

MILITARY INSTRUCTION.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

DEAR SIR.—I have carefully looked through your columns for some months past in the hope of learning whether any of the very valuable suggestions of Major Gen. Smyth's in the Annual Militia report, for improved instruction of officers, have been yet acted upon; without so far seeing a single paragraph that would warrant me in supposing that anything had been done.

This is much to be regretted, for to be candid I must tell you the general opinion amongst the best informed of Military men in England is, that improvement in the Canadian Militia is a thankless and a hopeless task for any one to attempt. To have a Major General in command sounds well, and is always a ready answer to any officious M.P., who finds fault—but in reality what with red tape and petty acts to clip his wings the Major General is powerless—and a trip to British Columbia or China the only thing he is allowed to undertake.

Now what has been recommended? take the senior arm for instance; An Inspecting Officer of Cavalry for each Military District, and one qualified regular non commissioned officer as Regimental Sergt. Major and Instructor of each Regiment of Cavalry—surely less could not have been suggested, especially when to my own knowledge there are dozens of officers in this branch who never put their leg across a horse the whole year except during the annual 12 days drill, and whose manner of imparting instruction at present is only equalled in the Kingdom of Zanzibar—but perhaps a knowledge of equitation is beneath the notice of mounted officers in the gallant Canadian Army—therefore it is useless to occupy your space further though perhaps Count Von Moltke's words may be considered worth reading—he states "that no officers was now allowed to enter the Cavalry in Prussia unless he received a certificate from two masters of hounds, which were kept by the Government for the exercise of its officers, that he could go well across country."

WAR OFFICE.

Ball Mall, 27th July, 1875.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR.—Should a vacancy occur for promotion in a Battalion, Active Militia, to the Rank of Major, whether would a *paymaster* with the Brevet rank of Major or the Senior Captain be entitled to the vacancy? both being qualified in accordance with section 33 of the Militia Act.—Holding first class certificates.

VOLUNTEER,

St. John, N.B., Augt. 9th, 1875.

The *Paymaster* being a non combatant officer is not entitled to Regimental promotion, in case of vacancy in the rank of Major in any Battalion the senior captain if possessing the necessary certificate of qualification would be entitled to have his claims considered.—Ed. VOL. REV.

Halifax, 9th August, 1875.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

DEAR SIR.—The General Order of the 12th June, 1874, reducing the numbers of officers of a company to two, has given a great deal of dissatisfaction to those who were appointed previous to the issue of the Order, as being most unjust to them for the following reason. In a certain corps of this city, there was a vacancy for a lieutenant, and a young man, a *private* in another battalion was gazetted with the rank of 1st Lieutenant, although there were 2nd Lieutenants in the same corps who were entitled to promotion when vacancies occurred. If justice had been done to the others, this young man would have received the rank of 2nd Lieutenant, and probably would have remained in that position to the present day. In the same corps another young man who was 1st Lieutenant in March '74 is now a Captain of some months standing, although about two years ago he was only a *private* in a company which was disbanded on account of its becoming non-effective. It is scarcely fair for captains who have to serve five years as such, before they get Brevet promotion, and who perhaps have served several years with inferior rank, to have this young man, after a few months service only, ranking with them. In this same corps there is no major, and if this officer's promotion is as rapid as heretofore (which is very likely as he has friends at court) it would not be very surprising if he should step into that vacancy. *Audi alterem partem.* In another corps in the city there is an officer serving as *Lieutenant*, (and in possession of a 2nd class certificate,) who was commissioned as *Captain* in June 1865, and has served *continuously* in the Militia since 1861, or *fourteen* years, and is still only a *lieutenant*, with no prospect of promotion, (unless he retires, when of course he would revert to his former rank) his claim to the rank of Captain being ignored at least six times, during the past four years. Now, would it not be better that all officers on appointment should receive the rank of 2nd Lieutenant only, and serve two years before promotion, and at least five years before attaining the rank of Captain? Your opinion on this matter will be satisfactory to many officers of the force.

Yours truly,

MEPHIOSBETH.

Paragraph one of the General Order of 12th June, 1874, reducing the number of officers to two for each company, was amended on the 7th May, 1875, so as to enable three officers to be appointed to each company, but as the amount of money voted for drill pay this year would not permit pay being issued for the entire nominal strength of the force now existing, the most equitable mode possible has been adopted, viz. to permit all the companies to muster for drill to the greatest extent possible con-

sistent with a due regard to the amount of pay available for issue. It was for this cause alone that the actual strength of companies authorized for drill this year has been reduced to two officers and forty three non-commissioned officers and men.

Referring to the last paragraph of the above communication, it does not seem possible that the suggestion can be carried into effect in respect of the formation of new corps where all the officers require to be appointed at one time. In other respects all promotions are made in the ordinary way, except in cases where officers who do not hold certificates of qualification require to be passed over.—Ed. VOL. REV.

At the request of our correspondent "Rifleman," we give publicity to the following communication addressed by him to the Halifax Reporter and Times:

To the Editor of the Daily Reporter and Times:
HALIFAX, N.S., 12th Aug. 1875.

DEAR SIR.—In looking over the prize list of the Dominion Rifle Association, I observe a match called the "Wimbledon Match," for the selection of the Wimbledon Team for next year; the regulations of which are so unfavorable and unjust to the Volunteers in the Lower Provinces, and calculated so entirely to further the interests of the marksmen in Ottawa and its vicinity, that I wish to call the attention of my brother Volunteers and the public who take an interest in the Team, more particularly to them.

The Volunteers selected to represent the Dominion in England are supposed to be the best shots that can be obtained, and one would think that in selecting them every facility would be given to the marksmen in the different provinces to compete on equal terms; but this year this seems to have been entirely lost sight of.

In the first place, all competitors are now obliged to go to Ottawa at their own expense to fire; and if all were within one hundred and fifty miles, it might be fair enough; but when the men from this province have to travel about twelve hundred miles, and expend about \$100 apiece on the trip, independent of the loss of time, it is quite evident that very few will be able to attend. Even if some men were found able and willing to go to Ottawa, after a journey of about sixty hours, which would not improve their shooting, they have to compete with fresh men, and on a range new to them, but on which most of the other competitors are accustomed to fire. This is the case as regards all the matches of the Dominion Rifle Association, but in the Wimbledon match there are further restrictions; it is in the first stage confined to a certain number of prize winners in the previous matches which cannot exceed 24 and is not likely to be so large, and 19 additional men named by the Rifle Associations in the different provinces, of whom 8 are named by the Ontario Association and 5 by the Dominion. These fifty-three fire in the first stage and the twenty making the highest scores are alone eligible to compete in the second stage. As the competitors in the first stage of this match would be, judging from the contests they have gone through and the reasonable presumption that each Association would nominate its best men who were present, the best shots on the ground, you would naturally suppose the team would be selected from them; but this does not suit the views of the Executive Committee of the D. R. A. who