

into existence by the patriotism of a few individuals, it has steadily advanced till it has attained the position of a truly national force—Her Majesty's army in Canada. This growth is mainly due to the same cause which gave it birth—the patriotic spirit of the people. Neither to the officers nor men who compose it does it offer any advantage, either social, political or pecuniary. On the contrary, membership in it is rather a hindrance than a benefit. It involves loss of time and loss of money, as well as a good deal of work. By politicians, it is looked upon as a political necessity. They grudge an expenditure which yields no chance of profit, and serves no party end. Yet the force is so popular in the country that they do not dare to meddle with it. The employers of labor give it no encouragement, and their men who join it do so at the risk of losing their places, as well as their time and their money. Yet under such conditions it lives, and it grows, and could at any time be largely extended. Nor is it a mere holiday force. It has always been ready for war. It rushed to arms to meet the Fenian invasion in 1866, and in 1895 it found in the North-West campaign something of the hardships and dangers of actual warfare.

If this view of the subject be the correct one—if the force as at present constituted not only best fulfils the conditions so obviously essential to any successful attempt to provide for the defence of the country—and if it is also best suited to the habits and ideas of the people, it is surely the part of wisdom to encourage and develop it—to find out its deficiencies and to endeavor to remedy them, rather than to suggest changes which would entirely alter its character, and endanger its stability.

Its deficiencies are many, most of them apparent, and all capable of remedy. The most obvious and important is that the period of service is so short, and that even during that short

period, sufficient time for instruction is not given. Men engage for three years, and during that period they *may* attend only one annual drill (I am speaking now of the rural battalions), and at most they can only attend two. To lengthen the period of service would be of no avail, for except in time of actual warfare it is useless to attempt to *compel* men to remain in the force, especially under the present system of drill. But, in the first place, the drill should be annual, which is obviously the great desideratum, and, in the second, some inducement in the shape of increased pay, however small, should be given to men who, after continuous service for three years, re-enlist for another term.

At present the man who remains in the force, and is an efficient soldier, so far as it is possible for him to become one, is entitled to no more consideration than the man who only joins for the annual drill, and is perhaps never seen again. As has been already remarked, the constant changes in the force which seem to be such a source of weakness have this countervailing advantage that they diffuse a knowledge of drill and discipline among the population, which is never altogether lost, and in case of emergency these men would be the first to come forward to fill the ranks. The proposals above made, viz., annual instead of biennial drill, and increased pay for extended service, simply involve an increase, and not a very large increase, of expenditure—an expenditure which would go directly into the pockets of the men, and which I believe Parliament would cheerfully vote.

Some inducement should also be held out to captains of companies to keep their companies together, and drill their men as often as possible. At present the captain who brings an entirely raw and undrilled lot of men to camp is on as good a footing, as regards his allowances, as the cap-