

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Volunteer Review.

DEAR SIR,—An Old Soldier presumes to claim the privilege of, it may be, a growl or grumble through the medium of your excellent journal; but ere indulging these amiable propensities he would pause to observe that nothing can be more beneficial than your judicious efforts to disseminate a military spirit throughout our infant Dominion. To say nothing of its elevating tendency this spirit has become the *sine qua non* of modern communities, and its natural sequence—military organization—demands recognition as a stern necessity in this country as the only reliable conservator of our peace and independence. An advanced civilization hesitates to accept this truth as being opposed to the ameliorating influence it assumes to exercise over mankind; but practical good sense will adopt that line of action which is as unavoidable as it is essential to our integrity. It is not incumbent upon a people to be for ever strutting in the garb of war, but woe to that nation which has not its full panoply readily available.

"Man may crush the worm, but pauses ere he
wake
The slumbering venom of the folded snake."

Now, although THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW pursues a policy which an Old Soldier most cordially approves, yet the record of new fiendish inventions for the destruction of human life which its pages contain chafes his spirit and shocks his muscular christianity. And he is led to reflect upon the probable effect of the (promised) wholesale slaughter which must necessarily characterize war in the future, and the effect it will produce upon the various idiosyncrasies of nations. Of course such ruminations embrace too wide a field for discussion here; but an Old Soldier feels assured that these modern improvements in the art of killing can, unhappily, be as deftly rendered annihilating by the manipulation of a pigmy or a dwarf, as by that of the most stalwart grenadier! and must consequently in no slight degree neutralize "the majesty with which a British soldier fights," as well as his stamina, and dogged determination, and above all that gallant *elan* which prompts him to come to close quarters with his enemy. An army that possesses a superior muscular development must feel indignant that future battles may be fairly epitomized into mechanics vs. manhood, physics vs. physique. Now as the British army is credited with having monopolized these latter attributes to a large extent, it can be no gainer by recent innovations.

An Old Soldier reads with indignant regret, of some new fangled ideas upon "Setting up Drill," and some silly prate "of greater ease and freedom in the soldier's motions." But he would inquire, where is more graceful ease to be looked for than in the bearing of the perfectly drilled soldier of olden time? There can exist no

gracefulness without its indispensable concomitant, ease. Let the capricious lover of novelty indulge himself in embroidery, belts, or pipeclay; but leave untouched the bold well balanced stride of the guardsman—the easy abandon of the Dragoon. Arms of greater accuracy, and longer range of course, demand a corresponding change in the formation of troops. But by the memory of a hundred stricken fields: by the manes of those heroes who have bequeathed to the army of to-day the fame and prestige by which it is environed—let not the gallant bearing of the British soldier be sunk and lost in the slouch and shuffle of the civilian—until every distinctive trait of the profession becomes obliterated.

Should this growl have escaped the accusation of a snarl, or sufficed to amuse by its somewhat turgid captiousness, it may encourage an Old Soldier to spin a yarn upon the iron walls of Old England for "The Volunteer Review."

AN OLD SOLDIER.

OUR NEW YORK LETTER.

NEW YORK, Oct. 21st, 1867.

The coming elections are so moving men's minds that they have neither time nor inclination to think of matters military unless they can be made subservient to politics, which in many cases they are, consequently there is but little to write about interesting to your readers. The past week has been one of inspection. Every day one or other of the regiments of the National Guard has been out for inspection and parade, the only effect of which was to obstruct the passage through the crowded thoroughfares and afford both officers and men an opportunity for displaying their uniforms and their awkwardness. With a few exceptions the drill of these men is exceedingly poor, far below that of the Canadian Volunteers. A stranger, after being accustomed to the regularity in marching and precision of the movement which distinguishes the British soldier, on seeing the New York National Guard would imagine the men were marching at ease, but, not so. Their ordinary march is an irregular swagger. This, however, will not apply to the regulars. Their drill is far more efficient, and some of their movements, for ease and expedition, might with advantage be introduced into our own system, especially is this the case with their Manual Exercise and turning on the march. Upton's Tactics, a new manual of drill, is being universally used, and with a few alterations will prove very efficient.

The Fenians, though they are not received with that enthusiasm they were wont to be, when the sight of the Sunburst called forth wild huzzas for the Irish Republic and maledictions upon England, are still working. The breach between them is still as wide as ever, that the followers of each faction are less demonstrative in their anger, than they were when charges and counter charges of

treason, robbery and all the crimes upon the calendar, were the order of the day. Each appears to have come to the conclusion to let the other "go to the devil his own way."

The "On to Canada" party seriously meditate another movement, which if carried out according to programme will assume the proportions of an invasion rather than a raid. They have already arms and equipments for 25,000 men, with which number the invasion is to move. I noticed that the Ottawa correspondent of the Toronto *Globe*, said that he had information that the invasion was to take place during the New York Election. Such is not the intention, neither is the precise time of the movement known to any one but the chief authorities, if indeed it is yet determined upon. The programme is in this wise: The material of war is to be quietly forwarded to the various centres in different parts of the States. Each centre is to furnish a certain number of men who are to be ready to move at a day's notice. Already a large quantity of arms, ammunition, uniforms, &c., has been distributed, and the head quarters still presents a scene of activity and bustle. On notice being given, the Grand Army of the Irish Republic will move in small bodies and concentrate at some point on the frontier, in order to avoid suspicions and interference on the part of United States Government, for though their intentions may be winked at their actual movement would be the signal for vigorous measures by the authorities here. A proof that the *Globe* correspondent was misinformed is that the whole success of the movement depends upon the troops being able to cross upon the ice, in the event of which they will sieze upon some town in Canada, hastily throw up earth works and fortifications in order to maintain their position, and so, as they fondly expect, be recognized as belligerents by the U. S. Government. This plan offers some chances of momentary success, and though the ultimate result is beyond a doubt, the attempt cannot but prove a source of great trouble and expense to Canada. Whether the scheme will be attempted, time only will tell, but certainly active preparations have been and are being made. It is the firm belief of the members of the fraternity that the programme will be carried out in its entirety, and though the Canadian Government is, no doubt, fully aware of the actual and contemplated movements of the Fenians, it would not be amiss to keep a strict watch and close guard upon them. To listen to the bombast of the poor misguided fools is almost enough to make one wish they would attempt an invasion of Canada again, and it makes one's blood boil to hear their slurs upon the Canadian Volunteers, especially the "Queen's Own," who, if they ever have the fortune to exchange shots again with the Fenians, must bear in mind that if they fire from dawn till dark and every shot makes a foe bite the dust. They have not yet taken one life for every insult that has been heaped upon