

5. It will probably be within Your Excellency's recollection that, in the "Memorandum by the Canadian Ministers concerning Defence," which was drawn up at the Colonial Conference of 1902, the reasons given for dissenting from certain of the proposals laid before that Conference by the War Office and the Admiralty were stated to be that "the acceptance of the proposals would entail an important departure from the principle of colonial self-government." This important question appears to be adequately provided for in the latter portion of the penultimate paragraph of page 8 of the present memorandum, in which it is stated that "the full control of the chief of the local section of the General Staff by his own Government must be accepted from the outset." It is further clearly laid down that, while chiefs of the local sections of the General Staff are to "keep in close communication with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff," they cannot receive orders from him. "He will keep them informed as to what are considered, from an Imperial point of view, the correct general principles, and they will advise their Governments as to the best method of applying these principles to local conditions, and as to the risk of departing from them. When this advice is not accepted, it will be their duty to carry out whatever their respective Governments may order."

6. In regard to that portion of the paragraph quoted which states that "the chiefs of the local sections of the General Staff will keep in close communication with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff," the undersigned is cordially in agreement with the proposal, but he is of opinion that, in order to avoid possible misunderstanding by the Chief of the Canadian Section of the views or intentions of the Dominion Government, and consequent misrepresentation of those views to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, it would be advisable to lay down definitely that all communications passing between the Chief of the Canadian Section and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, other than those on purely routine or ephemeral questions, must be submitted to the Minister of Militia for his concurrence before being despatched.

7. The Minister of Militia further feels it desirable that a definite assent should be given to the axiom (first paragraph of Part III, p. 9) that "in order to qualify themselves for employment on the General Staff, officers must have been educated previously up to a certain common standard of military knowledge, and have become imbued with the requisite uniformity of thought and practice."

This uniformity in training and thought can only be obtained by passing officers intended for General Staff work through a Staff College.

8. The memorandum appears to contemplate the possibility of the Staff College at Camberley (England), which must for some years to come be the central school of higher military education for the whole Empire, becoming congested, should large numbers of officers from overseas be collected together there, and suggests, as a possible remedy, decentralisation by the establishment of similar colleges in the overseas Dominions.

9. The Minister of Militia holds the opinion that, in view of the improbability of any large increase of the Canadian Permanent Forces for some years to come, it is unlikely that the Dominion would, for a considerable period, be able to spare more than four officers of that force at any one time for a Staff College training. If this be so, then it would not be worth while for the Dominion to establish a Staff College of its own, and it would be preferable, subject to War Office concurrence, to continue to send these officers to the Staff College, Camberley, following the existing arrangements. Should this course entail on the War Office any addition either to the accommodation at the College or to the number of the instructors, the Dominion Government would, of course, be prepared to bear its share of the expense, calculated upon any equitable basis.

10. Closely allied with this part of the subject is the question, also considered in the memorandum, of the preliminary military education of regimental officers, in order to insure that officers entering the Staff Colleges should have attained as uniform a standard of military knowledge as possible, so that they may profit to the utmost by the instruction given at those colleges. This question in Canada may present minor difficulties, to some extent adumbrated in the memorandum. In the opinion of the Minister, these may best be met by an extension of the functions of the Royal Military College, Kingston, and by including among its instructing staff specially selected officers from the educational branch of the Imperial General Staff.

11. Finally, the memorandum lays stress upon the advantages to be gained by the free interchange of officers between the various branches of the Imperial General Staff in the different parts of the Empire, and especially upon the great benefit which would result from periodical conferences of the Imperial General Staff, attended by representatives from all parts of the Empire, and held under the presidency of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in London. The advantages indeed are obvious.

The acceptance of these proposals and those others already referred to would, doubtless, involve expenditure, but the resultant benefits are, in the Minister's opinion, so great as to outweigh enormously the comparatively small expense involved.

12. The following extract from the "Memorandum by the Canadian Ministers concerning Defence" of August, 1902, already referred to, states fully the policy which then commended itself not only to the Government of Canada, but to the Dominion at large: "In conclusion, the Ministers repeat that, while the Canadian Government are obliged to dissent from the measures proposed (in 1902), they fully appreciate the obligation of the Dominion to make expenditure for the purposes of defence in proportion to the increasing population and wealth of the country. They are willing that these expenditures should be so directed as to relieve the taxpayer of the Mother-country of some of the burdens which he now bears: and they have the strongest desire to carry out their defence schemes in co-operation with the Imperial authorities and under the advice of experienced Imperial officers, so far as this is consistent with the principle of local self-government which has proved so great a factor in the promotion of Imperial unity."