

"work and that of their horses, receiving only fifty cents in lieu. Therefore they are naturally anxious to shorten the period by performing two days' drill in one, and so the work is hurried over in a perfunctory fashion; the drill instructor, who draws his forty dollars a year as such, possibly having learnt but little of the rudiments of drill, discipline, or regimental economy. A looseness and laxity of system therefore occurs which does not conduce to the first principles of training a soldier. It has been brought to my notice that rural corps ordered out for training are frequently composed of about one-half recruits, showing that men often join for one training only, with no desire to carry out the terms of their three years' enlistment unless it be convenient. Officers commanding companies are in fault for this; they are responsible for their companies under the existing law; they should not enrol men unless they know them well, their employment, their place of residence, and whether they are likely to fulfil the provisions of the Act. They are too lenient with their men, and to save themselves trouble or perhaps unpopularity, or even politics may here again interpose, they enrol new hands rather than proceed by law against the old ones to compel them, under the penalties of the Militia Act, to fulfil their terms of enrolment. All this requires looking into and a thorough reformation. Rural corps have the disadvantage of such long distances between their companies that the Lieutenant-Colonel, who has of course his daily business to attend to, can hardly supervise their details; and it may happen that the Staff Officers who make the muster and the half-yearly inspections do not always, as a rule, take minute notice of what has on the surface an appearance of being 'all correct.'

"Rural companies should be always drilled at battalion headquarters.

"In the same degree that rural company drill works badly that of city corps does well, because men can assemble in long winter evenings in the drill-sheds without loss of pay, and they look upon their drill and lectures as a recreation. I have every year opposed the system of rural company drill: it has the effect of circulating some money through the locality, and they may be convenient and satisfy local interests; it also brings a body of men together, armed and equipped for a time. But in my opinion it wastes more arms and equipments and clothing than any good that can result from it, and I shall disband every independent company not affiliated to a battalion, except in Manitoba and British Columbia; and I should suggest, if possible, in future to abstain from annual drill at company headquarters, unless the Captain holds a first-class certificate for drill and rifle instruction.

"This leads me to revert to the subject I have so often before dwelt upon—the necessity for some regimental permanent staff. The militia of Great Britain has, according to regimental strength, two

¹ The law gives a loop-hole in allowing any man to claim discharge after six months' notice. He can, and sometimes does, give notice immediately after his first training, and cannot in that case be made to attend another.