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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, FEBRUARY 8, 1876.

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. No communication, however, will be inserted unless the writer's name is given, not necessarily for publication, but that we may know from whom it is sent.

We have for the past nine years endeavored to furnish the Volunteer Force of Canada with a paper worthy of their support, but, we regret to say, have not met with that tangible encouragement which we confidently expected when we undertook the publication of a paper wholly devoted to their interests. We now appeal to their chivalry and ask each of our subscribers to procure another, or to a person sending us the names of four or five new subscribers and the money—will be entitled to receive one copy for the year free. A little exertion on the part of our friends would materially assist us, besides extending the usefulness of the paper among the Force—keeping them thoroughly posted in all the changes and improvements in the art of war so essential for a military man to know. Our ambition is to improve the *Volunteer Review* in every respect, so as to make it second to none. Will our friends help us to do it? Premiums will be given to those getting up the largest lists. The *Review* being the only military paper published in Canada, it ought to be liberally supported by the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of each Battalion.

In moments of commercial prosperity people are apt to forget the securities by means of which, and the power under whose protection their operations are carried on, and it is always a very popular cry with the trading class of the community when a season of depression induced by their own recklessness occurs to clamour for the reduction of military expenditure—conveniently forgetting that by it is derived the security under which their peculiar operations are carried on with any prospect of safety or profit.

The following extract from the *Nation* of the 31st December foreshadows a very unpleasant state of matters:

"It is certain that when Parliament meets, there will be found to have been a large falling off in the revenue from Customs. Probably it will not be less than a million and a half. Not that the amount of goods imported appears to have decreased: the decrease is in the value; which seems to denote a great excess of production. Loss of revenue will of course entail either additional taxation or reduction of expenditure. Additional taxation, at the present moment would hardly be borne. On the other hand it is not easy to say in what direction expenditure can be reduced. If there is any superfluity of officials at Ottawa it arises from the political necessity of employing a French as well as an English staff, and that necessity will not relax its hold. Our Eight Constitutional Monarchies indeed, constitute an amount of indulgence in that political luxury bordering closely on licentiousness; but the expenditure on them is Provincial. Unnecessary public works, not actually commenced or under contract, may be relinquished for the present. But the quarter to which the hungry gaze of the Finance Minister will at once be turned probably will be the militia. We have more than once expressed our sense of the value of military training and discipline for a country like ours as a school of national character, apart from the actual objects of external defence; and, therefore, the necessity of reducing the militia would be admitted by us with reluctance and regret. But the object of external defence compared with that of internal administration is remote. No nation ever had more peaceable and unaggressive neighbours than we have had in the people of the United States since Slavery with its train of Irish clausmen has ceased to rule their councils. A quarrel between them and the British aristocracy is the only imaginable cause of war; and even should that misfortune befall us, it is conceded on all hands that our real reliance must be on the British fleet and the pressure which it might be able to bring to bear on the enemy's ports and shipping. The idea of adding to our national debt we trust will not occur to Mr. Cartwright's mind. Canada has gone to the full length of her tether in that direction."

It is just as well at once to speak plainly upon this matter—we shall not stop to correct our contemporary's rather fantastical financial logic—inasmuch as it is rather difficult to see the distinction drawn between Provincial and Dominion expenditure Legislative and Administrative, seeing it is the Canadian people that pays both; but we protest against the idea of looking to the \$1,250,000 per annum paid for the expenses of our military organization being diverted to any other purpose.

A Parliament at Ottawa and seven subordinate local imitations, will not of themselves alone afford sufficient security to the London Stock Exchange, and if the people of this country want to add permanently to its present temporary embarrassment, they will treat this question of militia expenditure as superficially and flippantly as the Canadian press have always treated every measure connected with the same vital subject.

There can be no doubt that our military organization is one of our most important institutions, and it will not be for the interest of the country to neglect it. The

Finance Minister's recent success in negotiating a further loan was due to the Imperial guarantee; the evidence of previous prosperity, the admirable statesmanlike speech of His Excellency the Governor General at Colonial Institute dinner, and lastly the very intelligible fact that Canada had 43,000 British subjects under arms as a necessary pledge of the stability of her institutions in fact and intention.

Now of those four very cogent reasons only the last remains, and if there is a deficiency in the revenue, the best thing the people of Canada can do is to get rid of some of the superfluous luxuries forced on them as the results of mere party strife, and not destroy the only security they can offer to those to whom they must apply in the ordinary course of business—it is exactly like destroying the goose that laid the golden egg, and the results will be the same.

A semi government organ intimates that a reduction in the district staff is contemplated—that is already too small for the duties it ought to render our military force—in fact, there is not a department connected with it which can afford reduction of any kind.

We publish in another page an article from the *United States Army and Navy Journal* of 25th December, on a similar subject, and from *Broad Arrow* of 11th December, a speech of His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief, "On the Army."

It is a most inopportune time to talk of reducing military expenditure when the mother country has mobilized her forces, and such reduction has been always the forerunner of danger as well as the sure precursor of forced and hasty expenditure—even in the history of our small force the events of 1871 should not be forgotten—our small force at Fort Garry were withdrawn in early summer to be redispached over a difficult and dangerous route in late fall.

Those things should be well weighed before such a dangerous measure is undertaken, for it will not be in the interest of the taxpayer that a reduction of the militia estimates is to be effected.

Our contemporaries of the press would serve the interests of the country better if they were a little more jealous of the interests of its principal institution.

The concluding paragraph of the article quoted from the *Nation* does not reflect much credit on the accuracy of the writer—it is a mere perversion of historical fact—the aggression coming from the United States in the past as it must in the future, and the display of strategical knowledge is eminently calculated to mislead, being merely of the order of the usual clap net of the newspaper writers of the "Peace at any Price Party." If the course recommended be adopted we may look for a grievous fall in Canadian securities.

San Sebastian was bombarded by the Spanish fleet on Saturday of last week.