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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, TUESDAY, MAY 12, 1874.

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 "Printer's copy" written and a two or five cent stamp (according to the weight of the communication) placed thereon will pay the postage.

LEUT. J. B. VINTER, of Victoria, is our authorised Agent for Vancouver Island, British Columbia. As is also Captain H. V. EDWARDS for New Westminster and adjacent country.

The authoritative declaration of the Premier that it was the intention of the Administration to appoint a Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Army, with the rank of Major General, and that officer would be chosen from the British Army will, with the implied assurance that the present acting Adjutant-General should be confirmed in the rank of Adjutant-General give that confidence and satisfaction to the force which it is alleged has been wanting as a main requisite towards its proper organization. It was also stated that the pay of the rank and file would be increased and thus the great grievance of the force removed without any violent measure affecting its original organization.

Both those important measures will doubt-

less meet with all favor in Parliament as well as from the country at large, and we are sure we only speak the sentiment of the force when we say that full confidence is felt in the desire of the Ministry to place at the head of the Canadian Army an officer in whom that force and the country could and would have confidence. It is a delicate subject but there is probably in Canada a talented officer whose services would entitle him to the position and whose experience of the people and their social condition is all that could be desired. As the author of the best work yet issued on the late "American War," Lieutenant Col. FLETCHER of the Scotch Fusilier Guards has had the best acquaintance of any officer we know of with reference to the working of such a system as our ours, and as Military Secretary to His Excellency the Governor General, has had such experience of the social aspects as few have had a like chance to attain. He is, moreover, thoroughly acquainted with all arms of the service, and as chairman of the the Small Arms Commission has acquired a lasting celebrity by the thorough manner in which the details of that enquiry were carried out, and the result—the adoption of the Martini-Henry Rifle—will be a lasting monument of his practical knowledge and discrimination.

The appointment of an officer of his character and standing to the onerous duties of Commander-in-Chief would undoubtedly be hailed by all classes with satisfaction, and the Force would be in the hands of a Chief every way capable of developing all its good qualities. It is, however, the province of Her Majesty's responsible advisers to select the person they think best, and we are sure in any case the Force will be contented with their choice.

"The contemplated appointment of a Major General of the Imperial army to the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Militia, will no doubt be hailed with great satisfaction by the entire force. Such appointment would still leave vacant the office of Adjutant-General, the duties of which have been performed by Lieut. Col. Powell since the retirement of Colonel Ross. We apprehend that such a change will be made in the militia law as will enable the Government to appoint the present acting Adjutant-General to that position. Colonel Powell is more than efficient in his department, and we need not say that his appointment as Adjutant-General of the Dominion would give universal satisfaction to the whole force of the country."

The above paragraph is from the *Ottawa Times* of 25th April, and those who know the gallant officer referred to will not only endorse the sentiments contained therein but will go a little further and say it will be no particular boon to the Canadian Militia to appoint a Major General as Commander-in-Chief except the Chief of the Staff should happen to be what Colonel POWELL undoubtedly is—a man thoroughly acquainted

with the force, and as thoroughly popular amongst its members. Any officer from the Imperial army must be to a great extent a comparative stranger here; and his duties would be both onerous and oppressive if he had not an officer on whom he could rely to carry out the details with prudence and circumspection, one known to the force and in whom they repose unlimited confidence. The present Acting Adjutant-General has been virtually in his present position for thirteen years—the duties of his office have been well and conscientiously discharged, the present organization has been in a great measure shaped by his hands, and he can look back on the greatest work of the kind done in any country with just pride; there is therefore every reason why he should succeed the well earned promotion which ought to have been his long ago.

That spirited journal, *The Nation*, in its issue of 9th April, has an article on "Our Militia System," which we republish, especially as its fair open criticism is alike free from prejudices and dogmatism. It advocates the appointment of "a commission to examine into and decide upon the evils of the present system and the value of the remedies to be applied." As it has been alleged that the present system is radically defective, there can be no doubt before a change is attempted, the country should be satisfied that the proposed substitute would not be liable to the evils complained of, and that it would be as efficient to meet the social conditions of the people as the present system has proved itself to be. We hold that the present organization has one single defect and that is want of provision for a proper remuneration for the rank and file, and we must demur altogether to the idea that there has been any "introduction of the party element into an organization which should be essentially non-political," except in the legitimate exercise of that patronage which essentially and of right belongs to the responsible advisers of the Sovereign. It has yet to be proved that even this lawful patronage was exercised in any way but that most beneficial to the interests of Canada, and we know of no instance in which it was bestowed on an incompetent or unworthy object. We quite agree in our contemporary's opinion that the subject is a vexed one, but are certain that the alleged grievances are merely sentimental and only mark the restless desire for fanciful changes by individuals with a large amount of theoretical knowledge and little practical experience. There is, however, one proposition to which we totally demur. *The Nation* says: "It is very little use to have educated officers unless you have also trained men," while fully admitting the truth of the corollary it has been always not only the opinion but the exact knowledge derived from practical experience that you must have educated officers *before* you can have trained men, and while it is well known