

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## VOLUNTEER OFFICERS.

To the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW :

SIR,—With reference to a statement which has recently appeared in several of the local papers, to the effect that the efficiency of Volunteer Battalions at Thorold Camp was found to be in *direct proportion* to the number of old army officers and of Military School Cadets therein. Permit me to remark that in the several Volunteer Battalions in Upper Canada, there are but four Lieut.-Colonels, one Major, one Adjutant, and five Captains, who appear, by their names being in italics, to have been old army officers; of these, two Lieutenant Colonels only, and the Adjutant were in Camp. I don't think any of the Captains were; as one Lieutenant McDowel had been gazetted not six months, and had not commanded his splendid regiment when on service at Fort Erie; and as the other had never seen his Corps till he marched them into camp, I am at present unable to see how the conclusion as to the old army officers was arrived at. From the Military Schools, Volunteer Officers were rigidly excluded for years, and they do not deserve to be taunted of—which, however, I deny—that they are inferior to Military School Cadets, who have had to be subsidized in order to induce them to acquire that knowledge, which Volunteer Officers have cheerfully paid to attain. I fearlessly assert that as a class, Volunteer officers compare as favorable in all necessary skill in commanding a corps with Military School Cadets *who are not volunteers*, as they did at Thorold with the officer who commanded the regiment of Her Majesty's forces in camp there.

FAIR PLAY.

## MILITARY SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR,—In one of our weekly local journals of this day I observe with regret, an article in it copied from the Kingston *Whig*, commenting very severely upon the management of the Military Schools of these Provinces. I do not intend for one moment to defend creating expensive staffs, nor do I know that the present one for carrying on these schools is such, but I am perfectly convinced that the idea of disseminating a knowledge of military tactics throughout our country is most desirable, whether the recipients are old or young; in fact I think that as youth is the time to mold the mind more easily, it is rather an advantage than otherwise that so many young fellows do take a pleasure in attending. In this practical age there is no fear of placing round men in square holes, nor square men in round holes, and it would indeed be the height of absurdity to place these young Cadets in high posts of responsibility, which require much worldly experience not to be attained by drilling in squads or companies,

yet I would not damp the ardor of the youth of Canada seeking the soldiers art, for there will be plenty of room for a display of their talents in the lower grades of our national army, and as years and experience creep upon them, they can step into the gaps made by time and death. In a visit I lately paid to one of these schools I could not help noticing that the young fellows there drilling, some eight in number, were from all quarters of this Western Province, and would carry back with them on their return home, all the information necessary to organize a very respectable force for our defence, and it redounds very much to the credit of those in power, when they do their utmost to regulate the attendance so that the country districts may have an equal share of this knowledge with the larger towns and cities. I should be the last man to sanction training men for service in foreign armies, at the same time I do not think it possible to legislate for all points, and the fact of men gaining knowledge here and there, enlisting in a foreign army, does not establish anything to the discredit of the party so doing, for we should be charitable, and believe that in case of our country getting drawn into a war, that the young men who select the army as their profession, would at once return, and would most certainly be none the less useful to us in our struggles, for having kept up the information taught them at our expense. There always have been persons who will cavil and carp at anything, and believe that nothing is perfect which does not originate with them, and so I fear it will be till the end of time; but in these eventful days it would be more to anyones credit to employ their spare time in doing their all, even if that amounts but to a small influence, to help on the various bureau of Government, rather than holding their laudable efforts up to ridicule and contempt.

Guelph, March 6th, 1868.

CIVIS.

## NATIONAL UNIFORMS

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Allow me to make a few remarks upon the Militia Infantry uniform and equipment. Although the British uniform, especially the typical "red coat," will, I hope, ever be regarded with pride by every loyal Canadian, yet I think upon the organization of a militia system, the Canadian citizen soldiery might have a uniform and equipment more suitable, as regards cheapness, simplicity, and serviceability, than those of the regular army.

The following I would suggest as being simple, neat and convenient. A light shako, something in the style of the French forage cap, with a front plate and plume. A short, dark grey, tunic of the Austrian cut, that is, only coming three or four inches below the belt, faced with red, with black cord; trousers the same, with red stripe; shoes and black leather gaiters. For winter a

small fur cap and an overcoat of the pattern at present issued to the line.

As regards arms and accoutrements, I would have the whole of the infantry armed with the short rifle and sword-bayonet, the arm, and the manual exercise for it being much handier and simpler than the long rifle and its manual. The overcoat, when not in use, should be strapped on the back, with straps similar to those now used; the haversacks should be of oilskin, and divided into two or three parts for rations, a change of underclothing, and other necessary articles, such as brushes, blacking, &c. This would render a knapsack unimportant. The haversack, the strap of which should have a buckle for adjusting the length, should be worn on the left side, and rather to the rear. The mess tin and water bottle might be made fit into a leather case to be buckled into the waste belt behind. For carrying ammunition, I would suggest a leather satchel, closing with a spring, suspended at the right side, a little in rear of the hip, by a broad buckled strap over the left shoulder. This would hold sixty rounds with ease, and be much more convenient than the clumsy pouches now in use. The satchel, haversack, waist belt, sling, straps &c., all to be black.

Infantry supplies somewhat as above mentioned, and particularly instructed in skirmishing and outpost duty, &c., would be found most useful for the service, which would, in general, be required of them.

ESSEX.

## SOLDIERS UNIFORMS.

To the Editor of the U.S. Army and Navy Journal.

SIR: Having read in the "Journal" several communications on the subject of "Uniform," all penned I suppose by officers, I have determined to see if I could make myself heard as a member of the "rank and file."

We don't want more ornaments, as some of your correspondents suggest, but we want a uniform, both "full" and "fatigue" that is not worn by two thirds of the beggars, hack-drives, milkmen, and canalers, in the land. We are not ashamed of the "wearing of the blue;" not at all, but in a certain measure we are proud of it. I for one am proud to have worn it so long, worn it in the old Army, in the Volunteers, and now, since unfitted for duty in field I am proud of it still in the ranks of the Veteran Reserve Corps. But it is plain no soldier who has any of the true soldier in him, can go outside of his own barracks without having his pride somewhat taken down when he sees the counterpart of his uniform on the back of half the mendicants or woodsawyers he meets.

I am sure that this is one great cause of dissatisfaction among the very class of soldiers who are the best men in the ranks. In civil life you could not expect a man to willingly and cheerfully work at a business if the everyday circumstances connected with it tended to lower his self esteem. How then can a soldier be expected to feel satisfied at seeing parts of his dress worn by all those who cannot afford to get a better dress?

Some one may say you must not expect to see a change as long as the Government has such a surplus of clothing on hand. If