military and partially in civil duties, 8 as instructors in military colleges, and no less than 57 in purely civil duties. I think it would be quite possible that these young men, after leaving college, when they can only be considered as half trained soldiers, might be attached to our permanent corps, and when they have had further training as officers they might then be passed on into the public service. I do not mean in civil branches of the service, but they might be employed under the Railway Department and under the Public Works Department. I am not finding fault with the Minister of Militia that he does not propose this, because it would cost money, and I know how difficult it is for him to obtain money; nor do I find fault with the Government, but perhaps I might find fault with the members of the House as a whole, because this would divest them of some patronage. I cannot help that. Although the members of this House may be deprived of some patronage, the public would benefit by getting a superior class of engineers for any work in which engineering is required, and at the same time these men would be under the control of the Government and would be available for active service, and be from time to time employed with our militia, giving strength to it, and making themselves useful as staff officers. I would throw out this suggestion to the House. I do think that some steps might be taken by which these young men might be retained permanently in the public service, so that the expense we have made on them should not be thrown away.

Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—I may remark that not once or twice, but at least half a score of times, I have called on the Government to do what the founders of the college intended that they should do, to put a few appointments such as he described at the disposal of the most promising of the young cadets, and I am very glad indeed to find that some other gentlemen are desirous of seeing that carried out. Now, I want to know what the hon. gentleman is going to do with this \$18,000 more which he is asking for.

SIR ADOLPHE CARON—That is merely a different way of keeping accounts. There is an increase of \$18,000. The vote for 1889-90 represents a portion of the annual subscriptions and payments by cadets to the credit of the Receiver General for entrance fees, education and board, which hitherto have been credited against expense for the Royal Military College, but which it is intended to credit in the future to the revenue of the Dominion.

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—Will the hon. gentleman state how much he receives from graduates?

SIR ADOLPHE CARON—There is annually paid for each cadet for board, clothing, books, &c.: first year, \$300; namely, \$100 board and instruction, and \$200 for clothing, &c. Each subsequent year, \$250; namely, \$100 board and instruction, and \$150 clothing, &c.

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—Which it is now proposed to raise to \$350.

SIR ADOLPHE CARON—Yes.

SIR RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—No doubt there is a great deal of force in what the hon. gentleman has said, that it is desirable we should make the college as nearly self-supporting as possible. But he will remember that in the early stages of the college, admission was fairly open to competition, and a considerable number of the best pupils were the sons of men in comparatively poor circumstances. There is this circumstance which must be remembered, namely, that by raising the fee you practically put it out of the power of any man who is not in tolerably good circumstances to send his sons there. I do not know whether on a balance of the advantage, that may not be wise, but some of the very best officers now in the Imperial Service were sons of men who certainly could not have paid \$350 a year for each of them, the sum which the hon. gentleman proposes to charge.

MR. WATSON—Is it the intention of the Minister to allow the 95th Battalion, Manitoba, to go into camp this season?

SIR ADOLPHE CARON—The matter of camping and training has not yet been considered, and I am not in a position to give an answer to the hon. gentleman.

MR. WATSON—It is very important that this battalion should go into camp as it has not been in camp since 1885, and permission has been given for the formation of another battalion in Manitoba. I do not know for what purpose that is being done. I am afraid it is for political purposes and in order to give Major Bedson a commission. He has only got 4 companies yet, I believe. It would be much more in the interest of the militia force that those now enrolled should be annually drilled. It is much better to have an efficient body of 20,000 men than the present force of 37,000. This company was supposed to drill last summer, but unfortunately the order was countermanded and the company has not drilled since the year I have stated.

Annual Artillery Practice—Royal Military College, 1889.

The practice is to be conducted with the following ends in view:—

1. *General comparison of infantry and shrapnel fire*; the infantry arm being the M. H. rifle,—the artillery arm the 9 pr. R.M.L.

2. To obtain data in proof or disproof of the following:—

(a.) Artillery fire is "*practically no more effective at short ranges than it would be were the guns kept out of infantry fire.*" Artillery Drill, Chapter V.

(b.) "*The accuracy of modern guns is practically as great at 1,500 yards as at 500 yards.*" Infantry Drill, 1889, Pt. VI.

3. "*The effect of the fire of artillery does not increase at ranges shorter than 1,100 or 1,200 yards, since this is the distance at which every shot tells, and their effect is annihilating. On the other hand the effect of the fire of infantry increases at every step which brings them nearer to their target.*"

"*The effect of infantry fire first bears comparison with that of artillery at a range of 500 yards, and will not be equal to it before between 330 and 220 yards.*" Letters on Infantry: Prince Kraft.

For the purposes of comparison of infantry and artillery fire, the two arms are to have an *equal front* and are to be in action for *equal periods of time*.

CALCULATION OF FRONT.

1. An artillery brigade-division (3 batteries, 18 guns) occupies a front of $(98 \times 3) + (28\frac{1}{2} \times 2) = 294 + 57 = 351$ yards.

A Section (2 guns) will therefore occupy

$$351 \div 9 = 39 \text{ yards} = 47 \text{ paces.}$$

2. "*When the firing line opens fire, rank entire will be formed; each man will then occupy a space of 2 paces.*" P. 329, Infantry Drill, 1889.

The front of an artillery section would therefore be represented by 23 rifles. This is more accurately calculated as follows:—

(a.) A battalion (800 men) acting alone, is to have 4 sections of 25 men, or 100 men in firing line, occupying a front of 212 paces. (b.) When acting as part of a larger force there are to be 8 sections, or 200