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(SUCCESSOR TO THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE.)

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NOTE AND COMMENT.

The subjoined memorandum has been issued by order of the Duke of Connaught to officers commanding Volunteer Regiments in the southern military districts:—Before the conclusion of the current Volunteer year His Royal Highness, the General Officer commanding, wishes all officers in command of Volunteer Battalions in the southern district to endeavor by every means to exercise as large a number of trained Volunteers as possible in some of the field practices laid down in the musketry regulations. Volunteers have, since the foundation of the Force, taken a great interest in rifle-shooting, and the time has now come when a more extended and practical form of musketry practice should be aimed at. Great as is the value of the individual rifle shot, there is a still further training required before a soldier is ready and fitted to take his place as a

fighting machine in the ranks—namely, the perfection of training known as fire discipline. To attain this end, sectional practices are absolutely necessary to habituate the soldier to work at the will of the fire unit commander, and to train the non-commissioned officers commanding fire units to control and direct fire under circumstances approaching as nearly as possible to conditions of active service. Section commanders should be drilled in control of fire on the parade ground, and afterwards taken with their sections to the range and trained to regulate the fire in all practices, while every form of competition should be encouraged between sections of a company or a battalion; for good and effective regulated fire can only be obtained by careful training of fire unit commanders." The Duke of Connaught knows what he is writing about and the same necessity for this kind of work among the English volunteers exists in the Canadian Militia. Why do we not do it then; and why does not the Government assist us with the necessary funds?

The suggestion is made that the Montreal brigade should have an annual autumn church parade, as does the Toronto militia force. These turnouts do a great deal of good from a religious point of view, there is no doubt, and incidentally they do a great deal of good to the force. The men appear at their best and are pleased, and it all helps to keep up the public interest in the force, a very important point indeed.

If there is one thing more than another that needs to be urged upon officers and non-commissioned officers of the militia, it is the necessity to read and study military books if they wish to be efficient and prepared to do their duty. Of course it would be both absurd and ungrateful to expect militiamen to give

the time to military study that the state has a right to exact from its professional soldiers, who have no civil occupations to demand their time and attention, but nevertheless militia officers and non-commissioned officers accept certain responsibilities with their commissions and appointments. They accept the responsibility of keeping the men placed under their charge well up to their military duties, and they cannot hope to be in a position to do this without they do a certain amount of military study, and do it systematically. If an officer is not "read up" to a certain extent he is not fit to drill a squad, no matter how clever he may be naturally. He has to do a very great deal of study to keep himself well enough posted to do his whole duty in the event of the country, in an emergency, requiring his services.

It was undoubtedly in recognition of the necessity which existed for more reading that the system of personally examining each officer was instituted, and a good idea it is as far as it goes. It is a pity though that the officers are acquainted with the questions before they are actually examined. This doubtless restricts the amount of reading done; in many cases, it is to be feared, reducing it to a mere fragment. But the officers and the non-commissioned officers of our Service should not require the official spur in this respect, and they wouldn't if they only realized the necessity which exists for them to keep well read-up and appreciated the fact that of all studies, that connected with military work is one of the most entertaining. With a view of keeping its readers posted on the military literature of the day the Military Gazette will in future make its reviews of military books and magazines a special feature of the paper, so that our readers may see at a glance what the latest pro-