

REGIMENTAL STAFF.

NOW that public attention is being more directed to the militia, and suggestions are continually being made for its improvement, it may not be amiss to analyze, among other matters, the standing of the Regimental Staff of Battalions, as an efficient staff well up in their duties is a most valuable adjunct to a corps, carrying out the regular duties of each branch, and keeping the whole welded together. There is possibly, for the size of the battalions, too large a staff in many cases, while at the same time there may not be enough to properly attend to details, duties and instruction; the change, moreover, continually taking place in arms and drill makes new offices and appointments necessary. Let us take up the different positions in detail, as now authorized by Regulations.

MAJORS.

As these officers have to do principally with drill and duties, there is not much to be said, except that they should be well up in drill, and able at any moment to take command of their regiment. Where there are two majors each should know his half battalion thoroughly, the fitness and capability of each officer and non-com. officer. Commanding officers should see that majors are given proper opportunities of drilling the battalion, and that the company drill of their half-battalions is carried out under their supervision. They can then be held responsible by the commanding officer that his orders for drill are properly carried out.

ADJUTANTS.

The remark is often made that an adjutant can make or break a corps, and this is no doubt true. The qualifications for adjutants are so fully set forth in the Queen's Regulations, and the R and O for the militia, that it is unnecessary to go over them here. There are very few adjutants, however, who come up to the ideal there set forth, and it is almost impossible to expect it with civilian soldiers. There are many adjutants who think their duties end with the close of a parade or the termination of the annual drill, whereas the most of the opportunity for adjutants to impart instruction to young officers and non-commissioned officers occurs between the annual drills. An adjutant may easily take four D's for his guidance, viz., drill, dress, discipline and duties. The opinion of the writer is that far more proficiency would be attained if either permanent adjutants or permanent sergeants-major were appointed at least to each city corps in Canada. The average officer filling this appointment really has not the time to spare from his business to properly attend to all the duties of his position; the extra expense would not be great, and appointments could be made from R.M.C. graduates, officers of permanent corps, or retired officers of the army. In England, the Gov-

ernment soon saw the necessity and benefit of appointing paid adjutants to each regiment of volunteers, and these appointments are eagerly sought after by officers of regular regiments, those appointed generally going to the linked volunteer battalion. As this system has met with so much success in England why should not the same be tried for Canada? A permanent adjutant could do much work in correspondence, keep all the officers up to their work, and attend to much detail which now falls on the commanding officer of the battalion.

QUARTERMASTERS.

Many officers commanding corps think it unnecessary for an officer recommended for the appointment of quartermaster to possess any qualifications whatever, and very often those officers who are too lazy, too stupid or too old to act as combatant officers are made quartermasters. This is blind folly; a good Q. M. is born, not made, and while the average man may get through his work during local drill or in camp, when he has not much more to do than issue clothing (and this is very often done most indifferently) when his corps is called out for actual service, then the strain will come, and the uselessness of this officer will be found; but the officers and men will be the actual sufferers. Quartermasters should either be compelled to qualify for their duties or no appointments should be made, unless it be shown that the officers recommended are fit to carry out their responsible duties.

PAYMASTERS.

There is no doubt that the office of paymasters has been, and is, a sinecure, as the work of checking off the acquittance rolls of a twelve days camp or local drill of a city corps can be done in a few hours, and any junior clerk would be competent to fill the position. In rural corps therefore the work can be done by the junior major, and the general order abolishing paymasters by absorption is in the right direction, except in regard to city corps; in these battalions, as is well known, the officers' pay goes into the regimental fund, therefore those corps who now have no paymaster lose this amount of pay; but a stronger reason for allowing city corps to retain paymasters is that in many cases influential and wealthy men who take an interest in military matters are induced to take this position, which requires no special qualifications or study, and the regiment is thus materially helped by such an officer. There are many officers, too, who not having the time for executive or combatant work would still wish to retain connection with their corps and accept the paymastership, who now are debarred from doing so; it is even possible that some commanding officers who have served their five years would take the office of paymaster, and thus remain in the corps in which they have served so long. It is hoped the Militia

Department will consider the matter of allowing paymasters to be appointed in city corps, even if they make it an honorary position and withhold the pay.

MEDICAL OFFICERS.

This subject has been so ably treated in the lecture of Deputy Surgeon-General Campbell, published in the last issue of THE GAZETTE, that no further reference is necessary, further than to say that medical officers might do very much for their regiments during the winter in lecturing and giving lessons on first aid to the wounded. It is a pity that the appointment of assistant-surgeon is to be absorbed; two doctors for 300 men are none too much when in the field, and, besides this, the same reasons advanced above for paymasters apply here also. City corps, especially, want all the officers they can get, and medical men are generally of good standing and social influence. Medical officers of the Canadian militia should now be given the same titles as borne by those of the Medical Staff Corps. Let the military medicos work together and bring this matter to the front.

INSTRUCTORS OF MUSKETRY.

This is an appointment not yet authorized by Canadian Regulations, but in view of the now assured issue of the new .303 rifle, the importance of creating this office should be considered. Nearly every regiment of militia and volunteers in England has an instructor of musketry under whose supervision all rifle practice is carried out. In Canada it is a well-known fact that little if any attention is paid by captains of companies to theoretical shooting; the time is taken up with ordinary drill and getting ready for the inspection, and this most important part of the soldier's education is hurried over or neglected entirely. General Gascoigne has placed himself on record as pledged to develop the shooting powers of the Canadian militiamen, and in what better way can he begin? The amount saved in pay of paymasters could be devoted to this purpose, and in each corps an experienced rifle shot could be appointed who would be responsible that each man underwent theoretical instruction in camp or the drill shed, and practical instruction on the range; an assistant instructor from the non-com. officers could assist him. The expense would be light and the results beneficial. Then to follow this up, grant money prizes each year to the best shooting companies, and the best half dozen shots (privates) in each company at the annual target practice; this would do more towards developing shots among the men of the militia than twice the amount granted to rifle associations, when the prizes are won by old and experienced marksmen. All captains of companies in city corps know how difficult it is to get men to go to the range for annual target practice, but if there was a