



The Volunteer Review

AND MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor does not hold himself responsible for individual expressions of opinion in communications addressed to the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.]

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

DEAR SIR:—Your correspondent "Centurion" is a clever writer on the subjects he undertakes to write, but, nevertheless, I cannot allow that his ideas, or criticisms on other writers, are always correct. As I never will enter personal dispute (so to speak) with any gentleman in the newspapers, military or civilian, still I consider it due to myself to inform "Centurion" that I did not require any "more acquaintance with the artillery service" than he himself does on the fact that the "three branches" of "the service differ only in the manoeuvres, and that the institution at Woolwich educates the officers for each branch alike," and also that "the service is interchangeable." I knew Woolwich and Sandhurst for some years before I entered the Imperial service.

Let "Centurion" calculate the difference in cost between the present Garrison Artillery (as the cost will appear in November next) and one Battalion, of say 500 men, and the Field Battery guns and harness etc., and I think even the 500 men will not be too many. "Centurion" forgets the fact (which I thought I had suggested) that all the subaltern officers in this Battalion might be cadets of the military, as also some doing duty as non-com. officers, making them interchangeable at the option of the commanding officer of the *School* and not of the Battalion.

I say again the present scheme is absurd and I say so now more assuredly, since I have seen how hard it seems to get men to join it. In one month from the time when the A. Battery was first organized only 35 out of the quota had been furnished, and these had been taught their drill by fatigue work at putting in water pipes, knocking out doors for communications between the different passages in the old officers quarters Tete de Pont Barracks and such like fatigues; and half of these men old soldiers, if not all of them. Again some of these men are 21 and 25 year service men, some of

them drawing on for fifty years of age. Will Centurion now appreciate the Garrison gunners or would he not rather prefer my plan with men enlisted for 5 or even 10 years.

We must come to a small standing army and there is no earthly use in shrinking the fact, on throwing away our money on trifles; and I am sure the country will appreciate that man who boldly, as well as properly, points out the fact that in a small force alone, which shall act as a school for others in time of peace, will our money be well and properly spent. Tinkering at a leaking kettle only costs you more in the end than a new one would have done had you bought it and chucked the other away. Give us what I have suggested with not less than six months for infantry or cavalry cadets, nor less than a year for the Artillery, and you have a scheme costing a little more than 75,000 dollars perhaps, but far more effective in the end. Of course I know the Captains would have to work hard in teaching but that would do them good.

Yours sincerely,

ARTILLERIST.

FROM MONTREAL.

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

The roof of our capacious drill shed fell in on Tuesday night. I cannot say that such a catastrophe was unexpected; ominous cracks and certain signs were manifest some time ago, and you may remember in a former number of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW, I went with some detail into the matter, fortelling such a result, the consequences being that I got no end of abuse from the press for my groundless alarm. But the shed has caved in at last, and as there was no snow whatsoever on the roof at the time, the fault must be entirely in the mode and manner of construction. I often wondered why as a matter of precaution after doubts were manifested at the stability of the roof, they did not as a further guard, place supports inside the building in the shape of a few pillars.

Few persons witnessed the occurrence: at the time the band of the Prince of Wales' Rifles were practising in their armory according to custom, when they were disturbed;

first, by the gas going out followed by several loud reports and a shower of stones thrown through the window; supposing they were attacked by a mob they continued to play, but more stones flying in, and a man appearing at a window they got mad, and rushed out into the shed for the purpose of punishing their supposed assailants, when the state of affairs was soon discovered. They were rescued from their dangerous position by some persons outside who broke the rear door of the shed. Fully three-quarters of the whole roof has fallen in; the towers are partially ruined, and various other parts of the walls in such a condition that a greater portion of them will have to be taken down.

The building was never considered a model of strength and solidity; the strength of the roof lay very much in the iron portion that entered into its construction, and may have contracted from frost. The building covered two acres of ground, and to cover such a building with a roof unsupported by pillars seemed running great risk. Again the whole structure was built on a swamp, and had settled down in some places. The building cost \$70,000 and was leased to the Dominion Government for the use of the Volunteers in this city, and as a military training school; the whole loss will consequently fall upon the city. The span of the roof was 125 feet; the girders wood, and herring-boned; upon these were built uprights for the support of the roof timbers proper. It appears that the contractors protested against the style of roof.

The name of Col. d'Odet D'Orsennes, the indefatigable Brigade Major of the 6th Military District, has been prominently before the public of late, in connection with a report that he had been appointed Assistant Adjutant General of his district. His many friends however found that they were somewhat premature in their congratulations, while one has not a word to say against Col. Harwood as a soldier and a gentleman; should he vacate his position, Col. D'Orsennes would make a very efficient successor, and be the right man in the right place. The Colonel has the confidence and esteem of his whole district, is well and generally liked, a strict disciplinarian and every inch a soldier; and an ornament in his profession, and no one would object to see him in the supreme command of his own district; one thing is sure no one could fill it in as capable a manner as he. His appointment would give universal satisfaction.

Weather intensely cold.

B.