

The Purpose of the Permanent Corps.—II.

By "Linchpin."

The Artillery School at Kingston has, as a grazing pasture, so to speak, ten Field Batteries in Ontario, and one in Manitoba, or expressed in numbers, 880 officers, n. c. o. and men. The Garrison Artillery in Ontario can, for my purposes, be ignored, as it only has a total strength of 46, being composed of 45 officers and men at Cobourg, and one officer at Toronto.

You may have formed the same opinion, or you may share in that opinion, that it is the height of folly to maintain a Garrison Battery at Kingston, "including a mounted division"—of 9 officers and 151 men, for the instruction of 46 garrison gunners, for during the past three years our only Garrison Battery has sent the same number of men to this school for a short course, and with one from our demi Mountain Battery makes a total of 4; and at the same place keep up a Garrison Battery for educating during the year 1887 alone—80 Field Gunners. In a few words, to repeat, you maintain a Garrison Battery to instruct one and one-third of a garrison gunner per year, and for sixty and two-thirds of a field gunner you persistently refuse to have a Field Artillery School.

It is true that we must have somebody at Kingston for the care of the fortifications. Probably, with the small amount of money devoted to the preservation of these forts, etc., a "garrison squad" would answer all the purposes of a School and that of caretakers. I was once in a Bullock Battery, so I can appreciate the difficulties under which these Schools labour. A Garrison Battery to teach field and garrison duties both! Truly another school as a model in the "largest sense."

The two schools at Kingston and Quebec entered into active operations, I think, in 1871. There is a saying that "doctors differ," but from the extracts which I purpose giving, you will be surprised at the great consensus of opinion upon one point. In 1871, seventeen years ago, Col. Robertson-Ross, then A. G., in speaking of these schools, said: "Eight horses have also been authorized for each of these batteries, in order to give instruction in riding and driving drill, and I would beg to recommend that the number of horses be increased from 8 to 16 in each battery, and thus afford the means of carrying out far more completely field artillery instruction." You will note that he does not expect to carry out field instruction entirely, only partially. The next year the authorities are again reminded that "the number of horses—eight—is inadequate for instruction in Field Artillery movements. *Forty horses* would be sufficient for a permanent instructional Field Battery and riding establishment."

In 1875, Col. French, then Commandant of "A" Battery, reiterates the necessity of increasing the field strength, and Col. Strange, Commandant at Quebec, says: "I recommend a Field Battery being kept for permanent duty at each of the Gunnery Schools." Col. French, who goes fully into the matter, states that "a great number of men have been instructed in riding, driving, harnessing and stable duties, but I regret that the few horses allowed for the battery have prevented almost entirely the carrying out of any instruction in field artillery manoeuvres. This is a very serious drawback in a Province where there are so many field batteries, and I would recommend that during the ensuing spring * * * twenty more be purchased." During the same year, Col. Strange evidently thought the establishment of a Field School of so much importance that he was "of opinion that for each Gunnery School a Garrison Battery and one of Field Artillery with at least one captain, two subalterns and 144 gunners or drivers is required for *each* battery. The Field Battery should consist at least of four guns, four ammunition wagons, and forty horses; with less than that number it would be impracticable to teach Field Battery movements."

In 1873 Major-General Sir Selby Smythe arrived in Canada. "If it were possible these batteries should be even upon a larger basis, uniting instruction in both Garrison and Field Artillery, the duties of which are widely different. Moreover, it would be signally advantageous to these Schools if each Field Battery consisted of 4 guns, completely horsed, instead of the present insufficient number." The thing is still possible, for the Schools are yet in the same state now as then. This thing is getting to be very monotonous with me—equally so to you—but let me carry you through to the year 1887.

Major D. T. Irwin, Commandant at Kingston, says in 1874 that "an increase in the present Field Battery establishment of the Schools of Gunnery has been previously recommended by the Inspectors. As in 'A' Battery, there are at present 71 men belonging to different Field Batteries in the Province, the importance of providing adequate means for their instruction will be at once apparent." Col. Strange is sarcastic: "I need not, I presume, refer to the recommendations previously submitted." Well he might be.

