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### Commanding Officers in the Militia.

The late action of the authorities in altering the organization and composition of the Militia staff has called forth many remarks and suggestions throughout the Dominion in reference to the claims and qualifications of those who may in the future seek higher appointments in the Militia.

A lecture delivered a few evenings ago at the Militia Institute, Toronto, by Captain Buchan, of the Queen's Own, is well worthy of the perusal of all who take an interest in our Colonial army.\* Quoting from *Centurion* he says:—

"In the opinion of most officers of the Active Militia the time has come when the grouping of regiments into brigades and divisions could be advantageously effected.

"It would operate beneficially upon the organization of the force were the various arms detailed in due proportion to each brigade, and brigade commanders and their staff appointed.

"Under the present circumstances existing corps would be robbed of their most efficient officers, at the most critical time, in order to furnish the brigade and divisional commanders and their staffs. Allusion has hitherto been made to the effect that the Active Militia has been designated the 'Army of Canada.' This is not correct, nor can it be until the organization is completed. Regiments must be brigaded, and brigadiers and their staffs appointed; brigades must be formed into divisions, with their proportionate detail of cavalry, artillery, and engineers, their infantry and artillery, ammunition, reserve, military police, commissariat, and medical departments, with their several arrangements for transport and supply. Divisions must be grouped into 'army corps' and 'army corps' into an 'army' before the technical definition of this term is attained. At present the initiative only is taken in these matters."

"It has been surmised that this would furnish the pretext for the appointment of officers of the regular army to the staff and the higher commands. No more fatal error could be committed. It would at once destroy the *esprit de corps* and *morale* of the Canadian militia. The experience gained by filling up staff appointments by ex-army officers has not been a satisfactory one, and the prejudice against such appointments is strong and growing. If it were understood that all army officers were energetic, zealous, well-educated soldiers, then no objection could possibly be taken to their appointment; as it stands to reason that a man who has given all his time and brains to the intelligent study of the art of war must be better qualified for command than another whose opportunities have been more limited.

It is a fact that should our Militia be called into active service, and the various battalions formed into brigades and divisions, there are few commanding officers who are possessed of the necessary military knowledge to enable them to act on the staff, and as brigade and divisional commanders, and we should be obliged to send to England for our superior officers.

We think that a staff course of instruction at the Royal Military College should be established—in which com-

manding officers should be obliged to qualify or else remain in their regiments (if they be desirous of doing so) as *honorary* Lieut.-Colonels only, and that those junior officers who do qualify and prove themselves worthy of command, should, in the event of service, at once be promoted to such positions as their abilities entitle them to.

But as many officers from the pressure of business could not afford the time to attend such a course of instruction, staff examinations might also be held once or twice a year, simultaneously at Toronto, Montreal, Quebec, St. John, N.B., and Halifax, papers being issued from the staff college, and the examination conducted under the direction of the D. A. G. of the District, affording such officers an opportunity of studying and qualifying at their respective homes, if they have the ability to do so.

In the present state of military education and the high condition to which the science of war has attained—together with the many wonderful appliances and appliances of precision being continually introduced into the service—it would be madness to take our small force the face of a highly trained enemy without having afforded the means for, and obliged, its officers to perfect themselves in that greatest of all professions, to which their sacrificing patriotism and loyalty, have induced them to enter.

### Inspection of "B" Battery Royal School of Gunnery, Kingston.

The annual inspection of this corps by the Major General Commanding the Militia took place on the 19th ult. The Battery in marching order together with the Gentlemen Cadets of the Royal Military College, were drawn up in line on Barrisfield Common at 9.30 a. m. the former being commanded by Lt.-Col. Montizambert, "B" Battery the latter by Major Ridout 90th Regiment, mounted division of "B" Battery under Captain Short, the whole being under the command of Lt.-Col. Strange, R. A. I. of A.

Shortly after the appointed hour, Major General Lush accompanied by his A.D.C. Major Holbech, 60th Regt. Lt.-Col. Van. Straubeuzie, D.A.G.; Lt.-Col. Howland, commandant R.M.C.; Lt.-Col. Worsley Brigade Major arrived upon the ground, and was received with a general salute. After inspecting the ranks, the troops were drawn into column and marched past, the mounted division leading and galloping past. An enemy being supposed to have taken possession of Barrisfield Village, the battery then formed into extended order for attack, the guns on the right, Gentlemen Cadets in the centre, the "B" Battery on the left, but after a vigorous attack on the village they were eventually driven back on to the common, where squares were formed to receive cavalry. The Major-General afterwards inspected the men's bayonet and the bayonet exercise was gone through. It does not permit us to enter minutely into details of the evolutions and manoeuvres gone through—it is sufficient to say that the "B" Battery maintained its high reputation as the smartest corps in the Dominion and the driving of the field artillery over the rough broken ground, and up hills of forty-five degrees slope, elicited remarks of amazement from the beholders. The various newspapers through the country re-

\* An account in the *Toronto Mail* of the 27th October.