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THE CANADIAN

Military Gazette

Successor to the Canadian Militia Gazette.

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MONTREAL, FEB. 15, 1895.

Notes and Comments

Phoenix like the Canadian Militia has risen from its ashes. At any rate it exists on paper again—and that is something. In other words a militia list has once more been issued and it will gratify those good Canadians who had made up their minds that the great body of the militia, the rural corps, had dropped out of existence and had passed away without receiving decent burial, to find out that their fears were not justified. In spite of the fact that those good old battalions have had for a year and a half no chance of giving any outward and visible signs of any actual existence, and have even been deprived of the doubtful comfort of a paper

existence in a militia list, they bob up serenely in this new literary production of the Militia Department, and on paper look just as efficient as if they had been the constant care of a grateful and fostering government. The lists look well. There are Lieutenant-Colonels, Majors, Captains and Lieutenants galore; but we have a pretty shrewd suspicion that the showing would hardly be as brave a one as it is had commanding officers forwarded to Ottawa all the resignations now in their hands. Of course, one does not expect to find the company rolls in a militia list, but a perusal of the lists of officers naturally causes the reflection: "After this long period of enforced hibernation what must the nominal rolls of the rural battalions look like?"

But a word about this new list itself. It is undeniably the best list issued by the Militia Department, and that is not saying as much as the book deserves as it is saying very little. Many radical changes have been made and numerous additions. These changes are all in the line of advance and improvement and can only have been carried out with much increased labour. The list has been completed in such a manner as to render it a handy book of reference for journalists and the public as well as to the force, and that surely is a *disideratum*, but how woefully the papers do get tangled up on militia matters! Of course, the book contains some inaccuracies, errors and omissions, but it could hardly be otherwise with the list published in such an entirely new form and after such a long interval. A mid-summer

edition, providing one is forthcoming, and that members of the force co-operate as they are invited to do, and ought to do, should put these errors all right. So far, so good. If, however, the publication of a list is not to be kept up at regular intervals this list we are now discussing is just so much waste time and money. If the militia list is to be of any practical use at all, it must be issued to the force *promptly* the first weeks of January and July of every year. Of course a list six months old is worse than useless. It is misleading.

It is to be hoped in the interest of the militia that the absorption of the Toronto *Empire* by the *Mail* will not deprive Toronto militia-men of the interesting column of military chit-chat supplied every Saturday by the *Empire's* military correspondent. One never expects to find much profound military knowledge in the military column of the average local newspaper, and its writers frequently do more harm than good by their too lavish and indiscriminate distribution of praise where it is not deserved. Who can tell, by the way, what share of responsibility the so-called military writers of some newspapers ought to shoulder for the absurdly overdrawn idea of the efficiency of the militia generally held by the public, with its disastrous results upon the force? All will agree, however, that of the various military columns published in Canada the *Empire's* was one of the best and most interesting.

By the way, the writer of the *Empire* column in his last contribution prior to the amalgamation