

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

FROM MONTREAL.

(BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

The Camp at Laprairie broke up on the 12th inst. Taking all in all there is no doubt but that the heavy expenditure has produced satisfactory results; the training in the way of drill and discipline was strict without being severe, the printed rules and regulations for the camp being carried out to the letter.

Some grumbling was occasioned by the non-arrival of the necessary quantity of blankets and tents at the first go off, and some little confusion was at first occasioned in procuring the requisite quantity of rations, the latter due to a great extent to the ignorance of regimental quartermasters of their duty; but the very best feeling and unanimity prevailed, and matters were soon regulated. The camp was evidently a great success, and many have been the valuable lessons thus taught to the volunteer that he might have remained in ignorance of for years. The staff and officers worked like Trojans, all impressed with the idea of making the most of the time; the hours of drill and exercise were strictly adhered to, and complete military discipline was established.

The men were peaceful, orderly, and well behaved, there was no drunkenness or riotous behaviour, no insubordination, and but few causes of complaint. Col. Osborne Smith and staff had personal supervision of the camp, and rode several times each day through it for personal inspection. The men settled down into camp life with cheerfulness, and though the whole thing was new to nearly all of them, they soon adapted themselves to their several positions.

The volunteers richly merited the deserved encomiums of Sir George Cartier, Sir Hastings Doyle, the Adjutant General and others; but there was noticeable, however, a great deficiency in drill, and even the sixteen days training hardly brought many up to the mark, they having yet a great deal to learn, and need a good deal of practice to enable the lessons they have been taught to be of any permanent benefit to them.

The health of the camp was excellent, little or no sickness, the only two deaths resulting from accident, one being shot accidentally and the other drowned.

A great improvement is yet needed among the officers, I allude chiefly to those of the country battalions; they are lamentably deficient in drill, some being even awkward and ungainly.

Officers appointed provisionally ought before the expiration of one year's service to be examined as to what they really do know, a regulation such as this would act as a stimulant to many, who knowing it to be compulsory would surely learn, and post

themselves up in something. Some of these officers are incapable of giving a word of command properly, and are less fit to lead a company than many of their own men. Another matter, officers should not be entitled to their grade till they are dressed accordingly; several carried no swords, and others only half dressed had uniforms by no means complete.

The Eardley Company was perhaps the best drilled and disciplined corps at the camp, they are a splendid body of men, and their movements are like clockwork in precision and accuracy; they everywhere got great praise, and the writer never saw movements better executed than by them. This efficiency reflects great credit both on themselves and their officers.

The brigade commanders, Cols. Charles King, Fletcher, and D'Orsonnens, materially assisted by their individual exertions in maintaining the discipline of the camp. Col. Harwood having left on sick leave soon after camp was formed, the whole duties of the brigade devolved on Col. D'Orsonnens, who was well equal for the emergency, and though he underwent a severe domestic bereavement, in which he had the sympathy of all who knew him, he never shirked his duty a day.

Capt. Stevenson's artillery proved their excellence, being well drilled and officered. Everyone would rejoice if the Government would do something towards providing horses for this splendid battery; the only one that Montreal possesses. The Cavalry, four squadrons, under command of senior officer Major Burwash, turned out very creditably.

The ground being excessively lumpy and uneven, they did not get fair play. Capt. Muir's No. 1 troop of Montreal Cavalry caused the greatest attraction. They are well uniformed, and mounted under such good officers as Capt. Muir, and Col. Lovelace it is no wonder they are thoroughly disciplined.

I must not omit to say a word of praise of Sergt. Thomas Boyes, who as staff orderly clerk performed his duties in such an admirable manner. He is by no means a new hand, and his long experience entirely fitted him for the position he occupied.

A word or two of censure might be said on the precipitate manner in which the men left the camp, without packing and delivering equipage and stores in a proper manner. Tents in many cases were bundled into sacks without little regard as to how they went in as long as they went, blankets were tied up in all sort of ways and manners, and the bundles had all to be re-opened by the camp quartermasters personally after the men had gone away and re-counted.

No fatigue parties were left behind to assist in handling and checking stores, and the regimental quartermasters generally rushed through the business in order to be off with their men. In the hurry and confusion instances occurred of tent bags filled

with straw, pin bags with old bottles and sticks being handed in, and from the Prince of Wales Regiment, several bags were returned crammed full of old shakos they had discarded for the new scotch caps furnished them.

There is no doubt but that a good deal of valuable experience has been acquired all around, and if next year we have another camp, the previous experience will be valuable.

Universal satisfaction was occasioned by the payment of the men before leaving camp. The arduous duties of Major Hyndman, and Capt. Brehaut, district paymasters, were performed in a thorough and efficient manner, and to the satisfaction of all.

The camp was not without its amusements, games, songs, social interchanges, races &c., filled up recreation time.

Major Hyndman assisted by camp quartermaster Battersby, Capt. Laurie and others gave a grand instrumental and vocal concert in the Town Hall, Laprairie village, the evening previous to the breaking up of camp, funds applied to charitable purposes.

The encampment at Laprairie had amongst others, this one excellent effect of making the volunteers, both rank and file, acquainted one with the other, and many were the social greetings and expressions of good will and friendship interchanged.

The encampment could not have cost the country less than \$120,000, and but few will doubt but that the money was well applied. What is now anxiously looked for is the draft, and the sooner we get it the better, it has got to come, being merely a question of time; the people must know that the government are in earnest in its endeavours to create a well disciplined and reliable militia.

At a meeting of the council of the Quebec Rifle Association held on Tuesday, it was decided that the annual matches of the Association should take place on the 15th of August, and succeeding days. Lieut.-Col. Fletcher, Major Worsley, Messrs. J. Esdaile, and George McDougall were appointed a sub-committee to make all necessary arrangements, and draw up a programme.

Sergt. Massey of the Victoria Rifles has been presented by his friends with a testimonial accompanied by an address setting forth his uniform kindness while in camp.

PERSONAL.—Amongst the officers of the Active V. Militia Force, whose exertions have contributed to the success of the Laprairie Camp, the name of Major Hyndman, District Paymaster for No. 5 Military District, deserves placing on record. This very efficient officer by his courtesy and attention, has given general satisfaction, his prompt payment and settlement of all claims presented to him has been attended with the best results to the officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the different corps, with whom his duties have brought him in contact.—COMMUNICATED.