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## The Volunteer Review,

AND

### MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

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

OTTAWA, MONDAY, MAY 27, 1872.

LIEUT COLONEL WAINSWRIGHT GRIFFITHS, at present on a tour through British Columbia, has kindly consented to act as the Agent for the VOLUNTEER REVIEW in that Province.

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 in the corner the words "Printer's copy" written, and a two cent stamp will pay the postage if not over an ounce.

THE French Marshal Bazaine, who surrendered Metz and his army, has written a work intitled the "Army of the Rhine," in which the old military system is condemned; a summary of the causes which led to all the disasters of 1870-71 are attributed to, the unprepared state of France, the French Army being singularly ineffective, the reserve or Mobile National Guard existed only on paper, the resources of France were not ready. The native character excitable and unsteady was not suited to rapid firing and the new tactics. The troops failed on long marches; outpost duty was badly performed. The infantry kit too heavy, the artillery too dependent, the cavalry too divided, and in

subordination amongst the inferior officers who wanted to know the reason of every movement.

The Marshal admits that France had insufficient numbers and immensely destructive armaments and that she ought to have taken the "offensive in strategy and the defensive in tactics," that her army ought to have taken well known strategical points; fortified the Vosges passes, disposed itself in two lines: the first resting upon Luneville, Nancy and Pout a'Mousson, the second upon Verdun and Metz, while the reserve were drilling in the rear.

In our last issue we republished Lt. Col. Strango's "Artillery Retrospect of the Franco-Prussian War," and he showed most clearly the want of mobility in the French Artillery, that it did not possess the power of rapid concentration, and that in this fact alone lay the great secret of Prussian success.

We are far more inclined to take his view of the case as being the correct one, because the principle on which the Prussian Artillery was manoeuvred is no new tactical invention, it is simply that insisted on, acted on, enforced, and illustrated by the first Napoleon and the direct cause of all his victories which were as astounding as the Prussian triumphs.

The remainder of the evils complained of by the Marshal are to be traced to political interference; the great mistake made by Louis Napoleon was the attempt to give France Responsible Government as we understand it—that movement was a most unhappy one—as it introduced lay interference at once into all the departments of the army administration.

As a consequence the Intendance or Control was incapable of performing any of its functions. It is impossible to move troops who are not well fed and provided—they cannot perform long marches without boots—the soldiers had been spoiled by being allowed to have votes—once the man in the ranks becomes a politician discipline has departed never to return.

The want of a general staff must have been the fault of the General Officers in command, and the Marshal makes out no good case for himself in that he failed to organize one; Intelligence is as much a necessity of an army and as much the means of victory as ball cartridge, and it is a strange thing to find a military force operating in its own country surprised through the superior industry of an enemy a stranger therein.

It is a strange charge to bring against French soldiers that they were too excitable under fire—if that very quality had been made use of as it ought a different tale would be told—but the truth appears to have been that both army and Generals were alike untied.

Eleven years had hardly elapsed since a French army had driven the Austrians out of Italy, and as Colonel Strango points out Louis Napoleon himself, an Artillery officer

was the first to use rifled field artillery on that occasion and which contributed in no small degree to his success.

The remainder of the evils the Marshal points out were due to want of organization and enforcement of discipline; the officers having risen from the ranks or obtained their commissions by competitive examinations were politicians as well as soldiers, and as each hoped to wield at least the baton of a marshal, they thought themselves capable of criticising the operations of their superiors.

France has paid the penalty of allowing her army to be tampered with, of permitting her soldiers to be politicians, and of depending on the abstract quality of merit in selecting her officers.

Is her example a warning to other powers? England under Whig Radical rule follows it closely; already her army is controlled, commanded would be the proper word, by a lawyer; her fleet by a merchant manufacturer; her troops are to be located permanently in districts; her ships manned by artillerymen and commanded by officers incapable of navigating them; the commissions in her army set up to competition, while her control system has been a notorious failure—the end is easily foreseen.

THE United States Army and Navy Journal of the 18th May, has an article on the "Washington Treaty" which we reprint in another column, for the purpose of shewing our readers what the opinion of the organ of the military force of our neighbors is on the substance of the present complications, and we are happy to be able to say they are in accordance with the dictates of honor and common sense.

It is no disgrace to commit an error, it may be a misfortune to be obliged to acknowledge it, but in the nation or individual that is the only honest course.

We cannot blame our contemporaries at feeling sorely on this subject; the politicians have managed to make a rare muddle of it and to bring disgrace on the United States by a measure thoroughly disreputable as well as dishonest.

We differ from the Army and Navy Journal in the reasons it assigns for the opposition of the English people to the consequential damages, it was no political dodge on the part of the leaders of either of the great English parties, but the determined opposition of the whole people to unjust and illegal claims which would hardly be conceded if a Yankee army was in possession of London.

Those claims were distinctly repudiated by the English members of the Joint High Commission, and Mr. Bancroft, Davis, or whoever put them before the public, has succeeded in covering his country with no little disgrace; the treaty clearly defined the subjects to be laid before the Geneva Tribunal, consequential damages are not to be found in the list, and the "express terms" of the treaty are confined to subjects embodied