

militia, and we have no standing army; therefore it is out of relation to our system, an excrescence rather than a legitimate development. That, I think, is the substance of your argument. And you would change the present course of long, regular, scientific study which only a few can take advantage of, for short courses for militia officers. Now, I have not a word of objection against short courses, in addition to the present work done by the institution, and I think that the Commandant has again and again urged that provision should be made for such; but before revolutionizing and thereby destroying what was intended to be our West Point, let me suggest one or two considerations, in the form of questions. I do not speak with authority on the subject. I am a novice. I claim only to be a patriotic Canadian, loyal to the empire, and I desire information.

First, why do we keep up a militia or military force of any kind? Because, we may on some future occasion have to defend ourselves. I can conceive of no other reason. The men who calmly look this eventuality in the face are not the men who are responsible for its happening. No. Rather are they responsible, who pooh-pooh universal history, and who deny the truth of the aphorism "if you wish peace, prepare for war."

Secondly, does not success in war now depend more than ever it did before on scientific officers in all branches of the service, and especially in the artillery and engineers? Would short course men be sufficient? I have a distrust of short-cuts, and short methods of mastering any subject. Some people imagine that they can become scientists by attending Mechanics' Institute lectures, or short courses adapted to the capacities of boarding-school misses. In the case of war would we not need men who had received the highest training possible? Would not one such man possibly save the country the cost of the college for a century or two?

Thirdly, why did the United States keep up West Point, at an expense far greater than our Military College, when the Republic was not much more numerous or wealthy than the Dominion now is, and when it had a merely nominal standing army? Was it wise to do so? Let its history answer. When the country was in a death struggle, who came to the front? Short course men or West Pointers? The first battles were like playing at war, and great fun was made of the scares on both sides. That was because the militia were unused to the work. But they soon got over their inexperience, and West Point officers, who came from all departments of civil life at their country's call, licked them into the shape required to do the terrible work to which they were called.

It seems to me then that if we spend nearly a million on our military system, it is not unwise to devote one-twenty-fifth of the amount to the scientific education of officers; and that what is lacking is, that the Government makes no effort to secure the services of men that it is at the expense of training. It would be easy to suggest ways and means of doing this, to the present and ultimate profit of the country, but to make such suggestions is not the object of this letter. Believe me, yours truly,

CANADENSIS.

[Our correspondent's arguments are forcible. We have heard them before. But the time when highly scientific officers would be needed, is so remote, that we confess we had to some extent lost sight of the fact that to furnish such men was in reality the *raison d'être* of the College.

We were thinking more of to-day, and more of actualities than of possibilities. We held, and still do hold that all military educational efforts should be directed towards strengthening the militia force of the country. And that the College is not adapted to the wants of the militia is certainly not the fault of the staff, for as "Canadensis" says the Commandant has repeatedly asked permission to take militia officers into the College, and give them a year's or two year's instruction; but his good intentions have met with no response from the Department. The staff is doing all it can to make the College efficient for the work it laid out for it; and most of its members deserve the gratitude of the country for leaving home associations, and positions of emolument to come out here; and it is a great pity that their superior attainments are not turned to better use. — Eds. JOURNAL.]

THE LATE DR. J. G. HOLLAND.

IN the sudden and widely lamented death of the late Dr. J. G. Holland, the American public, and indeed our own also, have sustained a loss which will long be felt. He will not take rank among the world's *great* writers, but he was a *good* writer and a *good man*, and had gained as few writers have done, the ear of the great mass of his countrymen. His peculiar gifts seemed exactly fitted to appeal to the tastes and idiosyncracies of the average American, and his strong common sense and clear incisive style gave him the great and wide-spread influence which—to his praise be it said—was invariably used to promote the things that are "just and pure and lovely and of good report." Few literary men have left a purer and more blameless record, whether as a writer or a man. His personal history, indeed, would serve a novelist for that of an ideal hero. One of many illustrations of how early toil and struggle develop, as perhaps nothing else can, the moral thews and muscles of character, young Holland, like many another distinguished student, had to fight "circumstances" for his education, and he reaped his reward. And his early experiences in "school teaching" in the remote country regions of New England supplied him with a fund of strongly marked character and quaint individuality, which he afterwards turned to good account in his popular fictions and poems. One of his finest short poems describes a father of the old granite Scotch Puritan type, such as he had known among the rugged Vermont hills. He studied medicine as a profession, but his heart was in literature, and to that he finally devoted himself. His apprenticeship was served in connection with the *Springfield Republican* with which he continued to be connected for nearly twenty years, at once establishing the reputation of the paper and laying the foundations of his own fortune, for on his retirement from the editorship his share of profit was \$50,000. His books in prose and poetry, fifteen in number, have reached a sale of 500,000 copies—sufficient proof of their wide popularity. He was one of the first writers of fiction who ventured to take his subjects from the everyday life of his