

THE CANADIAN MILITIA!

ITS ORGANIZATION AND PRESENT CONDITION.

In considering the question of Canadian defences, the first difficulty that presents itself now-a-days, is that there is no plan for combination and concerted action between the Imperial troops and Colonial forces, and that neither Imperial or Canadian authorities have apparently given the matter any consideration.

The Committee which in 1862 drafted what is now known as Lyson's Bill, (and of which Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir George Cartier were members,) reported: "That the strategic defences of Canada came within the province of the General Commanding the Forces, but, that, with one thousand miles of open frontier, fifty thousand men in arms, with a reserve of the same number, would be insufficient, without a strong force of Regulars, and a powerful fleet of gunboats."

This report was submitted to Parliament more than ten years ago. Let us see what steps have been taken since then to carry out its recommendations, Sir John A. Macdonald being head of the Government, Sir George being head of the Militia Department.

There is a nominal force of 43,000 Volunteer Militia enrolled, and scattered over the Dominion from Halifax to Manitoba, but where are the Regulars? Where the gunboats? Where the General commanding the forces? Where the fifty thousand reserve?

But people may say, What is the use of bringing this ugly question to the front now, when everything is so calm and peaceful? Well, there are lots of unbelievers who hold that the era of peace and brotherly love, assured by the Washington Treaty, is nothing more than a breathing spell for the Yankees, to get up some fresh demand. This may be so, or not. In any case, a well organized Militia is a necessity for Canada; for we have already proved our neighbor to be a grasping, covetous tyrant, and if we want to look upon ourselves as reasonably well insured, we must keep up a good fighting establishment, not only to secure our liberties, but because the knowledge of such a fact actually lessens the danger of war.