

to the making of a soldier; and any one who expressed a doubt on the subject was smiled on contemptuously by the martinets and drill sergeants of the day. To propose to teach military exercises without a long preliminary course of slow march, "toes well down and palms to the front," was rank heresy; and the balance step, without gaining ground, could not be left out of the drill creed without the risk of perdition to the service.

We have now got rid of the pigtailed and the stocks. The doctrine of the infallible goose-step is not held with quite so much bigotry as formerly, and it has come to be recognized that some degree of attention to natural tendencies of the limbs and hands is not inconsistent with soldierly bearing. We have even got so far as to realize that freedom for the body to move is favourable to military efficiency and endurance. Knapsacks are now made as square and hard and polished as old-fashioned writing-desks so as to compel men coming off a long march to devote their first thoughts to serve them from being scratched. Packs are no longer supported so that the lungs and heart are impeded in their action, and that the wearers cannot put them on or take them off without assistance. Coats are now made with tight sleeves and waists, and high necks covering the cast-iron collar.

We smile now at the obstinacy and ignorance which so long upheld such egregious follies, but we still practise on bodies of men absurdities not less foolish than those formerly perpetrated on the body of the individual soldier. The stays and the stocks may have been abolished, and men may have been relieved from the oppression of stupidly-designed and easily-injured packs, but we still move bodies of soldiers about in tight-laced iron-bound fashion, and overload our systems of infantry training with finical, useless, and injurious complications. While the pigtailed and powder of the last century have given way to the sensible, cleanly short crop of modern times, soldiers are still taught a wearisome round of manœuvres, many of them suited only to the time of Frederick the Great, or in some cases even of Marlborough, "making the drill ground a mere scene of empty show, where many of the manœuvres practised bear little relation to actual warfare," (*Hamley*), because they are remnants of a system formed when the conditions were absolutely different. And this again, because "custom lingers long everywhere, especially in the army," (*Colonel Blundell*), resulting in absurd and damaging anachronisms.

Let two actual instances illustrate what has been stated. In the *Standard* of May 16th, 1884, there is a description of a field day of the three battalions of Grenadier Guards:—

"A very pretty series of movements now commenced, advancing in double companies from the centre of the brigade, retiring from both flanks in rear of the centre of the brigade. . . . changes of front, and a number of similar movements, then the march past, and . . . this brought to a close a thoroughly interesting and instructive drill."

"Pretty," yes. "Thoroughly interesting and instructive." For what? Does any sane man suppose that the manœuvres here described have, as movements, a connection, however remote, with anything these splendid battalions will have to do if they are called on to face an enemy? Does any person, excepting, perhaps, the ladies and nursery-maids who look on in Hyde Park, suppose that this is the sort of thing that goes on when these battalions are imitating real war at Aldershot; or that Von Moltke and M'Mahon went through these or similar "interesting and instructive" proceedings when in deadly combat at Mars la Tour or Sedan? Just fancy Colonels Smith or Wigram or Moncrieff retiring in double column from both flanks in rear of the centre under fire from a German battery of horse artillery, with a good deal of musketry fire thrown in! Such evolutions, steadily executed, were very useful in former days. Being performed within sight of the enemy, they had a powerful moral effect if they indicated perfect order, and thereby impressed the beholder with the high state of drill and discipline of his opponent. But they are utterly useless when out of sight of the enemy, and absolutely impossible, as well as useless, within his view under modern conditions. Yet they are gravely practised and worked up at great expenditure of time by our best troops, and form an important feature of inspections, which ignorant people would assume were for the purpose of testing the qualification of troops for the kind of movement that can be used when an enemy is to be encountered, and not for the display of pretty but obsolete evolutions.—*Colburn*.

To be continued.

ANNPRIOR.—Capt. R. J. Whittle, of the 90th Rifles, has sent a New Year's present of \$25 to the Citizen's band of this place. His kindness is gratefully appreciated.

It is reported at Victoria, B.C., that the Imperial Government intends erecting at Esquimalt next spring fortifications, an arsenal, torpedo works, barracks and a school for military instruction.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE FITNESS OF OUR INDIANS FOR MILITARY SERVICE.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette:

SIR,—A recent writer in your paper has suggested the formation of a native corps in this country on the lines of the corps of guides formed by Lumsden on the north-west frontier of India in 1846, but has failed to take into consideration the national characteristics of the recruits in each case. Lumsden had to deal with men who differed as much from the red Indian of our prairies as a dog differs from a wolf. Lumsden's men were capable of anything and everything but proving untrue to their salt—witness their conduct at the time of the mutiny. Bad as they were before their enrolment, and ready as they were afterwards to commit any atrocity at their masters' bidding, they could not "turn and rend" the hand that fed them—nay, more, they could even submit to the indignity of the "goose step."

