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AND

MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE

"I ordered, unsought, our swords we draw,
To guard the Monarch, fence the Law."

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 1876.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Letters addressed to either the Editor or Publisher, as well as communications intended for publication, must, invariably, be pre-paid. Correspondents will also bear in mind that one end of the envelope should be left open, and at the corner the word—"Printer's Copy" written and a two or five cent stamp (according to the weight of the communication) placed hereon will pay the postage. No communication, however, will be inserted unless the writer's name is given, not necessarily for publication, but that we may know from whom it is sent.

We have for the past nine years endeavored to furnish the Volunteer Force of Canada with a paper worthy of their support, but we regret to say, have not met with that faithful encouragement which we confidently expected when we undertook the publication of a paper wholly devoted to their interests. We now appeal to their liberality and ask each of our subscribers to procure another, or to a person sending us the names of four or five new subscribers and the money—a list be entitled to receive one copy for the year *vice*. A little exertion on the part of our friends would materially assist us, besides extending the usefulness of the paper among the Force—keeping them thoroughly advised in all the changes and improvements in the art of war so essential for a military man to know. Our ambition is to improve the *Volunteer Review* in every respect, so as to make it second to none. Will our friends help us to do it? Premiums will be given to those getting up the largest lists. The *Review* being the only military paper published in Canada, it ought to be liberally supported by the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of each Battalion.

Our previous article reviewing the proposition for establishing the "Institution of Adjutants," as put forth in the "Militia Report" for the past year intimated that a case illustrative of the position taken on this subject would be dealt with.

The Major General Commanding the Canadian Militia writing of the cavalry in page XVII of his report says.—"I have not yet specially referred to this useful arm the District reports enter into the condition of those Regiments during the training. I include them when speaking of Militia generally. They turned out well this year, I

well mounted, horses without the advantage of a mangle wonderfully steady; in the various field days the corps were well handled and some of them understood fairly the duties of outpost and feeling for an enemy."

This from the pen of so distinguished an officer is what we call high praise, and speaks volumes for the efficiency of the system which could produce such results. In page XVI of same Report we find the following reference to a letter—which we publish out of its usual place for the purpose of calling attention to the very serious allegations it contains which would, we believe, demand at least a Military Court of Enquiry as to the alleged negation of duty asserted as well as insinuated:

"May I request special attention to a very practical letter and scheme for the improvement of Cavalry which has been addressed to me by Captain and Adjutant S W Spillette, late Troop Sergeant Major 9th Royal Lancers. As to the experience of this officer in Regimental detail, the position he held in the 9th is a guarantee. His remarks are worthy of consideration, especially the reasons which he gives for the necessity of a permanent staff officer in each Regiment, an opinion from which no practical soldier can dissent, although, as I have before stated, I believe the idea is not supposed to be generally acceptable here—and so I have refrained from again urging it. The letter will be found in the appendix No. 7."

The following are the documents referred to; they, however, appear in Appendix No. 8, and we think that so far from rendering the appointment of a permanent staff officer necessary, it would prove that such an office, if it existed, ought at once to be abolished.

Because the knowledge such an officer acquired would be at the expense of the Captains and Subalterns who would be inefficient in duty, *ratio* to his efficiency, and because from his arbitrary dealings with the rank and file of troops he had no hand in raising, he would make recruitment impossible and be the direct means of disbanding what would under proper management be a highly effective force, as the Canadian Militia without the interference of such officers undoubtedly is:

ON CAVALRY ORGANIZATION.

GLINGTON, ONTARIO.

29th June, 1875.

Sir.—I beg to enclose you a copy of letter (A) and system (B) of organization of the Cavalry of which I made mention at Camp Niagara. You are doubtless somewhat familiar with the system of that date, and will therefore readily perceive the changes which from time to time have been made for the improvement of the force, and as it seems to me there is much room for further improvements, and that with but little or no greater expenditure than caused by the present system. I beg leave to offer a few remarks in connection with the enclosed paper and our present system, endeavoring to confine myself to the branch of the service to which I belong, and in which I have ever taken a great interest although engaged through the Military School under

C. J. Lowrie, 17th Regiment and obtained a first class certificate, and was afterwards for five years Adjutant of the 19th Lincoln Battalion.

In regard to the Troop organization I have but little to offer, as the officers and non-commissioned officers are as in my system; but in the place of the number of men being reduced, as has been the case, I still adhere to the fifty, with full equipments for each man, for it is better for all purposes to have one strong troop than two weak ones, and the officers draw equally as much pay for the one as the other, and I have not the same amount of responsibility or work, so am of opinion it would be better to have stronger troops if we had fewer of them.

The Troops, with but few exceptions, having been formed into regiments, the Staff advocated have been appointed, but were the Adjutants (if duly qualified) permanent Staff Officers under pay it would add greatly to the efficiency of a regiment, as I will endeavor to show.

In the first place, as you are aware, Sir, an Adjutant has to know everything in connection with his regiment, and be able at all times to answer any questions pertaining thereto. Such is not the case now. He never sees any portion of his regiment, or hears anything in connection with it, but when in camp, consequently he has to feel his way, as it were, in the dark for the first two or three days, in the place of being able to go to his work at once.

Again, Commanding Officers never see any portion of the regiment from one camp to another. Captains of Troops never see their Troops from one annual drill to another, and know but little or anything about them until they want them for drill, and yet these officers are paid—the former twenty-five dollars, and the latter forty dollars per annum for drill purposes, and in most cases are unable to drill their men. Consequently, when they come together in camp the Adjutant has to drill them separately before he can go on with his regimental drill. And then again, each Captain receives sixty dollars per annum for the care of arms, and I find it is as I stated in 1862, they are but little cared for. On inspecting their accoutrements when in camp, I found the saddlery in many cases in an unserviceable condition, many of the straps lost or broken, curb chains tied together with bits of string and wire, collar chains the same, and many of them lost, the numnahs torn and eaten by mice, the leathers rotten, and have not been oiled since they were issued, although I gave orders last year they were to do so. But it is well known that as soon as they are dismissed, no one has any authority over them, the Captains being afraid to use the authority they possess, and endeavor to gain popularity and make as much as they can out of their position, with out any regard to the service or country; and in many cases, although, contrary to the law, the men are not sworn in—they come in for the annual drill, and after that is over, they are seen in the ranks no more. All this could be obviated by a paid Staff Officer, as none would dare ignore his authority, and he would have a general supervision over officers and men; and I cannot perhaps do better than here bring to your notice a case which occurred in one of the troops some eight years ago, shortly after it had received its equipments. At that time, although Adjutant of the 19th Battalion, I was the appointed and paid Instructor of three troops of Cavalry, and on going to drill one day, a man came on parade with accoutrements very dirty. After giving a severe reprimand, I ordered him to appear on parade the next