

THE QUEEN AND GENERAL GORDON.

Miss Gordon, sister of the Christian Soldier, who was allowed to perish in the execution of his high conception of duty in the Soudan, has published a collection of her gallant brother's letters, which she has dedicated to the Queen. Her Majesty has also specially permitted the following letters from herself to be included in the volume:—

OSBORNE, 17th Feb., 1885.

DEAR MISS GORDON,—

How shall I write to you, or how shall I attempt to express *what I feel!* To think of your dear, noble, heroic Brother, who served his Country and his Queen so truly, so heroically, with a self-sacrifice so edifying to the world, not having been rescued. That the promises of support were not fulfilled—which I so frequently and constantly pressed on those who asked him to go—is to me *grief inexpressible!* indeed, it has made me ill! My heart bleeds for you, his Sister, who have gone through so many anxieties on his account, and who loved the dear Brother as he deserved to be. You are all so good and trustful, and have such strong faith, that you will be sustained even now, when *real* absolute evidence of your dear Brother's death does not exist—but I fear there cannot be much doubt of it. Some day I hope to see you again, to tell you all I cannot express. My daughter Beatrice, who has felt quite as I do, wishes me to express her deepest sympathy with you. I hear so many expressions of sorrow and sympathy from *abroad*: from my eldest daughter, the Crown Princess, and from my Cousin, the King of the Belgians,—the very warmest. Would you express to your other Sisters and your elder Brother my true sympathy, and what I do so keenly feel, the *stain* left upon England for your dear Brother's cruel, though heroic, fate!

Ever,

Dear Miss Gordon,

Yours sincerely and sympathizingly.

V. R. I.

WINDSOR CASTLE, March 16th, 1885.

DEAR MISS GORDON,—

It is most kind and good of you to give me this precious Bible,* and I only hope that you are not depriving yourself and family of such a treasure, if you have no other. May I ask you, during how many years your dear heroic Brother had it with him? I shall have a case made for it with an inscription, and place it in the Library here, with your letter and the touching extract from his last to you. I have ordered, as you know, a Marble Bust of your dear Brother, to be placed in the Corridor here, where so many Busts and Pictures of our greatest Generals and Statesmen are, and hope that you will see it before it is finished, to give your opinion as to the likeness.

Believe me always, yours very sincerely,

VICTORIA R. I.

These communications are a stinging rebuke to persons who, from time to time, air their crude vulgarity in disparagement of the Queen's character. There is indeed in these letters something particularly touching. In none which she ever wrote—at least in none which have been made public—does she so entirely forget the formalities of her station, about which she is sometimes thought to be somewhat punctilious.

Her Majesty writes to Miss Gordon simply as one sympathetic, affectionate, and consoling woman to her sister in grief, and she is evidently so strongly under the influence of simple womanly feeling that, woman-like, she pays but scant attention to grammar or construction, and quite disregards tautology. To Miss Gordon it is not "the Princess Beatrice," but "my daughter Beatrice," and with straightforward and earnest simplicity, she says, "Indeed it has made me ill!"

And we may well believe it. The Queen is—with such pride as consists with a feeling heart and a Christian conscience—a proud, spirited and courageous Lady; and it is difficult to conceive a position more calculated to lacerate the spirit of a benignant sovereign than to have found of no avail her urgency in a case in which thousands of her subjects shared her presence.

Whatever—and they are not few—may have been the benefits of Mr. Gladstone's Home policy in his several administrations, the very curse of rashness, imbecility, and vacillation, has pursued him and his colleagues whenever they have been called upon to deal with a Foreign question, as the Furies pursued Orestes.

That Gordon might have been saved, had the Ministry bestirred themselves earlier, is universally acknowledged; and we have before now expressed our deliberate opinion, that the Ministry of the day was guilty of the detestable policy of letting Gordon go, and trusted to his genius for some success to justify it, and is therefore chargeable with his death. A terrible emphasis is given to this judgment by the confirmation which has been wrung from the outraged feelings of the Queen.

THE MILITIA.

The Militia Estimates being occasionally called in question, it is desirable that the public should know what it is getting in return for its expenditure. There is no occasion—so long at least as Canada is not deprived

* The Bible here referred to was one used by my Brother for many years, and was his constant companion when at Grave-end, Galatz, and during his first sojourn in the Soudan: it was then so worn out that he gave it to me. Hearing that the Queen would like to see it, I forwarded it to Windsor Castle, and subsequently offered it to Her Majesty, who was graciously pleased to accept it. The Bible is now placed in the South Corridor in the private apartments, enclosed in an enamel and crystal case, called the "St. George's Casket," where it lies open on a white satin cushion, with a marble bust of General Gordon on a pedestal beside it.

of her autonomy by the over-bearing tactics of a powerful neighbor on the one hand, and the spiritless national temperament of a section of her children on the other—to enter into any justification of the maintenance of a military force. The practical questions are—What does it cost? And when that is answered—Is the article worth the price?