I trust that the Cavalry and Infantry are not getting wearied over this sameness, but there is no telling at the present rate of progress

what state their Schools will be in after sixteen years of existence. In 1875 Col. D. T. Irwin is still hammering away at the indifference of the authorities, for he says:—"The recommendations contained in my last report, * * * the increase of the Field Battery establishment in this School, have not as yet been adopted, and I can only repeat my former recommendation." Col. Strange was absent in England on leave that year; hence probably his silence.

In the report of Progress (?) of the Militia for 1876 Col. D. T. Irwin again returns to the attack:—"I have the honour to repeat the following recommendations made in previous reports, which have not yet been acted upon, and which will, I believe, tend to increase the efficiency of the School, viz.: * * * (C) increase in the Field Battery establishment of horses rendered necessary in consequence of the large number of Field Batteries' officers, n.c.o. and men who require instruction." Col. T. B. Strange makes a hit in saying that "the Quebec Gunnery School is crippled in the Field Artillery branch, which cannot be efficient without the establishment of a complete Field Battery of Instruction—that is an increase of 16 horses."

From 1871 to 1877 the General commanding, the Adjutant-General and the Inspectors of Artillery have annually drawn attention to the requirements of the Field Artillery, and that for want of horses the Artillery schools were not efficient in 1877. General Smythe for the second time refers to the subject: "The batteries constituting the gunnery schools should have their 4 field guns horsed." Col. D. T. Irwin for the fourth time says: I have, again, to repeat my former recommendations as to the increase in the field battery establishment of horses; without a larger number than at present it is impossible to carry out proper instruction in field battery drills. Col. T. B. Strange for the fifth time comes with "I will not reiterate [the recommendation made in my annual reports for the past five years."

By Col. Robertson-Ross, twice; General Smythe, twice; Col. Irwin, four times, and Col. Strange, five times, in all thirteen times in seven years has—without avail—the authorities attention been directed to this point; we shall see later on how many times this same recommendation has been in print during the years 1878 to 1888.

Regimental Notes.

The Seventh Fusiliers in a Bad Way.

The Seventh Fusiliers of London, for many years one of the foremost corps in the Canadian militia, was inspected by Col. Henry Smith, D.A.G., at the drill shed last week, the outcome being that he will report to the Militia Department recommending its disbandment. The following concerning the parade is from the *Free Press*:—

Last night the battalion made the most creditable appearance, as regards numerical strength, that it has presented on parade for some time past, and when the men formed the line to receive the inspecting officer there were probably seventy-five in the ranks, the companies averaging from eight to fifteen strong, Captain Payne's company being the strongest. An idea prevailed among the men that they would receive the annual pay—otherwise the turnout might have been even still smaller.

The Deputy Adjutant-General was accompanied by Lt.-Col. Aylmer, Brigade Major; Lt.-Col. Dawson, district store keeper and Lieut. Wadmore, Adjutant of "D" School. The officers of the Seventh who were present were Col. Williams, Majors Smith and Gartshore, Paymaster McMillan, Quartermaster Smyth, Surgeon Fraser, Capts. Beattie, Tracy, Butler, Payne, Peters, Lieuts. Butler, Dillon, Bazan, Cowan, Fraser and O'Brien. Capts. Little and Mackenzie were absent. After Col. Smith had been received with a general salute he ordered Majors Smith and Gartshore to put the men through the manual drill and firing exercise respectively. Both these officers and Capts. Tracy and Peters afterwards put the companies through several battalion movements. Col. Smith checked over the muster roll carefully, and then the men were dismissed.

The inspecting officer then met the officers in the orderly room. He said he regretted the present inefficient state of the regiment, and whatever the causes leading up to such a result might be, they occurred before he took command of the district. It was his duty, however, to report to headquarters the inefficient state of the battalion, and in so doing would recommend its disbandment. Whatever the result might be, a city like London, with the facilities offered for instructing the officers and non-commissioned officers, should have one of the best regiments in the service, and he would do all in his power to ensure such a result in the future. The result of this report will in all probability be the disbandment of the battalion as at present constituted, and its re-organization on a more substantial basis.