

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

A Weekly Journal devoted to the Interests of the Active Force of the Dominion.

Fourth Year.  
VOL. IV, No. 15.

OTTAWA, THURSDAY, 11th APRIL, 1889.

\$1.50 per annum in advance  
Single Copies Five Cents.

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## Topics of the Week.

Some months ago a Militia Departmental regulation was issued increasing the entrance fee for cadets at the Royal Military College at Kingston from \$100 to \$200. The parents of the twenty-four cadets who entered the college last September objected to the extra \$100, on the ground that their sons had gone up for matriculation when the then existing regulations placed the entrance fee at \$100, and it was manifestly unfair to levy the extra amount after all arrangements had been made on the basis of the old entrance fee. The Minister has had the matter under his consideration, and has decided to remit the extra amount for the last batch of cadets, but future cadets will be required to pay the \$200 fee.

The movement in favour of the participation of the Indian princes and chiefs in a scheme of national defence appears to have excited the utmost enthusiasm in the Punjab and Rajputana. Amongst the Rajput States the Rajahs of Bhurtpore and Jodhpore have selected cavalry and infantry amongst the existing regiments for special training; the Rajah of Ulwar provides 600 cavalry and 1,000 infantry; while Kotah sends a regiment of infantry. The Maharajah of Jeypore offers to maintain 1,000 ponies fully equipped for transport service; in Bikanir an armed camel corps 500 strong will be raised and equipped. In this way a thoroughly equipped Rajput corps is being got together amongst the chiefs of Rajputana.

The English Army estimates for the current year call for an addition of £600,000 to the annual expenditure. This gives an increase of 2,615 men; improves existing works and submarine defences, supplies the army with quick-firing guns, new field guns of the latest pattern and magazine rifles, and increases the First Class Army Reserve, which will, it is anticipated, in the course of the ensuing financial year, reach the high figure of 58,000 men. The Secretary for War, Mr. Stanhope, calculates that in 10 days the field army of 80,000 men could be made ready. For the defence of London, Mr. Stanhope is making arrangements for constructing at certain strategical points entrenched camps, surrounded by ordinary field works. In case of invasion these works could be extended and connected, all necessary preparation having been made to secure promptitude of action.

The Duke of Cambridge made an important speech in returning thanks for the toast of the Regular Army and Auxiliary forces at a public dinner recently. His Royal Highness takes the view that conscrip-

tion—i.e., compulsory universal service for the regular army—is absolutely impossible in England. He pointed out that conscription was incompatible in the British service, which was for the most part foreign, and that France and Germany had conscription because they had frontiers to defend. In their place England has the defence of India and the Colonies to provide for, and even Prince Bismarck would hardly be able to persuade his countrymen to accept universal service if it involved long periods of soldiering in the tropics. The Commander-in-Chief was careful to recognize the fact that the fatal objections to conscription for the Regular Army did not exist in regard to compulsory service in the Auxiliary forces, which would be brought about by the revival of the Militia ballot. Taking the Auxiliary forces as they are at present constituted, the Duke of Cambridge spoke in high terms of them, and said that they ought to have the support of the nation, and that in particular the Volunteers, being the least expensive, ought to be regarded with the fullest consideration by those who have to see its efficiency maintained. He also said that in his opinion the Volunteers “wanted more money,” that is to say, that more money ought to be spent in improving their efficiency.

This curious paragraph, appearing as an Ottawa despatch of the 24th March, is now going the rounds of the United States:—“Fears are expressed that a filibustering expedition from the United States may seize the undeveloped territory in the great Mackenzie River region. Senator Girard says: ‘Fifty resolute men, armed with supplies and ammunition, would be sufficient to hold the country against any force that could be sent against them under existing conditions.’ The country contains great mineral wealth, and abounds in valuable fisheries, extensive forests and rich pastures, all awaiting settlement and affording plenty of room for thousands of population.”

The San Francisco *Standard* prints the following:—“The easy indifference which marks the attitude of the United States towards all other countries is well illustrated by the apparent lack of interest in Washington in the building up of a great British fort on Vancouver’s Island. A resident of Olympia, W. T., said in this city the other day: ‘A very large proportion of the people of this country are aware that the strongest fort on the American continent is now building on the Pacific coast. When completed it will rank next to Gibraltar among the world’s fortifications. It commands the entrance to Puget Sound, the second port of entry on the Pacific coast and one of the most important in the United States. The British will soon be able to close this port at any moment. No other nation in the world would permit the building of this great fort to intimidate a peaceful neighbour.’”

On the occasion of a presentation of officers commanded to the Military Gymnasium the Emperor expressed great satisfaction with the performances that he had witnessed, and, referring to the importance of gymnasiums for the army, recommends the practice with the bayonet to the special care and attention of infantry officers. He expressed him-