

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATE OF
THE MILITIA FOR 1870.

[CONTINUED.]

*The Honorable Sir George E. Cartier, Bart.,
Minister of Militia &c., &c.*

In connection with the subject of military schools, I would respectfully point out, that while these schools furnish a ready means for enabling officers to learn drill, and to undertake the duties of commanding companies and battalions, and are of great advantage, yet no military school or staff college has been established for the training of Canadian staff officers intended to fill positions on the staff, and if required to command considerable bodies of troops in the field. Indeed it may be considered, that this at present is the weakest point in the organization of the defensive forces of the Dominion.

The men composing the Active Militia are an admirable body physically, and altho' as yet from the too limited period of time allowed for annual drill, very insufficiently practised in rifle shooting, they are, generally speaking, well enough acquainted with company and battalion drill, to enter into a campaign at once, for in those days when fighting from behind cover, and intrenchments is so much in use, manœuvring in the open field, when in presence of an enemy, and under fire, is avoided as much as possible. The company and battalion officers have also, generally speaking, a fair knowledge of drill, and very many of them, as well as some commanders of battalions have attained to great proficiency; but for the training of officers to the higher duties of the staff, no means have as yet been supplied. Under these circumstances, therefore, in view, moreover of the dimensions which the Dominion has now attained, and its increasing importance and position in the world, I would respectfully represent that the time has arrived for the establishment in the Dominion, on a small scale, of a Military Academy somewhat similar in organization to the Staff College in England. It should always be borne in mind that an efficient staff is the most important element in a military body, and that the appointment of unqualified and untrained persons to the staff of an army is fatal to its efficiency or success, and it being recommended in this report, that the five years' tenure of office system, for appointments to the staff, should be brought into operation in future, and that none but qualified officers who have undergone a special examination, should hereafter be appointed to the staff, the propriety of establishing a Staff College to afford the means for qualification, and supply this great want in the military system of the country, is respectfully submitted for the serious consideration of the Government; no great difficulty need arise in effecting this object, and I would recommend that encouragement be given to some intelligent and zealous officers already in the force, to qualify for instruction in the higher branches of military science, with a view ultimately of becoming instructors in a Canadian Staff College. In order to effect this important object, it is submitted that arrangements might be entered into with the Imperial Government for the admission for this purpose, of a certain number of Canadian officers into the Staff College in England; with a view of entering more into the detail of this important subject, I shall have the honour hereafter to submit a special report on the same for the consideration of Government.

STAFF.

The staff consists of the Adjutant General (who is appointed to the military command of the whole of the Militia of the Dominion,) the Deputy Adjutant-General at headquarters, nine Deputy Adjutant Generals, each of whom is appointed to the command of a military district, and twenty three brigade majors, there being that number of brigades now in the Dominion; and when the extent of the country and strength of the force (the active portion of which alone now numbers forty-four thousand four hundred and fifteen) is considered, it will, I think, be admitted that the above is the least possible staff, through whose instrumentality so considerable an army can be worked.

Certain anomalies, however, exist in respect to the constitution of the staff, which, however, can easily be remedied; for instance, the designation of Adjutant-General, as applied to an officer appointed to the command of an army, is a misnomer, and that of Deputy Adjutant-General equally so to an officer appointed to a minor command, such as that of a military district. An Adjutant General is a staff-officer, appointed to assist a general officer in command of an army, in carrying out the numerous details connected with its drill, discipline, military command and disposition; in like manner, Deputy Adjutants-General are staff officers appointed to assist general officers holding minor commands, but these staff officers do not themselves hold any command. The officer who fills the post of Adjutant-General of Militia, practically discharges the duties of a general officer commanding an army, holding, by the Dominion Militia Act of Parliament, the military command of a force, which, in constitution, is very similar to a regular army. All the officers being commissioned by Her Majesty, and the non-commissioned officers and men being regularly enrolled and sworn in for a stated period of service; some portion of the force, moreover, being now always on actual duty, and for a short period in every year the whole body.

Considering, therefore, the changed military position of the country, consequent upon the withdrawal of the greater portion of the regular troops, the numerical strength of the Dominion Army, the necessity moreover which has now arisen for its occupying a more prominent position, having to undertake almost entirely military charge of the country in ordinary times, and in all probability in the event of future war a much larger share in its defence, than in past times, and on the principal, moreover, of designating official positions by their proper names, I would beg to submit for consideration, that the time has now arrived to alter the designation of the officer appointed to the military command of the Militia of the Dominion, in accordance with his actual military position and duties, and would, therefore, recommend that he be commissioned as Major-General commanding the Militia, and styled as such; also, that the Deputy Adjutant General at headquarters be commissioned as Colonel, and designated Adjutant-General, that the Deputy Adjutants-General in command of districts be commissioned as Colonels on the Staff; and that the necessary amendments in the Militia Act to enable the same to be carried out be introduced.

I beg to point out that certain inconveniences have arisen in consequence of the Deputy Adjutants-General commanding districts, holding no higher rank than that of Lieutenant-Colonel, a rank also held by

many under their command. In one instance, it has recently occurred that a Lieutenant-Colonel commanding a battalion was senior by date of commission to the staff officer actually at the time in command of the district, and as it is a military rule, universally observed, that the officer appointed to the command of a brigade or district, should hold a higher commission than one commanding a battalion, considering also the numerical strength of the militia in each district and the brigade organization, the propriety of now giving to officers in command of districts a higher commission than that of Lieutenant-Colonel is apparent. By the above alteration (without any increase to the Staff,) many advantages would result, due order and military subordination would be better defined and preserved, the already high military tone and character of what may now be well termed "the Army of Canada," would be greatly increased, be more in keeping also with its organization, numerical strength, responsibilities, and the important position in the world now being taken up by the Dominion itself.

Whenever the Dominion of Canada, has as in recent times, been threatened with invasion, or actually invaded, the practice observed has been to transfer the Command-in-Chief of the Militia, to the General Officer in command of the Imperial troops. The Dominion Government passing an "Order in Council" to this effect, in accordance with clause 61, paragraph 3, of the Dominion Militia Act, which directs that this may be done under such circumstances, and this is provided for very properly, in order to insure unity in the chief command of both armies (Imperial and Canadian,) when in the field—but under such circumstances, it does not follow that the Chief Officer of the Militia loses his command, on the contrary, following military rule, he would continue to perform his duties as the Commander of the Militia, but acting under the orders of the Imperial General Commander-in-Chief.

The Militia of the Dominion is a separate and distinct Army, paid and maintained by the people of the Dominion (the officers of which are commissioned in the Queen's name,) being intended for the defence of Her Majesty's great Canadian Dominion, and this army would be found numerically a "tower of strength" in defence of the country, acting in co-operation with Her Majesty's Regular troops; but it could only be worked satisfactorily in the field, as an auxiliary one, under the command of its own officers.

The system hitherto followed in regard to staff appointments in the Militia (namely, making such appointments permanent,) is one which military experience has proved to be very objectionable, and as no consideration should be allowed to stand in the way of keeping the staff of an army as effective as possible (which is best done by creating promotion, periodical changes of individual, and filling up all staff appointments by the officers best qualified and most deserving,) I would strongly recommend that the system observed in the regular army in regard to staff appointments be now adopted for the Militia of the Dominion, viz: That all staff officers of Militia should hold their respective appointments for five years only, and not be eligible to reappointment in the same office.

I would further recommend that the five years tenure of office, as applicable to the present staff officers, should date from 1st January, 1871, and that in future all officers previous to appointment on the staff of the Militia should qualify for such, and pass a