

Militia.

Lieut. Gen. E. Selby Smythe, Commanding the Militia of Canada, in his annual report, regrets, from a mistaken idea having gained ground that no great need exists for military preparations, the Canadian Militia has not improved in internal condition. The numbers are not reduced, but the time of training is too short, and the absence of any permanent regimental staff is a great drawback. No better material for soldiers exists in any country, and on any prospect of active duty they turn out with enthusiastic alacrity, but in the absence of proper training establishments, or any trained and disciplined body of men, it is to be feared their efficiency will diminish year by year. The great defects in the Militia system are held by the General to be "Too short a period for drill; the want of model training schools for cavalry and infantry; paid and permanent Adjutant and Sergeant-Major for each corps, to act as regimental store-keeper; the keeping of arms, &c., at regimental headquarters; an allowance to Captains of companies to cover losses, making him responsible for the arms, &c., of his company; a consolidated allowance to the brigade staff, instead of so much for each efficient company; horses for the guns of the Gunnery Schools and several other minor details.

The Active Militia at present comprises

Cavalry.....	1,803
Field Artillery.....	1,326
Garrison Artillery.....	3,048
Engineers.....	232
Infantry.....	27,990
Rifles.....	9,330

Total.....43,729

There are 17 Field Batteries, viz. :—

- 13 9-pounder muzzle loading rifles.
- 16-pounder Armstrong breech loading.
- 2 9-pounder bronze smooth bore, and a 24-pounder Howitzer.
- 1 at Melbourne, armed entirely with bronze 24-pounder Howitzers.

There are 80-pounder muzzle-loading rifled guns in possession of the "A." & "B." Batteries, Schools of Gunnery. The Infantry is calculated at 55 per company and armed for that, but late reductions have brought them down to 42.

The Reserve Militia comprises 655,000 men. It has not been mustered since 1873, but is duly regimentalised and in some measure efficient.

Large numbers of persons are by the Militia Law exempt from service. The General recommends that such should be additionally taxed for the national defence.

The Military College at Kingston is progressing very satisfactorily. On the 1st Dec, 1877, there were 88 cadets and 13 more were expected. The instructional staff numbers 6. The subjects of instruction: Mathematics, geometrical drawing, freehand and instrumental drawing, French, German, fortification, artillery, military topography and surveying, military history, military law, elementary chemistry and geology. drill and discipline. The progress of the cadets has been remarkable. It is intended that each military district should send annually 2 cadets to the College, or 24 for the Dominion. Nova Scotia and P. E. Island and B. Columbia are still unrepresented.

Ten new rifled Palliser 64-32 pounder guns were added to the armament of Quebec in the summer of 1877 and five to that of St. John, N. B. It is recommended that the old smooth-bore guns should be converted into rifled guns.

The reserve of stores of all kinds is maintained as far as the means allotted to the service will allow. There is military store accommodation now, with well filled magazines, at Halifax, Quebec, Montreal, Kingston, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg and Victoria. The staff consists of 12 Deputy Adjutant Generals and 11 Brigade Majors, and, as a whole, is efficient.

In the School of Gunnery at Kingston 13 officers and 46 men took certificates in 1877. In that at Quebec 10 officers and 62 men received certificates 56 officers and men of the Active Militia obtained certificates at Kingston and 74 at Quebec. 58 certificates were granted by the New Brunswick Military School and 51 by the Nova Scotia.

The clothing issued was 5 561 tunics, 8,464 trousers, 5,720 caps, and 3,496 great coats. It did not prove satisfactory and many complaints were made.

Snider ammunition issued for practice was 322,609 rounds of ball, and 303,309 of blank. 587,030 rounds of Snider ball, and 9,500 rounds of artini-Henry were sold to different Rifle Associations. 18,905 lbs. of powder, 6,842 friction tubes, with the usual shot and shell, was issued to the Artillery, Field and Garrison Batteries. More armourers are urgently needed to keep the arms in proper repair. A serious loss was sustained in the St. John fire, all the stores there being burned.