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The Volunteer Review,
AND
MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE

"Unbribed, unbought, our words we draw,
To guard the Monarch, fence the Law."

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 1876.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Letters addressed to either the Editor or Publisher, as well as Communications intended for publication, must invariably be pre-paid. Correspondents will also bear in mind that one end of the envelope should be left open, and at the corner the words "Printed & Copy" written and a two or five cent stamp (according to the weight of the communication) placed thereon will pay the postage. No communication, however, will be inserted unless the writer's name is given, not necessarily for publication, but that we may know from whom it is sent.

WE have for the past nine years endeavored to furnish the Volunteer Force of Canada with a paper worthy of their support, but, we regret to say, have not met with that tangible encouragement which we confidently expected when we undertook the publication of a paper wholly devoted to their interests. We now appeal to their chivalry and ask each of our subscribers to procure another, or for a person sending us the names of four or five new subscribers and the money will be entitled to receive one copy for the year /i.e./ A little exertion on the part of our friends would materially assist us, besides extending the usefulness of the paper among the Force—keeping them thoroughly posted in all the changes and improvements in the art of war so essential for a military man to know. Our ambition is to improve the *Volunteer Review* in every respect, so as to make it second to none. Will our friends help us to do it? Premiums will be given to those getting up the largest lists. The *Review* being the only military paper published in Canada, it ought to be liberally supported by the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of each Battalion.

THE "Report on the State of the Militia," for 1875 is of unusual interest, as it contains a narrative of the journey of the General Commanding-in-Chief from the Atlantic to the Pacific. It includes his report and recommendations with the usual reports of the District Staff Officers as an appendix.

From it we learn that a force of 28,845 men of all arms and ranks have been mustered at annual training during the year, and the General remarks that "the training of the militia during the past season may be considered as having in a satisfactory degree carried out the principles of the organization," and that the system "is year by year assuming in a marked degree the evidence of greater solidity and permanent endurance"—while a high compliment is paid to "the many patriotic and zealous officers of

the Canadian Militia who have from the infancy of the movement, in spite of discouraging difficulties at the beginning, resolutely applied their minds and devoted their energies to build up by slow but sure degrees what has now become a permanent and powerful military organization."

It must afford the authors and advocates of the system supreme satisfaction to receive this assurance from a soldier of the standing and experience of the Commander in Chief, and to none more than the Adjutant General, to whom a handsome and well deserved compliment is paid.

This assurance is the more valuable, because it is the result of practical experience, the previous report for 1874 leading to the opinion which was very widely diffused that the organization as a system did not meet the approval of its gallant and talented Commander-in-Chief, because it wanted the cohesion inherent in a standing army; and we are of opinion that the idea of an approach to such an organization led in more than one instance to the diminution of the force.

The present report is however abundantly reassuring. The General holds to the opinion, that small permanent organizations of the militia are a necessity—serving as a nucleus around which the larger and more loosely organized bodies should form in case of war, and a school for training officers and non-commissioned officers for the force.

It is evident the latter clause of the proposition is the most useful and practical—we have no faith in *small trained nuclei*—war will be carried on in this country with such ever varying conditions that small trained bodies will in no wise affect it. At the opening of the late contest between the Northern and Southern States the United States had a small well trained army of 16,000 men—its effects on the issue were in no case appreciable.

The General naturally complains that the term of training is too short to give officers the necessary opportunities of acquiring sufficient tactical knowledge and habits of command—the remedy for this is very simple—it is only to recognize the fact of the company being the tactical unit and not the battalion as is now the case—compel company drill to be more attended to—let the larger organization be provisional and change Field Officers after five years service.

The law requires subalterns to be able to drill a company and handle it in battalion drill—*keep promotion within the company* and there will be no necessity to complain of want of tactical knowledge—the organization being territorial and local cannot be forced into exact conformity with the details of organization of the Imperial regular service, and we contend that efficiency in company drill is the first tactical requisite.

Moreover the yearly training should not be solely devoted to mere battalion or brigade manoeuvres; there is ample room in

Canada for lessons in major tactics and strategy, and as the General Commanding-in-Chief points out there are able Field Officers in the Canadian service capable of executing any movements confided to them. We look on this compliment as the highest which could be paid to the organizers of a system capable under confessedly adverse circumstances of producing such splendid results.

With respect to the "Staff," we may remark, that it only shares the faults of all organizations, military or otherwise, in this country or Great Britain which is under Parliamentary control—it has served its purpose admirably, and as it was organized with the express design of decentralization and local mobilization a change of names or rotation of duties in its administrative officers would not appear to be any improvement.

We believe a further acquaintance with the social conditions of the country and its local needs will persuade our talented Commander-in-Chief that *development*, not change, is the great need of the Canadian Militia organization; and it is certainly not the way to effect that by importing *trained officers* to fill the Staff appointments—where they acquire the knowledge from which our own officers are shut out—in the very interesting expedition across the continent we do not see the name of any Canadian officer on the General's Staff, and it was certainly a grave oversight to confine it exclusively to gentlemen whose services this country may not be able to acquire in a case of emergency.

Our readers will find the information in this valuable report exceedingly interesting—we commend it to their careful study, and if we may be allowed the expression, it reflects honor on the talents and experience of the high authority from whom it emanates.

CAPTAIN G. A. RAIKES, 3rd West York Light Infantry (militia), has added a valuable volume to the military literature of the Empire by an elaborate and beautifully written history of the "First Regiment of Militia," now known as the 3rd West York, the battalion which has the honor to number amongst its officers the gallant and talented historian.

Our readers are well aware that this is not the first literary essay of the gallant author, he has already given the military antiquarian, the history of the "Reserve Forces of the Crown," and a number of other valuable essays in which previous practical experience is condensed and placed at the service of those entrusted with the organization of the national forces of Great Britain and Ireland—thus rendering a public service of the most important character by enabling the military organizers to avoid errors and develop what is really valuable in all the systems hitherto tried.

We have to thank the gallant and talented