

Brigade Major, Lieut.-Colonel The Hon. Matthew Aylmer, Brigade Major, Military District No. 1.

Supply Officer, Major John B Smyth, Quartermaster, 7th Fusiliers. Camp Quartermaster, Major Wm. Wallace White, 30th Battalion. Instructor of Musketry, Captain Thomas R. Coogan, 24th Battalion.

Principal Medical Officer, Surgeon Major Vesey A. Brown, London Field Battery.

Orderly Officer, Major W. H. Lindsay, 25th Battalion.

The following passages are extracted from Col. Smith's report:—

"The Drill was carried on systematically and with energy, and more time proportionately was given to squad and arm exercises, than to Brigade, or even Battalion movements. In compliance with a memo from Headquarters, route marching was practised on one day, but owing to rain this was not carried out as fully as intended.

The prescribed target practice was performed by all the Infantry Corps, under the superintendence of the Brigade Musketry Instructor. This Officer was indefatigable in the discharge of his duties. In his recommendations I concur, particularly in those which relate to preliminary firing exercise and the expenditure of blank cartridge. Lack of time is the only thing to prevent those suggestions from being carried out. Shortening the ranges has been a step in the right direction, and when it is considered that out of the 1,249 men, who went to targets at Stratford, 929 never fired a rifle before, it might not be unwise to consider the advisability of going a step further and making the first range 50 yards as laid down for the Permanent Corps.

Three Batteries of Artillery were brigaded under Lieut.-Colonel Peters, London Field Battery, and worked to my entire satisfaction. This branch of the service is entitled to much praise. True it has advantages not possessed by the Cavalry or the Infantry, in that it is drilled annually, and has longer been favored with good schools for the training of its staff, yet the spirit evinced seems to be due to other causes as well. The general efficiency of the Artillery could, I think, be still further promoted by forming all the Batteries in the same District into one permanent Brigade and I recommend that this be done here. The technical inspection of this Arm was made by Lieut.-Colonel Irwin, Dominion Inspector of Artillery. The loss of two horses through kicks suggests the desirability of adopting some better mode of "picketing." Accidents of this kind should not occur, and I will endeavor in future to have such a system as will make them very improbable.

#### SUGGESTIONS.

Though what I have said has been more commendatory than otherwise of the force in this district, it must be understood that I have been speaking relatively, and with a due consideration of the limited opportunities for training. That so great results are obtained in so short a time, that there is so much cohesion, so much "touch" in a battalion after it has been embodied 8 or 10 days, says much for the intelligence of the men, and for the capability of the comparatively few qualified officers, but that there are defects in the system and great lack of efficiency amongst officers and men must be clear to even an ordinary observer. The chief cause of this inefficiency is the shortness of the time allowed for training. That 7 or 8 days drill every two years is utterly insufficient, goes without saying. It scarcely suffices to preserve the organization much less to make it in any way reliable. As a remedy I would take the liberty of urging that each rural corps be drilled every year. If through lack of means, it cannot be taken out "full bodied," let it by all means come as a "skeleton." Much better that the skeleton, the "framework," should turn out than that the whole body should be left at home to die of inanition. Officers and non-commissioned officers are the framework of even the most complete regiment; in a Canadian militia regiment they are something more. They are its very life, of necessity, they are its trainers as well as its leaders. If they are not fairly good the corps is worth little, and if they are bad, to retain them is a positive evil. Their efficiency, then, is the first thing to be secured, and it is infinitely more important that they should be brought together every year with comparatively few men, than that the biennial system should be continued with double, treble, or even quadruple the number of rank and file. It must not be understood, however, that I advise a reduction of the force. On the contrary I feel that the organization should be extended, and that an infantry corps of at least 8 companies should be maintained in each county, but maintained in such a way as to have a greater feeling of reality infused into it. For many years to come our militia must be our main defence, and it should be placed on the best footing possible as to both efficiency and numbers, but numbers of corps rather than numbers of men. If we have a large number of well organized and expansive bodies, they can be rapidly filled up when the need arises, but it is a difficult task to organize the bodies in the face of danger.

