

THE "NOODLE" AGAIN.

MY DEAR MISTY,—The report of my death is not true. When you next meet our mutual friend "Cloudy," please thank him in a hearty sort of way, for having kindly and thoughtfully forwarded me a copy of the Militia Report, in which I read with the deepest interest, the remarks of the Major-General, to whom you will kindly convey my congratulations, on his efforts to improve the Canadian Militia. He may not remember me, so if he doesn't, just get away as quietly as possible; but possibly, if you describe me as the biggest noodle on the expedition, he will doubtless look pleased, and say "Yes; by Joe! I remember." As I waded through the report, my first warmly expressed "hear, hear" occurred on striking page xix, near the bottom, where the following is to be found: "I would again urge the advisability of giving preference to graduates of the Royal Military College in the appointments of officers to permanent corps." This idea is not by any means a new one, so it is not the Major-General's, for be it known that the authorities long ago, soon after the R.M.C. began turning out its young men, issued an order that all appointments to the permanent corps should be graduates of the above institution; but any ordinary "noodle" can see by glancing at the militia list that they did not carry out this most commendable resolution, but contented themselves with occasionally dropping on a R.M.C. man, if he had sufficient backing in the proper quarter. Now the appointing of officers to the permanent corps from the militia, if not soon stopped in some way, is bound to ruin the reputation of the schools as places of instruction. This will surely and certainly follow, if our present system goes on, for we must not forget that these corps are supposed to perform the duties of instruction, and it is a known fact that an officer passing a "short" and "long" course at the schools, does not qualify him for a permanent berth in such corps, when so high a standard is now necessary for all military positions; if not, why maintain the college at all? If only for the manufacture of officers for the Imperial service, why, well and good; but the idea of many Canadians is contrary to this. I should like to draw the attention of some of our numerous political appointments, and warn them that some day they must, in the ordinary course of events, succeed to the commands of the schools of instruction. And with merely a twelve months' certificate and a strong political leaning, with a large family, they will hardly fill with justice to the country the important duties assigned to a commandant. There would be little objection to political preferment, if it were exercised after the applicants had passed through the R. M. C.

If some of the fathers now continually applying for positions as subalterns would quietly wait till their sons had graduated at the college, and then go in with a good backing of influence, they would still have the coveted prize in the family, with the addition of the feelings of a proud father, combined with a more dignified and useful service to the country. The time was, before the proper means were in existence for sound education of officers, that commissions were given from the militia, but now the necessity does not exist. In order to illustrate how we have adhered to the rule of gazetted R.M.C. cadets, I may state that not counting the commandants, and those appointed before the establishment of the college there are *twenty-nine* combatant officers, out of this number *twenty-one* have never seen the inside of the institution that we are keeping up for the avowed purpose of improving our militia. We have *eight* cadets. It is hardly necessary to say more, and we must cry "hear, hear," every time we come to this portion of the general's sermon. While mentioning these facts, I am quite aware that among the nineteen mentioned above are some first rate officers in every respect, but this does not prove the principle anything but a most reprehensible one, which carries with it only one ultimate result, the inevitable decadence of the standard of military education. The long course may be sufficient for an officer connected with the volunteer militia force, but a higher grounding is beyond a doubt necessary for the permanent corps. Not only does the appointment of a cadet guarantee the necessary education, but he also, if *secured early*, enters the service as a single man, an advantage not ensured in the majority of political commissions. The general misery all round with a married man and family is too well-known to enlarge upon at present. It is sufficient to say that one of the most difficult tasks of the officer commanding is to keep up a mess, and how can this be accomplished when most of the subalterns, instead of dining there, are at home playing with the babies. It is difficult to prevent officers marrying after they are gazetted, but in these cases they generally spend a year or so at the mess table, but when appointed in the blessed state of matrimony, they are debarred from obtaining a certain amount of knowledge necessary to every officer. Another fault, caused entirely by our system of management, is that when cadets are fortunately here and there given commissions, they are not the pick of the college, these

