

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

DEAR SIR:—In your issue of yesterday you have been pleased again to refer to certain opinions which I entertain as to simplification of drill, as a prepared system. Permit me, while thanking you for your very kind remarks, to deprecate the ascription of any undue importance to my ideas, and, with this view, to explain their nature and what I have actually done with regard to them.

Struck by the facts that we have now practically no drill between the annual drills—that the squads of recruits will inevitably be larger each year than the present system remains unimproved—and that there is consequently no sufficient time to produce any precision through squad drill, in company movements, as squad drill exists—certain principles appeared to me to offer the facilities needed to meet this condition of things to some extent, by admitting of the performance of one or two of the most necessary formations and movements with the least possible amount of instruction.

In sequence to these primary ideas I proposed to reduce the bulk of the F. E. by the elision of certain sections of squad and company drill altogether, and the shortening of others by cutting out a great deal not necessary to rough-and-ready rapidity of instruction.

I submitted a mere outline sketch of my ideas to the Adjutant General, who as I expected beforehand, did not find himself in a position to sanction any facilities for their trial, though he, with great kindness and courtesy, favored me, at considerable length, with his own opinion on various points of drill.

I am, dear Sir, &c.,

G. W.

FROM MONTREAL.

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

A letter to the *Gazette*, under the signature of "A. J. G.," expounds in a very clear manner the uselessness and worthlessness of the Militia Act of 1868. After very clear explanatory passages he says, "In short, the system of defence embodied in this Bill is simply a delusion and a snare, as any system must be which makes of Volunteers the first and only line of defence, instead of placing them in the position they should occupy, viz., that of a reserve or auxiliary force." The point seemed to be aimed at is that every able bodied man should undergo a system of training to fit him for duties in the event of war. A modification of the Prussian system is quite adaptable to us. The question is, are we or are we not prepared to assert our rights as a nation, and if we are there is but one alternative—we must drill to a man or otherwise perfect our-

selves, so that in time of need we have but to step in. The practical experience of the Act so far has been to the effect that volunteering has not attained the results desired. "A. J. G." concludes in this spirited style: "There is indeed but one system that can avail us; one which must be gradual but compulsory in its operations. When a standing army of any consequence is out of the question, it were as wise to think of carrying on the machinery of the Government by voluntary contributions as to propose creating an official defence, of which the Volunteer system shall be the main if not the only feature. If the people are willing there can be no reason why, in a comparatively few years, and with a very small sacrifice of each individual's time, every Canadian should not be fitted to take his place at a moment's notice in the ranks, and with a very considerable knowledge of a soldier's duty. If they are not willing, then let them without more ado give up the dream of founding on this continent a separate and enduring nationality."

All very true, and the sooner the fact is recognized the better for the Dominion.

The removal of the headquarters of the troops from Montreal in the Spring is anticipated with regret. Montreal cannot but be the looser from the fact, and we will after that time be dependent upon Volunteer turn outs for any military display.

It is generally understood that several companies in this city have tendered their services for Red River in the spring. It is intended to garrison the forts there with Volunteers, the term of duty not to exceed three years, pay and discipline to be equal to that of a standing army.

Though aware of companies having tendered their services for a length of time, in the absence of anything official it is premature and useless to propound theories and appear wise, so shall hear soon enough when anything definite has been agreed upon.

Capt. Muir and his, No. 1, troop turned out for inspection last week, a large muster being made only two being absent. They assembled in the Drill Hall and looked as they always do, every one of them a soldier.

Col. Bacon was the Inspecting Officer and one would fancy by the minute and careful inspection of them, their arms and accoutrements, that he had made up his mind to find fault with them. Their carbines and saddlery were then closely examined, and the result was as one might imagine highly creditable to the troop. Col. Bacon expressed his satisfaction at the result of his examination. Capt. Muir, and Drill Instructor, Col. Lovelace, need no puffing from my pen, their reputation is too well known, and as for the men of No. 1 Troop, they would compare favourably with regular cavalry.

Another batch of returning Zouave will arrive here at the end of next month, or as a French contemporary says "gallant heroes

returning from gallant deeds done," and we may add in same strain when they have returned they will be "warriors taking their rest."

The Volunteer police news, with which I will keep you posted, this week comprises one of the "Mount Royals," up for a petty offence. All quiet among the Chasseurs.

B.

REVIEWS.

"The Soldier's Pocket Book for Field Service," by Col. J. G. Wolseley, Deputy Quarter Master General in Canada, London, McMillan & Co., 1869.

"The Hand-Book for Field Service," by Br. General Lefroy, R.A., F.R.S., with the aid of several contributors. Fourth edition, revised. Woolwich, John M. Boddy, 36 Artillery Place, 1867.

To such as have made military science a study—not mere drill, nor even only the broader fields of strategy and tactics, but those problems of perhaps still greater importance to the officer of the national force of Canada, involved in the treatment of men and bodies of men, the recent work of Col. Wolseley contains matters of the deepest interest. Of high import to the rising generation of regular officers, it has also a peculiar significance to those of the Dominion Militia.

It is probable that it has occurred to many a Volunteer officer who, unbiassed by the customs and traditions of the army, has given the subject any consideration from the stand-point of a natural man's common sense, that the relations generally existing between officer and man in Her Majesty's Regular Service are altogether overstrained in the excess of their distance. I know that although brought up in a school of the strictest discipline myself, this has struck me very forcibly ever since I first began to give serious consideration to the best mode of working a service efficiently.

A great many of us know a little of Col. Wolseley by having served under his command, and most of us know by reputation that he is one of the best practical staff-officers in the army. His authority may, therefore, be rated very highly. To the Canadian Volunteer who cherishes the hope that he may one day prove his ability to command a Militia regiment with satisfaction to his men and to his government, and credit to himself, it is essential that careful study of the existing conditions of different forms of military service, a deep and broad forethought, a habit of mind open to receive few impressions, yet cautious in judging their value, and an almost intuitive perception of the tendencies of those changes, moral, physical, scientific, which, in these latter days pass over us so continuously and so rapidly, should, as far as possible, supply the place of that actual experience in which most of us are deficient.

The exercise of these means, powers, and