These men had a code of honor. Can anyone say as much for the North American Indian? History answers "No."

Discipline is unknown amongst the Indians of this continent. An Indian obeys the dictates of his chief so far only as it suits his own inclination, and this right of option is recognized to the full. Poundmaker and Big Bear were obliged to follow the behests of their respective young men, at the risk of having their authority denied in word as it was in deed. It follows then that the Indian could never be depended on to render to the white man loyal service.

Sir Henry Lawrence trusted to the humanizing influence of medicine to win over to the cause of law and order the fierce tribes across the Indus, and the result fully justifies his expectations, but it would be interesting to learn from the medical officers of the Mounted Police whether they would expect to receive any consideration at the hands of those whom their skill has benefitted, in the unhappy event of their being at the mercy of the redskins.

Gratitude is an unknown quantity in our Indians' nature. I believe I am correct in saying that there is no word in the Indian language to express it. Be that as it may, men who have had experience of the North American Indian agree in saying that he is a thief, a liar and a coward, and I venture to think that a corps distinguished by such characteristics could serve neither with credit to itself nor with advantage to the country.

Nemo.

N. W. T., 3rd Jan., 1886.

THE ATTITUDE OF THE COUNTRY TOWARDS THE INDIANS.

To the Editor of the Canadian Militia Gazette:

SIR,—The letters and articles lately published by you on the Indian affairs in the North-west must commend themselves to all thoughtful Canadians, especially that letter in your issue of 29th Dec., by "One who served in the North-west."

If any of your readers have not seen it, I venture to call their attention to a powerful leader in the *Toronto Mail* of 6th Jan., and also to an interview of a reporter of the same paper with a Mr. Cameron, who escaped the massacre at Frog Lake.

Something must be done, and done quickly, and I would suggest amongst other things that it would have a great effect upon the Indians, if, say one chief and ten men from each petty tribe, were at once invited to visit the large cities of our Dominion. If they were shown the wealth, industry and thickly populated cities, and well and liberally treated, I think they would return to their tribes and spread the ideas that it will answer their purposes better to remain faithful than to rebel.

We should also see that the utmost care is taken to provide them with good and sufficient food, and if a faithful auxiliary force of Indian scouts could be added to the police, as suggested by XXX., in your paper of 15th Dec., it might be made, not only a most useful body of men to the country, but a model and a prize to get into, which might be the aim of our young Indians, as it is of the young Ghoorkas to get into a Ghoorka regiment in India, and thus a thorn in our side would be converted into a loyal support and help.

At the same time every preparation ought in self defence to be made, so that in the event of any further unhappy trouble, it may be checked with a strong hand.

In this direction Lieut.-Col. Wyndham's military colonization scheme is surely worth promptly considering, and the aid and advice of such men as Major Boulton ought to be sought.

Whilst agreeing fully with "One who served in the North-west," I would remind you that "a stitch in time saves nine," and "prevention is better than cure," and I would join with you in urging on the Indian Department their careful consideration of the suggestions of your former correspondents.

THE ODD FILE.

REGIMENTAL NOTES.

(We wish to publish information respecting all the doings of all corps. Will the officers interested, particularly at a distance, assist us by having news relating to their corps promptly forwarded?)

WINNIPEG.—Robert McLeod, a young man of intelligent appearance, was charged on the 29th with forgery, perjury and obtaining money by false representations. It appears that the prisoner entered the office of Mr. Watt, real estate broker, with a certificate to the effect that he had served with the 91st during the rebellion and was entitled to scrip. The paper bore the alleged signature of Captain Cates. This scrip Mr. Watt purchased for \$40, drawing up an agreement of the transaction, and McLeod swore to the scrip being genuine. Mr. Watt, being a justice of the peace, claims the power of taking affidavits. Mr. Watt learned the certificate was a forgery and, informing the police, the prisoner was arrested and the case enlarged for a few days, when it is expected the charge against the prisoner will be duplicated.

CALGARY.—The funeral of the late Sergt.-Major Brown of the Alberta Mounted Rifles took place Wednesday afternoon from the Grand Central Hotel. The deceased was born in Scotland in 1853, and when quite a young man he enlisted