

their duties with much zest. They arrive at responsible positions at an age when hard work still acts as a stimulant. No long, weary wait. No one is tied down to a subaltern grade until he has lost enthusiasm. And as stagnation is not a fear, the nerves remain hard and in good condition for war service.

"The result of the manoeuvres will permit of a judgment on the tactical aptitude of the officers and N.C.O.'s to conduct a fight, as well as on the instruction of the soldiers in the handling of their arms. But already one can now reply to the question at the first part of this article, asked by the English War Minister: THE SWISS CITIZEN, THANKS TO THE CAPACITY OF THEIR OFFICERS, HAS BECOME A SOLDIER HIGHLY ACCEPTABLE."

OUR MILITIA ACT

To the Editor of *The Mail Empire*

Sir,—What right has a Government to throw on an individual or a class the onus of choice of action in a matter of such vital importance as safety of flag and country? Yet this is the extraordinary position of national defence in Canada.

I, for one, would make protest, and, in advocating equal treatment for all, express cordial sympathy with complaints made by correspondents in the daily press. It is said firms dismiss men under salary who are of an age to serve, and, again, others write, "I will not volunteer, but take me, and take also the shirker who is waiting for my shoes." I even sympathize with the plaint of a Militia Officer, when he said, "I am willing to obey a an order; why has the Government not pluck enough to order me out?"

The *Toronto Globe* said editorially on the 17th of November: "The law has long provided for compulsory service should the need arise, and notwithstanding Col. Lavergne's fine-spun theories of the relation of colonies of their Motherland, the defence of Canada may be far more successfully undertaken on the plains of Flanders than on the banks of the St. Lawrence."

The *Globe* ought to be aware that silken hands of its own party have woven a web to nullify the underlying principle of our old militia Act, and it seems to be no less than scandalous that the subterfuge clauses in the present Militia Act of 1906 should have been allowed to remain without a protest.

If we turn to the old Militia Act, in the underlying spirit of which many of us glorified, we find that the old title-deeds of a true militia, which saved Canada in 1812-13 and 14, have been wiped out in the modification of 1906.

In the Old Act of 1886, the spirit of the splendid militia law of 1808 was toned down to the following: