

35 to 40 strong better than none at all. If they do not they may as well disband a large proportion of the force. At all events I do not think you would find its state improved were every captain who cannot keep up his full strength to resign. In many cases where the present captains cannot do it, I am quite sure their lieutenants would command a still less measure of success, and however much those who now desire to cast on the shoulders of the officers, whose patience, labour and sacrifices have made the force even what it is, may ignore the fact, the supply of influential gentlemen willing to burthen themselves with the taxation to which a Volunteer officer must submit, is not so large in all parts of the country as gentlemen at headquarters appear to imagine. Their theorizing is all very well, but there are hard facts connected with the service at large of which they appear to have but an imperfect knowledge.

I am, however, warned that I am in excess of due limits, I will therefore only express a hope that when you next do me the favour to open your columns to me, it may not be on a subject on which I may happen to differ a little with your opinions.

I am, dear Sir, &c.,

G. W.

To the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR:—Your correspondent "L. C." in a lengthy communication replies to my last letter and furnishes therewith a list of twenty two battalions of which 17 show that from one to five companies have disappeared from the roll of the Volunteer force, of the other five nothing appears on the face of the returns to say whether they have all been extinguished or yet flourish on the fraudulent lists which your correspondent insinuates are *cooked* at headquarters. However the numbers as shown by "L. C." are 2,068 men, comprising 32 companies, but he does not say whether the whole have left since the Militia Bill came into operation or whether it was actually the cause of those companies disbanding. He then proceeds to instance a battalion which he alleges has been "reported by the *recognized* as having 497 men in its ranks. That battalion had when its service rolls were sent in, in January last, somewhere about 320, out of that number 91 men all told enlisted for three years under the provisions of the New Bill, the remainder simply enlisted to complete their term and their time all expires this year."

Now "L. C." calls in question the veracity of the District Staff Officers and the honesty of those who cook the returns at headquarters, but it is very strange that the battalion cited as an example had no officer independent enough to denounce the fraud which he alleges has been perpetrated on the country, if that could be traced beyond the battalion.

I have no wish to call in question "L. C.'s" veracity and fairly warned him that

there were two horns to the dilemma in which he was placing himself, on either of which impalement was certain.

The fact that so small a proportion of the battalion enlisted for three years can be explained easily without laying the blame on the Militia Bill. Three years full service ought to exempt any man even an officer from further service, and those who wish to keep a battalion together will try to do so without compelling men to serve against their inclinations.

In reply to his question as to the difference between the number of men in the batteries of the Brigade of Artillery noticed in my letter as encamped for their annual drill and those on the nominal roll, did it never occur to "L. C." that it was in the busiest season of the harvest, near its close, that the wise step was taken to call these men out—he ought to show some surprise that the muster was so good at such a time.

It is evident that "L. C." finds fault with the Militia Bill "because it was framed by Sir G. E. Cartier alone, a man possessing no military knowledge himself." It may very fairly be asked how does "L. C." know that? Is a thorough knowledge of military organization confined to people trained to the practice of arms alone? The history of the world shows such not to be the case, and with all due deference to "L. C.'s" better judgement, it is full of instances of very successful commanders being very indifferent organizers, neither can he tell whom Sir G. E. Cartier consulted or whom he did not, and I believe the present Militia Bill is more in accordance with the wants and wishes of the country than any yet offered.

That it is not perfect I am quite as willing to allow as "L. C." is to find fault with it, but the wants of the country and people must be considered in preference to the theories or wishes of any class of men.

A great drawback on the efficiency of the Volunteer force was the small inducements held out to the men for devoting their time to the public service. "L. C." deprecates the idea that the stoppage of \$1.50 per man had anything to do with the dissatisfaction alleged to exist, and yet immediately after he shows plainly that it is a wrong but places it at once to the account of the wrong man.

It seems to me that this subject has been rather worn threadbare and that its valuable space has been occupied by a series of articles not at all calculated to give outsiders a high idea of the Canadian military service, the honor of its officers or the morality in vogue amongst them; for I believe the Staff Officers either at district or headquarters, are gentlemen and soldiers, if error exists it must be sought out nearer home to those making wild and unfounded charges, which I for one am sorry to see is about to become a regular epidemic amongst your correspondents.

I am, Sir,

Your obed't. servant.

Ottawa, 8th Nov., 1869.

F. O.

THE DOMINION RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR:—In your number of yesterday *Marksmanship* calls attention to the great waste of public money which took place at Laprairie at the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association Meeting last year. True, there was great waste, and worse management, but as it is not pleasant to rake up old troubles it is better to think of improvements for the future. The Dominion of Canada Rifle Association was formed at a time of political excitement and the members of its council were all politicians, not *riflemen*. Few of the members of its first council knew the difference between a rifle and a shot gun, and as to managing a match they were as much abroad as a sea captain would be driving a plough. They probably enjoyed wearing huge rosettes with "Council" painted on them and imagined themselves of more importance in uniform than in plain clothes. The meeting at Laprairie was simply a farce. This year's meeting at Toronto was practically a second edition of the Ontario Rifle Association matches. For the reason that the prize list was of such a wretched nature that no one from a distance had any inducement to attend it. It is simply a huge swindle to grant money to the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association at all. Its matches are supposed to be for all the Dominion; how many Lower Province men went to Toronto? Colonel Creighton of Halifax was the sole representative from the Maritime Provinces. The programme was such that it was perfect certainty that no man from any distance could hope to pay his expenses unless, to quote Stewart Finley of the English Eight, "he shot like an angel and had the luck of the devil." The writer well remembers the evening before the matches took place, calculating for Colonel Creighton's amusement how much either of us ought to win, and telling the gallant Colonel that we should have to excel ourselves to win \$40 a piece. As luck would have it one of us was rather more lucky. But to show you the estimation in which the programme was held in Montreal I may mention the fact that had it not been that the Montreal Club had been a good deal chaffed at being beaten in their simultaneous matches with the Hamilton Club and much annoyed at the impertinent remarks of Mr. Russell in the *Review*, none of us would have attended the meeting. We simply went to win the Affiliated Association Match and cared for no other.

The large grant given by Government would be far better employed were it divided among the four Provincial Associations. It is to the Provincial Associations we must look for the encouragement of shooting. What we want is to interest all the young men of the country in the use of the rifle; I am sure it is a more profitable amusement for a young man to shoot than