



A VOICE FROM QUEBEC.

Editor MILITARY GAZETTE:

SIR,—Will you allow me to make a few remarks in reference to the want of life displayed by the staff officers of the 7th Military District. We continually hear of field days being held in Toronto, and also of lectures on military subjects being delivered, and it must be gratifying to the officers of that district to find their D.O.C. one of the prime movers in these manœuvres, lectures, etc., which do so much to raise the standard of efficiency and to foster that esprit de corps which is necessary for the general welfare of our militia.

Here we boast of a permanent school, yet hardly once a year will they favor us with even a short lecture. Such a thing as a field day has not been held since the Carnival in '94. Why is it that we are so far behind the forces in Toronto in this respect? We have equally good men who, if given the chance, would prove themselves just as keen on sham fights as our western friends. Let us entreat the permanent force and staff officers to wake up and show the good example as is shown by Lieut.-Col. Otter and others in Toronto. Let us have lectures frequently during the winter months, and then, whenever the opportunity occurs, let them join with our militia corps of this city in a field day, for we all know that the men will learn more in one day's manœuvres in the open than they will in their twelve days' drill inside of four walls.

MILITIAMAN.

[We are very glad to find space for this letter, which is from one of the most capable officers we have in the force and one who possesses more than the average qualifications. We trust that not only will the officers of the permanent staff and units in Quebec, but in other parts of Canada, take the hint so nicely given. The corps in Toronto district are by long odds the most efficient in Canada. This is almost entirely due to the enterprise and untiring efforts of Lieut.-Col. Otter, D.O.C., who has done more, perhaps, than anyone in Canada to increase the efficiency of the force. A polite note from the G.O.C. to the various D.O.C.'s, saying that he would expect more than routine work from them in future, would have a good effect. He should then see that they carried out his suggestion.—Ed. C.M.G.]

THE SURGEONS OF THE PERMANENT FORCE.

Editor MILITARY GAZETTE:

SIR,—With reference to your edition of 1st inst. on the pay of the surgeons of the permanent force, I am sorry to say the opinions expressed are not sanctioned by military men in this part of the country. Hitherto militiamen of the Dominion have much to be thankful for on the manly stand you have taken for the betterment of the service, and some of the good results obtained, I have no doubt, have been occasioned by your pen. Anything looking to the reduction of pay of the surgeons and placing them on a par with Indian doctors or poor-house medicos, would seem to us a lowering of the service. The many important duties of a surgeon in the Canadian militia—particularly in the permanent force—are sufficient to warrant pay in proportion to rank of that received by his brother officers. We of the rural corps cannot help commenting on the great change for the better with respect to the vast improvement of late camps in connection with the hospital service, and you know as well as I can tell you, the credit is mainly due to the surgeons of the permanent force. The Minister of

Militia himself will bear me out in this statement as a result of his own personal experience at camps of instruction. I am not writing in any way as a champion of the military surgeons of the permanent militia, but only from a sense of fair play to a class of men who have made considerable sacrifice in connecting themselves with the force. I trust, therefore, you may yet see your way clear to defend the surgeons against any disposition on the part of the authorities with respect to a reduction of their pay.

Yours obediently,

A NEW BRUNSWICK OFFICER.

[This question has excited a good deal of interest, and many opinions have been expressed for and against the amounts paid to the permanent medical staff. The views recently published in THE GAZETTE were those of a correspondent and not necessarily those of the paper. In some places the medical officers have done much good work, but in others, especially in the one in which our correspondent resides, it cannot be said that material progress has been made. Reference to back numbers will show that THE GAZETTE itself has been a very strong friend of the medical department.—Ed. C.M.G.]

A COMPLAINT ABOUT CLOTHING.

Editor MILITARY GAZETTE:

SIR,—I think it would be a friendly act on your part to call the Militia Department's attention to the bad quality of the clothing issued to the militia for many years past. The material is, as a rule, of the poorest class, shoddy or half shoddy, and the fit is nearly as bad as the quality. Take, for instance, cavalry riding breeches issued to the active corps. There is no fit at all about them; they seem to be cut with a broadaxe. This trash is not issued to the permanent corps; I think their riding breeches come from England. Compare the trash I speak of with that issued to the English yeomanry, or to the Canadian permanent cavalry; the latter is of good quality and a different pattern.

The material of the issues to Canadian cavalry is so poor that it is a difficult matter to get them fitted by a tailor after paying him well to alter the scarecrow article. Riding breeches, if not reasonably well fitted, are conspicuous for their ugliness. Then again, the English prices are just about half that for the Canadian-made goods of inferior quality. I prefer to see the militia clothing made in Canada, but unless there is a marked improvement in the quality and pattern of the clothing made, it would be well to return to the purchase of English-made tunics and pants until Canadian manufacturers learned how to make a better article at lower cost. A tailor informs me that a cheap shoddy pair of pants may now be made up for \$1, the material and work about as good as specimens I showed him.

In the Government price lists, which represent the net cost of the article, cavalry cloth trousers are listed at \$5.50 and cavalry cloth riding breeches at \$6.25. This is, I think, double the price asked by the English manufacturers for better goods. The same manufacturers who charge the Government such prices will manufacture on a smaller scale, for retail merchants, trousers, which for fit, quality of material and general make-up, are the equal of the military article, for \$2 per pair or less. Indeed, it may be claimed that the quality of the civilian article is better, for the general public do not have the same patience with the manufacturer's poor goods as the militia and the Militia Department of Canada have. Go to any rural armory, pick up a pair of pants or riding breeches, get at a cut edge, pick it for a moment and see the shoddy come to pieces. As a rule it is thick, unnecessarily thick, well stiffened with glue, and the surface nicely finished, to look well.

This additional cost is charged up against the militia, when, as a matter of fact, a great saving could be made in this line alone.

Yours, ANTI-SHODDY.