

THE CANADIAN MILITARY GAZETTE.

(SUCCESSOR TO THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE.)

VOL. VIII
No. 16

MONTREAL, 15th AUGUST, 1893

Subscription \$2.00 Yearly.
Single Copies 10 cents.

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(Successor to the Canadian Militia Gazette.)

ESTABLISHED 1885.

PUBLISHED AT MONTREAL ON THE
1ST AND 15TH OF EACH MONTH.

DEVOTED TO THE
Interests of the Military Forces of Canada.

SUBSCRIPTION:

Canada and the United States, - Per Annum	\$2.00
Great Britain, Ireland and Postal	
Union Countries, - - - - -	10s 6d. stg
Single Copies, - - - - -	10 ce 1s

Subscriptions are in every instance payable in advance, and the publishers request the favour of prompt remittance.

Unpaid accounts are subject to sight draft.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

We publish elsewhere an interesting account of an encampment of two companies of the Boys' Brigade in Ontario. This is an organization well worthy of investigation by those interested in militia matters and would seem to be worthy of recognition by the Government. The cadet corps organized by Government sanction in connection with the various educational institutions have done and are doing a great deal of good. They might do a great deal more if the Government were a little more generous and gave them an allowance, in the shape of an efficiency grant, towards providing themselves with uniforms. Without uniforms it is really useless to try and imbue the youthful mind with military ideas. Without uniform drilling appears to be like playing at soldiers, and that seems a very ludicrous amusement to lads big enough to carry rifles.

All that the Government does for the school cadet corps or drill companies is to provide them with rifles (useless for shooting) and belts. They are inspected once a year and that is all the recognition there is of the fact that the lads are part of the militia. It is no wonder that so many of these corps, started under most promising auspices, go to the wall. The writer knows how it is, for he was a member of one of the oldest and best known cadet corps in Canada himself when a lad. The boys were always enthusiastic on joining and many an hour was given to drill that other pupils devoted to football and lacrosse. Examinations for corporal's stripes kept the youngsters poring over red books till late at night, and I believe that each one of those three companies did as much solid work in the course of the year as any two companies in the active militia. Their drill was like clock work, and the way those little chests expanded and filled those grey tunics, on parade showed that the youngsters were proud of their corps.

But what was the use of drilling your heart out to perfect yourself in your drill when you had no chance of impressing the rest of creation with your prowess. There was some satisfaction in barbing your shins and generally covering yourself with glory and mud on the football field, because admiring eyes were on you, but the critical eyes of our instructor were the only ones to witness our artistic work at the manual and firing exercises, and that immortal piece de resistance, the march past. Obstacles were always thrown in the way of our turning out in public. If the militia had a review we were not allowed to participate. At last we thought we were going to get our revenge. A big review was to take place out of the city and we were given to understand that we could participate. We

consequently made all our arrangements bought our tickets and drilled away harder than ever. A day or two before the date of the review a bomb-shell fell in our camp. A curt telegram from Ottawa arrived saying that we could not attend the review. After a great deal of correspondence we got permission to go to the review, but were not allowed to march past or participate in the manoeuvres.

That showed the boys that although the Government allowed them to drill and buy themselves uniforms it did not recognize them as having any connection with the militia. They were merely toy soldiers; allowed to amuse themselves drilling in the seclusion of the school yard and gymnasium but not to be considered as having any connection with the active militia. This gave the coup de grace to the cadet corps in question, one that not only provided scores of officers to the active militia; but also furnished many of the most successful men to the Royal Military College, Kingston. In England the school cadet battalions are recognized as a most useful adjunct of the volunteer system and they not only parade with the adult volunteers even at royal reviews, but participate in some of their rifle matches. Why should not a similar system be extended to our juvenile cadets. If they were made to feel themselves a recognized portion of the militia service and received but a very little bit more encouragement their numbers and usefulness would be greatly increased. The Government should at once call in the old, heavy, useless Paddy rifles now issued to these corps, issue short Sniders or artillery carbines to them, encourage the larger boys to go in for target practice and give them every chance to gratify their very natural and proper youthful pride by turning out with the active