

## Correspondence.

[This paper does not necessarily share the views expressed in correspondence published in its columns, the use of which is freely granted to writers on topics of interest to the militia.]

## THE INFANTRY SCHOOL FOR QUEBEC.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE,—I have been much pleased to see that you have urged the removal to Montreal of the Infantry School now stationed at St. Johns. To the readers of the *St. Johns News*, the school may have been a "gratifying success," but certainly those outside that very limited circle would hail its removal to Montreal as a step—and a long step—in the direction of making the school of practical use; this it can claim at present only in a very limited sense. If it be necessary to keep the school at St. Johns, let the old Board of Examiners be resuscitated so that our officers have an opportunity of passing their examinations and obtaining their certificates without wasting two or three months away from their business. It is well known that those best adapted for the role of officers of volunteer battalions, especially in the cities, are men who cannot afford to spend even the shortest term of ten days away from their secular occupation, and though they may be perfectly well up in their drill, having plenty of time in the evenings, are debarred from joining or remaining in the force. At present all the city corps are suffering from vacancies on the roll of officers, and this altogether because men otherwise eligible and willing to join cannot do so, under the existing regulations, with the school at St. Johns. At the same time there is not the slightest doubt that at least as large a number of officers from outside corps would attend the school were it in this city.

Were it possible to obtain the sense of all the commanding officers of the province, I believe there is no doubt that scarcely one outside of the charmed circle of the *St. Johns News* would not favour the removal of the school to Montreal.

MAJOR.

Montreal, 8th December 1888.

## Regimental Notes.

Lt.-Col. Smith, Deputy Adjutant General of Military District No. 1, Ontario, is anxious that volunteer officers commanding companies should get up their work during the ensuing winter months, so that they may be better able to perform their various duties at the training camp next year. A memorandum to that effect has been sent through the Colonels of the various battalions in the district to the officers in command of companies under them. It says those who can make time to attend a school of instruction should do so if they wish to occupy a reasonably creditable position in the force.

The Montreal troop of Cavalry last week went through their annual drill in a very creditable manner under Capt. McArthur and Lieut. Clark. The galleries of the drill hall were filled with a large company including several ladies. Lieut.-Col. Houghton, D.A.G., inspected the troop, and was accompanied by Lieut.-Col. Mattice, B. M. Amongst the officers of other corps present were Lieut.-Cols. Massey, Turnbull, Gardner, Major Radiger, Capts. Hood, Pettigrew, Esmond and Ross, and Lieuts. Shaw, Shorey and Kemp. The sword exercise was particularly good and the men were complimented on their appearance by the inspecting officer.

A Whitby despatch of the 5th inst. says: "The drill shed here is in a bad state of repair and the management of the South Ontario and Durham Exhibition Association have been interrogating the Minister of Militia with the view, since the structure will soon have to be probably rebuilt, to have it removed to the fine new fair grounds, consisting of 25 acres, part beautifully wooded, and with many stables, sheds and other improvements that would make the place suitable for a large military camp. Lieut.-Col. Otter, Deputy Adjutant-General, having been deputed by Sir Adolphe Caron to investigate and report upon the matter, ran down from Toronto on the afternoon train and paid a visit of inspection to the new fair grounds. He was met at the station by Lieut.-Colonel O'Donovan, of the local battalion, the gallant 34th; Mr. John Miller, of Thistle Ha', Pickering, the well-known president of the Exhibition Association, and Wm. Smith, M. P. for South Ontario. The party drove to the grounds. There had gathered Major Long, Postmaster Howden, Directors Wm. Beith, A. A. Post, James Willis, Wm. Anderson, D. C. Downey and Secretary W. R. Howse, of the Exhibition Association, and a number of citizens interested in the successful continuance and improvement of Whitby's Central Fair. The visiting military gentleman was delighted, and intimated that he would report favourably upon the proposition of the Exhibition Association, which is upon receiving a grant of \$1,000 from the Government to undertake to move the drill shed and put it in first-rate order in the new exhibition grounds. Col. Otter expressed himself as much pleased with the extensive grounds and surroundings as a site for the district camp, Whitby being much more centrally situated than Kingston."

