

THE WINTER CAMP

The sensitive soul of the editor of the Weekly Chronicle, the camp paper published by the 47th Battalion, has been painfully lacerated by an article in The News which, he says, casts slurs upon the climatic conditions at the coast. So badly have his feelings been hurt, that we shall never again feel justified in thinking that such things as rain and mud are ever to be found in the neighborhood of New Westminster, the particular district which the editor of the Chronicle appears to have taken under his protecting wing.

Speaking seriously, however, we are very decidedly of the opinion that it would be a grave mistake to break up the mobilization camp this fall, and disperse the troops among the various coast cities. A residence of over a quarter of a century in Vernon has convinced us that the men could be made thoroughly comfortable in winter quarters here at a much less expense than would be entailed by transporting them to the coast and removing them again in the spring to a central camp. We know that the men of the second C. M. R. from this district, who were stationed last winter at the Willows Camp at Victoria, suffered a good deal of discomfort from the wet weather, and found the facilities for training very limited as compared to those they had experienced when here. We doubt if sufficient space for adequate training operations can be found at either New Westminster or Vancouver, in order to meet the demands for efficiency, which after all, is the paramount consideration, when we are informed that 50,000 more troops will be called for from Canada, this year by the Minister of Militia.

It may be acknowledged that muddy streets, such as were to be found in the Vernon camp during the wet season this year, are likely to cause some criticism, but when 4,000 men are gathered together in camp, such conditions are bound to be occasionally found. We have the assurance however, of the Camp Commandant expressed last week at a meeting with the committee of the city council, that he considered this an almost ideal camp site, and except in a few minor matters, no complaints could be made. He contrasted it very favorably in the matter of dust with the Sewell camp which he had recently visited.

Something can be done to better conditions by gravelling the streets in the camp, and we believe that this work will be at once undertaken under the direction of the city council. We do not think that the complaints voiced by the Chronicle express to any great extent, the feeling of the men in camp. They are as fine a body of soldiers as were perhaps ever bathered together in Canada, and one thrills with pride when a knowledge comes home that these men, knowing full well the terrible dangers and hardships awaiting them at the front, are eagerly and earnestly preparing for the great struggle to which they have devoted their all. Even if we are to lose them this fall, we shall never forget that Vernon has been honored by their presence, and as far as the News is concerned, it is only because we believe that they, and those who succeed them can be better prepared for the terrific task that lies before them by continuing to train in such a camp as this, that we feel it unnecessary and unwise to break up the camp this fall.