

**THE MILITIA PROBLEM.**

[By an Officer in a Rural Corps.]

**A**FTER the September camps there appeared several letters in your columns anent the rural corps, and as I disagreed with most I thought of writing in answer to them, but being busy, the time went past and I did not. The plan I would advocate would be to place the country corps as nearly as possible on the same footing as city corps, as farmers' sons and mechanics have no more time to attend camps than their city brethren; therefore, they do not join, and it is mainly the floating class who go, who are here to-day and away to-morrow, and one thing is certain, that if trouble were to arise they are not the class who could be relied on. I would therefore advocate the appointment of a paid instructor, from one of the schools of infantry, who would drill each company two nights a week at company headquarters in the months of June and February, and then, say, on Dominion Day, or Thanksgiving Day, or some other public holiday, have them meet at battalion headquarters for battalion movements and a dinner provided like a picnic, where the people would take some interest in them, and not as at present, when it is considered a disgrace to be a volunteer.

I have always maintained that were a company composed of the right material and its men well grounded in company drill and able to hit the target every time, the money expended would not be, as at present, thrown away.

I think a good test of efficiency would be that of calling out the companies at short notice, and in the case of those who could not muster half strength—let someone else try it. At present I am so sick of the way things are carried on that I have made up my mind to take a back seat unless some change for the better is brought about.

**THE OTHER SIDE OF IT.**

[By Ulysses.]

**I**N an article headed "the Permanent Corps" in your issue of the 15th of November you make several statements which, if not contradicted, may do harm to the permanent force, which indeed seems to be one of the aims of your paper and some "military" correspondents in Canada, where everybody, from the beggar on the midden up, seems to be able to give opinions off-hand upon military questions.

In the first place, you say these corps "have not by any means fulfilled the purposes for which they were organized." This I emphatically deny, especially if you refer to their instructional duties. Granting for the present that they exist, not as soldiers, but as pedagogues merely, I will ask you to look at the Militia List, as you should have done before writing your article, and look up the corps in, for instance, No. 2 District—the Queen's Own, Royal Grenadiers, 13th Battalion, 48th Highlanders—and see what the permanent force has been doing. The officers of these corps have worked hard in a proper spirit, have obtained their certificates and have their reward in their splendid battalions. But I dare say they would have found it much easier if the permanent force had not existed when they went through, and the old system of education, which produced commanders of the Ridgeway type, had been in vogue—but what would their battalions have been like now? By the way, what was the old system of education? I know of the V.B. examination, but I don't know that it was a system of education. I do know, however, that it was looked upon as a military joke. I also know of the military schools. But how could you return to that system without Imperial troops (should I say Imperial schools?) returning to Canada? Perhaps your well-known reader, who wants to smash the permanent force (I fancy I see V.B. after his name), prefers Englishmen to his own people. I have known such. As to the "enormous" sums the permanent corps

costs the country (Mr. Well-Known Reader probably gauges it by the amounts spent by a town council on its police), I beg to say that the country gets full value for every cent she spends upon it, which is more than can be said about a great part of the militia.

If you and your reader are so zealous why don't you set to work and clean up the active militia? There are, for instance, old fossil captains therein who refuse promotion and won't retire because they would thus drop their "care of arms" and "drill instruction" allowances. Such "care" they take, and what "instructors!" There is plenty of real work for zealous people if they look for it in this direction; but your paper and its correspondents seem to relish nothing so much as pitching into the permanent force, the most efficient of all. Does it not occur to you that this must disgust painstaking officers in that force?

Now as to "schools." The word is a general one and has no military signification to the public. When a soldier comes to be asked 30 or 40 times in a year what the ages are of the children taught at the "school," he naturally gets sick of the word, and it was for this reason that the military word "depot" was substituted. What, then, is your objection to this? Why should not soldiers go to a "depot" for their instruction? And why should not the label "Military School" stuck upon a barrack be torn down when it would be misleading to those who should be taught that soldiers live in barracks or camps and not in "schools?" And why should not infantry officers, whom you specially single out, correct people who use the word "school" instead of "depot," when the latter is the official word? What is the matter with your paper? Can it show that the word "depot" hurts anybody or does any harm? What of it, for goodness sake?

Further, as to this pedagogue business. We will suppose again that the permanent force exists solely for teaching, that they never saw the Saskatchewan, and that they do not serve Her Majesty as soldiers. I think that even laymen can see that in order to teach others to be soldiers they must first be soldiers themselves, and it is quite as plain that they must accordingly be organised, trained, and taught to look upon themselves as such. This can never be if they exist only as "schools" and not as military units, and for a further and most important reason, that the "teachers" in order to keep their "hands in" must remain in touch with a purely military body in order to be of use to the "school-boys" when they join.

What are your reasons for your objections to the permanent force as soldiers? Let us hear them, and see if they will bear inspection.

**MONTREAL VETERANS ORGANISE.**

A veteran association is an accomplished fact in Montreal. At a meeting the other day the Executive Committee submitted the following list of officers, which was approved of:

Hon. president, Lieut.-Col. Lyman; president, Lieut.-Col. Bond; 1st vice president, Lieut.-Col. Isaacson; 2nd vice-president, Mr. James Harper; treasurer, D. L. Lockerby; secretary, Major D. Seath; surgeon, F. W. Campbell, M.D.; Executive Committee, Lieut.-Col. McArthur, Lieut.-Col. Stevenson, Sergt.-Major Walker, Major Baynes, Sergt. Cunningham, Capt. Beers, Mr. Mathewson, Major Campbell, Lieut.-Col. Gardner, Lieut.-Col. Kennedy, Sergt. Logan, Lieut.-Col. Cushing, Major Atkinson, Sergt.-Major Stark, Lieut. Ellicot, Sergt. Jones, Sergt. Tigh, Col. Mattice, Col. Marchand and Lieut.-Col. Ste. Marie. It was decided that the officers meet the Minister of Militia when in Montreal this week, and lay their claims for recognition before him. The movement is enthusiastically entered into by the veterans who rose in arms against those who sought the destruction of their country.