

at great cost to the state, holding aloof from the service of their country. With a view to secure in some measure a return for the cost to Canada of keeping up a military college, I suggest that before a young gentleman is admitted as a student, he and his parents or guardians should give a joint bond that on graduation he will serve for a specific number of years as a commissioned officer in a corps of the active militia, and I consider that some regulation of this nature should be adopted, if in the future the college is to justify its existence as a military institution.

Now, do not misunderstand this. He does not find any fault with the standard of the college, its possibilities and the admirable way in which it is conducted; but he objects—and I feel strongly with him—to the large expense of that college, if the result is not that for a time at least Canada shall have the advantage of the service of these cadets whom we educate at such great expense.

Now, the active militia or volunteers include, as we all know, infantry, artillery, and cavalry; and I will read what the Major General says of these forces, his appreciation of them, and his suggestions in regard to them :

My inspections of the camps of instruction in military districts No. 1, 2, 3 and 4, 5, 6 and 7 afforded me an opportunity of seeing a great number of the rural corps at their training, and enabled me to gauge their practical efficiency. As in my report last year, I can speak most favourably of the zeal, intelligence and excellent spirit of all ranks, and the administration, cleanliness, good order and discipline maintained in the camps was highly creditable to all concerned. I must also specially commend the manner in which the officers in command and staff officers carried out their duties. I believe that, taken altogether, as much was accomplished in the way of training as existing conditions will permit of. In some districts the results were rather better than in others, which was in a measure due to very adverse climatic conditions, which seriously interfered with tactical instruction, but I can only repeat that in nine working days it is absolutely impossible to impart more than the mere rudiments of a soldier's training. The time does not admit of any practice instruction in the more important branches of 'field training' or 'musketry,' and consequently the net result is very far indeed from being satisfactory as regards the practical efficiency of the Canadian militia. Officers and men, I feel sure, do their very best, but I can only reiterate what I said in my last report, viz.: 'that the troops can never be made even fairly fit to take the field with the limited period of annual drill that they receive under existing arrangements.' The difficulty is greatly accentuated by the fact that, as a rule, quite 60 per cent of the men in the ranks are raw recruits, who retard the progress of the remainder, for, as the strength of a chain is that of its weakest link, so is the instruction of large bodies of troops in advanced modern tactics hindered by the presence of a mass of practically untrained men in the ranks.

The wastage that takes place year after year in our rural corps is perhaps the most serious drawback against which the militia of Canada has

to contend, and it is impossible to acquit captains of companies of a considerable share of blame for this unfortunate state of affairs, for many of them seem to consider that so long as they can bring into camp some approximation to their full establishment, the proportion of 'recruits' is of no consequence, neither do they make any efforts to enforce the provisions of the Militia Act against deserters. Apathy on the part of the officers has a most direct influence upon the military spirit of the people who compose the rural companies, and I am quite confident that zealous exertion on the part of the officers would go far to mitigate if it did not altogether remove this evil.

I am still of opinion, however, that the value of the militiaman's services increases in direct ratio to the extent of his training, and that consequently it would be true economy to adopt a scale of pay graduated according to the number of trainings performed.

But even with the recruits' reduced to the proper proportion (33 per cent), it is obvious that they should undergo some preliminary training before the bulk of their regiment assemblies, so that they might be fit to take their places in the ranks with the older soldiers. Progressive instruction could then be given to all on the same lines, which at present is impracticable owing to the backwardness of the first year men.

Then he proceeds to recommend his remedy. He says :

I therefore recommend that the statutory drill period should be altered to give a maximum of 28 days.

In another part of his report he divides that period up and shows that the recruits should have seven days drill before the others. Then he goes on to say :

It is obvious that such an extension of the training would entail a corresponding increase of expenditure, but not more I conceive than the important interests involved in the defence of Canada would justify, and even demand. I venture to think that this is a question that has never yet been taken seriously, and the time seems ripe that the defence of the country should be dealt with as a practical matter and in a common sense way. It goes without saying that the expenditure on military defence, against troubles from without or from within, must be governed by fiscal considerations, or in other words by what the country can afford, but I would urge most earnestly that it is to the quality rather than to the quantity of our defenders that our efforts should be directed. 20,000 troops thoroughly well officered, trained and equipped would give the country a better return for the money expended on its military forces than 40,000 men on paper, who, under existing conditions, cannot be expected to be efficient for actual and real service in the field. If, therefore, the country is unable or unwilling to extend the annual training of the whole of the active militia, I would urge that the numbers trained annually be reduced so far as may be necessary to secure for those that are trained the time requisite to make them fairly efficient soldiers in discipline, field training and the use of their arms.

This is very startling perhaps with regard to the length of time, and I am inclined to