

Soldiering in Canada

To say that the regiments of the Canadian Militia constitute an efficient body of troops might be to convey a false impression respecting them; while to call them inefficient would be to show one's ignorance of the circumstances of the case.

In equipment and training they cannot be put on a level with the trained regiments of Europe and so might not be called efficient in one acceptation of that term; but if their efficiency is measured by the extent to which they meet the demands that are likely to be made upon them, then up to the present time they have maintained a fair efficiency. The only engagement we have had to fear from foreign sources in the past is a clash with our neighbors across the border, and whenever such a collision did take place our volunteer forces most nobly met the demands of the occasion. In the suppression of internal revolt, also, they have shown their efficiency so that, measured by this proper criterion, it would be incorrect to call them inefficient. A brief view of the organization and establishment of our militia will show us its position as to efficiency.

In the first place our militia is divided into land and naval forces; as will be seen from the title we are concerned here with the land forces only. This latter is divided again into active and reserve forces; the active militia consisting of our volunteer regiments and the reserves constituting all the male inhabitants of Canada between the ages of eighteen and sixty years not specially exempted from service by law. The active militia, again, has a permanent division as well as the battalions that drill only at intervals. The forces are of course, divided into the three arms of the service, Cavalry, Artillery and Infantry, with the additional so-called arm Engineers.

The permanent force of the active militia is divided into three bodies: The Royal Canadian Dragoons, having squadron stations at Toronto and Winnipeg; Royal Canadian Artillery, having battery stations at Kingston and Quebec; The Royal Regiment of Canadian Infantry whose establishment is limited to one thousand men and which has regimental depots at London, Ont., Toronto, St. John's, P. Q., and Fredericton. These permanent stations constitute schools of instruction at which militiamen of all ranks can be prepared for service and from which all officers must have certificates before they are qualified to serve as officers. This wise provision ensures to the Canadian militia officers who are trained in the principles of the art of modern warfare.

For purposes of administration Canada is divided into twelve military districts for the supervision of each of which a permanent staff of officers is detailed. In 1898 the number of all ranks on the rolls of these districts was 33,439. The battalions constituted in these districts receive instruction by annual "camps" under the supervision of the permanent officers of the districts. These camps give each