

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE MILITIA FOR 1872.

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Reduced Militia estimates means reduced Military efficiency, and power of defence; but should it be determined at any time to reduce the estimates, it would be well to bear in mind that this can be done with least detriment to public service, from a military point of view, not by reducing the number of men authorized to be trained annually in the whole Dominion, but by training the full number of men allowed for a somewhat shorter period of time.

Although a system of voluntary Recruitment is certainly not the most, reliable or equitable mode of forming a national defensive Army, or obtaining men for the performance of such a public duty, nor is it the mode most approved of by the majority of the officers and men actually belonging to the Force, still if it be the desire of the people of Canada to continue that unsatisfactory mode of recruitment, it should be borne in mind that it will be necessary for the country and Parliament to give every encouragement to the Active Militia and deal liberally with it, and thus enable the captains of companies and corps to compete in the labor market for men, on more favorable terms, as it is through their instrumentality entirely that under the voluntary system men are obtained.

It may be more difficult to obtain the full number of men by voluntary enrolment in some Districts than in others, but provided the Force is treated liberally and properly equipped, I have no doubt but that even the full quota of men authorized to train annually for whole Dominion, may come forward voluntarily.

Many officers commanding the Militia in Military Districts, especially the officer commanding the Militia in Military District No. 6 (a District chiefly occupied by French speaking Canadians) seem to consider the application of the ballot as necessary to obtain the quota required and fill up the ranks of existing corps, other Commanding Officers in Districts occupied both by English and French speaking Canadians are much of the same opinion. No doubt these officers are quite right from a military point of view and show that they have studied the science of military organization when they report in favor of a system of compulsory service for a military Force intended purely for purposes of national defence, as compared with a voluntary and consequently uncertain mode of recruitment, but still I think with due encouragement, and by the appointment of proper officers, the quota of men required from French speaking Districts may be obtained voluntarily, although existing corps may from time to time collapse.

French speaking Canadians are certainly as patriotic and as much attached to their country as any other people, indeed from length of settlement they are true Canadians *par excellence*.

For the last two years a very great number of French speaking Canadians have come forward with their respective corps at the time of the annual drill and joined the Brigade Camps of Exercise. I saw no corps of militia in the Dominion more efficient as regards the training and discipline of the officers and men in any of the camps of last year than the Quebec Field Battery of Artillery. These corps are composed entirely of French speaking Canadians. Very many

men in these Batteries have passed through the School of Gunnery, (B. Battery) and are well versed in a knowledge of their duties.

Lieut. Colonel T. B. Strange, Commandant of the Quebec Gunnery School, who is a distinguished soldier and Artillerist from the Royal Artillery, at present loaned by the Imperial to the Dominion Government, and who was for five years Superintendent and Gunnery Instructor at the Royal Military Repository Woolwich, assures me that the French speaking Canadian Officers and men, who have attended that school, display great aptitude in acquiring a knowledge of Artillery, and many excellent military qualities. The best shot with the Snider Rifle in the Militia of the whole Dominion last year at the time of the Annual Drill, was a French speaking Canadian from the Province of Quebec.

I have a high opinion of the military qualities of French speaking Canadians, descendants of those bold and hardy Normans who first discovered, the St. Lawrence under the intrepid Cartier, and then peopled the country of their adoption, and who were the first to penetrate the dense forests and pathless prairies of the North American Continent, exploring even to the recesses of the Rocky Mountains.

I have seen the descendants of these men in the camps of Lower Canada, on the trackless prairie, and in the Rocky Mountains. In point of natural intelligence, hardihood, endurance of fatigue, readiness of resource, and cheerfulness of spirit under difficulties, they have no superiors; masters in the art of travel, of camp and prairie life, they are equally courageous and at home in the frail canoe amid the foaming rapids of American rivers, or in the saddle on the boundless prairies of the North West.

Hardihood and the power of endurance to withstand fatigue and privations are the most essential qualities of a soldier; discipline and training does the rest.

THE RIFLE INSTRUCTION AND TARGET PRACTICE OF THE ACTIVE MILITIA FOR 1872.

The prescribed course of Rifle Instruction and Annual Target Practice has been much better carried out at the various camps of exercise during the past than in the previous year. Nearly the whole Force has been exercised in this most essential part of military training, and the general efficiency thereby greatly increased.

The introduction of the system of Government prizes to the best shots in every Battalion, Company, Corps and Military District has produced the most beneficial results, and tended more than anything else to promote the efficiency of the Infantry.

I recommend that an additional Government prize of \$15 with a badge be given to the best shot in every Brigade, and that the prize given by the Government for the last two years to the best shot in every Military District be increased from \$15 to \$20.

The Annual Target Practice Returns of the Active Militia of the Dominion will be found in the appendix. This Return which is very complete, has been carefully compiled, and not only contains the names and scores of the best shots in every Company, Corps and Battalion, but also shows the average shooting figure of merit by Corps, Companies, Battalions, Districts and Provinces.

It will be seen from this return that—
The 27th Battalion figure of merit 15.63, was the best shooting Battalion. No. 4 Company (Tilbury East) 24th Battalion, figure of merit 19.21, was the best shooting Company

and Private Charles Coombs, No. 3 Company (London), 7th Battalion, with a score of 43, was the best shot in Military District No. 1 at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

The 38th Battalion, figure of merit 17.62, was the best shooting Battalion. No. 5 Company 38th Battalion, figure of merit 25.12 was the best shooting Company, and Corporal Wilson, No. 6, 38th Battalion, with a score of 50 was the best shot in Military District No. 2 at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

The 49th Battalion figure of merit 11.86, was the best shooting Battalion, No. 1 Company (Tamworth) 48th Battalion, figure of merit 19.22, was the best shooting Company, and Color-Sergeant John Bailli, No. 5 Company (Barrie) 47th Battalion, with a score of 50, was the best shot in Military District No. 3, at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

The 42nd Battalion, figure of merit 15.83 was the best shooting Battalion. No. 2 Company Vankleek Hill, 18th Battalion, figure of merit 25.77, was the best shooting Company and Paymaster Sergeant P. T. Saucier No. 2 Company, 18th Battalion, with a score of 56 was the best shot in Military District No. 4, at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

The 50th Battalion, figure of merit 13.63, was the best shooting Battalion, No. 4 Company (South Roxton) 76th Battalion, figure of merit 23.00, was the best shooting Company and Private W. Morrison, No. 6 Company 58th Battalion, with a score of 45, was the best shot in Military District No. 5 at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

The 55th Battalion, figure of merit 9.79 was the best shooting Battalion, No. 2 Rawdon Company, figure of merit 17.59, was the best shooting Company, and Sergeant B. Morgan, No. 2 Rawdon Company with a score of 36, was the best shot in Military District No. 6, at the Annual Drill for 1872-73.

The Kamouraska Battalion, figure of merit 5.23, was the best shooting Battalion. Gaspé Basin Infantry Company, figure of merit 12.18, was the best shooting Company and Sergeant-Major Le Monde, No. 1 Company, Baie St Paul, Charlevoix Battalion, with a score of 57, was the best shot in Military District No. 7, at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

The 73rd Battalion figure of merit 17.05, was the best shooting Battalion, No. 2 Company, 62nd Battalion, figure of merit 22.00, was the best shooting Company, and Private C. J. Phillips, No. 6, Company, 62nd Battalion, with a score of 49, was the best shot in Military District No. 8 at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

The Cumberland Provisional Battalion, figure of merit 19.53, was the best shooting Battalion, No. 3 Company, Cumberland Provisional Battalion, figure of merit 28.88 was the best shooting Company, and Sergeant G. Corbin, No. 1 Company, 63rd Batt., with a score of 50 was the best shot in Military District No. 9 at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

The 3rd Battalion, G. T. R. B. figure of merit 20.07, was the best shooting Battalion. No. 4 Company, Richmond, 1st Battalion G. T. R. B., figure of merit, 33.67, was the best shooting Company, and Private Beasley 3rd Battalion, with a score of 50 (3rd Battalion G. T. R. B.) was the best shot in the Grand Trunk Railway Brigade at the Annual Drill of 1872-73.

[To be Continued.]