

Universal Training in Operation

Col. the Hon. Jamee Allen, Minister of Defence in New Zealand, was the guest of the Military Institute, Toronto, on May 7th, 1913, and in a most instructive address related the experience of that Dominion in the enforcement and operation of the statute of Universal Training. He said, in part :

We in New Zealand desire nothing more than to remain in peaceable occupation of the shores we live upon. The idea of aggression from our point of view is ridiculous. What could we think of doing? What could the great Empire to which we belong think of doing? She never has and never did and never will dream of aggressive action upon the shores of the East. So that all we are out after is to occupy our country in peace and to trade with the other parts of the Empire, and to do that under existing conditions; and we can make preparations to defend ourselves if we ever happen to be attacked. That is what we are attempting in New Zealand, and that is what we hope the great Empire we all belong to will do, with one common and united purpose, in the immediate future.

We came to the day in which we realized that the kind of training we had been giving to our volunteer force was not sufficient. Some men came to parade, some didn't, and so the continued advancement of our drill and training was kept back because there were always some absentees, and the others were getting further and further ahead with their training. We couldn't get over this difficulty by any system of volunteer service, and we were looking around to see how it could be done, when our people determined, and I believe rightly, that preparation to protect one's home, one's country, and to keep one's own flag flying was a duty which belonged to every citizen, and that no one was worthy of being called a true citizen unless he was able to protect his citizen's rights.

The original Act provided that every boy from 12 to 14 years of age should join the Junior Cadet Corps. I have amended that because I thought beginning military training at 12 years of age, was asking too much, and instead of starting military training at 12 we have now established.....a system of physical drills on scientific lines that are applicable to both boys and girls, and the reason why I