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EDITORIAL

LAX MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS.

It has become apparent that some have been accepted for overseas service in the Canadian army that were below the standard of health or physical build required to enable them to endure the fatigue and hardships of a soldier's life. While it is necessary to secure recruits to keep up the wastage of the war, it is not well to accept those who will prove unfit. Such recruits in the end only prove a handicap on the efficient members of the force.

To overcome this condition, Canadian enlistees will be submitted to two careful medical tests. The first one takes place when he enlists, and the second one at a later date, and is conducted by a board of three examiners. It is felt that this precaution will sift out any who should not be sent to Europe. It is a great expense to train a soldier, and it is very regrettable if, after the time and money so expended, he is found unfit. The sifting should therefore be done at the earliest date possible.

In one of his reports Colonel H. A. Bruce directs special attention to this fact. Out of 1,330 permanent base duty men, there were 636 discharges. During one month between 900 and 1,000 were found fit for base duty only, made up thus: Over age, 413; under age, 128; extreme flat feet, 90; defective sight, 78; severe hernia, 32; extensive varicose veins, 40; old disabilities (rheumatism, bronchitis, asthma, etc.), 31; defective hearing, 21; missing fingers, toes, etc., 16; mental disturbances, 3.

It is quite clear that men should not be sent overseas who are only capable of doing base duty. The stress and storm of war will produce a sufficient number for this sort of work. There will be many who will be incapacitated by sickness and wounds from serving on the firing line, and who would be able to do base duty. The new regulation will do much to correct this.