

## CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

I had no idea that my random shot of the 20th September would turn up a bull's eye, nor was I aware till I read the letter of "F. O." that the REVIEW commanded the services of an occasional editor. 'Tis a very handy arrangement and very convenient at times, but on the whole I think your subscribers would be as well satisfied if they knew that the interests of the Volunteer Militia and the policy of the REVIEW was guided by a responsible party, viz: the editor or proprietor of the paper; "F. O." would then have the same advantage as the rest of your correspondents and his articles would not appear as if they represented editorial opinion.

I find no fault with "F. O." for his defence of the New Militia Bill, "every man to his fancy," and as long as he believes in the truth of his principles just so long has he a right to advocate his convictions, but let "F. O." on the other hand be prepared to give me credit for as much sincerity as I cheerfully concede to him. I don't see moreover, that there is any call for his caution in respect to personalities. Public men and public measures, are public property; for my opinions I alone am answerable, and of all that I have advanced in reference to this Militia business I have not a single word to retract or a single sentence to withdraw.

My adviser takes umbrage at the tone of my last letter and mildly insinuates that it was written by somebody else. Let me assure him that I have not the aid of an occasional amanuensis, the letter was all my own, and on reading it over again prior to answering his, I really feel rather proud of the bantlin.

I will notice as briefly as I can the substance of "F. O.'s" letter, and begin by pointing out to him the inconsistency of his first paragraph and a few others as I go along. First, he says "the REVIEW having laid down the principle that Canada could not support a standing army advocated such a Bill as that of 1868, by which the whole population could be made available for military purposes in case of necessity." Now, I think I have proved that this is all humbug, that the bill provides for no such thing, and that the militia of Canada, except as regards change of name, is not one whit better, nor one whit more available than when it rejoiced under the name of the old Sedentary Militia.

To be sure the change of nomenclature from Sedentary to Reserve cost the country some \$60,000, but that, I suppose, is what "F. O." would call one of the good features of the Bill.

Now in the REVIEW of the 31st May, 1869, the editor (I don't know whether it was occasional or the de facto) says, when speaking of the Volunteer Memorial, "The necessity for the establishment of a small regular force

has not occurred to the memorialists." How does that chime in with "F. O.'s" sentiments and the REVIEW's principles that Canada could not support a standing army?

But it looks very scaly, Mr. Editor, when a supporter of the Militia Bill must go to England to get endorsers; why, when it has so many merits, are its home supporters silent? How does it come that out of the 40,000!!! officers and men of the organized Militia there is not a voice raised in its favour? From Sandwich to Quebec it has been measured and found wanting, and except as I once before said in the editorial columns of your own paper the Bill is never mentioned by Volunteers but with contempt and execration. You Sir, called loudly for somebody to show "L. C." how little he knew of the force he belongs to, and "F. O." steps to the front; "F. O." now in his turn calls upon some patriotic officer to come to his assistance—I am afraid "F. O." will be "calling spirits from the vasty deep."

The English authorities quoted by my mentor are very respectable, but I take it, the position of the Militia of Canada is not much better understood there than here, where as we all know the people are as a rule supremely ignorant on the subject, and their representatives with a few notable exceptions, know about as much as their constituents,

Lord Elcho may endorse the Bill of 1868, so may the *Volunteer Service Gazette*, (by the way why don't you copy some of the articles from that paper, the letters of *Reserve* for instance which have appeared in the last two or three numbers, you ought to let our people see how the re-organization of the English Volunteers is progressing, especially as the last number, October 9th, gives them at home your sentiments on the state of the Volunteer Militia of Canada,) but if they have no more knowledge of the measure, than they can obtain by simply reading the Bill their judgement on the value of the scheme will be on a par with Mr. Cardwell's knowledge of the state of the Canadian Militia in 1862.

He, you will remember, was Secretary of State for the Colonies in that year, and in February very deliberately made the assertion that Canada had then an organized effective Militia of over 80,000 men. When this was the amount of knowledge possessed by an English secretary of state and his country on the eve of war too, how much faith are we to place in the editorials of English newspapers on a Canadian act of Parliament which has been in force only a year (and which has done so much mischief in less than a year) or even on Lord Elcho's verdict who argues as an English Volunteer, an officer of a force that is only the third reserve of the kingdom, (will we ever see the day when our reserve is as efficient) and who forgets, if he knows, that the Canadian Volunteers are the first levy of the Militia, and the regulars of the Dominion.

I repeat that "F. O." has a perfect right to support this Bill and swear by it too if he likes, but in the meantime he must not put words in my mouth that I never made use of nor draw false conclusions from his own inferences and then shoulder them upon others. He does both in his letter. He says that the signers of the Volunteer Memorial find fault with the Bill because it does not give them unlimited power to draft at pleasure; I deny this in toto. "F. O." culls part of a paragraph that, when taken alone and with a very loose interpretation, may be made to bear his meaning, but taken as a whole and with its context shows that drafting by all those officers as looked upon as a last resource. Again he says—"The whole fault "L. C." finds against the Bill is that it has not changed the Volunteers into the Regular Militia (which will be done yet) giving the zealous officer power to draft at his pleasure, &c., &c. I must again correct "F. O." there is no such proposition urged by me. I asked among a number of other questions which are still unanswered, as to the working powers of the Bill. "Did the measure which you endorse so strongly give the zealous officer power to draft when the Volunteer material of his neighborhood was exhausted." Every man who has read my letters knows that the drafting powers, when referred to by me, was always mentioned as a *dernier resort*, but "F. O." has so little to take hold of that he must utilize that little all he can and therefore accuses Volunteer officers generally, and "L. C." particularly, of favouring a conscription, and under this very little cloud of his own raising comes out as a defender of the liberties of the subject.

As for that dilemma which "F. O." says I have got myself into, and out of which I am endeavoring to wiggle, I really can't see it. I showed my faith in the Militia Report by offering to make a certain wager, that wager was open for over a month, and no man took it up. Why did not "F. O." face the music? I used no personalities in that letter, I simply drew inferences based on figures, and in reply to what "F. O." confesses were his own arguments. But now "F. O." demurs to this and says he prefers the report of the recognized authorities. So be it. Here are the figures of the recognized. I will take the Districts in their order the reader may judge where the dissatisfaction exists, as the returns from all bear a most wonderful similarity.

1st. DISTRICT, COUNTY BATTALIONS ONLY, AND EXCLUDING CAVALRY AND ARTILLERY.

22nd Oxford Rifles, 10 Cos., 2 gone.	8)552
Average men and officers per Co.	62
23rd Essex, 7 Cos., all gone but 2	2)124
Average	69
24th Kent, 8 Cos., 2 gone	6)387
Average	64
25th Elgin, 6 Cos., 1 gone	5)332
Average	66