gentlemen are wafted away to the Imperial service, and we hear wonderful tales of what they will be to us some day—well, it may turn out as predicted, let us hope it will do so. But instead of allowing them out of our grasp, offer a fair inducement for them to stay at home. Naturally now they turn with disgust from a service where no future promotion or pension is to be looked for. As an example of the former, let me ask the effect on the officers of the British service if it were decided to increase the number of companies in a regiment or battalion, and instead of promoting those in the regiment, they took outsiders from the militia to command the new additions. Such is the habit in Canada nevertheless, we will see at all events, when the new infantry corps is formed in London. To return to the pick of our cadets, they turn up their noses (very rightly) at their own army, if it may be called such, go home, and in a few years return to us, where they spend a short holiday in their native land, all their feelings and interest not with their own, but with the service that holds out to them the rewards and future prospects denied to their brother cadets foolish enough to throw away their lives on a profession that suddenly ceases some day with the information "you are too old." Let us pass on to the rank and file—the men enlist, the most deserving are promoted, they lose all aptitude for obtaining a living in other walks of life, but day after day, good solid men, who have now served since the first formation of the regular force in 1872, are discharged with "nothing," "you are too old." Some of these fine fellows went through the Northwest campaign without a day's sickness, many of them too proud perhaps to cave in, in their struggle to manfully do their duty, they came back, their three years are expired, they are too old, they are discharged; while some sickly boy who went up with the "neuralgia" and came back with the rheumatism—putting in his campaign in the ambulance—*gets a pension*. Surely a country which can so gratefully reward in one case, cannot refrain from remembering the man who resisted rheumatics, served for years, and dodged the rebel bullets. The most absurd side of the matter appears when the commanding officers are continually being admonished to be most particular in selecting as recruits men of the most *exceptional character* and class, as they are to be patterns to their fellows in the militia. This will be carried out when the required class see an *improvement in the future*. We can sympathize with a man who makes a pattern of himself for the best part of his life, and appears discouraged at being told that he can "go now," "old patterns not required." He would have passed a much more lively existence by posing in the service as a "frightful example," and have received the same indulgence at the end of his career. I am sorry to say that for the above reasons many of them do. I remain yours, dear "Misty,"

A NOODLE.

PERSONALS.

Lieut. and Adjutant Brophy, Lieut. Tullock and Lieut. Jacks successfully completed a special course in the Infantry School last week.

Lieut.-Col. Joseph Beaudreau, who lately succeeded Col. Rodier in the command of the 76th Rifles, "Voltigeurs de Chateauguay," has been a militiaman since 1868, when he joined the newly organized Ste. Martine independent company as a private. In the same year he was appointed ensign, and in 1870 was in command of the company and took it to the frontier to resist the threatened Fenian invasion, though he did not get his gazette as captain until 1871. When the 76th battalion was organized on the 22nd March, 1872, Captain Beaudreau's company was incorporated in it. On the 3rd May, 1877, he was made brevet-major, getting his substantive majority in May, 1885. He holds second-class military school and first class volunteer board certificates.

THE TARGET.

The following resolution has been carried by the Victoria County Rifle Association, and a movement is being made with a view of securing similar action on the part of other associations throughout the country.

Resolved, that, since owing to the expense involved in the purchase of ammunition, rifles and other outfit, together with the cost of maintaining ranges in proper condition, we believe that many militiamen are prevented from becoming active members of rifle associations, thus throwing the burdens on a few and depriving the many of the privilege of riflshooting; therefore do we respectfully request J. R. Dundas, Esq., M.P. for South Victoria, and Hector Cameron, Esq., M.P. for North Victoria to express to the Hon. the Minister of Militia our belief that the Militia of Canada would gratefully welcome, and be much benefitted by the enacting that ammunition for Snider rifles be furnished to all regular rifle associations or to certified members thereof for five cents a package.