

### Our Militia Affairs Misrepresented Abroad.

Some one signing himself "Canadian," has written to the *Broad Arrow* a splenetic epistle abusive of the Minister of Militia, drawing a picture of "discontent, bordering on despair," said to be prevailing regarding the administration of the militia, and winding up with the declaration that the majority are entreating "that some responsible British Canadian should now hold office." The paper in which it appears evidently believes the twaddle is gospel, for, it says, "several communications have reached us lately on the subject, \* \* and the introduction of some fresh blood both in the office of the Minister of Militia and in that of his deputy seems desirable," so that, "after thirty years of French administration British Canadians should have their turn in directing the military affairs of the country."

It is astonishing that a journal such as the *Broad Arrow* should—adopting the offensive exclusiveness of the seemingly disgruntled and certainly fact-forsaken Canadian who penned the plaint—impugn the loyalty of our French speaking countrymen by describing them as other than "British" Canadians. As for the Minister of Militia, Sir Adolphe Caron, his loyalty and devotion to the British crown and British interests are unquestionable; and it is utter nonsense to pretend that "Britishers" can suffer any wrong from the administration of a minister of any nationality whose every act of importance has to receive the approval of his English speaking colleagues in the cabinet; and who has a British Army officer at the head of his forces, and an English-speaking Adjutant-General. As for the Deputy Minister, Col. Panet, a more painstaking official, or one more unselfishly devoted to the interests of the force, it would be hard to find.

The fact that "Canadian" sent so far from home to have his communication appear in print makes it evident that he had reason to be ashamed of its contents. When real Canadians have trouble with their ministers they will be able to settle them without parading the unpleasantness before the whole world.

That our militia have grievances no truthful man will deny. The Minister is fully alive to them, and would be only too happy to have them redressed were it in his power. But the source from which most of these troubles spring—insufficient appropriations—is such as to make it beyond his power to apply the remedy. The Minister of Militia would no doubt be only too happy to perfect our defences had he the wherewithal to meet the expenditure, but this he is denied by the ministry and parliament, and the people have so far failed to demand more liberal treatment of this branch of the service. We would like to believe their apathy justifiable, but must confess that it would be prudent did the authorities act to a greater extent upon the old adage—"In time of peace prepare for war."

Capt. S. A. Denison, of the South Staffordshire Militia Regiment, England, has been "seconded" whilst holding appointment of lieutenant in the Infantry School Corps, Canada.

Captain H. B. Mackay, R.E., graduate R.M.C. June '81, has been appointed Commanding Royal Engineer, West Coast of Africa, and selected to superintend the construction of important fortifications there.

Lieut.-General Sir John Ross, Halifax, and his A.D.C., Prince Dhulep-Singh, are at Government House, Ottawa, this week on a short visit. The Prince is a son of the Maharajah Dhulep-Singh, at one time a powerful East Indian potentate, and he is a god-son of Queen Victoria.

Colonel Francis Duncan, Conservative member for Finsbury in the English House of Commons, who died last week, had, as an officer of the Imperial army, served in Nova Scotia for a considerable period, and in after years was a frequent visitor to the Dominion, where he had many warmly-attached friends, among whom may be mentioned Col. G. T. Denison, of Toronto. He was the author of several printed works, and wrote frequently for the periodical and newspaper press on Canadian topics of Imperial interest. He was an honorary D. C. I. of the University of King's College, Nova Scotia.

### The Volunteers' Schools of Instruction.—II.

(United Service Gazette.)

All officers attend in undress uniform, and for the first day are invariably put through a course of squad drill, to see that they are acquainted with the rudiments of a soldier's work. In fact, the commanding officer and adjutant have to certify that such candidate is so acquainted.

On the second day the whole school is divided up into classes, or sections, usually of five officers, having a "company" of nine or ten men in single rank, to whom the whole instruction of company drill has to be given, word for word, as in the Red Book, one officer acting as instructor, and the other four being told off respectively as captain, right and left guides, and markers. At each parade the positions are shifted, so that by the end of the first fortnight every officer has had his turns of acting as instructor, and also in performing the duties of captain, guides, and markers.

The "sticking point" is usually found in performing the duties of instructor, as at hand is always a drill-instructor, and in addition the school commandant or adjutant—and sometimes both—are hovering near, to see that the candidate gives the words of instruction literally as they are found in the book, and taking note of the progress or otherwise of the candidates in their various positions.

About the middle of the month battalion drill commences. If any field officers are present, or any captains wishing to qualify for field officers' certificates, these now act as instructors to the battalion, consisting of four companies, each of eight or nine men in single rank. The officers passing for captains' certificates here fall in as captains, guides, and markers only, it not being necessary in their case that they should be able to instruct a battalion. The field officers take duty alternatively as senior and junior major and adjutant, combined with duty as instructor; they in their turn having to give the cautions, instructions, and words of command precisely as laid down, word for word, in the Drill Book. They have, moreover, to satisfy the commandant that they are able to ride, and the present examination in this respect consists in each candidate performing the various duties mounted on one parade specially set apart for the purpose. Formerly, every field officer had to obtain a certificate in riding from a cavalry riding-master, but this has been discontinued for some time. Towards the end of the month's course, a day is set apart for brigade drill, when two or three skeleton battalions are formed, the school commandant acting as brigadier, and each field officer having command of one of the battalions, as their certificate requires that they should be able to "command a battalion in brigade."

During the whole course it is usual for the adjutant to give lectures on any points of drill that may require elucidation, on musketry, duties of guards, etc.; and questions are put to the various officers, and notes taken of their proficiency or otherwise in their replies, all these notes being referred to at the end of the course when the awards come to be made.

Great stress is laid upon all officers giving the instruction and word of command in a loud voice, so that the men can hear at a considerable distance.

The foregoing may all be considered to be the *viva voce*, or parade examination, but in addition to this every officer has to pass a written examination in company and battalion drill, musketry, and the duties of guards; the field officers having also to pass in route marching and brigade drill. The points obtained in these paper examinations are then compared with the parade examinations, and if a candidate is found to be very smart in both he frequently receives "special mention" with his certificate.

Well-grounded officers always feel sure of a "pass," as it requires but attention to instruction and regularity in attendance to ensure getting through; but the "special mention" is the acme of perfection which is but rarely obtained, and it undoubtedly shows that an officer so distinguished is in every respect worthy of his position, and that he has availed himself to the full of the opportunities obtainable at the school.

There are always, of course, some unfortunates who, at the end of the month, find that they are "plucked." Some of them go in for a second, or even for a third, course, whilst others content themselves with a "pass" under a Military Board, which may be considered as a "walk over" for any officer who has ever attended a school, though he may not have been able to come up to the high standard which is insisted upon there as necessary for the "p.s."

Correctness and tidiness in dress, strict punctuality in attendance, and careful saluting on parade, are matters of detail which are rigidly insisted upon at a School of Instruction.