

possible) that the Minister of Militia will be able to organize a Reserve Force at all worthy of the name.

The people of Canada may be divided into two classes - those who volunteer, and those who do not. Among the former, after years of service, with their attendant losses and expenses, enthusiasm is apt to cool, and they very naturally think that, having done their share, is time that others get into harness; these, the Reserve branch should afford an easy and honorable means of retirement, while those who had not served should be compelled to bear burdens slightly commensurate with the services rendered by the retired Volunteer. We know it would be absurd to apply anything like coercion to men who voluntarily enter the ranks, often to the detriment of their private interests, therefore, the service, to be efficient, should be made attractive, and some premium, however slight, be set upon the Volunteer character. In this respect the Legislature of Ontario has acted wisely, perhaps on account of the Volunteer element in that assembly possessing some what more independence than the corresponding class in the Commons. If it were made an object of positive advantage to the young men of the country to put in a certain term in the Volunteer ranks, we would not hear so much about the difficulties experienced by officers in keeping their companies up to the full strength, could the baleful influence exercised by political tricksters be overcome, we might hope for the accomplishment of what we desire.

Considering the present state of the Volunteer Force, and the services that they may at any day be called upon to render, a Reserve or auxiliary support is a positive necessity, more especially as the Imperial troops have been withdrawn, and a miserable economy forced upon the Administration has greatly weakened our only army of defence. Of course, Canadians, as on all former occasions, will rush to arms on the first sound of alarm; but undisciplined levies ever march to certain destruction, and it is not until many of the first ranks go down, more through their own ignorance than by strength of their opponents, that they acquire the experience and discipline necessary to render them effective.

A scheme for the formation of the Reserve Militia has been shadowed forth, and we submit, with all deference to those entrusted with its embodiment, the idea that if they wish to make it anything more than a paper concern, they must make better provision than that at present existing for officering the Active Force, and establishing a regular system of retirement therefrom. We make this recommendation from a conviction that the Reserve should be so constituted as to afford facilities to officers and men of the active branch for retiring after having performed a certain term of service, and entitling them to some privilege as a

reward. For instance there is a large class of active, intelligent and thoroughly loyal young men in the Volunteer ranks who are not in possession of the franchise, these, after a fixed period of service, should be permitted to vote. A movement like this would vastly increase the popularity of volunteering, and there would be no longer any difficulty in selecting eligible young men to take the places of those who, having completed their term, retire into the Reserve. In like manner the officers should be dealt with, granting them a step in relative rank or otherwise, which would secure an efficient staff for the Reserve, and do away forever with the heartburnings and disappointment which too often accompanies many of our best officers on their leaving the Force. It would not be necessary or advisable, in the existing state of affairs, to make retirement compulsory, but it should be regulated that completion of service would be an object desirable to all.

This is a subject which demands a vast amount of consideration and we hope it will receive the attention its importance requires, which, after due time will result in the establishment of a thoroughly organized and effective Reserve Militia for the whole Dominion.

When a person possessing the ability, force and persistency of our correspondent "L. C.," so determinedly and pertinaciously asserts a string of ideas which may be accepted as correct expressions of a large class of volunteers, it would be but a poor compliment to his patriotism and evident knowledge of his subject to deny that there are some grounds for his complaints. We will however merely refer to his letter which appeared in our last number, by remarking, *en passant*, that these editorial columns are, and have been, since the present writer's advent entirely free from outside influence. Circumstances have occurred when through absence, illness, or other causes their management had to be intrusted to others. This is a thing that will occur in any business, but we can assure "L. C.," that it is only to one every way worthy of confidence that so important a trust was confided. We do not intend to enter into a lengthy disquisition upon the ample text with which our correspondent has supplied us. "F. O." has taken up the question in his own proper person and between two such able opponents we are content to hold the balance of opinion for a time at least, or until such time as it will be necessary to sum up both arguments, and taking into consideration the feelings of all classes of Volunteers and of the people at large we will be enabled to say which is right. This is a question that, to be rightly solved, should be approached without passion or prejudice, and, while we are convinced of the purity of motive which actuates those among Volunteers who oppose Sir G. E. Cartier's administration of Militia

affairs, we are nevertheless convinced of the fundamental soundness of the measure of 1808. Although the management of its details is not what we would altogether wish, yet, we believe, before long, we will obtain a hearing for all our reasonable demands.

The best mode to adopt for the uniforming and equipment of the soldier for active service is a subject which has often occupied the attention of the Military authorities, but, up to the present time, little or no active measures have been taken; at least in England, to adapt the clothing and accoutrements of the soldier to the exigencies of modern warfare. That a change must be made, and that before very long, is conceded on all sides, but the War Office must be either distracted with the claims of rival inventors or has not the courage to shake reform, though ever so much needed, in the face of Monsieur Martinet. It being apparently much easier for Government to disestablish the Irish Church than to do away with an ugly and unhealthy military dress. Many years ago we remember, when a recruit, hearing of great things that were to be done in the matters of uniform and equipment. The villainous parodies on the human foot called "ammunition boots;" the brick-dust tunic thick with the abomination of pipe-clay; the skimpy trousers; the crossbelt, ingeniously contrived to crush the action of the heart and prevent expansion of the lungs; the huge, awkwardly placed and ill-constructed pouches; the leather stock which made the wearer appear like one undergoing a slow process of the garrote, and, like a cap to the climax of the grimly-whimsical poor devil of a soldier, behold the shacco! Thus he stood forth and stands still - a monument of absurdity unequalled in ancient or modern times. We had almost forgotten the knapsack stuck to his back and crammed with a lot of stuff the greater portion of which is utterly useless. We write from experience - and, we believe, if the British military powers are earnest in their desire to improve the soldier's dress, the best thing they could do would be to employ a committee of intelligent and experienced men from the ranks and submit to them the improved dresses and accoutrements. Practical men in all walks of life are the best able to give an opinion on what most intimately concerns the peculiarities of their profession. We submit the hint believing it worthy of some consideration. Below we append a description, from the *London Times*, of a new uniform presenting some novel features:—

"At Dover, lately, a proposed Infantry uniform and new equipment were submitted for the inspection of his Royal Highness the Commander in Chief by Lieut.-Colonel Bray, 4th King's Own Royal Regiment. A model Infantry soldier was paraded before his Royal Highness in the proposed uniform and in complete warservice marching order. Among the many changes proposed by Colonel Bray the most striking is that the model soldier