

TROUBLE SURE TO COME.

UNDER the late Government of the Dominion the members of the active militia of Canada were in receipt of very few favors. The frequent changes of Ministers made it impossible for any incumbent of the office of Minister of Militia to give his close attention to the duties of his position. At the incoming of the present Government many officers of the active militia, irrespective of politics, hoped that a new system would be initiated.



The new system has been initiated. Amongst the officers of the active militia there is consternation, mixed with indignation. Formerly it was a case of the reign of King Log. Now it is the time of King Stork. Dr. Borden, the new Minister of Militia, seems to be in the hands of a particular clique of gentlemen, whose residence is in Ottawa. To everybody whose business takes him to Ottawa the many good qualities of the Minister are well known. Good nature is one of these, and it may be that in this case the Minister has been too confiding. Some six weeks ago a militia general order appeared, in which several important regulations as to brevet rank were provided for.

The regulations were as follows :

Service Qualification.	Brevet Rank.
After three years' service* with substantive rank of lieutenant.....	A step of rank.
On appointment to substantive rank of lieutenant in a permanent unit of the active militia, and in possession of a diploma of graduation from the Royal Military College of Canada.....	A step of rank.
On appointment to substantive rank of lieutenant in a permanent unit after not less than four years' substantive service in another unit of the active militia and in possession of a 1st class long course grade "A" certificate of qualification.....	A step of rank.
On promotion to substantive rank of captain, and not less than 12 years' substantive service*.....	A step of rank.
After 12 years' service* with substantive rank of lieutenant.....	Major.
After three years' service with substantive rank of major and not less than 15 years' substantive service*.....	A step of rank.
After 16 years' service* and holding substantive rank of captain.....	Lieut.-Colonel.

* Service here means service in a permanent unit of the active militia.

(2) Officers serving in the headquarter or district staff will be granted a step of rank under the same conditions as to service qualifications as officers of permanent units.

Upon the promulgation of this order there arose a strong feeling of dissatisfaction amongst the officers of the active militia. It was evident, by the terms of the order, that an arbitrary line was to be drawn between the officers of and those appointed to the permanent corps and those of the active militia. It was known that the Minister of Militia at the time regarded the order with no favorable eye. It was expected that the order would not be acted upon; in fact, in conversation less than a month ago, Dr. Borden said that he would enquire very thoroughly into the matter before sanctioning any such promotions. Evidently Dr. Borden has been persuaded that the change is desirable, for, on Monday last, a number of promotions to brevet rank were gazetted.

The whole thing amounts to a most invidious distinction between the officers of the permanent corps and those of the active militia. By the terms of the new order gentlemen who have no long course certificates, and who obtained their posts solely by personal or social influence, are advanced over the heads of those who have spent many dollars and much time on military matters. Gentlemen of the permanent section of the militia have only to

wait for time to bring them the promotion which henceforth is to be theirs, not for distinguished services, not because of their ability, but because of their luck in being members of the permanent corps.

In order to show the unfairness of the new method, the case of Capt. R. L. Wadmore may be cited. In December, 1883, Capt. Wadmore came out from England and was appointed to the permanent corps. He was not the possessor of a long course certificate, and not being a graduate of the Royal Military College it was necessary for him to serve five years before he could obtain his brevet captaincy, which he did December 21, 1888. During this time, it is certain, Wadmore was not in possession of the requisite certificate for his position, and was not entitled to promotion.

Another appointment which has excited much adverse comment was that of Mr. D. I. Vernon Eaton, a lieutenant in the Ottawa Field Battery. Mr. Eaton became major of the Ottawa Field Battery June 13, 1896, and little more than a month later was made a lieutenant in the permanent infantry. Mr. Eaton has no infantry certificate. He possesses one granted by the Royal School of Artillery, which does not qualify him for substantive work. He is not a graduate of the R.M.C. Why was he appointed a brevet captain?

Capt. R. Cartwright was appointed to the permanent corps 29th October, 1885, being a graduate of the Royal Military College. He is entitled to count two as two years of the required five years' service to entitle him to the rank of brevet-captain, which rank he got 29th October, 1888. Now, under the new rule, things have changed. Capt. Cartwright must serve 12 years as lieutenant before the rank of brevet-major is conferred upon him, i.e. :

Capt. Cartwright, appointed 29th October, 1885, after 12 years' service, will become brevet-major 29th October, 1897.

Capt. Wadmore, appointed 21st December, 1885, after 12 years' service, became brevet-major 21st December, 1895.

This makes Capt. Wadmore in the period between 1883 and 1888 not holding the necessary certificate.

Again, the general order specially applied to the Royal Military College graduates and long course men and service in the permanent corps, with one exception, four years' sub-service in a militia regiment with a long-course certificate. A lieutenant holding either of these certificates gets a step of rank on joining a permanent corps. With regard to Lieut.-Col. Fred. Wilson, Col. Wilson has been in the permanent artillery for a number of years, holding the substantive rank of major, 10th August, 1883. Under the old rules he got the lieutenant-colonelcy after 10 years' service, 10th August, 1893. We now read in the press that Col. Wilson's appointment will date from 10th July, 1889. Col. Wilson having received his promotion under the old rule, it is hardly fair to the militia lieutenant-colonels to make this general order retroactive and to permit his outranking lieutenant-colonels appointed between 10th July, 1889, and 10th August, 1893. From actual count Col. Wilson jumps over 40 militia lieutenant-colonels.

Instances could be multiplied of the unfairness of the present system. The officers of the permanent corps have made not nearly so many sacrifices as have those of the other branch of the service. The permanent officers profit by an unfair discrimination against the officers of the active militia. This latest method of favoring the former at the expense of the latter cannot endure for long without superinducing serious friction. The immediate cancellation of the recent brevet appointments seems to be very necessary.

The public are not interested in the technical aspect of the matter. What the ordinary citizen will object to is the adoption of a system whereby the salaried officer of the permanent corps is placed in receipt of favors which are denied the officer of the active militia, who receives only an honorarium. The aim of those in power at headquarters seems to be to delimit a line of cleavage between the two branches. The effect cannot but be prejudicial to the best interests of the service. The gentlemen who officer the active militia will have the endorsement of the public in their protest against this new and unheard-of discrimination in favor of the officers of the permanent corps.—Toronto Evening Telegram.