

Universal Training Discussed in the Senate

On 4th June, 1913, the Senate debated the "Improvement of Defence Forces in Canada," the introductory speech being made by Hon. L. G. Power, of Halifax. It was full of good points. The following extracts are of special interest:

Hon. Mr. Power said (in part): The matter to which I desire to call the attention of the House is a very important one. . . . In the first place, I think every hon. gentleman will admit that Canada requires an efficient defence force. There is probably no question about that; and the fact that Canada has great wealth and resources only partially developed offers a great temptation to aggression; and it will be too late to prepare to resist when the crisis has come, and when the aggressor has got into the country.

. . . . Almost contemporaneously with the development of the volunteer movement in England, there was a volunteer movement, of course on a much smaller scale, in Nova Scotia. A law was passed, which I really think was on the whole probably as useful and good a law as I know of, with respect to the militia, requiring every male inhabitant of the Province, from the age of 16 to 45, to turn out and drill for practically a week in each year; and the result was that in that small province, with a population of only about 350,000, in the year 1867 there were drilled nearly 45,000 men. That is more than have been drilled in the whole Dominion of Canada during the past year. . . . The men were not paid. They did not expect to be paid. No one was. It was not looked upon as a grievance at all. . . . and, it must be remembered, these men were drilled year after year. As it is in Canada, probably half the men who are drilled this year are not drilled next year. I do not see why we cannot do in Canada as a whole something like what was done in Nova Scotia long ago. . . . The whole militia service in Nova Scotia for the year 1867 cost something less than \$100,000, and we are spending now between ten and eleven millions and do not drill as many men as they did in Nova Scotia forty-six years ago.

Col. Sinclair was the adjutant-general of the Nova Scotia militia, and he was really the man who framed the Nova Scotia law under which that province worked for