



ANY years ago the Militia of Canada joined itself with me; the object of this union being the greater security of the Dominion. The combination was a gratifying success and reflected credit on the far-seeing statesmanship of the promoters. I have no wish in this historical publication to lay claim to a greater share in the defence of Canada than is justly due me, but it is a significant fact which cannot be controverted, that since the Militia and myself joined forces, no invader has dared to set hostile foot upon the free soil of the Dominion. Of course the moment the news of our junction reached Europe the Chancellories of the old world at once got on their ears, as the classic phrase has it, and claimed that our combination was a menace to them. They have since quieted down and accepted the inevitable. But, speaking for myself, I hereby put it on record, that no thought of interfering with them ever entered my mind. I cannot answer for the Militia, of course, but my recollection of the boys who composed it is, that they were far from being a bloodthirsty lot. Our motto was "Defence," and not "Defiance," and if for awhile we did terrorize the earth the fault cannot, with justice, be attributed to us.

It was in the charming and picturesque town of St. Thomas, Ontario, that I joined the local body of Volunteers, and so thoroughly was I drilled that to this day when I see an innocent horseman approach on the road I feel an inclination to drop on my right knee, place my walking-stick at an angle of forty-five and prepare to receive cavalry. A year ago, in Syria, I put a Turkish company through the evolutions of Canadian drill, and surprised myself, and the company, too, at the readiness with which all the cabalistic words of command came back to me. The Turks proved quick to learn, which was rather odd when you remember that neither of us understood a

word the other was saying. However, in drilling, practical demonstration goes much further than spoken language, and, besides, the language used by a British drill-sergeant is a good deal more Turkish than it is English. No drill-sergeant can hope to succeed who speaks the English language with propriety, as the old-text-books on grammar used to put it. Our drill-sergeant used to imagine that "Shoe-la-humph!" meant "Shoulder arms!" and no one in our company ever had the courage to correct him.

Last Queen's Birthday, revisiting St. Thomas after an absence of many years, I had the pleasure of standing on the sidewalk and seeing my successors march past, and a well set-up, well-drilled body of young men they were. Little they imagined that a veteran was viewing them with critical eyes; one who had been there himself. Indeed, I have read that my distinguished fellow-soldier the Duke of Wellington in his older days frequently watched the evolutions of troops, himself unrecognized, as was I at St. Thomas.

I was a stranger to all the boys of the company when I joined it, and being a modest and retiring sort of person, as I am still, I knew very few of them when I forsook bloodshed, and at this date not a single name of those military heroes comes back to me, except those of two of

the officers. Captain Day had charge of the company, and Neil Caswell was lieutenant, who became captain when Day retired. It gives me deep regret to put on record the fact that the troops we all unanimously desired to fight were those of the British Regular Army, and this entirely without any feeling of disloyalty towards the old country. A section of the British Regulars was at that time stationed at London, which was then situated some eighteen miles to the north of St. Thomas, and I suppose, unless great changes have taken place, the mileage between the two cities remains the same to-day. Added to our other troubles was the misfortune that periodically British officers came down from London to inspect us and put us through our drill. Now, the British officer, when you meet him on what he imagines is social equality, is a very nice fellow indeed, usually genial and capable, a man who knows



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