## Toronto.

The Queen's Own Rifles furnished a guard of honour on Friday evening (30th ult.) to His Excellency the Governor-General on the occasion of his attending the St. Andrew's Society ball at the pavilion. The following was the detail: A Co. 12 men, B 10, C 8, D 12, E 12, F 10, G 10, H 10, I 8, K 10. Total 102, but 116 men put in an appearance. Busbies and great coats were worn. Capt. McGee was in command, with Lieuts. Mercer and Rennie as subalterns. Arriving at the gardens, the guard was drawn up in open order, and, after waiting five or ten minutes, whilst the chill November wind blew gently through the whiskers of those possessing such hirsute adornments, received His Excellency with a royal salute, the band playing the national anthem. The tramp back to the shed through the mud was highly enjoyable, but, taken as a whole, the evening's proceedings were not of a wildly exciting nature.

Says the *World*: Col. Gray, District Paymaster and Superintendent of militia stores, was in Cayuga Saturday, turning over the stores of the 47th battalion to the successor of Capt. Wm. Mussin. The Colonel while standing in the village street, was accosted by a tall, gaunt farmer of Haldimand, who stood admiring his gorgeous uniform. Said the stranger: "Say, mister, what *band* do you belong to?" The Colonel, who draws the line at being mistaken for a bandsman, almost fainted.

KUNE SOHN.

## The Canadian Route to the East.

The leading shipbuilders in the country have submitted to the Canadian Pacific Company offers for the construction of three large and speedy screw steamers for what is now known as the Empire Route to the East *via* Canada. It is proposed to end the Atlantic journey at Halifax in the winter time and possibly Quebec in the summer season, and that thence a voyager will cross the continent on the Canadian Pacific Railway to Vancouver, and from that point sail to Australia, China, or Japan. It is for the Pacific route that the new steamers are intended. Much that is controversial has been written on the various routes to the East, and without desiring to enter into this controversy it may be interesting to indicate briefly what is claimed for the Empire route since it has in a measure forced itself before the engineering public. To the patriot the fact that he does not sight foreign land may be a consideration. The route follows practically a circle, or travels at latitudes where degrees of longitude are shortest; the seas crossed are cool—an advantage to the marine engineer—and free from monsoons and tropical cyclones; and 2,500 miles are overland. With shorter sea passage and coal-fields at or near Halifax, Vancouver, and Sydney, less coals would require to be carried, and thus extra freight money recovered. With Halifax only 2,400 miles from England, it could be reached in five days, and it has advantages over New York, as there are no shoals. The railway journey, even although the climate is very cold, is rendered pleasant by artificial heating, &c., and again, the Pacific sea voyage is short. The voyage to Japan, *via* Canada, is about  $9\frac{1}{4}$  thousand miles, whereas *via* Suez it is  $13\frac{3}{4}$  thousand miles, and *via* the Cape  $15\frac{1}{2}$ . To Shanghai it is  $10\frac{1}{2}$  thousand miles, as compared with  $12\frac{1}{2}$  thousand miles *via* Suez,  $14\frac{1}{4}$  thousand miles *via* the Cape, and 16,000 *via* Cape Horn. Hong-Kong is about equi-distant *via* Canada, and Suez 11,000 miles;  $13\frac{1}{2}$  thousand by the Cape, and 16,000 by Cape Horn. Sydney and Auckland are also the same distance by the two steam routes, 12,000 miles, but the latter is only  $11\frac{1}{2}$  thousand miles by Cape Horn, and the former  $12\frac{3}{4}$ , and they are 14 and  $13\frac{3}{4}$  thousand miles *via* the Cape. Singapore is 3,000 miles nearer England by the Suez (9,500 miles) than by Canada, but Brisbane is 1,000 miles farther away, the Canadian route being  $11\frac{1}{4}$  thousand miles against  $12\frac{1}{4}$  *via* Suez. It is therefore patent that to Japan and Shanghai the new route will be the more suitable, and the question of the development of trade with these countries enters into the count. British trade with Japan in a quarter of a century has improved fully 33 per cent., with China 25 per cent., and with Java and the Straits about 130 per cent.; and looking to the prospect of Japan being opened up with railways and telegraphs, there is every likelihood that trade may be further developed. In any case, both the Pacific companies seem to think so, for not only do the Canadian Pacific Company intend building at an early date, but the old Pacific Company are having a fast steamer built at the Fairfield yard on the Clyde, and a couple of similar vessels at Philadelphia.—*Engineering*.

In a letter to the *London Times* Sir Samuel Baker puts forward the theory that the low Nile this year may perhaps be due to the damming of the Akbara, which is the fertilizer of Egypt. This, he states could be done with great ease, as the bed of this river is dry for five months of the year, and by constructing a dam in a suitable position, the course of the river could be deflected towards the Red Sea.