

away from sheer exhaustion when taking his first lesson, but it does him a world of good nevertheless. It straightens the boy up and gives him a firm and commanding bearing, which will remain with him through life.

"The value to the student, of promptness of execution and close attention which is developed in drill, as well as the habit of rigid obedience of orders, is of inestimable value. Moreover, when the student goes through the marchings and manual with cheerfulness and enthusiasm they constitute the very best sort of recreation for him.

"What has proven true of this branch of instruction in colleges should be found true to a still greater extent in the high schools. The average boy enters the high school at just that period of his life when he is most ungainly and most indifferent.

"It is at this period when proper discipline will most effectually correct the boy's figure and give him a soldierly carriage.

"It is at the high school period of a youth's career, perhaps, that training in strict obedience to proper authority is most needed. Military discipline tends to effect this. It should be encouraged."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

[This paper does not necessarily share the views expressed in correspondence published in its columns, the use of which is freely granted to writers on topics of interest to the Militia.]

THE LEAGUE.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE,—So much has been written concerning the League of late that I really feel ashamed to ask you to publish anything further, yet I think I can suggest something that would be interesting to the lovers of rifle shooting. I would suggest that each province have a league, and at the close of the season have a grand Inter-Provincial League contest, with say twenty men on each team; telegraphic of course. This would not interfere or conflict with the present Dominion League, but would rather assist it by stimulating the teams to greater efforts. It would be considered a great honour to be selected on a provincial twenty. What say the other provinces?

ONTARIO.

NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE,—For a number of weeks past I have read the many communications relating to the qualification of officers, and while I admit that it is necessary that officers should be qualified, I consider it far more essential to the Militia Force that the non-commissioned officers should be qualified, a fact which is too often overlooked. In the lengthy and (to his mind) unanswerable arguments of C.F.C., he proposes to make the appointment of officers compulsory from the ranks, and no doubt there might be instances in which this would be an improvement, but are those to be appointed to have no say in the matter? There are in the force many who would make excellent officers had they one of the qualifications which is needed, and that is *cash*. It is evident to all who have had any connection with the force that this is a very important qualification for an officer in our militia. I venture to say that the majority of the force are mechanics and working-men who, were they offered a commission, would refuse it

on the grounds that they were unable to spare the necessary cash and time that would be required of them, and should they accept, would they be more qualified than those already holding the positions? I fear not. How many regiments are there in the force who require any qualification other than length of service to entitle a private to receive promotion? I have seen many non-commissioned officers who, had they been required to pass even the most simple examination, would have remained in the ranks. I think the suggestion of Beaver to be a good one, but the instruction at headquarters should not be confined to officers. Open the class to all grades, and allow the non-commissioned officers and privates who wish for promotion to attend, and in this manner the expense of the instructor would not be as great to the country as the instruction of the same number at the schools would be, and then the force would be supplied with competent non-commissioned officers, as well as officers, and at a comparatively small cost. One of your correspondents said that an officer who could not spend a few days at a school to qualify was not likely to give much time to the force and was better out of it, or something to that effect, and I suppose he would apply the same argument to those not holding commissions. Well, I contend that no one, whether he hold a commission or not, can *qualify* in a few days. He may pass an examination at some of the schools, but he will not be qualified. And more, on account of the number wishing to attend the schools, especially in the winter months, it has been necessary to limit the number received from each battalion, and therefore it is impossible that all can attend who would qualify if a class was opened at their headquarters by an instructor from the school. Hoping you will pardon me for being so lengthy,

I remain,
Yours,
N. C. O.

GENERAL HERBERT'S HOLIDAY PARADES.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE,—“Snap Cap” must have had a bad bilious attack (or was it gout?) about the 14th inst. I don't know much about the feeling among militiamen in other parts of the country, but in the old Rock City, when it became evident that the new Major-General commanding intended taking a really active interest in the force, the members of the different corps felt very much encouraged. We can, I think, depend upon Major-General Herbert to recommend all reasonable applications for better equipment and greater allowances for expenses, &c., but we must look to our friends in parliament to secure more encouragement for the Militia by increased grants and in other ways. The proposal to have out different corps on holidays for instruction in field duties and tactics, is considered here as an excellent one. A good many of our fellows have wives and children, who like nothing better than to see the “volunteers” out in their war paint, and would certainly consider the holiday on the 24th May a “fraud” if there were no soldiers to be seen all day.

Men who consider it a nuisance or a “fraud” to spend some of their *idle* time in learning some of their duties as citizen soldiers, do not as a rule join the militia, and when such men do join it is generally for the sake of the rifle shooting (out of which they make money enough to cover their expenses) or some other equally selfish reason, and they are, therefore, of precious little use to their corps.

I venture to say that one field day such as Gen. Herbert proposes, carried out under his personal direction and subject to his personal criticism, would be of more use to the corps engaged than a whole week spent in camp or drill hall practicing little or nothing but “display” and “parade” movements. Pull yourself together “Snap Cap” and come