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THE CANADIAN

# Military Gazette

Successor to the Canadian Militia Gazette.

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## Notes and Comments

Are the militia men assuring themselves that political candidates are solid on the militia question before pledging them their vote and support? We owe as much a duty to the force at the polls as we do when in uniform. Let us all not forget it, and we shall see a big change for the better in militia matters in Canada.

Unfortunately it has not always followed that members of the force are its best friends in parliament, but nevertheless some militiamen are necessary there, and militiamen should see to it that they get there. A retired officer or layman thoroughly friendly to the force, alive

to its shortcomings and determined to have them remedied, would be more useful, in Ottawa, however, than a member of the force not alive to its pressing requirements and capable of impressing them upon an indifferent government.

Of course there is naturally an objection to mixing up the question of defence with politics, but how is it to be helped? Things are in such a bad state with the force just now that it is doubtful whether a remedy can be effected, whether the public can be aroused to the necessity for a complete reorganization of the force without an energetic presentment of the militia's demands during the electoral campaign just inaugurated. Political agitation is a rather disgusting expedient, but it is all that is left for the militia, with the columns of the press closed to them by that insulting gag clause, which would have done credit to the dark ages. By the way, how far is that law responsible for the present position of the militia?

It is really astonishing, considering the paramount importance of the subject and the prevailing ignorance in our service regarding it, that more attention is not given to the study of tactics. The importance of tactical and strategical study is very apparent, and if once indulged in becomes almost an infatuation, it is so entertaining. It seems a pity that more of the lectures at the military institutes, which by the way are doing good work, should not be devoted to the elucidation and discussion of strategical and tactical problems.

This work could be done during

the winter months, but should be preliminary, merely to practical demonstrations in the field. One of the advantages of tactical study at home is that it leads on to tactical and strategical work in the field, for the thoughtful student feels an insatiable desire to test his theories and the principles laid down by the hand books and other authorities in the field. However well drilled and organized our force may be, it can never be thoroughly trained until it has some field training. We would like to see good honest field days in every militia centre during the coming year and the Government should doubtless assist with the expense.

We are not among those who would do away altogether with reviews and display parades for the sake of practical field work, for we believe that the time-honored Queen's Birthday review, with its picturesque *feu de joie*, its long line, its march past, its carnival of martial music and its admiring crowds, was a most useful institution for the militia. In addition to the fillip it gave to *esprit de corps*, it likewise helped amazingly with the recruiting, and kept the force before the public eye and gave it a place near the public heart. It has doubtless been one of the great mistakes of the service to deprive it of so much "pomp and panoply" as we have done. Although this is a utilitarian age, fuss and feathers still have their place in the military economy.

Still there is a place for everything, and we think that the millinery department of the militia could get along very well without quite so many feathers. Each regiment