

criticises the proposal made in this column to secure garrisons of Imperial troops for the principal cities of Canada. The *Empire's* writer agrees that there is a good deal of truth in the MILITARY GAZETTE'S contention that a strong permanent force of armed men is becoming a necessity in Canada and adds, "It was probably these considerations that prompted the establishment of small regular garrisons in all our leading cities, the only exceptions that I know of being Montreal, Hamilton and Ottawa." In the first place what practical value would a hundred men be in the face of any mob worthy the name? Then if it was "these considerations" that prompted the establishment of our permanent corps why in the name of all that is strategical were four of these wonderful garrisons established at London, Kingston, St. John and Fredericton while the vastly more important cities of Hamilton, Ottawa, Montreal and St. John, N.B., were left unprotected? The fact that the Canadian permanent corps were distributed as they were with none either at Montreal or Ottawa, which are by far the two most important cities of Canada, is the most conclusive proof that these permanent corps were never considered as effective armed units, and of course they are not.

The error of the *Empire's* writer is one so commonly held in Canada that it is worth exposing thoroughly. The Militia Act (49 Victoria, Chap. 41,) provides that "Her Majesty may, for the purpose of providing for the care and protection of forts, magazines, war-like stores and such like service, and for the purpose of securing the establishment of schools for military instruction, raise and maintain, in addition to the ordinary Active Militia force, one troop of cavalry, three batteries of artillery, and not more than five companies of infantry." The act, it will be noticed, is eloquently silent on the utility of these permanent corps as military units, and those who so persistently ignore the *raison d'être* of the present permanent force and want it to consider itself as the standing army of the Dominion are its worst enemies.

In this connection we would resent most strenuously the imputation in the *Empire* that the MILI-

TARY GAZETTE "has not been over friendly to our permanent force." This paper has always been, is, and intends to be a true friend of the permanent force, but its friendship is of that frank, practical kind that does not allow itself to close its eyes to mistakes or to maintain silence when a blunt word of warning appears necessary. We have held, and always will hold, that our permanent corps owe their existence wholly to the educational requirements of the militia force, and what prouder or more honorable distinction could the officers and men of the permanent corps wish for than to be considered as the instructors of the active militia, the standards set up for the guidance of the national defensive forces. The permanent corps have fallen short of their mission just so far as they have allowed their ambition to be considered a standing army or a separate fighting machine outside of the active militia altogether, to get the better of the desire to provide the best instruction possible for the active militia. The MILITARY GAZETTE is willing to acknowledge the devotion of the officers and N. C. officers of the permanent force who recognize the nobility of their peculiar instructional functions, but it will not cease to expose the absurdly false position taken by those of their comrades who like jackdaws in peacock's plumes want to be something they are not and never cease bewailing the fate which "makes officers nothing but mere school masters."

And it is just such rubbishy talk as that in the *Empire* about the value of the permanent corps as a defensive force that has done so much harm in the permanent force. It is due to this sort of nonsense that captains of permanent companies have refused to allow their men to attend the instructional parades which they were maintained to provide. Let the permanent corps get completely over the peculiar idea that they are maintained as garrisons, and bend their whole energies to the duty of providing instruction to the active militia, and the grumbling at the heavy expense of maintaining them, of which the writer in the *Empire* speaks, will soon disappear.

The *Empire* writer cannot see

why, if regular regiments are required in Canada, they should not be Canadian regiments. He says: "For my part I can imagine no possible reason why any of our young men who have a fancy for a soldier's life should be refused because some faddist wants the regiments to be 'Imperial.'" Nor can any one else understand why they should be refused, nor, it is to be presumed would they be, had Canada a British garrison. That is a detail that could easily be arranged, one would think. As to the advantage of having the proposed garrison composed wholly or partly of Canadian regiments under the administration of the Dominion Government, it is hard to see where it would come in. Take the question of economy. Ten companies of the Imperial army are maintained in Canada at Halifax for less than it costs to maintain four companies of our present Royal Regiment of Canadian Infantry. Officers and men have a future before them in the British army and are willing to serve in all ranks for much less pay than they would serve in a one horse service. Then take the question of efficiency. We know that the Imperial regiments are efficient. What sort of regiments should we have a right to expect here with the commissions distributed through the able medium of the political grab-bag? The demoralized state of the active militia should be sufficient warning in all conscience to anyone rash enough to consider for a moment the advisability of trusting the administration of a permanent defensive force to the tender mercies of the Dominion politicians. The *Empire's* writer says:—"I don't think Canadians would relish paying for regiments over which they would have no control." We don't suppose that Canadians with the ordinary political proclivities would relish it, but to our minds that is just what should commend the idea.

A valued correspondent takes the MILITARY GAZETTE rather severely to task for the strictures from time to time passed in these columns upon the administration of the Militia Department. The gentleman in question thinks that the political head of the department is made the butt of much of the criticism justly belonging to the military head of