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The Annual Report of the Department of Militia and Defence, for the year 1888, was issued this week, and we publish elsewhere liberal extracts from it. These are from only the reports of the chief officers of the two main branches of the department—the Deputy Minister and the Major General Commanding. In succeeding issues we will deal with other portions of the annual report.

It will be noticed with pleasure that the Deputy Minister, Col. Panet, joins in the request for an increase in the annual parliamentary grant, and emphasizes the fact, so often pointed out in these columns, that if there have been obstacles in the way of the proper development of our militia system these have arisen mainly from lack of money.

Of the total ordinary militia expenditure for 1888, more than one-third is shown to have been spent upon the permanent corps. The proportion appears larger than it ought to be; for the services of the 36,000 more or less trained men comprising the rest of the militia are certainly worth to the country more than twice the sum paid for 1,000 men of the permanent corps. Yet for every one dollar paid for the latter there are only two for the former. The force would be sorry to lose the schools, and we do not see how the expenditure for them can easily be reduced, even though \$1,300 is spent for each qualifying certificate granted. But it is quite within the range of possibility that the schools should be made vastly more useful than at present. In fact, it is imperative that something in this direction should at once be attempted; for whereas the total number of certificates granted to officers and non-commissioned officers during 1888 was 334, there are at present on the militia roll about 750 officers not possessing certificates of any kind, and who can only get them from these schools.

Col. Panet notes that three times during the year the militia were called upon for service in aid of the civil power, and in this connection points out that on every such occasion the conduct of the troops has evoked warm praise from their superior officers.

In General Middleton's report attention is given mainly to the Royal Military College and the Permanent Corps. In connection with the report upon the college he devotes to the rules governing the issue of Imperial commissions to cadets who have put in only two years at the college, a paragraph which will doubtless be instructive to those newspaper critics who in the desire to find fault, have lately taken the government to task for recommending such cadets for commissions offered.

The General's recommendations respecting the schools are as usual very interesting. He asks for an augmentation in the numbers of the Cavalry School Corps, and favours a rearrangement of the artillery schools, so as to have district branches in each for field and garrison artillery respectively. Concerning the recommendation that the garrison branch

of the Kingston School should be abolished, there being only one garrison battery in Ontario at present, it will be noted that he expresses the hope to have more garrison artillery in Ontario shortly, a hope which we trust is well founded. "C" Battery of the R. C. A., and also the Mounted Infantry Corps, receive high praise for the services rendered during the year when called out in aid of the civil power. The Infantry Schools are dismissed very briefly, but the General's report is satisfactory.

The subject of shooting receives a good deal of attention from General Middleton, and he recommends increased grants of ammunition and money prizes for the permanent corps and the ordinary militia alike. The necessity for some such step being taken to increase the shooting efficiency of the force becomes apparent from the perusal of the reports of the Deputy-Adjutant Generals in command of the several districts. To the riflemen it will be good news to note that the worn-out Sniders are about to be replaced by the new ones lying idle in the stores.

On the whole, General Middleton's report is well worth perusal, and we hope that action will be taken shortly in furtherance of its recommendations. This would be strengthening several weak points in the defensive system, about which much has been written of late. It will be good news indeed if, when the state of the Militia is brought under discussion in the Parliament which opens to-day, the Minister of Militia in answer quotes the recommendations of the General commanding upon the points raised, and announces that those recommendations are about to be carried out.

There is a siege scene in the handsome carnival number just issued by the *Montreal Witness*, which that paper thus describes: "The Storming of the Political Ice Castle", by the great Canadian caricaturist Bengough, is just full of hits. Sir John, in armour clad, holds the main tower with his comrades, Sir Adolphe perching himself on the topmost pinnacle with the great two-letter standard. From separate windows just below the Prohibitionist and Brewing Cabinet Ministers are firing artillery, of different strength, but both as characteristic as they are unique. Mr. Mowat now holds the keep, and Mr. Mercier has captured an important tower, from which the ex-Premier is suspended in a terrible situation. The Manitoba tower has also been taken, and another ex-Premier flutters in that region. But the defenders have themselves made a capture, and a gentleman well known in Montreal and Laprairie dangles from an improvised gallows high in air."

The *Halifax Critic* prints this very complimentary notice of a militia officer:—"Capt. Jolly, commanding the Yarmouth Battery, ought to be mentioned as one of the most efficient and energetic officers the excellent militia of our province can boast of. Capt. Jolly has, we are informed on the best authority, built a drill shed for his battery at his own expense, paying ground rent for the land on which it is erected. It is not every corps commander who could stand such an expense on behalf of the service to which he does honour, but such a man is emphatically the right sort of officer."