

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 228

APPENDIX B.

HEADQUARTERS STAFF.

OTTAWA, April 15, 1908.

To the Honourable

The Minister of Militia and Defence.

A considerable amount of misconception, fostered by the ill-informed report of the Civil Service Commissioners, appears to exist on the subject of the number of staff officers now employed at headquarters and on the command and district staffs. I venture to think that it is desirable to place on record a clear statement of the case.

The Commissioners have, while criticising the Militia Department and the Militia Council, assumed the truth of an allegation often heard, to the effect that the number of staff officers has, of late years, been considerably increased. They have failed, however, to make any inquiry as to the real extent and nature of whatever increase there has been, or the reasons for it.

It has more than once been advanced in the press, in criticism of the administration of the militia by successive General officers Commanding, that each one was apt to differ from his predecessor's views and to introduce a new organization. While there may have been some ground for this criticism, it is remarkable that all General Officers have been agreed on one point, at any rate, and that point was the necessity for a reorganized and augmented staff.

Major-General Herbert took over the command of the militia in December, 1890. In writing his first annual report, dated December 31, 1891, he uses the following expressions:—'The existence of an energetic and capable staff is indispensable to secure the efficiency of any military organization, whether it consist of regular or militia troops. . . . The Headquarters Staff should be the brain of the militia body whose members it is presumed to direct. . . . I am thoroughly convinced that, if the country is to receive an adequate return for its military expenditure, a reorganization of the staff is necessary. . . . A chain of responsibility, maintained by competent staff officers, must exist.' At this period, while the Headquarters Staff of the Militia was small—it consisted of only four officers—yet the District Staff was disproportionately large. It consisted of 26 officers, and it is evident from the Militia List of that date, that the normal organization for each district was supposed to be a deputy adjutant general, a brigade major, and an officer combining the duties of district paymaster and superintendent of stores.

General Herbert repeated his recommendations concerning the staff in subsequent annual reports, in one of which he said: 'Much useful work has been delayed, and proposals for the defence of the Dominion have been necessarily set aside, in consequence of difficulties arising at the outset from defective staff organization.'

When Major-General Gascoigne assumed the command of the militia in 1895, one of the recommendations contained in his first report was the following:—'As already urged by my predecessor, one of the greatest needs of the militia is a systematic organization throughout the whole service. No force which consists merely of a number of individual units, such as regiments, battalions and batteries, with no organized staff, and without those departments which clothe, feed, arm, nurse and pay the army in the field, can be looked upon as a force available for war.'

When Major-General Hutton in 1898 succeeded to the command of the militia, the following appears in his first annual report:—'There are no officers of the Cana-