

Discontent.

What oft on hasty view we swift condemn
 As metal base, on calm and close survey
 Becomes the purest gold. Thus Discontent.
 How oft attacked! How little understood!
 A moment but reflect, its worth appears.
 How endless our desires! We have, we lack,
 No rest we find, nor shall this side the grave:
 Our soul thirst never slaked, nor life complete,
 Till filled our eye with sight of Him who gave
 The life, and in our souls implanted deep
 The thirst divine: of immortality
 The augury sure; of destiny high the proof;
 Of Heaven or Hell the germ: of joy the source,
 Yet of our joy the assassin. From present gains
 No satisfaction flows. Our joys are those
 Of foretaste. Long we strive and spend our strength,
 And fain would find in what above us lies
 Our full content. This prize hard toil attains.
 But where the satisfaction? Further fled
 We have but pitched our tents and would enjoy
 Our labour's meed. But no. Strike them again
 We must. No pleasure now possession gives:
 Still higher points the finger of the soul.
 For at our touch the vision melts in forms
 In shape again beyond our reach, and lures
 Us on, our souls enamoured still of that
 Boon coveted, which e'er eludes our grasp
 Yet no detraction this, still on we press:
 The hungry soul nor wearies of the chase:
 The seeming failure but renews its youth.
 Thus wisdom high is seen in each defeat.
 For what's the resurrection that awaits
 The soul that's satisfied with earthly things?
 Such soul is dead and n'er to be renewed.
 Our souls superior rise to earth's best gifts
 And still for satisfaction crave. Whence then
 This pearl of price to come? Still further from
 Above: above the earth, time, man himself,
 From heaven, eternity and life in God.
 O Discontent divine! no vice art thou
 But Virtue pure, and lacking which no soul
 That lives shall ever find its goal—its God.

W. M. H.

Toronto's Militia.

A DEPUTATION recently went to Ottawa for the purpose of trying to obtain permission from the Dominion Government to raise and equip in Toronto a brigade of garrison artillery or so many batteries of position.

Now every one is agreed that it is necessary to strengthen our forces and to increase the efficiency of those already existing. The question is how is this best to be done? If creating another corps in Toronto is the best way by all means let such a corps be formed. But those who are in a position to judge say that such is not the best but the very worst way of doing it.

These people say: first, we have no use for garrison artillery; second, we have no means of officering it efficiently; third, we have no heavy ordnance; fourth, we have no garrison fortifications. Besides this they say it has been tried before and proved a failure.

What these opponents urge with pertinence is this, that we have already a field battery, a regiment of cavalry, and three regiments of infantry. That these are all, with the possible exception of the cavalry, short of officers, and that they are only maintained in their present state of comparative efficiency by the unwearied efforts and pecuniary sacrifices of both officers and men. These should be made more efficient, say the opponents, before a new corps is created.

To begin with the field battery, Major Mead is a thoroughly smart soldier, knows his work and can do it, but he has not the whole of the officers the regulations allow him. Besides this, the guns he uses are now obsolete and ought to be replaced. The G.G.B.G. are fine troops, and well officered, but their armament is as regards much of it old fashioned, out of date, and calls for renewal. Take the Infantry Battalions, the Queen's Own Rifles are above strength a long way, so are the Grenadiers and 48th; but the extra men are clothed, by whom? The Dominion Government. Not a bit of it, but by the officers and men of the respective regiments.

Every cent of pay received by officers, N.C.O.'s, and men is cheerfully given up for the collective good of each battalion from a sheer spirit of *esprit de corps*. But not only this, the commissioned officers, both combatant and non-combatant, give large subscriptions each year in accordance with their rank, and these are practically compulsory. "There is no compulsion, only they must."

If Government would increase the authorized strength of the Queen's Own and Grenadiers from 42 to 55 men per company; if they would do the same in the 48th, and add two companies to its establishment, making it the same as the other two regiments; if they would provide them with proper arms and make a larger allowance for drill instruction, so that greater attention could be paid to recruits drill; if they would give commanding officers a paid adjutant and shrieve-major to be on duty all the year round, they would do far more to increase the efficiency of our defences than by adding a regiment of garrison artillery which few want and of which still fewer see the need. T. E. C.

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One of Our Boys.

WHEN he came up to the college as a recruit, he was so fair and so absurdly young that he was christened "Baby Mine," and the name stuck to him. In due course he was inducted into the mysteries of the "T-square," learned to wear his handsome cadet uniform, and to speak modestly of the "R.M.C. and the rest of the British army." Then there came a day when he became an integral part of that army, and looked for the last time on the fort and the parade ground that overlook the harbour of the limestone city.

The little army that wears red has many odd jobs to do, all round the world of which the newspapers hear nothing. In the year 1892, for instance, there was a small expeditionary force somewhere in the jungles of East Africa that had to negotiate a palisaded native village. It was an obstinate village, and somebody had to blow the gate in. The duty fell to our Canadian subaltern. "He had been so hard-working all the way up," writes his superior officer, "that everyone was full of admiration for his soldierlike qualities, but our just appreciation of him was heightened, if possible, when we saw his magnificent conduct under fire. He was as cool as on parade, fired his rockets and watched their effect with interest, and when at last he was asked to blow in the gate agreed at once. He ran back a good distance for his explosives and then with an 'All right, Major, I will be back in a minute,' was through the first fence and up to the gate." His nerve was apparently better than that of the sapper who was to help him. When you come to think of it, it is something of a risk to carry an infernal machine up to people who are shooting at you with intent to kill. "The man carrying the gun cotton did not follow him past the fence, so ——— returned and himself carried up and fixed the charge. It was a beautiful thing to see him calmly lying down amidst the rattle of firearms at the gate, and forcing the detonator as if he were at practice in the school." It seems to have been a clean piece of work, and the workman got off for the time without a scratch. In spite of the loss of their gate, the obstinacy of the village continued. They even sustained two charges. Our Canadian, "who had been in each time, with his men, was at the end of the second charge, shot through the heart and lungs and fell dead. I ran to him at once, but as I lifted him to bear him off I saw that he was dead."

Here the letter shows an un-English amount of feeling, and an eloquent contempt for mere grammar. It is not at all like the ordinary official despatch. "Such a good fellow, such a soldier, and just slain at the moment when we were all full of admiration for him, at the moment when he had so distinguished himself, and gained without doubt such a recognition as the soldier covets. I would he had lived to wear it." That is his epitaph.

The attack seems to have failed, and our people had to retreat. But our boy was not left to vultures and the jackals. He was carried back, although the natives hung about the rear, and fired the bush to cut off the retreat. By his side marched his faithful negro servant. Then the next morning the body was given Christian burial. "All were present except Major Browne, who was badly wounded, and Captain Doyle, who was sick. We fired a volley three times, blew a flourish, and came away with very heavy hearts."

There were other heavy hearts in a country very far from Africa, when this news reached them, and some that will ache over it till they cease to beat. He was only one of our boys who fell as he did his duty—his plain duty, nothing more. And yet there are some people who think the R. M. C. ought to be abolished. ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN.