

which may be called upon to serve in any country, and which would be so called upon to supply the waste of war, as soon as the first-class army reserve had been absorbed.

There is one more question that follows on the heels of the last one, and which owes its existence only to the affirmative answer given to the latter.

Are we fit to take our place by the side of English regular troops?

Well, comparisons are odious sometimes, if not conducted in a proper spirit. But we may say at once that we lay no claim to such fitness, if the standard of comparison is to be only an outside appearance. A body of men who devote their whole lives to a profession must without doubt outstrip us, who can only devote our spare moments to it, snatched here and there from the daily round of a busy life. But in the material of our rank and file we have something to boast of, men of good physique and of an average higher intelligence than can be found in any continental army.

Let us see whether there is any means by which the training of ourselves, officers, and men, may fit us more certainly for our enviable position.

Most certainly all must depend upon the energy and capabilities of our officers. It is their duty and pleasure to increase their own knowledge, and afterwards to impart the necessary portions of it to their men. Drills and exercises in camps and at headquarters must be made more practical, more suitable to the actual requirements of war. A correct march-past is not one of these requirements, but is only a stepping-stone whereby the instinct of orderly movement is impressed upon the soldier. All the minor operations of war, such as out-post duty and patrolling, are as easily practised as any of the ordinary movements of the drill-book, and are far more useful as tending to teach individual self-reliance to our soldiers.

Inspecting officers do not require these at their inspections, you say. No; but inspecting officers will be delighted to see them, and will appreciate the labors of any officer who has earnestly endeavored to train his men for the realities of service.

It is often said that officers are fearful of attempting any exercises which are not accurately detailed in the drill-book. Every allowance must be made for his feeling, for, indeed, it requires some little pluck to break forth on a new line where our own education is incomplete.

For these, then, there is only one word to be said. The desire for military knowledge is in them, and increases year by year. How is such desire to be satisfied? Only by reading some of the many excellent works written on these subjects, and, if possible, by a supplemental course of instruction at one of the many excellent military schools of the country. Reading and study—there is no other high road to learning. The best generals of latter days have all been men who have given close attention to the perusal of military history and the experiences of their predecessors.

In this country we are sadly in want of a means for the ready diffusion of military knowledge. Perhaps no better plan could be devised than the establishment of a military institution, where officers might record their views and experiences by means of lectures and discussions, and where these proceedings could be published for the use of all those, (and there are many) who really desire a more intimate acquaintance with the real necessities of war. If such an institution could not stand by itself, then let us seek assistance from the mother land, and try to develop a branch of that admirable and long standing establishment, the Royal United Service Institution. India has its own United Service Institution, and has lately organized branches in many of the chief places in that country.

We may thus endeavor to prepare ourselves more surely for the future. That the future is, for the Canadian militia, no inglorious one, will be the opinion of every man who reads rightly the high feelings and aspirations which are shewing themselves in the steady progress of the day.

That the present scanty population of the Dominion does not warrant the immediate fulfilment of all these aspirations, may be at once conceded; we will, but with increased population comes increased power, greater responsibilities, a more important stake in the affairs of the world, higher duties, a desire for extended right and opportunities for extended action.

E. N.

The annual dinner of the officers of the Governor-General's Foot Guards was held in the orderly room in the drill hall on Tuesday evening, Lieut.-Col. J. Pennington Macpherson presiding, and there being a large attendance of the officers of the corps and invited guests, amongst the latter present being Col. Walker Powell, Adjt.-Gen.; Col. Panet, Deputy Minister of Militia; Lieut.-Col. Lamontagne, D.A.G.; Lieut.-Col. Otter, D.A.G.; Lieut.-Col. Lewis, Brigade Major; Lieut.-Col. John Macpherson, Director of Stores; Lieut.-Col. Bacon, Militia Dept.; Capt. Streatfield and Capt. Anson, A. D. C.'s to His Excellency the Governor-General; Capt. Wise, Capt. Lee, Mr. McLeod Stewart, and others. Amongst those invited and unable to be present were Sir A. P. Caron, Minister of Militia; Major-Gen. Sir Fred. Middleton, and Ven. Archdeacon Lauder. After the dinner a very pleasant social evening was spent, occasional songs and informal speeches enlivening the proceedings.