The sum to be voted for 1888-9 is \$1,319,900. In round numbers about £272,000 sterling. For this sum we maintain the Royal Military College and the following Permanent Corps, which are also Schools of Instruction for their several arms:—

	Number.
A Troop of Cavalry, Quebec.....	40
A Battery of Artillery, Kingston, Ont.....	150
B " " Quebec.....	160
C " " Victoria, B. C.....	100
Company Mounted Infantry, Winnipeg, Man.....	100
A Company of Infantry, Fredericton, N. B.....	100
B " " St. Johns, Que.....	100
C " " Toronto, Ont.....	100
D " " London, Ont.....	100

Total.....950 men,

with a due, but somewhat restricted proportion of officers. The vote for these establishments is \$522,700.

A Cavalry School is also established at Toronto. This is not a very formidable standing army, but, besides being reliable bodies in emergency, their utility to the Militia Service is indicated by the fact of 355 certificates having been granted by their Commandants to officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of all arms during 1887, and the influence of these graduates on the discipline and efficiency of the corps they belong to, is very marked.

The Military College had, at the end of June last, passed out 114 graduates, of whom 36 had become officers in the Imperial army, a feature probably distasteful to annexationists as constituting a continually strengthening link of connection with the mother country. 75 cadets stand on the list as attending the College at the end of 1887.

Of the education received there, General Middleton reports:—

"It is most satisfactory in tracing the career, so far, of the graduates of this College to notice how very successful they have been in civil as well as in military employment. It ought to be clearly understood that the four years' course at this College is calculated to fit a man for almost any appointment in this country, whether civil or military, and it is no doubt only the want of such employment in the Dominion which has caused the few who have taken employment abroad to do so, and they will all probably sooner or later, find their way back to the Dominion with increased and valuable experience. The grant for this institution is \$59,000."

As regards the general Militia, the sum of \$290,000 is asked for Annual Drill, and the expenses connected with it. Last year, 20,500 men were drilled, and there is an undoubted increase of efficiency on the whole. Public Armories, care of Arms, Pay of Storekeepers, Storemen and Armourers, Drill sheds, Rifle Ranges, construction and repair of Military Properties, etc., require \$157,000, and it may be noted that extensive repairs to Drill-sheds, etc., which are becoming old, are required this year. Ammunition, including its manufacture at the cartridge factory at Quebec, clothing, great coats, military stores, etc., \$205,000.

The salaries of the Lt. General Commanding, Adjutant-General, Inspector of Artillery, 6 Deputy Adjutant-Generals, 9 Brigade Majors, and 11 District Paymasters, their transport expenses, etc., amount to \$29,200. Grants to Artillery and Rifle Associations, Bands of efficient corps, etc., take \$38,000, and this is an item which, it seems to us, ought to be well looked into.

There is also the special grant to the Dominion Rifle Association of \$10,000, and that of \$2,000 to the Dominion Artillery Association, which embraces aid to the team sent to compete at Shoeburyness (G. B.) Improved Rifle Ordnance is down for \$3,000, and \$4,000 is wanted this year for Barracks in British Columbia; last year, the vote was \$10,000. There is a decrease of \$1,000 in the vote asked for the salaries of the General and District Staffs, and the largest increase of \$40,000 arises directly from the establishment of the new Infantry school at London, and of the C. Battery and School at Victoria, B. C.

There does not, on the whole, appear to be any tendency to extravagance, but it can only be gathered from the reports at the end of the year, whether the sums asked for have been made the best use of.

The requirement for better accoutrement equipments is very urgent, as indeed are several other items which we cannot now detail; and it would seem that the most practical economy the Department could carry out, would be the reduction whenever possible, of superfluous and inefficient corps, in accordance with the General's continued representations. Every such body got rid of means a saving of some portion of the annual drill money, and of the continued expense of the issue and replacement of arms, clothing and accoutrements.

Better reduce the Force to 30,000 (or even 25,000) and drill them all. Allow no odd companies, such as five, seven, or nine; and we should even be disposed to insist on a local body being either four companies under a Major, or eight under a Lt.-Colonel. It is also a question whether Battalion Medical Officers and Paymasters might not be abolished, and the duties in camp be performed by Staff Officers.

Dr. Oliver's valise equipment was so highly valued on trial by the Rifle Brigade and the 52nd Regiment, that they begged hard to be allowed to keep it, but Red Tap was inexorable.