

gund on one point. He believes that the British Regular Cavalry may be, and ought to be, kept as it is as regards, apparently, dress, equipment, armament, and training—should remain, in fact, the *Cavalry* pure and simple of old time, and that “Mounted Riflemen” are “a cross” between Cavalry and Mounted Infantry, “an organization which neither the Cavalry nor the Mounted Infantry of the Regular Army need attempt to adopt, but one particularly suited to the irregular horsemen of a rifle shooting nation, to men who naturally spend much of their time on horseback, but who cannot be kept together for a sufficiently long time to produce good Cavalry.”

WE must adhere, continues the above paper, to the opinions we have so often expressed—first, that whatever may be the case in countries which possess large armies, the small force of British regular cavalry ought to be trained and equipped virtually as “mounted riflemen”; and secondly, that it will never be found possible to keep up in any numbers auxiliary troops trained and equipped on a model not to be found in the regular army. With regard to the first point, we may remark that it has always been found in recent European wars that the cavalry, whatever they may have been called—Cuirassiers, Lancers, Hussars, or Dragoons, have had to be “maids-of-all-work,” and, indeed, we believe that Lord Melgund himself would admit that in Egypt the mounted infantry, whose functions he would theoretically limit very severely, had practically to perform all the duties of cavalry except charging. We hold, therefore, that without taking away in the least the “pomp and circumstance” of our regular cavalry, it is desirable that their dress and equipment should be made more workmanlike, and, above all, that they should be armed with a firearm with which they can on occasion face infantry; in a word, that whatever they may be called, that whatever head-dress or lace they may wear, they should be virtually “mounted riflemen,” or, as Colonel Bower would prefer to call them, “rifle cavalry.” As regards the second point, we cannot, indeed, bring any direct evidence to support our view except the fact that all the corps of mounted rifle volunteers, save Lord Melgund’s have gradually died out; and this may be at least partly accounted for on other grounds.

BUT, the *Volunteer Service Gazette* concludes “there is a strong and natural feeling among amateurs of all kinds to do things as much in the professional style as possible, and we fear that the yeoman will never take kindly to the rôle of “Mounted Rifles” until the regular cavalry set the example or until a regular regiment of the new arm is raised. The same sentiment may perhaps account to some extent for the reduction of the force of the Mounted Rifle Volunteers down to its present small number, but here the question of cost comes in, as has been pointed out by Colonel Acland on many occasions. Lord Melgund sees this clearly. It has been, he says, “the absence of some small daily payment to the volunteer cavalry,” when out for drill, “which would have enabled the men partially to meet the heavy expense necessarily entailed upon them by ten days in quarters, that has been the chief reason for the collapse of so many corps.” It should be explained that he holds that volunteer cavalry and mounted rifles cannot be satisfactorily trained like volunteer infantry and artillery on named days at headquarters, but must, like the yeomanry, be called up annually for some ten days permanent duty. Altogether, Lord Melgund’s paper is very thoughtful and useful, and we strongly recommend the perusal of it to all those who are interested in the organization of auxiliary cavalry.

Correspondence.

DEFICIENCY OF HORSES AT ARTILLERY SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of the *Canadian Militia Gazette*:

SIR,—I understand that the number of horses at the artillery school at Kingston has been increased to 18. Now, if these unfortunates are always sound and fit for duty they have to do the following work: haul four guns at battery drill in the morning and in the afternoon; probably are used for instruction in equitation by the R. M. C. cadets, by the Long Course officers and the attached officers and men of the field artillery.

Surely a country that can afford to spend \$35,000,000 per year can spare money to purchase and keep 30 horses at this school for the instruction of field artillery. I believe it costs, or ought to cost, 30c. a day to feed a horse, and as the average life of usefulness is 8 years, an additional 12 horses would cost about \$1,500 per annum. The increased expenditure might be met by reducing the establishment of the school by four men.

A CHEVALIER.

PROPOSED CONCENTRATION OF ARTILLERY AT NIAGARA.

To the Editor of the *Canadian Militia Gazette*:

SIR,—The general results of the Niagara artillery camp, 1887, were in every respect most satisfactory. The batteries seemed to vie with each other in the efficient performance of their various drills and camp duties. The discipline maintained was extremely good, and the presence of so many batteries enabled combined brigade drill to be carried out with manifold advantage (Lieut.-Col. Irwin’s report). The camp season for 1888 approaches; if such satisfactory results were obtained by brigading five batteries together, why not repeat the experiment on a much larger scale? The expense would not be much greater. Niagara is the best camp ground in Ontario, pleasantly situated, healthy, and a very dry parade ground. Welland, Toronto and Hamilton batteries will naturally again be brigaded there. The two Guelph batteries are within reasonable distance, “B” will, no doubt, like to show off its new (?) 9 pr. M. L. R. guns. London battery can reach Niagara in seven hours by special train; Durham, by embarking from their headquarters, Port Hope, on the “Norseman” could reach Niagara in six hours; another steamer could bring up the mounted division of “A” along with the Kingston battery. We would thus see nine field batteries concentrated at very little expense to the government, and the militia department would be amply repaid by the increased efficiency. In the very limited stay at camp, the artillery has no time to do any work with the infantry, excepting the march past, so no good purpose is gained by sending one battery to camp with two thousand infantry. The digging of gun pits and a march might be practised and a few artillery manoeuvres on a large scale attempted, if there were no lame horses.

