

THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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CORRESPONDENCE.

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COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

The letter from a "Volunteer" last week impelled us to dig up a few statistics on the subject of military school certificates that force us to quite agree with our correspondent as to the necessity for more infantry schools in Canada. Taking as our guide the militia list of 1885, and matters are not materially improved since its publication, we find that in the active force there are, in round numbers, three thousand officers. Of these about two thousand four hundred belong to the infantry in the older parts of Canada. For the education of these there are provided three schools, each of which is allowed to take forty officers per annum for short courses, and, for special courses involving not less than seven days' residence, such numbers as can be accommodated. Taking the eleven regiments at Ottawa, Kingston, Belleville, Toronto, London, Brantford, Montreal and Quebec—where the lists are full—as examples, we find that in 1884 there were fifty-five new appointments, and ten officers holding provisional appointments. Taking eleven rural battalions with headquarters at Levis, L'Original, Lincoln, Milton, Woodstock, St. Marie, Chatham, St. Thomas, London, Sarnia and Stratford, we find that, in the same year, there were eighteen new appointments and seventy-two officers holding provisional appointments. These twenty-two regiments may be considered a fair representation of the whole force, and therefore there must have been in all about six hundred and fifty officers requiring certificates of qualification. To work

these off it would be necessary for each school to pass out, annually, about two hundred and seventeen men, which of course is simply impossible.

If we take 1884 as a fair average of the normal state of affairs, we find that in each twelve months over three hundred officers join the infantry. Now, as one hundred and twenty is the maximum number of short course certificates that can be granted, it is quite clear that, unless one hundred and eighty special certificates are also given, the power of the schools is not even equal to the new appointments. The school at Toronto is always crowded, and it is necessary for an officer to make application for admission months ahead of the time he desires to join. When the new one at London is in full swing, it will be found to have more than it can attend to in No. 1 District. We would be glad to see another established for Districts 3 and 4. In this there are fifteen regiments with an establishment of nearly four hundred commissions. Of these one hundred are held by unqualified officers and fifty-six are vacant. In the ordinary course of events the changes are about ten per cent. per annum, so that a school would not only have its work cut out from the beginning, but would scarcely be able to keep abreast of it. Unless more accommodation is afforded, the Militia Department cannot consistently enforce its own rules, and as the old Boards have been done away with we may expect to see the number of provisional appointments increase rather than diminish.

The *Winnipeg Daily Manitoban*, which has, since its organization about a year ago, proved most enterprising, and which during the rebellion gave very full and well digested accounts of all proceedings of the troops, often capitally illustrated, has now started a weekly military column with the announcement that "it is the intention to make the military column a regular feature of the Saturday issue of the *Manitoban*. English, foreign and colonial military items of interest to readers will be given. Special attention, however, will be paid to local news, and to this end it is asked that any readers who have anything of interest to communicate will kindly address the military editor, *Manitoban* office." We do not know how to express sufficiently the pleasure with which we learn this intention, and can only say now that we are sure it will be a benefit to the local forces, and that we wish the column and the paper the utmost measure of success.

We are glad to see the *Army and Navy Gazette* backing up our noodle in his crusade against the uniforms at present in vogue, and have no doubt that the agitation will result, if in nothing more radical, in the adoption of some easy and unspoilable jacket for actual service. Here are the views of our English contemporary: "'Utility' wishes to draw public attention to the great and really unnecessary expense which officers are put to, by being obliged to wear their tunics for route-marching. As on these occasions the rank and file wear their serge frocks, there would appear no good reason why officers should not be permitted to wear a red serge patrol-jacket with pockets, and the badges