

The period of training now allowed for engineer corps is altogether inadequate.

15. It appears to be necessary that the relative positions of two or more Militia engineer corps, when they are *doing duty together*, should be defined, as apparently it is not clearly understood at present, and confusion and want of harmony may arise from this source.

Command, the higher disciplinary powers, and ultimate responsibility devolve on the senior officer of the combined corps, and the camp guard and general routine duties must be detailed by him as if the separate companies were actually one.

On the other hand, after the foregoing has been done, when separate corps assemble at the same time and place for their course of *annual training*, it is essential that each corps should make its own separate parade state and returns of work performed (forwarded through the senior officer of the combined corps) for the information of the inspecting or instructing officer as the case may be. If this is not done it is not possible for these officers to ascertain the relative efficiency of the several companies and to determine the amount of credit, or otherwise, due to the officers and men of the separate corps.

Without this all emulation and comparison ceases, and efficiency may be lost in a possibly dead low level, to the detriment of more active corps or zealous members of them.

The returns of annual courses of instruction of engineer companies can and ought to be as separate as those of regiments or batteries, without in any way losing the regimental or corps organization of the engineer force, or lessening or infringing on the proper position of the senior officer of the combined corps.

16. There is much room for more accuracy in the preparation and punctuality in transmissions of these returns.

This may appear a trifling matter, but it is the uncertainty and unreliability of such that leads to carelessness in greater matters and to misapplied force, and in the end to greatly increased work.

17. I consider that the bringing together at Kingston of the Engineer Corps of the 2nd and 5th Districts has been of great advantage, and if continued will go a long way towards making the engineer branch of the Militia of the Dominion of Canada a reality, instead of what it has hitherto been—an unreality.

In employing the word "unreality" it must be clearly understood that it does not reflect any discredit whatever on the officers, non-commissioned officers or men of the Engineer force of Canada. On the contrary, *the highest possible praise* is due to them for the zeal, energy and sacrifice of means, which alone have kept up their organization to the present date.

The inadequate results obtained from this excellent spirit is simply due to the hitherto entire absence of all means of instruction for, and encouragement of, the engineer force.

18. The duty of reporting on the 2nd and 5th District Engineer Corps, recently placed under my command for instruction, naturally and necessarily leads to the consideration of the general organization of that branch of the service, and I respectfully submit the following remarks for serious consideration.

19. The military engineer service being essentially a real and onerous one, and necessarily involving work and somewhat less show than other branches of the service, presents less attraction to some men, but, on the other hand, it is for this very reason, more interesting to others.

The nature of the instructions required, the higher rate of wages most members of the engineer corps can command in civil life, and also the small number of officers compared with a battalion, must of themselves make the maintenance of this force more expensive to its officers than any other branch of the service, and, therefore, to become efficient it needs more, rather than less, assistance than the artillery, cavalry, and infantry.

20. The existence of a fictitious engineer force can only prove a broken reed, and be a great danger; and to become a reality, such a force needs some special aids in organization and training, and the provision of necessary stores.