

their friends for, appoint, or have the same appointed to a vacancy occurring by reason of promotion or otherwise. This is the loop-hole to which I refer in the first cause given above. And, moreover, when a non-commissioned officer, should he be so fortunate as to pass through every grade of the non-commissioned officers, by means of qualification and promotion, from a private to the senior non-commissioned officer, his promotion ceases here, regardless of vacancies, be they few or many in his company or regiment, and also of his qualification, be there none as good, to fill the vacancy occurring therein.

Here again we encounter the same loop-hole above mentioned.

At this juncture, Mr. Editor and reader, let us give our attention for a few minutes to what is actually done here, at this loop-hole. It is here, sir, where the greatest evil is committed; it is here, through this loop-hole, where these unqualified persons are admitted into the service.

To the writer's special knowledge cases can be cited of appointments in the militia of our country that are amazing. For instance, the appointment to a captaincy of a company of a man who, after being gazetted, admitted to the writer that he was never before in his life a day with the soldiers or volunteers in any country, thus passing over the office of lieutenant, which was at the time about to become vacant, as well as over the heads of all the non-commissioned officers and men, while the colour-sergeant of the company had been therein six years, passing through in the meantime every grade of the non-commissioned officers from a private up, and also possessed the qualification in addition thereto of a certificate obtained at one of the military schools in Ontario. Did he (the sergeant) get even the lieutenantcy on its becoming vacant? No, his promotion stopped short in the manner I above related. This so appointed captain, in filling this vacancy, being ignorant in respect to military affairs (the second cause I have given for the presence of so many - eight hundred - unqualified officers in our militia), desiring, seemingly, not to have immediately under him an officer to whom he might be dictated, followed the example set him by jumping over this above mentioned sergeant and all the other non-com. officers, a man possessing no more military qualifications than he himself possessed.

Soon thereafter the 2nd-lieutenancy was filled by a person similarly qualified, who not only left the limits, but the country, shortly after receiving his commission.

There are other cases, which can be mentioned by the score, where appointments have been made without qualification, even that of a private, just about a month or so prior to their departure out of the limits, and not a few instances out of the country. Such appointments are anything, sir, but a credit to our militia. I mention these cases only as a fair illustration of the sort of men picked up for officers. They are by no means few, nor local, although such cases are undoubtedly more prevalent in some localities than others, but such is the fact the Dominion over. So much for the first and great cause to which I attribute the evil of having in the militia these unqualified officers.

The second cause of the existing of the enormous evil in our militia I have already partly explained, viz:—Ignorance. For instance, where an unqualified person is appointed captain of a company, it is a trait of human nature for him to not desire, immediately under him, as a lieutenant, a person properly qualified for the position, by whom he would be liable to be made a laughing stock. Therefore to evade this he chooses for his lieutenants, unqualified and inexperienced persons, taking his own unburdened knowledge of military tactics for the standard of qualification; thus the number of unqualified officers in the service is swelled.

Now the military law requires a person receiving an appointment provisionally to qualify within a limited period.

Does he do so? No, but remains in the service year after year as bad, if not worse, than when admitted, according to the aged adage "a little learning is worse than none at all."

The third cause being exceptions, thereby each case differing from the other, neither calls for nor admits of an explanation here.

Therefore, Mr. Editor and reader, let us pass on to see what remedy may be offered for the purpose of diminishing and eventually excluding this venom of maintaining so many, eight hundred (800), unqualified officers in our Militia.

I would suggest as a remedy for the first and great cause I have given for the evil afore-mentioned that the "Rules and Regulations" respecting the promotion and appointment of officers be amended by enacting therein "That all appointments and promotions in the Militia, both active and reserve, shall be compulsorily in the order of office held, seniority in the same, qualification and merit," (all these several points taken into consideration severally and collectively) from the lowest rank—the private—to the commanding officer; thereby filling a long felt want, closing up all loop-holes—especially the one now existing between the non-commissioned and commissioned officers, and choke off the captains and others in authority from recommending for and having appointed to vacancies, any social or political favourite they may fancy. For illustration, say where a captaincy becomes vacant from promotion, resignation, death, or otherwise, let the 1st lieutenant fill the vacancy, provided always that he is qualified therefor, or will so qualify within the time given for so doing in the "Rules and Regulations," but in case he (the lieutenant) cannot or will not comply with the said requirements, then pass him by and let the same be given to the 2nd lieutenant, then to the senior non-commissioned officer under precisely the same provisions, continuing in like manner to pass down through all the grades of the non-com. officers from one to another, till lastly the private is reached, when select one by merit and appoint him to the vacancy under the aforementioned provisions, rather than give the office to one, so to speak, who is picked up from the street, having no other qualification to recommend him for the office than his social and political standing, and ignorance of the military discipline and drill, as is practiced now-a-days under the present system.

For cause second—Ignorance, I would suggest as a cure, education.

Now this is an article on military matters and I desire to be rightly understood. When I use the word ignorance, I mean ignorance of military tactics; and in like manner by education I mean a military education.

Now for the non-enforcement of the "Rules and Regulations" such as we have at the present time, respecting qualifying, within the time laid down in the said "Rules and Regulations" for so doing, of officers who receive a provisional appointment. I would suggest the same remedy give for cause first—that the "Rules and Regulations" in like manner be amended as follows: "When an unqualified person receives an appointment provisionally, by reason that a person possessing a certificate of qualification could not be obtained, or for some other unavoidable cause, does not obtain the necessary qualification within the time limited by the "Rules and Regulations" therefor, he forfeits his appointment, and the same shall become null and void *ab initio* upon information of the same, and an application for the office in his turn or order of office held, by one of the inferior officers belonging to the company, battalion or regiment, etc., to the proper authority. The officer so forfeiting his commission or appointment to be reduced to his former position, and his successor's commission or appointment to bear the same date as if the now forfeited commission or appointment had not been in the first