

until gradually, as the Artillery and Engineers, consisting in 1794 of four battalions, became better organized, steps were taken for the instruction of the cadets attached to these corps; books were bought, and in 1798, when an additional regiment of the same arm of the service was raised, and when the cadets numbered fifty-six, four teachers were appointed.

The groundwork of a Military Academy in connection with a Military force had thus been laid, but it was not until 1802 that an Act of Congress was passed dividing the Artillery and Engineers into two corps, and allotting forty cadets to the former, and ten to the latter. These corps were to be concentrated at West Point, and were to form a Military Academy. The selection of West Point was due to its importance as a frontier fortress, which commanded the Hudson River at the narrowest portion of its channel, and guarded one of the most important lines of approach from the British Possessions. In 1808, the cadets were increased by 156, and in 1812 their limit was fixed at 260, the strength of the army being at that time over ten thousand men; four professors, in addition to the officers detailed for instruction, were also appointed to the staff of the Academy. Thus a foundation was laid for the training of the officers of the small army with which it was deemed necessary to supplement the State Militia.

Much, however, remained to be done to bring the Academy to its present efficient condition, and it was not until 1818 that a system, which with little modification has been followed to the present day, was finally determined upon. The cadets were declared to be soldiers, subject to Martial Law; two general annual examinations were ordered, and steps were taken to train the young men during the summer months in camps of instruction. Since then, although many improvements and changes may have occurred, the organization and method of training and discipline have remained the same in principle as in 1818, the growth of the institution depending partly on the interest shown in its welfare by the successive Secretaries of War, more on the qualities of its superintendents, and somewhat on the tone of the army, which it feeds, and from which, in return, it draws its life.

Among the most efficient and renowned Superintendents of the Academy, the names of Major Thayer, of 1817, and Major Delafield, of 1838, are given, the pamphlet adding—" whilst in 1853 the presence of Colonel Robert E. Lee could not fail to have exercised over all who were brought in contact with him an influence which was subsequently felt in a more extended sphere." We may remark here that this is an appropriate tribute to the character of the great General who, for four years, led the Southern army to victory after victory, being only overcome, at last, by a crushing numerical superiority of forces under General Grant. Colonel Fletcher, if we mistake not, had ample opportunity of observing the great abilities and lofty qualities of this distinguished officer, during the latter portion of the war, from the vantage ground of proximity to General Lee's person. No doubt, the skill, excellent character, and soldierly qualities exhibited by many of the officers of the Southern as well as the Northern army, were well calculated to excite curiosity in the minds of military students or observers like our author, as to the nature of the institution at which they had received their education. It had been often remarked by foreign soldiers that, whatever deficiencies as to literature or general information many of the West Point officers might labour under, they possessed a varied and practical knowledge of the different branches of the military profession. As Colonel Fletcher has himself noticed, there were no sharp dividing lines between the different branches of the service, so far as the commanders were concerned. A West Pointer, as the regular officer was called, was regarded indifferently as suitable for any arm of the service. He might be in command of a force of Infantry one day, and in charge of a body of Cavalry the next. The American readiness of resource and adaptability favoured this system of exchange, which was a marked feature of the conduct of the war. But Colonel Fletcher, while admitting the advantages of a general knowledge of the methods and duties of all the branches of an army, points out some of the drawbacks of teaching everything, in the result of the instruction imparted on any of the special branches, being less in amount, and wanting that valuable quality of thoroughness so essential to eminent success in any department. Even the ablest man, the most studious and ambitious, can learn, in a life-time, but very little of what is generally called everything, great success in any one sphere being attainable only by a concentration of strength upon one or but a very few subjects. The author's description of the site of West Point Academy is a pleasant one, and suitable to the subject. The place is healthy, the scenery charming in its diversity, while the buildings and other provision secure to the pupils comfort and tolerable enjoyment. The author thinks that all these advantages are necessary to the support of the hard-worked students, who number at present 246, though 300 might be

under training. Certainly their experience is calculated to deter all but the youth who is brimful of military ambition, or has a natural taste for study. The age of admission is from 17 to 22. The following sketch of the mental and physical discipline gone through will confirm our opinion:—

Supposing him to have joined in June, he is at once allotted to a company according to his size, and goes into camp. During the two months he is under canvas, he becomes acquainted with his class-mates, and selects one of the same company (to which his choice is limited) to share his room.

When study re-commences, at the end of August, he passes into the fourth or lowest class, to rise yearly in turn, and, after examination, to the third, second, and first classes. During these four years, the following course of instruction is pursued:—

1. Infantry, artillery, and cavalry tactics, and military police and discipline.
2. Use of the sword, bayonet, &c.
3. Mathematics.
4. French language.
5. Spanish language.
6. Drawing.
7. Chemical physics, chemistry, mineralogy, and geology.
8. Natural and experimental philosophy.
9. Ordnance, gunnery, and the duties of a military laboratory.
10. Ethics, and National, International, and Military Law.
11. Practical Military Engineering, Military Signalling, and Telegraphing.
12. Military and Civil Engineering, and the Science of War.

As the cadet is supposed to have received, and in many instances has received, only the most elementary education before reaching the Academy, it must be granted that, to acquire in any useful degree a knowledge of the subjects contained in this catalogue of studies, will require close and almost incessant application. Such, on reference to the regulations for the employment of time, proves to be the case.

From early morning until bed time, the cadet's time is mapped out and occupied. Study, parades, and military exercises, succeed each other with little intermission; and relaxation is afforded, not by amusement, but by a change of study, or by the training of the body in place of the mind. Excepting on Saturdays and Sundays, when the period of leisure is somewhat extended, the cadet has never more than half-an-hour at a time for recreation, supposing that he employs, as is intended, the time he remains in his room for private study. The system is, to give instruction in the class room at what are termed recitations, after the lessons set by the professors or assistant professors have been prepared privately in the cadets' room.

During May, June, July, and August, the reveille is sounded at 5 a.m.; in September and April, at 5.30; and during the rest of the year, at 6 a.m. Breakfast comes at seven, dinner at one, afternoon, and supper after parade, which follows sunset. The time between eight in the morning and sunset is wholly taken up with study and military exercises, with the exception of the hour between one and two. This is a system of cramming, or prolonged forcing of the intellect, which must have its disadvantages in many a case. Every youth cannot so completely devote himself to a series of exacting studies, and escape the consequences of overwork. The result, in some cases, may be an enfeeblement of the faculties, a reaction after the period of study, in the shape of an aversion thereto for the future, or a condition of superficiality in regard to a number of the subjects deemed important enough to be included in the curriculum. Of course, natural students and robust intellects will pass through the ordeal with advantage, or, in other words, will gain their education at a smaller cost to brain and body than their less gifted fellows. The Colonel gives further information as to the cadet's experiences, including those gained in active service, and states many facts concerning his social position, moral characteristics, and general qualifications, which should prove interesting to Canadians, in view of their purpose to imitate the Americans in the matter of a Military Academy. Our author shows that he has written his pamphlet not only with a desire to furnish the Canadian public useful information on a subject of peculiar importance at present, but with an object connected with the requirements and duty of this country. He not only lays down the moral, but proceeds to give it application. After showing that West Point has fulfilled its objects, as regards the moulding and efficient maintenance of an American Regular Army, and illustrating the value of the West Point officer in the Mexican and Civil Wars, our author thus concludes this suggestive branch of his subject:—

As far as the American nation and the American army were concerned, West Point had proved a success, and every thinking man, whether on the Northern or on the Southern side, must acknow-