

commanders in South Africa, because we know that, sooner or later, some Home General will, in a foolish struggle with the name of one of the Dutch supporters of Oom Paul, contract lockjaw. But we entertain a strong feeling of dislike for the foolish political partisans who, unable to postpone the day of reckoning with their opponents, are continually carking and bickering about the arrangements made regarding Canada's share in the responsibilities of the Empire. Let us refrain from petulant altercation until the smoke cloud of battle has blown away from the distant British possessions where our boys are standing shoulder to shoulder with other Soldiers of the Queen.

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**The Canadian Disposition.**

Rational, calm, cool, inclined to look at all things in a philosophical manner; Such would seem to be a fair description of the disposition of the young Canadian. This opinion is expressed after careful perusal of the published letters written to parents and friends by some of our soldiers in South Africa. What could be better as an indication of the character of the writer, than the following extract from the letter of a volunteer from the royal town of Guelph. Any father or mother may well be proud of a boy who closes a long looked for letter in such a cheerful, thoughtful strain as this: "Well, I can only wish you all a good jolly Christmas and a happy New Year. I hope none of you are worrying about me at all, for I will be all right, and even if I am unfortunate enough to be hit with a bullet, there is time enough to worry when it is all over."

"I have written you two letters since landing, but you must not expect to hear from me often, as it is, as I say, quite a job to write, and then in time it may be quite impossible. I will have lots of strange things to talk about when I come home, and will think myself quite an important member of the family, having travelled so much."

This bright lad from Guelph will, we hope, live to see himself not only "an important member" of his family, but a much-respected alderman of the town he hails from.

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**Compulsory Drill.**

When our country's cause provokes to arms,  
How martial music every bosom warns!

The arousal of the people of the British Isles to a knowledge of the serious nature of the task imposed upon them by President Kruger, has been the means of kindling a blaze of military ardor which seems likely to lead to a radical re-organization of the British army. The daily sound of martial music, the tramp of armed men en route to stations and troopships, and the long lists of the dead and wounded, have transformed the "nation of shopkeepers" into a nation of soldiers. From all parts of the country the British

Government is receiving advice, and in almost every instance, the suggestions made point to such a modification of the existing volunteer system as will make 1,000,000 trained soldiers available whenever

"Our country's cause provokes to arms."

One writer reminds us that, although the potential strength of the Empire is equal to that of the greatest Power in the world, "wars, and the disputes of which wars are the ultimate solution, are determined, not by latent energies, but by organized force." He, therefore, suggests that, for three years, volunteering should be compulsory—if such a contradiction in terms can be allowed—on every able-bodied man between 20 and 45 years of age. For three years every man might be compelled to join his local volunteer corps, and attend once a week for drill. To encourage this movement, other suggestions are made having for their object Government provision of more rifle ranges and ammunition at a nominal charge, so as to encourage constant practice at the butts.

We like the plan extremely, and wish it may, if adopted, extend to Canada. There are difficulties in this country as there will be in Great Britain—difficulties arising out of the provision of places for drilling, the finding and maintenance of horses for a strong mounted arm, etc.—but none of these should be insuperable to money and expert advice on either side of the Atlantic. Compulsory drilling of every able-bodied man, apart from the grim purpose of such a movement, is an excellent suggestion. It would be a splendid system of physical education, and any opponent of such a scheme should spend an evening at the Victoria Rifles Armoury, or in the Drill Shed of Montreal, and watch a class of recruits being taught to stand erect, to handle a rifle, and to walk always as undrilled men only do when they hear the sound of martial music. Drill, ye citizens, drill.

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**"FIRE CHEMISTRY AND FIRE PREVENTION."**

Such is the title of a handbook for insurance surveyors, works managers and all interested in fire risks and their diminution. The work is based upon two courses of lectures delivered by one of the authors to an audience composed of gentlemen connected with the Fire Insurance Profession.

The need for a text-book dealing mainly with the Chemistry of Fire Insurance matters having frequently been brought before the notice of the authors, the lectures, considerably extended and re-arranged, are now published in this volume.

The book is the work of Mr. Herbert Ingle, F.I.C., F.C.S., and Mr. Harry Ingle, Ph.D. (Munich), and they claim that every man interested in danger conditions, and how to find them, and the simplest and best means of preventing and extinguishing fires, ought to have a copy of their book.