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CORRESPONDENCE.

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

ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF VOLUNTEER ENGINEER CORPS FOR CANADA.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

MILITIA.—In your issue of the 22nd inst., in reference to the formation of Engineer Corps, you state it has not yet been dreamt of and no necessity exist for organizing a corps of artificers dressing them in a peculiar uniform, and dubbing them Engineers.

I beg to differ with your correspondent on that subject, and state my reasons for so doing—as you state that men required to perform the duties of the rank and file can be found in every battalion, are already proficient in the use of Axe, Pick and spade, so far as that goes I say may be correct; and further, we have good materials in all our battalions to make good Engineer Sappers—that class of men you allude to, only performs a small portion of, the duties required to be performed by Engineers and by that class called miners in the Engineer Corps. I will give you a simple statement of the class of men and trades that are required to form the Royal Engineer Corps of the British Army, and a portion of the duties they must be competent to perform before they are returned fit for Engineer Sappers for general service.

The class of men required and recruited for the Royal Engineers are as follows:—carpenters, masons, bricklayers, plasterers, smiths, plumbers, glaziers, wheelwrights, coopers, turners, painters, saddlers and miners. No man to be taken unless he can read and write. After joining Head Quarters they are sent to drill for six months, under staff officers and drill instructors of the corps until well posted in their duties of drill, guards, &c., and reported fit for duty. Then they are prepared to commence to learn their duties as Engineer Sappers, they are classed to the different schools, according to their ability, which they attend two hours every morning, Saturdays and Sundays excepted; they are put through a course

first of Geometry previous to going through a course of fortifications, Government furnishing books, drawing instruments, paper, boards, &c., for every man in the corps when going through the schools—and Field Works which they are employed at during the remainder of the day at the Royal Engineer Field establishment Chatham. Under a competent staff of officers and Non-Com. officers for that duty in working parties. For sapping, mining tracing batteries, building batteries, field powder magazines, stockades, parallels, approaches, laying gun and mortar platforms, traverses in batteries, cutting brush wood for making gabions, fascines, pickets for reveting batteries and other military field works, pontooning, barrel ferrying for military bridges composed of rafts made with barrels, knotting and splicing ropes. On wet days not fit to work on the field works, the companies are taken into the model rooms of the establishment and instructed in the art of attack and defence, where the models are prepared and the defending and attacking parties are both engaged in their operations, with all arms of our service for their information and instructions; and each company of Royal Engineers consist of one captain, one 1st Lieut. and one 2nd Lieut., one Col.-Sergt., four Sergts., four 1st Corporals, four 2nd Corporals, 100 to 120 men, and unless their service is much needed they are always allowed from 12 to 18 months in the field establishment before going on service.

For the benefit of our Dominion Militia a Staff College should be established on a small scale similar to Staff College at Sandhurst; consisting of Professor of fortifications, instructors in military drawing, Professor of military history and instructors in drill; for the benefit of all officers who may wish to qualify for Artillery Engineers or for the staff duties there should be also an Engineer school and field establishment to instruct the Non-Com. officers of the Engineers, on whom the Engineer officers will have to look to for assistance in faithfully carrying out their orders, and attending to the Field works in their absence on other duty, and the additional expense say for books, instruments, drawing books, paper, Field

tools and stores for military field Works say for 50 Non-Com. officers going through at each period for it will be the duty of the Non Com. officers of the Engineers to superintend all working parties of the militia or line on military field works whenever it may be required under the directions of the Engineer officers; and where all militia officers could obtain the practical work of Field fortifications on a limited scale, and it would be to the advantage of the volunteer Engineer corps and officers of our force if the Sapper's Manual compiled by Captain W. A. Frankland, Imperial Engineers, could be obtained in this Dominion by purchase for their use.

I trust when the House of Parliament does assemble they will grant supplies to enable the above to be established for the benefit of our Canadian Army should the proper authorities think fit to recommend any such establishments.

Yours, &c.,

SUBSCRIBER,
and Campaigner of the Active Force.
Burritt's Rapids, 24th Jan. 1872.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

BY G. W. G.

That a country—the conditions of whose existence as a nation, and, the guarantees for whose independence, are so peculiar and unique—as are those of Switzerland, should find it necessary to devote its serious attention, and its strenuous patriotic efforts to its military system, is a circumstance which should act as a warning to all nationalities inclined to glide into the fool's paradise of anticipations of a millenium of peace, even had the present generation not had ample experience of how sudden and how rude may be the awakening from day-dreams so complacent and so imbecile. Not many years ago we were accustomed to hear a great deal of the perfections of the Swiss system of organization. It is therefore with peculiar satisfaction that we are enabled, through the VOLUNTEER REVIEW, to discover that, however satisfactorily the Military institutions of Switzerland may accord with the idiosyncrasy, and fulfill the requirements, of her people, there is really no