#### THE SHORTAGE OF OFFICERS.

We are met with the difficulty of obtaining, I would not say qualified officers, but officers of any kind. (The same difficulty, by the way, is met with in regard to the militia and volunteers in Britain.) To overcome this difficulty, more encouragement should be given to officers. This would be done to a great extent by taking them out yearly as suggested, but in addition to that they should be put on a more permanent footing by giving to such of them as qualify a yearly allowance according to rank, payable quarterly, and made contingent on their attending the annual drill of their corps. In view of the fact that many eligible gentlemen are deterred from accepting commissions owing to the attendant expense, some such scheme must be adopted in order to give a supply at all approaching the demand. It is folly to say that officers in sufficient numbers will come forward in time of need. That will be too late. They are required now, they should be trained now, and be made ready for the task of instructing the willing but raw material which will come forward at the approach of danger.

What I have said of officers is truth, though in perhaps a less degree, of non-commissioned officers. There is an amazing lack of competent Sergeants, especially in the rural battalions, they not having facilities for forming N. C. O. classes as is done in the cities. The absence of suitable sergeant-majors is very marked. No effort should be spared to induce good men to qualify for this latter rank, and to remain in the position after qualifying.

#### SMALLER CAMPS ADVOCATED.

Another suggestion that I would make is that the camps of instruction be on a smaller scale. There are three main objects in view in bringing corps together in brigade—to create emulation, to afford opportunities for larger manoeuvres, and to provide supervision by a brigade staff. The first two of these could be quite as well secured, in some cases better, by assembling at one time fewer corps than is generally the practice. As to the third object it may be said that owing to a general lack of knowledge respecting interior economy and duties, regiments require much supervision from the brigade staff. To be of real value that supervision should be applied to fewer bodies. For example, in this district where six infantry corps are usually brought out in the same year, it would be desirable to have half the number come out in June, and the remainder in September, or, if possible, half in the early part of June, and the other in the latter part. This would not make so big a show on paper at the time, but the increase of percentage in actual good would be very great, and the additional expense occasioned by it, only that of the staff, would be trifling. Under that system target practice could be much more satisfactorily carried out than it is at present, for there would be less rush, and more time could be given to preliminary instruction before going to the butts.

In closing this report, Colonel Smith concludes: It becomes my duty to acknowledge the valuable assistance rendered me by Lieut.-Colonel Aylmer of the District Staff. In camp, in the brigade office, and at the half yearly inspections, his duties have been performed to my entire satisfaction. His local knowledge has been specially useful to me, I being comparatively new to the district. To those officers who served on the brigade staff at Stratford my best thanks are due. All were zealous, painstaking and vigilant, and always ready to assist in promoting the general efficiency, as well as to perform their own special work.

#### No. 2 District—Lt.-Col. W. D. Otter, D. A. G.

The authorized strength of corps in this district is 538 officers and 5,517 non-commissioned officers and men. All told 3,772 were authorized, and drill in the year under review, and the corps selected for drill consisted of one troop of cavalry, three batteries of artillery, one-half battery of mounted artillery, and ten battalions of infantry and rifles. To these must be added C. Company of the I. S. C., not counted in the authorized strength. Colonel Otter recommends that "an increase should be made in the garrison artillery of the district, at present there being only one battery (Toronto), while at least four should be maintained; no difficulty would be found in raising that number in this city, which I consider is the best point for such a force."

Of the camp at Niagara, opening on the 12th June, Colonel Otter thus speaks:—The weather was fine, though very hot throughout, and consequently no time was lost. The field batteries were placed in the charge of Major Frank King, W. C. F. Baty, under whose superintendence their routine of drill was carried out; for the progress made I must refer to the report of the Inspector of Artillery, Lieut.-Col. Irwin.

Following the system I inaugurated in 1886, the various drills for infantry were detailed daily from the brigade office, and a constant supervision of them kept by myself and staff. The presence of "C" Company, I. S. C., under the command of Major Vidal, together with a number of "attached" officers from the Royal School of Infantry, Toronto, just completing a course of instruction, was the means of fur-