

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF
THE MILITIA FOR 1872.

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3rd BRIGADE DIVISION.—Lieut. Col. McCulley,
Brigade Major.

In addition to the 1st and 8th Regiments of Cavalry, No. 7, and the half battalion 14th, assembled in camp with their respective corps already referred to, 2nd Brigade Division, I inspected the following artillery corps, in conjunction with Lieut. Colonel Iago, acting in his capacity as inspector of artillery.

Newcastle Field Battery.—Captain Hall.

Lieut. Colonel Iago reports that he inspected this battery, at Newcastle, on Sept. 30th. This battery turned out for eight days' drill in camp this year. Captain Hall appears to have a good deal of difficulty, from local causes, about re-enrolling his men and horses; but he informed him that he had now determined to adhere to the proper system of enrolling a field battery, and to take no drivers from any but the farming class.

Lieut. Col. Iago had much pleasure in reporting favourably upon this battery last year, and if Capt. Hall adheres to his rule, and uses the energy he has noticed in him, he has great hopes that he will have a thoroughly good battery next summer.

No. 7 Battery, Chatham.—Battery Major Gillespie.

Inspected at Chatham on Sept. 28. As Lieut. Colonel Iago previously stated, the best part of this battery attended the St. John camp; and though the men here were fairly drilled, they compared badly with their comrades who had accepted the greater advantages of instruction. There are two 24 pounder guns at this place, and a slight expenditure of money would lay down platforms, build a side arm shed and otherwise provide a proper muster place for the battery—whilst, at the same time, doing much for the defence of Miramichi.

I may add that Major Gillespie has been desired to estimate for this service.

7th Battalion—Lieutenant Colonel Ferguson.

I inspected this corps in camp, near Chatham, on the 19th August, on completing its eight days' training.

Originally composed of five (5) companies and one company having failed to re-enroll the battalion assembled in camp below its authorized strength.

However, the Lieut. Colonel with his usual energy is taking such steps as will, I doubt not, ensure the battalion being completed to six (6) efficient companies—mainly composed of farmers (their interest identical)—at an early day.

This corps, I consider, has hitherto had some serious drawbacks to its complete efficiency. Varying interests represented in its ranks—farmers, mechanics, fishermen and merchants—all loyal and patriotic though they unquestionably were, it was difficult to select such time for the performance of the annual drill as would prove convenient to the majority. Hence it was necessary to assemble in camp for the shorter period—eight days—without the advantages of pay, of rank, government rations, &c.; and of course the training could neither be as interesting or instructive as that of other corps at Brigade camps under the improved system.

But, as above stated, these difficulties will

be shortly overcome; and I must say the result of the inspection was an satisfactory as could be expected. Excellent staff and good company officers, considering that but few have yet attended the military school; men well drilled and well conducted—on no better foundation could the reorganized battalion be placed.

Bathurst and Dalhousie Infantry Companies.
Captains Burns and Barbano.

I inspected these companies at their local headquarters on the 15th and 16th August respectively; but their re-organization not having been completed at that time, the inspection was necessarily imperfect. They were subsequently inspected by the Brigade Major, on the 14th and 15th October, who reports that the former company "mustered strong, and the men seemed willing to do duty. In the latter company but few men came to drill"—the captain was absent.

The vitality and stability of our present system have this year been fairly tested in the enrolment and re-enrolment of the force, at a time, too, when the supply and demand in the case of every article of utility was abundant, labourers alone in town or villages being scarce. At such a time, it is gratifying to observe that this institution has been maintained by the representative men of the country, not those belonging to the migratory class—mercenaries, who, as a rule, join the ranks of standing armies.

I may here state that it does not always appear to be clearly understood, by the "outsiders," that in the "Canadian Army" the word volunteering is only applicable to the act of joining the force, and once enrolment has taken place, the term ceases to have any meaning, as the force should not have in the ranks, a man not prepared to make such exertions and sacrifices as the regulations demand.

Happily, the force is no better known as the "Active Militia" than the "Volunteer Militia."

I may add that, whether our force be maintained by voluntary enrolment or compulsory means, as provided by law, should the former fail, it is satisfactory to know that it is neither the intention nor the desire of the authorities, from the Minister of Militia the Adjutant General downwards, to issue and enforce such arbitrary rules as would render the service the slightest degree distasteful to those taking part in its duties by materially interfering with their industrial pursuits.

On the contrary it will be shown that no efforts are spared to secure the maximum of efficiency with the minimum of the cost of labour. In the first place it is desired that District Staff Officers, and all others concerned in making arrangements for carrying "the instruction" into effect, will give due consideration to the convenience of the militia generally, in regard to the season of the year which will be most suitable for the performance of the annual drill.

2nd. The Adjutant General's "regulations" provide for the systematic performance of the duties in camps of exercise, so that both officers and men are now expected to know their duty and do it, on the principle of carrying individual responsibility downwards within the corps, through its various elements—the same principle that in civil life requires one "always to be most careful in the selection of agents, and then to give the persons chosen one's entire confidence, calling on them to do the same, each in his own branch." Leave of absence is

thus not necessarily withheld in individual cases where care, of course, to be taken that the occasion of granting such leave is justified by necessity. This, I consider, is but just. Active, busy men are invariably men of weight, influence and stability, and belongs to that class of men which of all others should be incorporated in the force of the country, not a standing army, while idlers, and they are few, are, as a rule, of little use in any community.

With respect to the performance of an annual drill in camps of exercise in general, and "tactical brigade camps" in particular, I am in a position to report these camps are annually being looked forward to with increased pleasure.

In the case of corps composed mainly of farmers, for whom in winter, whether employed in the woods or on the farm, there is but little leisure, there follows the sudden transition from winter to summer, and the consequent hurry to sow the seed; after this, there is a period of comparative relaxation, and now, as a rule, before the hay harvest succeeds the seed time, our camps may be formed with advantage.

As to city corps, in my last report I pointed out the peculiar difficulty in my District of selecting such time as will suit the convenience of both city and rural corps, so as to assemble them in the same camp for the whole period of training.

However the experience of this year shows that even city corps by the exercise of forethought on the part of the staff and officers in command, and moreover, by a proper understanding between employers and employed, can devote a certain portion of time to military duty in camp, without much personal inconvenience, and with pleasure and advantage individually and collectively. It is but due to city corps to add, that the prescribed sixteen days is by no means the limit set to their annual drill. In many instances, additional weekly drills are alike voluntarily and cheerfully performed, with the view to secure increased efficiency, and to secure the corps appearing to greater advantage at the camp next season.

In arranging for the annual drill of corps at St. John, accompanied by the Lieut. Col. 62nd Battalion (Lieut. Colonel McShane) I called upon the principal employers of labour in that city in order to consult their convenience, as far as possible, and to secure their co-operation. All reminded me of the scarcity of labourers; but none, I am glad to state, appeared desirous to place any obstacle in our way. On the contrary, all admitted the necessity of encouraging our local force, and facilitating their attending camp; probably aware that in the event of war or even any internal disturbance, the important class to which they belong—the commercial—would derive most advantages if the country be found in a healthy state of preparation for such an emergency; and they, undoubtedly, would be the greatest sufferers, if the very opposite were the case.

It is obvious that in our camps of exercise the health and comfort of the men are of primary importance. Cheerfulness will follow as a matter of course, and in proportion as these receive attention will success and efficiency be attained.

[To be Continued.]

Though the benefits to be derived from the new depot system inaugurated in England are yet to be arrived at, £1,300,000 are devoted to the experiment.