

December last was 23 officers and 393 men, being 2 officers and 14 men less than the authorized establishment. Twenty-eight officers and 85 n.c.o. and men had joined for instruction during the year.

The most important event in the life of the regiment was the organization of C battery, in British Columbia, which received a draft of 2 officers and 51 n.c.o. and men from A, and 1 officer and 44 n.c.o. B. battery.

The report on A battery, Kingston, made by Lt.-Col. Cotton, shows that during the past two years there have been eight attached officers and men from the garrison artillery, and recommends that improved facilities be given for instruction in the field branch.

The report recommends that for the future enlistments for the battery should be probationary for three months with a reduced kit. At the end of that time men to be allowed to go, or remain for three years. This would be a means of checking desertion and preventing the loss of a large and costly kit. It would also permit undesirable men being got rid of. Col. Cotton urges the fitting up of a proper recreation room for the n.c.o. and men on the modern plan of soldiers' libraries.

The armament at the Citadel at Quebec calls for remark from Lt.-Col. Montizambert in his report on B battery. He says: "There has been no change except that effected by the fire of the 6th July, when carriages and stores of various kinds, mostly obsolete, were destroyed, and three 7-inch and one 40-pr. R. B. L. guns were rendered useless. There are in the Citadel only a few rifled guns; none of which could pierce an iron-clad at 50 yards range."

Col. Montizambert suggests that as promotion is so slow the senior subalterns should be given the rank and pay of captains.

Lieut.-Col. Holmes, D. A. G., commanding C battery, British Columbia, regrets that the Martini-Henry rifle was not issued instead of the antiquated Snider-Enfield. "The former weapon," he says, "being for many reasons, especially here on the Pacific, much to be preferred."

Col. Holmes is not satisfied on the recent considerable augmentation in his command:—

"The established strength of the battery is rather low considering the importance of the position it has to aid in defending, and the fact that the local force of the active militia is, although good in quality, numerically weak, owing to the smallness of the population.

"If it is not thought advisable to increase the strength of the regiment a redistribution of the batteries, making each equal in strength would, perhaps, meet the necessities of the case.

"The strength of C battery, should, in my opinion, be increased by one lieutenant and thirty n.c.o. and men.

On the subject of officer's pay he thus opportunely comments: "The case of the officers deserves consideration. The increased cost of living in this province over that in the eastern stations is at least 33 1/3 per cent., and this is felt in greater force by the officers who have to provide nearly everything for themselves than by the men. It is in my opinion only simple justice to them to give them the same proportionate increase in their pay, viz., 25 per cent."

The Mounted Infantry Corps.

LIEUT.-COL. J. B. TAYLOR, commanding the Mounted Infantry Corps at Winnipeg, reports the school in good working order and of full strength (except officers), the present being 5 officers, 100 non-commissioned officers and men, and 50 officers. But he finds the duties come very heavy on the men, as they have not only to perform all duties and clean their arms and accoutrements, the same as infantry (being infantry soldiers), but also to clean their saddlery and equipments and attend to and groom their horses, which though a labor of love to most of them (for they take a great pride in their horses), not only gives a great deal of extra work, but also wears out their uniform much quicker, no stable fatigue suits having yet been issued.

According to the suggestion of the General part of the spare ground about the barracks was partitioned off and laid out in small gardens for the men. It proved very successful; so many of them took up gardens and attended carefully to them that at the end of the season they had a show and prizes were given for best garden and vegetables, thus producing an interest in the barracks as a home and a pleasant occupation for spare time.

Forty-three officers, non-commissioned officers and men attended free instruction during the year.

The Royal Schools of Infantry.

THIRTY-ONE officers and 63 n.c.o. and men attended for instruction at the Royal School of Infantry at Fredericton during the year under review.

Lieut.-Col. Maunsell, the officer commanding there, reports that the Temperance Club of A Co., formed in 1885, and in which Major

Gordon takes special interest, has taken an advanced step during the past year in the formation of a temperance lodge in the corps, with increased members and renewed efforts for good. He continues: "I cannot speak too highly of the advantage of these efforts; crime and misconduct have, as a result, been reduced to a minimum, and the canteen, at all times conducted with regularity, strictly in accordance with Queen's Regulations, is now considered as a branch of the coffee room, where harmless beverages can be obtained, more than as ordinary canteen for the supply of ale and porter. There is also a recreation room in connection with the canteen."

The want of a permanent quartermaster in each company is again alluded to, and Sergt.-Major McKenzie recommended for the appointment to the post in A Company. Lt.-Col. Maunsell endorses the recommendation of the commandant of B company, as to the appointment of an adjutant in addition to the authorized strength of the corps at each station.

The harmony of life with B company of the I.S.C., at St. Johns, Q., during the past year was marred only by one event, the desertion of six musicians, enticed over the border to form a band.

Eighty-one officers, n. c. o. and privates attended for instruction.

In his report Lt.-Col. D'Orsonnens says: "The regimental system of each school should be thoroughly established by the appointment of a second captain and the division of the corps into two companies. I was unable the other day to order a regimental court martial, having no captain to preside, my only captain being on the sick list at the time.

"I am in need of more staff sergeants, and I pray that an hospital sergeant, and orderly room sergeant and a signalling instructor be added to the present establishment, giving those who have performed those duties for merely nothing a fresh encouragement and a status they deserve, as well as the uniform of their ranks.

"My past experience with the militia has proved to me the necessity of good buglers in every camp of training for the militia. Some means should be taken to have in the band establishment a n.c.o. specially intrusted with the care and duties of training young buglers and special certificates should be granted to young men who have proved themselves steady and able to sound all the calls required, in the field as well as in garrison.

"The bugle-major I also recommend to act as warrant officer, and that bandmen be classified into two or three classes with different rates of pay, as an incentive to young musicians and the means of keeping in the corps well trained men.

"Efforts of all kinds are made to build a home for the soldier in barracks, and a permanent committee presided by Sergt.-Major Joseph Phillips, and composed of the staff-sergeants and others are continually at work seeking for them amusements which will benefit them physically and keep them out of harm.

"Under that committee the library has attained a standard not usually found in barrack libraries. More than 1000 volumes, consisting of selected works on history, biographies, travels, science arts and literature are now at the disposal of the corps.

"To aid and correct, as much as I can within the limits of my power, the want of education in some of the n.c.o. and privates attached to the school, I have established a temporary evening class, where men, during a short course, can go and perfect their writing, learn a little of arithmetic and book-keeping, etc. This course is only voluntary but has rendered some service. I can only hope that some day this institution will be officially recognized, as it would be real philanthropy to use the time a soldier has to serve the state to improve his education and render him to society fitted for other works.

At the Royal Infantry School at Toronto there were in attendance for instruction during the year 61 officers and 85 n.c.o. and men. Of these 45 officers, and only 38 n.c.o. and men succeeded in qualifying for certificates. On this subject Lt.-Col. Otter says: "In a former report I complained of the want of care in the selection, by commanding officers, of those sent for instruction as non-commissioned officers, and I have a second time to refer to the same subject; a glance at the summary above given shows that not half the non-commissioned officers and men sent obtain certificates, and even with many of those successful, the required number of marks was only just obtained and no more."

The report continues: "The necessity for adding equitation to the course of instruction at the schools of infantry appears more prominent each year. In my capacity of Deputy Adjutant-General I find the majority of mounted infantry officers poor horsemen, and in consequence more attention is bestowed by them on parade to their horses and their men.

Coulson N. Mitchell, the able representative in the 90th Winnipeg Rifles of the great shooting family of his name, has been promoted from the rank of Colour-Sergeant to that of Sergt.-Instructor of Musketry in his regiment. The Ninetieth teams may be expected to be more formidable than ever if the new Sergt.-Instructor manages to impart a share of his skill to a few of the rising shots.