

military preparations in having a nominal force of 43,000 men under training and fully twice that number practically trained, and that a regular army would be only a bill of expense without any corresponding benefit. Every battalion in the British army costs the country £80,000 sterling per annum, or say \$400,000. This battalion will number, all told, 350 officers and men. Owing to a variety of considerations, the same force would cost in Canada at least \$500,000, the country would have for its present outlay, say 1,100 officers and men scattered over some 3,600,000 square miles of territory. A cry has been raised against the staff which is alleged to be out of all proportion to the service, against the number of officers on the Reserve and retired lists, and this cry has for its advocates the theorists who propose establishing a standing army of *skeleton battalions*. Moreover, a demand has been made to replace the present staff with officers from the Regular British Army as a cure for the alleged evils attending the organization.

The staff is barely sufficient for the duties it has to discharge. It is itself the mere *cadre* of an organization whose development was intended to be gradual, but the design has never been carried out. Those who raise a cry about the number of unemployed officers, seem to forget that while you can improvise a soldier it is a much more difficult matter to train an officer, and most of those on the retired list are thoroughly competent men able and willing to serve the country, again, if necessary, and certainly in any case, have earned the right to wear the liver, of their Sovereign and retain their proper titles. The officers of the Reserve Forces are selected not with a view to service in the field, but as recruiting officers, and therefore personal influence, and standing in society are more requisite than military training for that class. Instead of being over officered, the real fact is that there is not enough even with the military school cadets to supply a case of need, and a well devised *unattached* list is one of the desiderata of the service which the militia department has yet to supply.

In dealing with the very difficult question of the employment of officers of the Regular British Army on the Staff of the Canadian Militia, we are not in the slightest degree actuated by selfish or envious feelings; but we feel it necessary for the service of the country to speak out, and in asserting the incontrovertible axiom that officers trained in the country with a force raised by their own influence are more likely to be able to handle that force in the hour of danger than mere strangers whose only claim can be professional training under totally different conditions of climate and topography.

If the Canadian army is incorporated into the regular forces of the British Empire and commissions in the general service as well as staff training thrown open to our officers

and military cadets, an interchange for the purpose of professional training would be highly desirable; but appointments on the Canadian's staff ought to be the prizes to which our cadets should be taught to aspire.

It has always been our practice to meddle as little as possible with the prerogatives of the Executive Government, but on this occasion it appears to us that a Commander-in-Chief with the rank of a General officer should be appointed, and that officer ought to be from the Regular British Army. Common sense would prescribe that every officer under that rank should be men who had served with the Canadian Militia and thoroughly understood its organization and social aspects.

It holds within its ranks many talented and energetic officers, men whose knowledge of the art of war is inferior to that of no professional soldier, and whose administrative abilities are beyond question; it would surely be a piece of folly to supersede those men for the sake of change alone. In our present Acting Adjutant-General the militia of Canada can boast of an officer distinguished above most other men by rare administrative ability, quick perception and a thorough knowledge of his countrymen. The officers of the district staff are men of high professional standing, and of the scientific corps the commandants of the Schools of Gunnery are men that any service may well be proud of; the fact is, our organization only wants development and does not need re-organization, with all its new fangled ideas of cadres rotative and short service: all admirably calculated to make the soldier or officer a "Jack of all trades" but a proficient in none, and only a clumsy run after all. In a country whose people will not endure compulsory service, but will fight when there is a necessity, we have the best system possible, and time will only develop its value. Constant change and the desire for it is the curse of the age—in military organization it is imbecile folly of the worst description.

It has been rumoured that there will be "a School of Engineering" organized in connection with the Canadian militia; and it certainly has been a great oversight, in the fact, that every military district has not long since had its staff corps; ample material in the Civil Engineers and Land Surveyors in the country is at the disposal of the authorities; and it does not reflect much credit on our appreciation of the advantages to be derived from such an arm of the service that its organization has been so long deferred.

The following article from the *Pall Mall Gazette* shows conclusively the dangers into which a special corps may be trained and the necessity for making both the knowledge and experts diffusive throughout the organization. The example afforded by

the late civil contest amongst our neighbors is of far more practical value to us than all the precedents drawn from the fields of France or the strongholds of Asia Minor, and we should not neglect the lesson taught at our own doors. If the Engineering School was in operation to-morrow it would be seven years before it could supply an export to the ranks of our army, while they are to be had in hundreds for the cost of organization.

"Lord Derby was right in saying that the task we had drifted into in Africa was, apart from sanitary considerations, in the main an engineer's war. It was known from the first that we might have 150 miles in advance before bringing our adversary to bay; that the movement would be made in great part through forest, traversed only by foot paths so rude as to be unfit for even the lightest column of infantry; that there would be at least one large river and many streams to be bridged; and that depots of stores and stations to shelter the troops would be absolutely necessary parts of any scheme that took us beyond our forts. So much was ascertained, and was even matter of familiar conversation long before Sir Garnet Wolseley started; and a very little reflection was needed to see that, whether for a temporary defensive or for securing a line of advance by posts, rough fortifications would also form a most important element in the operations. If there were doubts as to whether white infantry were needed, there should have been none as to the necessity of white artisans. The most sanguine hopes of getting the Fantees to fight never extended to the possibility of creating skilled pioneers out of a slothful and savage race. And yet, with the certainty of all this before it, the head-quarter staff of the expedition was allowed to sail with no more efficient aid for the mechanical difficulties of the enterprise than was comprised in the presence of three officers and half-a-dozen corporals of engineers. It was very handsome, no doubt, to allow the individuals selected such a special opportunity of distinguishing themselves in their profession; but it would have shown more intelligence had this most necessary branch been even over represented, than so reduced as to leave it open to chance whether a single officer would be left at the end of a few weeks to superintend the necessary labour. As it was, the work had hardly been fairly begun when it became needful to draw assistant engineers from untought officers of the Line; and this although at home there were a hundred subalterns of the corps at the least, each of whom has a long training for that work in the field which he may never have the opportunity of sharing.

"To understand fully not merely the importance of this arm of the Service, but the difficulties it had to contend with, we must look at a parallel case. General Grant, in the famous operation against Vicksburg, which turned the tide in the American war, was opposed by nearly the same physical obstacles which lay between Cape Coast and Goomasio. He too, had tracks for roads, unbridged rivers to cross, swamps to pass through, forests to clear. But it was his especial boast that in every battalion under his orders, so large was the contingent of Western pioneers and backwoodsmen that he never failed to find ready at his call the practical skill necessary for the rough engineering work of the war. Just the opposite was the case in our African campaign. A modest supply of tools, a few able heads to