

CORRESPONDENCE.

The Editor does not hold himself responsible for individual expressions of opinion in communications addressed to the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

DEAR SIR—Would you kindly inform me if there is any truth in the report that our Government intend sending a Canadian Brigade to the Autumn Manœuvres of 1873, and also if it is possible to obtain regulation cross belts, swords, and sword belts (for officers) from the Government Stores, and if so at what prices?

An answer in your next will greatly oblige.

A VOLUNTEER.

We have to inform our correspondent Volunteer that the Government have not as yet entertained the question of sending a Brigade to England, although its political and moral effect would be of great advantage to our general and local interests.

There are no swords or sword belts for officers at present in store, the intentions of the Militia Department with respect to renewing the supply have not yet been declared.

ED. VOL. REV.

MONTREAL.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

Who are the drill instructors of the Volunteer force? they are captains and commanding officers; in some cases with certificates, and in other cases without; as to the eligibility of such, of course speaking more generally of this section of the country, there is no question that in this matter there is great need of reform. In other words the \$20,000 that is annually given as instructor fees for the instruction of the Volunteer force is not spent in its legitimate channel, but simply in many cases pocketed by the officers, or given to inferior men who have no more knowledge of the drill than the men in the moon. How is it possible for an officer to be instructor for his own company when he himself knows next to nothing about it; yet that man draws Government allowance, his company virtually goes without instruction, I should be sorry to state that this is the rule, there are exceptions, but I dare not assert that such are few and far between. In Montreal, that boasted of a staff of six or seven effective officers, these men have nearly all left, but the drill allowance is still drawn.

It is certainly degrading to the service to see the captains, self-styled instructors, acting sergeants duty, and also pitiful to witness officers when at drill overlooking mistakes, simply because they are unable to correct or explain them, although the regulations say most distinctly that to be drill instructor to a company, the party must have a second class and for a battalion a first class certificate, when it is a notorious

fact that many draw pay as instructors who have no certificates.

Truly in this matter the whole thing wants sifting, what is required is, say four competent drill instructors, men who will do their work without fear or favor, and who have no interest but in their duty. These instructors to exact off the officer the same attention as they do off the men, and to see that they know and do their several duties, we would then not witness such sights as was witnessed during previous camps, of officers acting actually as drill instructors, making fools of themselves, and unable to execute the simplest movements; no wonder the men under such command are raw and undisciplined. Forty thousand dollars is annually spent or allowed to drill instructors, of this Montreal receives say two thousand and four hundred, distributed as follows:—

(\$40 per company.)

Victoria Rifles, 6 Cos.....	\$240
Prince of Wales, 6 Cos.	240
Mount Royals, " "	240
Hochelaga Light Infantry, 4 Cos	160
Artillery 6 Cos.	240
2 Engineer Corps	80
1 Cavalry	40
Stevenson's Battery	200
Grand Trunk Rifles 6 Cos.....	240
" Artillery 6 Cos.	240
" Engineers 1 Co.....	40

\$1960

Add to this salary of instructors at military schools, which is \$400, and you have in round numbers \$2400. This would give a salary of \$600 to four competent instructors, and whose services could also be utilized at the military school. I will be bound to say that in a very short time we would present a very different state of affairs, both officers and men would then take a pride in posting themselves up, and a spirit of rivalry would then prevail, which could not but have a salutary effect.

As matters now stand, an officer dare not be severe with the men, he would soon lose a number of them, so he has to go and beg, and put up with little short of insubordination. An outside drill instructor would proceed fearlessly with his duty, the officers could but say to their men while under the instructor's orders, "we cannot interfere, you must do what is required of you—your duty."

With respect to the differences that exist between Colonel Bond and Major Robinson of the Prince of Wales Rifles there has been a great deal of cross fire and recriminations, and it would be well for all parties concerned were a strict investigation held, and the matter fully ventilated. Mr Hunt the popular bandmaster of the Grand Trunk Brigade was the recipient of a complimentary dinner rendered him by the brigade.

Over sixty persons sat down to a sumptuous repast served by Host McGlennaghan in a very creditable style; Major Doran occupying the chair. The viands having received full attention, the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were given and heartily drunk, the band playing an appropriate air to each. In responding to "The Volunteers," Capt. Atkinson dwelt particularly on the decline of the volunteer force in this city and demonstrated that the real cause was the illiberal and ungenerous policy pursued by the employers. He mentioned several

instances of harsh treatment undergone by volunteers at the hands of the mercantile community, and declared that in many cases the fact of a young man being a volunteer barred him from obtaining employment. So far is this opposition carried that competitors at the rifle matches frequently only obtain absence from business by feigning sickness, and then have to shoot under an assumed name.

The remarks of the speaker were frequently interrupted by the hearty endorsements of the company.

This has become a notorious fact, the greatest enemies of the volunteers are their employers, whose selfishness denies to their men the short time requisite for drill.

In proposing the toast of the evening the chairman spoke in very complimentary terms of Mr. Hunt, the sentiments being heartily endorsed by the enthusiastic applause of the company. In the course of his remarks, Major Doran took occasion to mention a fact not known to many, viz., that the Grand Trunk band, has frequently given its services gratuitously and at no little sacrifice for charitable purposes, and later on Mr. Hunt in alluding to the foregoing testified to the willingness always manifested among the members to engage in such works.

In responding to the toast Mr. Hunt said he was quite at a loss to know why he had been made the recipient of such honors; he had tried to do his duty, if he had succeeded it gave him great pleasure and he would ever strive to go on in the same path.

The evening was enlivened by several selections by the band and songs by the members of the company, which made the time fly so pleasantly that it was far in the "wee sun hours" ere the last "good night" was said.

The dining room was tastfully decorated with handsome flags and devices in swords and bayonets.

On the 12th the Prince of Wales Rifles celebrated the birthday of the Prince of Wales, by a concert in the Mechanics Hall, in behalf of the General Hospital.

The walls of the Drill shed are being covered in for protection from injury from the frost.

Horse epidemic fast dying out.

B.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Our Montreal correspondent discloses a very discreditable state of affairs in connection with the Volunteer force of that city, and one that requires attention from the District Staff as well as the Headquarters.

We cannot conceive how any gentleman holding the rank of Captain, could be ignorant of the necessary qualifications to drill his own corps. The rules of the service demands that he should hold a proper certificate of qualification, and we are of opinion no authority should interfere between him self and his men. The affairs of drill instructor is not necessarily that of drill sergeant. An adjutant is properly nothing but a drill instructor and if we are to have soldiers they should learn their discipline from their own officers.

Still the whole affair is discreditable to the local force, and a remedy should be found for it at once, our only fault with the present system is that it copies too closely that of the regular army, and the various staff officers do not look more closely after their commands.

There is only one remedy for the selfishness of the Commercial class and that is to embody and drill the population of all incorporated villages, towns or cities without exemption except physical disability.

ED. VOL. REV.