

Let Us be Efficient.

To the Editor of The Canadian Military Gazette,—

Why are we volunteers; why do we join the force? What aim and object have we? This question may be answered in various ways. Some of us join to shoot, some for exercise; others because they have friends in the corps. Some are attracted by the uniform and band and because their hearts swell when they see a marching regiment and cannot resist the temptation of joining in and marching too. There are others who join from a sense of patriotism of duty. These are perhaps the principal reasons.

How many of us realize, if we even think of it at all, what is the primary reason for enlistment.

But putting aside everything else, is it not for the defence of our country from foes without and discord within? That is what we are soldiers for and that alone; and the sooner the rank and file of the militia of Canada and "the powers that be" recognise this, the better for the force at large.

It takes Germany and France from three to five years to make a soldier; we think we can make one in twelve days. Now if actual hostilities were to break out could the force as it stands be sent to the front? Could not the militia be brigaded at some depot and taught the art of fighting before being sent out to encounter the enemy? No, we must be the first line of defence and would have to rely on ourselves alone. If a war broke out suddenly; not much warning is given by an enemy now; Her Majesty's army would not have time to reach us before fighting began.

In these days when one gun can hurl a shrapnell shell containing 150 bullets against a battalion of infantry at 2,000 yards timing the fuse so that the shell will burst in mid-air 100 yards before reaching its mark, spreading its missiles over a bullet zone of fifty yards in width, of what good would our dense formations be? Our largest battalion with half a dozen such shots would be swept out of existence. "Slaughter" would be the word and there would be no help for it. We could but stand up to be bowled down at every shot.

There is not a battalion in Canada that can go through the skirmishing, attack and defence drill correctly; there are 30 that can march past and go through other ceremonial movements as well as regulars. But what use are these movements on the battlefield?

We have only twelve days practice yearly in order to learn our profession and all attention seems to be riveted on these show movements. The men get only as far as the march-past and some battalion movements, inspection comes and the corps are disbanded for twelve months. Perhaps it is not well to depreciate these things too much, as they certainly tend to make the men steady and instil discipline, but there appears to be no real progress from year to year. Our non-coms. who have the makings of splendid sub-officers just about master the intricacies of marking when the drill is over. Why on earth were markers ever invented? Cannot the battalion movements be

executed without them and the companies dressed by the guides who could be taught to act quick and sharp and the men likewise to take up their own dressing?

So much time is actually wasted in these useless duties that the non-coms. learn nothing about fire discipline and controlling their sections whilst skirmishing and in attack and defense. Nevertheless it is the non-coms. in an engagement who win the battle.

Have we half a dozen battalions that ever hear of outpost duty?

Wherein does the fault lie for this state of things? Not with the men, they would prefer exertion to inertia, there would be something useful to learn. Wits would be sharpened, intelligence quickened. Not because there is no room; even in the largest cities space can be got wherein to practice in extended order.

No, the fault lies with the inspecting officer. He seems to prefer the old regulation march-past, the advance in review order, or if not this, a rigid inspection in quarter column. He can tell whether a man has the correct number of buttons on his tunic or his thumb in the right place, but as for skirmishing—well, that's another matter.

I have watched an inspection, at which the men were kept standing on almost the same ground for two hours in a hot sun, strapped up in tight tunics and belts, the inspecting officer did not even have the march-past (which would have been grateful under the circumstances) while he made a most severe inspection of each man.

Now our men are volunteers; they are not regulars. They prefer to move and be kept moving. In this case perhaps half the men joined for the first time that year, and doubtless half would leave from one cause or another before the next inspection? The men were thoroughly tired out, and cramped with standing so long in one position, grumbling and put out, they wished to "show off" and were disappointed. They were not the least impressed with the imposing majesty of the inspecting officer.

With only twelve days' drill a year why is not everything sacrificed to efficiency? If need be so change our drill book that skirmishing, attack and defence, outposts, etc., shall be in the front part, and the goose step, markers' duties, march-past, etc., relegated to the end. Make every officer an instructor of musketry. Have half the annual training put in at the butts; let the men fire volleys at the targets; let them fire 200 rounds per man in place of 20. A man that can march and shoot can do anything.

Let the authorities issue a new book of "Regulations and Orders," the present one is obsolete and a disgrace to the force. It is almost impossible to find in it what one wants. Sections which should be under the head of "Discipline" appear in "Interior Economy" and vice versa and so ad infinitum. Let it be compiled up to date, as it sins of omission are perhaps greater than commission.

And now in regard to uniforms and accoutrements—We are going to get a new rifle, well, good; give us modern kaapsacks as well—not the cumbersome, value equip-

ment, which will give a man disease of the kidneys in a day's march. The shoulders are strong enough to bear the weight and the hips should be free. The regulation helmet gives a man a headache and cuts into his forehead. It is bad enough on a field day; imagine what it would be in a campaign? A man cannot fight when incased in a tight fitting tunic, so that he can hardly breathe; he wants lots of air and the free use of his limbs. Clothe the country corps in serges. It will be far cheaper and more serviceable. The splendid (they really are of admirable quality now (scarlet tunics are soon soiled and ruined in camp, where the men are obliged to sleep in them.

A man can fight as well in a grey or brown as in a red coat. Why must the Canadian service be obliged to rigidly adhere to the dress regulations of the Imperial forces? Why cannot Canada like Australia adopt a distinctive uniform more suited to the country? No loyalty would be lost.

Here is a model: The dress of the Alpine Chasseur of the French army. It is one of the most practical and serviceable uniforms to be found. A comfortable broad Tam O'Shanter, a loose and easy Norfolk jacket, knickerbockers and leather leggings reaching to the knee, then turning down like Highland stockings; the rifle has a sling which is a great relief to a man when marching at ease. The whole "get-up" is most picturesque and business-like and looks more like a Scotch deer stalking costume than that of a foreign soldier.

VEDETTE.

The Last Gazette.

Ottawa, July 28.—The undermentioned gentlemen cadets have completed their full period of instruction at the Royal Military College and been granted "diplomas":

Rank and name.	Aggregate marks.
Company Sgt. Major Chas. F. J. B. DeBoucherville	51,228
Battalion Sgt. Major B. H. O. Armstrong	47,220
Sgt. Henry N. B. Hollinshad	43,590
Company Sgt. Major J. J. B. Farley	41,660
Company Sgt. Major Chas. J. Armstrong	39,936
Company Sgt. Major Roland H. Strickland	37,869
Gentleman Cadet Arthur W. Burnham	36,595
Sergt. Wm. F. Sweny	35,745
Gentleman Cadet Jas. T. Warner	34,073
Sgt. John E. Leckie	32,529
Corp. Henry J. Lamb	32,271
Gentleman Cadet E. St. John Maunsell	30,979
Gentleman Cadet Edward C. Musgrave	29,201

The undermentioned graduates have been recommended for commissions in Her Majesty's Army; Royal Engineers, Battalion Sergt. Major B. H. O. Armstrong; Royal Artillery, Sergt. Henry Hollinshad; infantry, Company Sergt. Major J. J. B. Farley, Sergt. William F. Sweny.

The undermentioned graduates of the Royal Military College are appointed Lieutenants in the active militia: C. F. J. B.