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GENERAL HERBERT'S REPORT.

The following is a continuation of Major-General Herbert's first annual report upon the condition of the Militia, the first of which appeared in last issue :—

I submit the outlines of a scheme for the issue of allowances, the effect of which would be to place Officers in a somewhat better position pecuniarily than they occupy at present, while the country would derive a distinct benefit.

1st. An "allowance for recruiting" to be given to captains of companies in lieu of that for drill instruction. One of the most important duties of a captain is that of "recruiter" for his company. His special remuneration for that would ensure its proper performance, and prevent the irregularities in connection therewith, which are now of too frequent occurrence.

2nd. A "contingent allowance" to captains to meet certain expenses in connection with their companies, which are now unprovided for. This allowance should gradually replace the "care of arms" allowance. The arms should be drawn by degrees into regimental stores, and placed under the charge of a permanently paid Adjutant and non-commissioned officers, who would form the permanent staff of the Regiment. This introduction of the regimental system would largely reduce the heavy expenditure now involved by a very insufficient system of inspection, and would lead in the long run both to efficiency and economy.

3rd. Allowances to commanding officers should be in the nature of contingent allowance, to meet, as in the case of captains, the expenses for which no provision is made at present. The principal of contingent allowances is one which has been thoroughly tried in the Militia of the United Kingdom.

ARMS, EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING.

The Snider rifle and carbine, with which the Militia is armed, is at the best an obsolete weapon, but in the condition in which it exists, in most of the regiments of the Active Militia, it has no claim whatever to be classed as an arm of precision. A large number are of the

earliest mark of converted Enfield rifles. Their sights and rifling are completely worn out, and it is no exaggeration to say that in many cases a smooth bore musket would be a more accurate weapon. For upwards of 20 years they have had the roughest possible usage. A considerable number of Martini-Henry rifles are in store, and it would appear desirable that these should be issued to the permanent corps, and be gradually introduced throughout the Militia. The change must necessarily be gradual, since the issue of good arms is useless, without adequate provision for their care. Under the system at present prevailing, it is idle to expect that rifles issued to the Rural Militia, can be kept in good order. Even in cities, where good public armouries and paid Government caretakers exist, the condition of the arms is in many cases far from satisfactory, since the caretakers are under no control. The only system under which proper care can be insured, is that now existing in the Militia of the United Kingdom, where the caretakers are part of the permanent paid staff of the militia regiment, and are amenable to military discipline. The commanding officer can then be held responsible for the Government property entrusted to his charge.

The equipment in use in the Active Militia is also obsolete in pattern, and a large proportion perished from age and severe usage. There is not a Battalion that could turn out in complete marching order on a given day, though many have, at their own expense, provided some of the most necessary articles. Moreover, the equipment does not exist in store, which it would be necessary to issue in the event of grave emergency. I have not inspected a single Battalion in which the men's boots would have stood one month's active service, or a Regiment of Cavalry, or Battery of Artillery, in which the saddlery and harness could be expected to bear a similar strain.

In the matter of artillery material, the Militia is very deficient. The eighteen Field Batteries are armed with guns which are still good, but there is no reserve of guns, nor is there a spare gun wheel to be had nearer than Woolwich. Of heavy guns the Dominion does not possess a single modern specimen. Of

the armament handed over by the Imperial Government, a large portion could not be mounted, and a part could not be fired. Those at Victoria, B.C., loaned by the Imperial Government, are not at present fit for service. There is no sufficient reserve of ammunition.

The clothing is fairly good in quality, but the system of issue is open to very great objection. It is complicated, expensive and satisfies nobody. I am of opinion that economy and efficiency would be better served were annual allowances in money granted to city corps, to enable them to supply their own clothing, the responsibility for the strict inspection of such clothing and of clothing accounts being fixed on the inspecting officers. In the case of rural corps, the complete issue of clothing should be made to coincide with the term of the men's service, viz., three years.

It cannot strictly be said that any system exists for the issue of equipment and clothing. At present many corps are left unprovided with the issue to which they are entitled, while others get more than their share.

BARRACKS.

The barracks, occupied by the permanent corps, at Quebec, St. John's, Toronto and London, are in fair condition, while those at Fredericton are in want of considerable repairs and structural alterations, to adapt them to modern requirements. The Tête de Pont Barracks at Kingston, owing to their site, are extremely unhealthy, typhoid fever and diphtheria being of frequent occurrence there. The question of their removal is one that urgently demands consideration, and there is every reason to believe that the value of the site they occupy would fully cover the necessary expense for new barracks. The barracks at Fort Osborne, Winnipeg, were reported by me after my inspection in February, 1891, in the following terms: "Wholly unfit for occupation by any troops in the climatic conditions which exist at Winnipeg. Moreover the first principles of sanitation seem to be wholly neglected."

A Hospital was erected there this year. It possesses structural defects which might probably have been avoided by the adoption of a more simple design.