

A VISIT THROUGH THE BARRACKS.

LET THE BIG FIGHT WAIT!

(During the past few months, much has been heard regarding the absence of an 'entente cordiale' between the men of the St. Johns Garrison and the townsfolk of St. Johns, and on every possible occasion, the old familiar bogey has been trotted out.

So far as St. Johns is concerned, and whatever may be the conditions which exist in other parts of the Province of Quebec, we have always been at a loss to quite understand how such an impression may have originated.

Recently, in looking through the local French Canadian newspaper, —the Canada Français—, the writer came across the following article. Under the circumstances, it is a pleasure to reproduce, in part, the article referred to.

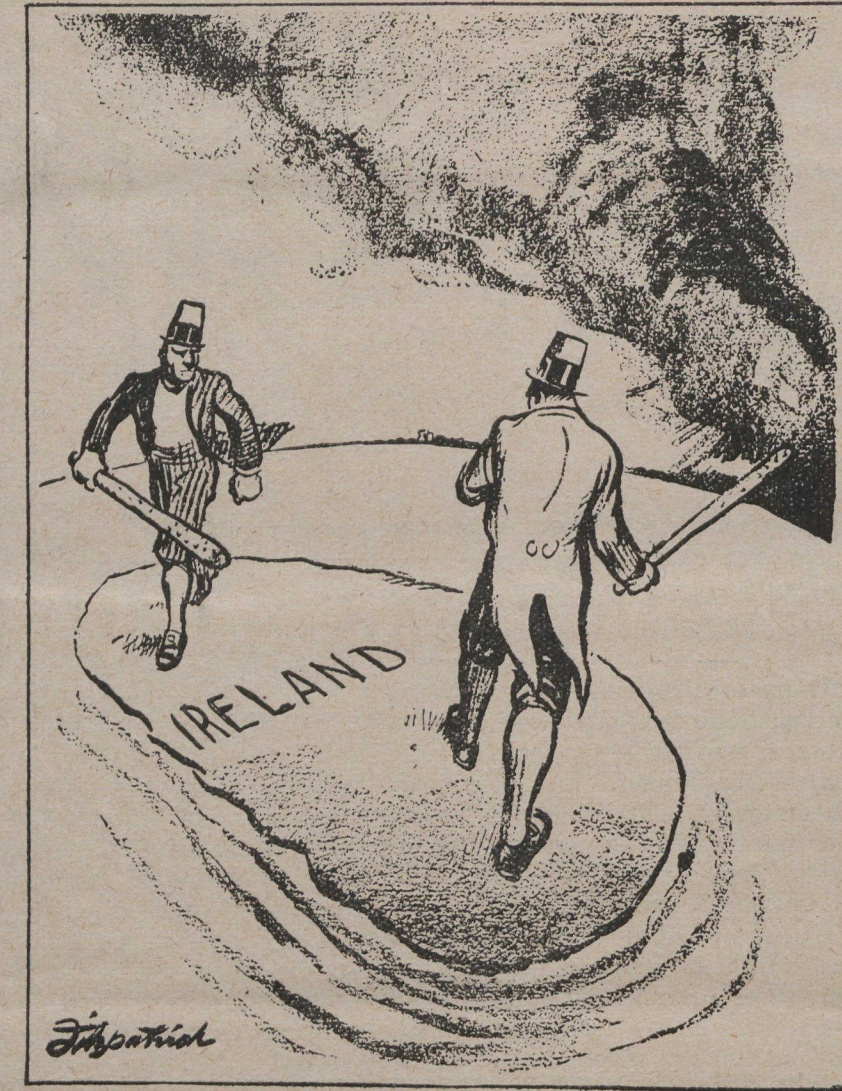
May we express the hope that the notable example afforded by the men of the St. Johns Garrison and their cordial relations with the French-Canadians of St. Johns, may serve as an example which should go far toward pointing the way to a truly harmonious and lasting friendship between the two great branches of the Canadian People).

We are indebted to the courtesy of Col. W. W. Melville, O.C. Engineer Training Depot, of this City, for the privilege of visiting the Military Barracks of St. Johns.

We were cordially received by the Colonel himself and all Officers in charge were ready to help make our visit easy and agreeable.

It would be impossible, owing to lack of space, to give a complete description of the Engineers Training Depot, but we will surely be permitted to say that we have seen one of the best kept and most orderly Military establishments in Canada. Cleanliness is most strictly adhered to in all departments and all that seemed to be in ruins before Col. Melville arrived here has been put in order and appears as though new. Moreover, we visited two newly constructed buildings which were necessary and as they were built by members of the military force the cost of same was greatly reduced.

The Military Establishment at St. Johns constitutes practically a small City. The organization is so complete, one may see besides the numerous offices required for an Administration of such importance, an office for the examination of the new conscripts, a Medical Office, a Pharmacy, a general Store (where will be found uniforms, arms, saddles, harness, picks, shovels, ropes and tools for all



trades), a Bakery shop, Butcher shop, an immense kitchen well fitted and properly kept, a Dining room, that actually receives three times per day not less than 1600 men.

At the side of the men's quarters will be found a Stable which is remarkable for its cleanliness, a fodder house, a hospital for sick horses and a department for the necessary medical treatment. One Veterinary and two helpers are in charge of the hospital.

In one of the buildings near the entrance to the Barracks, another Hospital is to be seen. This one is for the soldiers of the garrison and generally cases of slight importance are treated here, although several operations for appendicitis have been performed successfully. There is a Doctor in charge with one Nurse and two expert helpers, and the few patients who occupied the rooms declared that they were perfectly treated in every way.

Since the beginning of the War there has passed through the Barracks at St. Johns more than 10,000 men and of this number there has never been returned a single man as physically unfit nor a single Officer returned as being Military incapable. This alone is a very strong note for the Commandant

and it is easy to see with what care he directs the institution confided to him. Of a Military career and having served in France up to the autumn of 1916, Col. Melville is thoroughly conversant with practical military life and directs the same in a practicable fashion. This year he is training men with the knowledge of field life and in order to give them an occasion to do proper work he has in cultivation 15 arpents which are not in use around the barrack buildings. The sides of these buildings will be covered with flowers and a hot bed for young vegetable plants has also been made. We said that the Depot constituted a small town; with the above complimentary details it suddenly becomes a pretty little country where the soldiers are the spoiled children of the Commandant, outside the hours of rigid discipline.

The Colonel assures us that he regrets the errors made by some of the soldiers in the town, and that he severely punishes any of the guilty ones that are brought to his attention. He also assures us that he uses every effort to assure good conduct by all his men in the City as well as in barracks. Anyhow any trouble that happened was caused by strange Units, who

were simply passing through here. If by any chance any of his soldiers should cause a disturbance, Col. Melville prays all citizens to immediately bring the matter to his knowledge and he will see that justice is promptly dealt out and the guilty punished as he cares not only for the good name of his soldiers but the tranquility of the citizens.

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