SHORT COURSE.

N.B.—“If no good purpose is gained by sending one battery to camp with two thousand infantry,” why put Ottawa Field Battery in that position?—S. C.

ANOTHER PLEA FOR PAID ADJUTANTS.

To the Editor of the *Canadian Militia Gazette*:

SIR,—Practically speaking it is allowed on all hands that this force in Canada is too much neglected, neither to the advantage of the active militia nor the country itself. If the Government wish to cut down expenses in the force, my impression is that it is wrong to do it wherein it visibly affects the main body of her defence.

If they wish to please the economists there are lots of little billets that could be discarded in toto, and lots of other snug little berths that could be rolled into one, and thereby all the parts in the active and reserve militia be more likely to form a harmonious whole. I am told that the active militia is gradually decreasing and that the military enthusiasm amongst the people is by no means so lively as it used to be. For why? In my opinion it is because of not receiving encouragement to enlist at the hands of the Government, and enough encouragement after they have enlisted.

The place I write from has a population of 23,000 people, yet they can only muster a battalion 300 strong, and one corps has recently been disbanded really for want of men, as I gather that those who were enrolled were nowhere to be found, that is the majority of them, being very widely dispersed. You can see that the place is not even able to keep up one decently strong regiment. If the other is ever revived again I hope it will be as a second battalion to the one existing.

There is something wrong in the system, somewhere, when men and citizens cannot be got to come forward to fulfil the duty they owe to the state they live under.

It may with some be the hope that there never will be a war, or it may be with others for seemingly good reasons likewise, but one thing I do know, and it is that while mostly everyone whom you sound on the subject, recognizes one general idea, that personal service by all men should be considered as a duty to the State, but few recognize it as it should be, an honour to the individual. It is the duty then of all parents to see that their sons should join their local corps if only to receive setting up drill and a manly bearing. Judging from what I have seen here when the local corps turns out for a parade, all the people turn out to admire, I fancy, the gifts and the training of the soldiers.

Allowing then that there is a military enthusiasm amongst the people, what is to be done to heighten this enthusiasm? Here is a force that might be made more popular and more efficient by giving a little more money and encouragement. First of all the officers of the corps must exert themselves more and encourage the men to enlist, the Government on the other hand must back them up and offer more inducements, encourage rifle shooting and give more prizes to be shot for, and improve the quality of the weapons they use etc. Each regiment should have a permanent staff consisting of an adjutant and a drill instructor, the former to do his own office work and also that of quarter-master when necessity required. The only thing to be said against such a staff is the expense, but only give such a staff to a regiment that could muster for inspection say 600 officers n. co.’s and men. Battalions with less than 300 men should be amalgamated with others or be disbanded. By this means the cost of such a staff would be considerably reduced. Say you gave your adjutant \$1,000 per annum and his sergeant \$400. It would be the duty of this staff always to be on the alert, not only inducing young men to come forward for enlistment, but coaxing them and their officers to attend parades oftener; and last but not least, they would receive proper instruction.

Being passionately fond of drill and having had the honour of acting adjutant to my own regiment when they numbered 1,000 strong, out of curiosity I have been several nights to the drill shed here; seeing what I could see. I don’t want to tell all I saw; but I saw a company in line, representing the battalion, under the adjutant, and the right-guide and marker were both in rear. Again I saw several young officers drilling some men, and all they did was to march those unlucky fellows from one side of the hall to the other at the devil’s own pace, ten or twelve times, then halt for a breath and crack a joke, then for variety’s sake he would start some front form, left, and right, and right about form squad, etc., nearly every time getting his right hand man where his left should have been. As the adjutant was present I concluded that the performance met with his complete approval.

Now, putting out of the question what has been allowed: that everyone owes in purse or in person a contribution to the defence of the country, my ideal principle is this, that as local volunteer militia cannot give the whole of their time to soldiering, what time they do give, that instruction should be in the hands of an efficient adjutant. It can’t be expected that an adjutant who is in civil employment all day can give the time and attention to the practical studies necessary for the forming of a professional military spirit; he can’t be both a soldier and a business man at the same time to have any remarkable knowledge of his profession. One thousand dollars a year of course is small pay, but what with the special privileges attached to his military rank, and with an equal amount of private means, there are plenty who would accept the honour and the post.

27th April, 1888.

IMPERIAL RIFLEMAN.