

unable unassisted to deal. In these days of quick-firing rifles and machine guns, the knowledge of a soldier that prompt and suitable measures are at hand for treating him when wounded improves his *morale* as a fighting unit. Nothing more depresses an army than to be aware that assistance will not attend them when struck down."

The duties of a bearer company, I may mention, consist in giving what is known as first aid to the wounded, and in removing them promptly and properly from the field of battle. To perform these duties efficiently they require a course of special instruction in such elementary anatomy and surgery as will enable them to arrest hæmorrhage, apply splints to fractured limbs, etc., and a course of stretcher drill to teach them how to handle the wounded without aggravating their injuries and remove carefully to a dressing station. No militia or volunteer force is now considered effective in Great Britain without having attached to it such a bearer company, which is quite distinct from the regimental bearer organization.

Its formation need involve no loss of strength to the corps it is formed from. The men may remain attached to their respective regiments for purposes of discipline, drill, etc. In any case in time of war or mobilization a similar number of men for similar duties (*vide* Queen's Regulations) would be called for from each regiment in the field, with this important difference, that the men then handed over to the medical officers as bearers would be untrained and, perhaps, unreliable; whereas, should the bearer company system be adopted the medical officers would have under their control a body of trained men, competent and experienced to give every assistance to the injured and remove them safely from the scene of action.

The men of the bearer companies should be selected preferably from those who are already proficient in their ordinary duties, and, when possible, from those who have already undergone a course of instruction in first aid to the injured, as some of our militia men in Halifax have done. They would continue to wear the uniform of their regiment, and to serve with it; but would be liable to be detached when doing duty with the bearer company, and would parade under the medical officers of that company.

The men of the bearer company, when formed, should receive some distinctive badge, such as the Geneva Cross, as might be determined by the Dominion Government.

In addition to the professional instruction in first aid to the wounded which might always be given by their own regimental medical officers, they would require a course of stretcher drill under a competent instructor.