Militia and Volunteers.

THERE is a class of officers in both branches of the auxiliary service who, towards any suggestions for the increased efficiency of their particular arm, always assume an attitude which can be best defined by the expression *non possumus*. In the militia these gentlemen are well represented, and when it is pointed out to them that the training of their battalion is eminently unpractical, that their men cannot shoot, and that they themselves are by no means highly educated soldiers, they listen to you with grave politeness, and shaking their heads with a gentle melancholy reply, "Very true, no doubt; but there's nothing to be done; things cannot be improved, so they must go on as they are." Among the volunteers there are many excellent men of the same type of mind who wax very indignant when one delicately suggests to them that discipline can hardly be effectually instilled into their men on occasional Saturday afternoon or evening parades, and that in battle without discipline the quarter of a million volunteers would be but brave "men with muskets." They retort that in the short time they are at work their fellows do wonders (which is quite true); that all ranks make very great sacrifices to render themselves efficient in the government sense of the word—i. e. attend nine parades and the inspection and fire twenty (now forty) rounds of ball cartridge; and finally, that they are all wage-earning civilians first, and soldiers a good way afterwards, and that any further attempt to raise their compulsory standard of efficiency would result in alarming diminution in the numbers of the force.

To all who think that the auxiliaries are at present as good as they can be made, and that they could be relied upon to take the field against the highly-disciplined troops which an invader would throw upon our shores, let me recommend a careful study of the accounts of the war of 1885 between Servia and Bulgaria as an instance of the crushing superiority of professional soldiers over ill-trained militiamen. The Bulgarian army was raised after the Russo-Turkish war under Muscovite auspices, and as the Czar proposed to utilize the Bulgarians as the advanced guard on his next march to Constantinople, the commissioned ranks down to the rank of captain were filled with Russian officers. The men served for two years with the colors and then were transferred for eight years to the reserve, so that the time for converting the raw material into a trustworthy fighting man was limited to four and twenty months. The Russians did their work splendidly, as the events of Prince Alexander's campaign clearly proved. It will be remembered that when the rising in Eastern Roumelia compelled the mobilization of the Bulgarian army, the Czar, in the hope that he would completely paralyse the Prince, ordered all his officers to throw up their commissions and instantly leave Bulgaria. Alexander found himself in the most desperate straits for officers; there were only a few captains (Bulgarians by birth) left in his army, and from these he had to select generals of division, brigadiers and staff officers. Subalterns and sergeants blossomed out into colonels, and men from the ranks commanded companies. Terrifically hazardous as was the experiment of taking men so commanded into the field, Alexander determined to make the attempt, relying on the fact that his troops were regular soldiers, thoroughly trained, and perfectly disciplined, while the Servians were in the matter of military experience about on a par with the militia and volunteers. Had the Servian war project been carried out in its entirety the ranks would have been composed in about equal parts of regulars who had served for two years' consecutive training with the colors and militia who had either spent five months or even only thirty days under arms: but from motives of economy the number of regulars had been cut down by one-half, and thus the back-bone of the force was hopelessly weakened. In an army thus unevenly and imperfectly trained it is not surprising to hear that fire discipline was most imperfect. Some regiments began without orders to fire at the enemy at 3,000 yards distance, and could not be induced to stop until they had blazed away all their cartridges; other corps, when at close quarters with the Bulgarians, fell absolutely out of hand, were too excited to fire volleys, and kept up a wild, independent fusillade, which hit nothing. Nor is it remarkable that, after so flimsy a military education, the Servians managed their outpost duty badly, and that they exhibited a marked objection to meeting Bulgarian bayonets. With the one exception of the refusal to face cold steel, the mistakes and shortcomings of King Milan's troops would probably be reproduced by our unprofessional army in an engagement with the soldiers of any one of the great military powers. Cannot the amateur soldiers of England be roused in time to a sense of their deficiencies, and strenuously struggle to remedy them? Take, for instance, the single instance of musketry. All military authorities on the continent admit that the shooting education of the soldier must be raised to the same high level as the mechanical excellence of the arm he carries. To ensure this object, fire discipline and fire tactics are now treated as the most important elements in the training for war; and volley firing is insisted upon as more morally and physically efficacious, and more economical of ammunition than independent shoot-