

# CHAPTER XXIX.—NATIONAL DEFENCE

## CONSPECTUS

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Although the original Militia and Defence Act was passed soon after Confederation, on May 22, 1868, Canada's present defence organization has been an outgrowth, essentially, of her direct participation in the two world wars of this century. Before the outbreak of the War of 1914-18, national defence was centred in the Canadian Militia which, at Mar. 31, 1914, consisted of a Permanent Force of 3,000 officers, non-commissioned officers and men and an Active Militia of 5,615 officers and 68,991 non-commissioned officers and men.

The Royal Military College of Canada, founded in 1876, has a very distinguished record in connection with the training of all branches of the military profession and for the qualifying of officers for command and staff appointments (see pp. 1087-1088).

The Naval Arm of the Service was, at that time, neither so old nor so important as the Militia. The Naval Service of Canada was established by the Naval Service Act of 1910. This Act gave effect to decisions reached at the Conference on Imperial Defence held at London during the previous year. In general principle the Naval Service Act followed closely the lines of the Militia Act, but the new Naval Service Department was for a time placed under the Minister of Marine and Fisheries. A Naval College was established at Halifax, N.S., where boys selected after competitive examination were educated and trained for the Canadian Navy. The protected cruisers, the *Niobe* stationed at Halifax, N.S., and the *Rainbow* stationed at Esquimalt, B.C., were purchased from the Royal Navy and recruiting for the Canadian Navy commenced but by 1914 the Canadian Navy had done little more than lay its foundation.

During the War of 1914-18, Canada built up from her pre-war Militia Forces an Overseas Active Army Corps of four Divisions with complete supporting and ancillary units. There had been sent overseas at the date when hostilities ceased on Nov. 11, 1918, about 418,000 officers, non-commissioned officers and men.

The Royal Canadian Air Force was not in existence at this time, but several thousand Canadians served with the Royal Air Force and after the War an Air Board was established to regulate Canada's commercial, civil government and military aviation. Out of this original Air Board, the present R.C.A.F. on the one hand and the Civil Aviation Administration on the other have grown. In 1920 a Canadian Air Force was set up, under the Air Board, as a Non-Permanent Force to give refresher training to former pilots, observers and airmen of the Royal Air Force. In 1922 a complete reorganization of the C.A.F. was undertaken from which it emerged on Apr. 1, 1924, as a Permanent Force honoured by the King with the prefix "Royal".