

even granting that in this instance the bridge was put up by rule of thumb more expeditiously than it could have been done scientifically, surely no one will argue from that, that engineer officers are not wanted, or that the native wit of us Canadians will supply the place of competent training, either in discipline or in matters pertaining to fortification. If any of our friends confident in their mother wit were to attend a course at the Royal Military College, we imagine they would be ready to admit that there are more things in military science than can be picked up fortuitously by even the keenest observer.

**S**PEAKING of men not having time to qualify, we know of one case of genuine hardship where the rules governing the military schools might advantageously have been suspended. Captain Caldwell, of the 42nd, is a man who was a real acquisition to the force. A large employer of labor, and a man of sufficient means, he not only did not prevent his men from enlisting, as so many employers do, but he himself enrolled them into a company, and took command of them—provisionally. At camp in 1884 he turned out a full company of sturdy, well drilled, and well dressed men, thanks in part to his own private purse, and a company that made the highest shooting average in the district that year. In January, 1885, Captain Caldwell went to the Military School to qualify, but just previous to the date of the examinations the troops were ordered to the North-West, and the captain found himself left behind minus his certificate. When the school was resumed Captain Caldwell was in the midst of a season's business and naturally could not afford the time to resume his interrupted studies, and the consequence is that at last year's camp his splendid company turned up missing. No blame can of course attach to the commandant of the school for strictly maintaining the rules, but we are quite sure the country cannot afford to lose either Captain Caldwell's services, or those of his company.

**T**HE eighteenth battalion has met its just fate at last, and has been disbanded. We learn that Lieut.-Col. Lewis, B.M., has been instructed to proceed to Prescott county and take over the stores of the different corps. It is rumoured that there is a prospect of this regiment being reorganized under the command of its former colonel, A. McLean, in which case many of the old officers would come forward and volunteer anew.

**T**HE Ontario artillery association is to be congratulated on the results of its first year's work. The association has held a successful prize meeting, while the impetus given to the several corps by the fostering care of the association is evidenced by the high place which the Ontario contingent secured in the D.A.A. competitions. It now behooves all the other provinces to follow the good example set by Ontario, and to organize similar associations, so that their artillery corps may not be at a disadvantage in future competitions.

### The Schools of Instruction.

(From the Victoria Warder.)

**M**ANY young men from this district anxious to attend a military school this winter have been unable to do so because the schools were full. It has long been our intention to enter a protest against the present military school system. The system is chiefly noteworthy on account of its red tape and etiquette. Efficiency of instruction there may be, but it is not in advance of the old plan.

To our mind the system of admitting cadets in large numbers, each wearing, not the uniform of his rank, but that of the school, and each spending a term of say four weeks in barracks for routine duty, boarding elsewhere if desirable for the rest of his period of instruction, is the only plan on which a school at least for infantry should be conducted in Canada. In case an officer in attendance at a school for a company certificate desires to put on airs by wearing his own uniform and messing

with the staff, he should be free to do so, off duty; but on duty either on parade or in the barrack room he should appear only in the uniform of the school. The present plan is breeding an amount of snobbery not combined with efficiency that will ultimately produce inefficiency in all ranks.

The MILITIA GAZETTE, usually on the right side, last week endorses General Middleton's recommendation that "all officers of the permanent force rank senior to other militia officers of their own rank." This is a principle we cannot endorse. We do not deny the efficiency of many officers of the permanent force, and their superiority to the majority of the militia officers; but the difference lies in the fact that the militia department has for years allowed men to retain commissions in the force who are totally unqualified to drill a squad or mount a guard. Let the "provisional" officers now on the lists be retired at once if they fail to qualify, and let corps failing to turn out in strength, owing to having such officers, be disbanded and the arms and outfit given to districts or men that will keep up efficient corps; and the cry of inequality between the officers of the permanent and those of other corps will soon vanish. As an instance of the superiority of the raw Canadian volunteer officer over even the British regular an event of the North-West campaign may be cited. A day or two after leaving Batoche for Prince Albert the force came to a place that required bridging. The British engineer officer started to outline a plan, meanwhile sending teams for material. A couple of Canadian militia officers, one of whom was Capt. Winslow, accustomed to practical work in the woods, did not await the drawing of the plan or of the material, but seizing axes had a bridge built and the force over before even the sketch was ready.

We oppose as yet the recommendation of General Middleton, and suggest that he clear out all the officers not qualified. Then will there be something like life and energy in the force. Then will the permanent corps not be in advance of the ordinary militia. Indeed as it is some of the ordinary batteries and battalions seem nearly as well drilled as the regular force; and the annals of the North-West do not indicate that the raw militia were a whit behind the regular.

Our advice is, get rid of the red tape, and train the boys to spot a bull's eye at 500 yards.

### Simplification of Drill.

**T**HE question of simplifying drill is a very important one for the Canadian army. The short time available for the training of our militia force renders it impossible for the battalions of the Dominion to be practised in anything but a very small portion of the field exercises for infantry. Another point that must be considered is that the present drill has to a very great extent come down to us intact from the times of Frederick the Great. The linear formations which form so great a part of them received a further stimulus from their successful application by the Duke of Wellington in the early part of the present century. But this was in the days of the old muzzle-loading flint-lock rifles, and when defensive tactics were more easily carried out than now-a-days. Besides all this we must consider the fact that Canadian troops will never be called on to fight in savage wars, in which kind of war alone the present two-deep, close-order line formation finds an application. Such a formation is totally un-adapted to offensive movements. This was fully shown by the English advance at the battle of the Alma, where the English line advanced for about a mile only, and became a mob. Victory was gained there, not because the English advanced in line, but because the Russians showed an utter want of generalship and made greater faults than the English did. In the face of modern weapons troops cannot advance, even in small bodies, in a two-deep line. Shallower and even extended formations are required. An extended formation is not a true fighting formation in itself, it is only an expedient to reach effective ranges without undue losses. Once the effective ranges are reached the firing line must be as dense as possible, consistent with the effective use of the rifle; i.e., a man per yard, in order to overwhelm the enemy by fire; that is to say, the troops must fight in single line. Such being the case, why not train them always in single line? Lord Wolseley has long said that the time has come for infantry to drill and fight in single line, but the proverbial conservatism of military opinion has been too powerful as yet for him to effect the change, but when this far-seeing soldier had an opportunity of testing his opinion he did so with great success. We refer to the Ashanti campaign. Numerous native levies had to be raised and trained in a short time, while, to add to the difficulties, they did not understand a word of English. To teach them the ordinary drill of a two-deep formation was an utter impossibility. Consequently a single line was used, which was then numbered off in fours. At the word "Fours right (or left)," each four wheeled in the required direction. Nothing can be simpler than this. The veriest recruit can learn it in a few minutes, and in this column formation of fours the company can be deployed to the right or left at any moment, which cannot be done in