

CONTENTS OF No. 39, VOL. IX.

POETRY:—

Canada Wooded by the Seasons..... 400

EDITORIAL:—

Diet Tables for the Army..... 402

Unarmoured Ships..... 402

Rifle Practice..... 403

Colonel Baker..... 403

News of the Week..... 407

CORRESPONDENCE:—

Lancaster..... 404

RIFLE COMPETITION:—

Dominion of Canada Rifle Association.... 453

SELECTIONS:—

The Divorce of the Grand Duke Alexis..... 401

Statistics of the British Army..... 405

Diet Tables for the Army..... 403

General McPherson's Fate..... 407

Preparations for Robbing Windsor Castle..... 403

War Strength of Germany..... 403

REVIEWS..... 401



The Volunteer Review,
AND
MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE

"Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
To guard the Monarch, hence the Law."

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1875.

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.

LIEUT. J. B. VINTER, of Victoria, and Captain H. V. EDMONDS of New Westminster, are our authorized Agents for British Columbia.

We copy from the *U. S. Army and Navy Journal* the speech of General SHERMAN at the recent banquet given to Mr. EADS, the Engineer of the Great Bridge over the Mississippi at St. Louis on 23rd March last.

The interesting portion of which refers to the improvement of the mouth of that magnificent River, for which Mr. EADS is both Contractor and Engineer. As was to be expected the gallant General's address was not confined to compliments alone, much useful as well as valuable information of a commercial description was given to the world, and the interesting statistics connected with the grain trade would lead to the idea that the surest and best way for the United States to restore its commercial marine and foreign trade would be to push on the Mississippi improvements with vigor.

A communication under the heading of "The Mouth of the Mississippi" has subsequently appeared in the pages of our contemporary, and as it deals with the Engineering, as well as physical aspects of the case we have copied it in this issue.

About the possibility of deepening the Channel at the mouth of this greatest of Rivers there can be no question—but whether

it will effect all General SHERMAN claims may well admit of doubt—grain spoils rapidly if water borne in the latitude of New Orleans.

ACCORDING to our contemporary the *United States Army and Navy Journal* Count VON MOLTKE has been delivering himself of the following opinions relative to the system pursued in officering the United States Army:

"I am asked why neither side in the civil war in America produced a very distinguished general. Even their respective partisans hardly claim any leader of transcendent genius. In so long a war, and where so many men fought, does it not imply a lack of military talent in the Americans? I answer no. The true reason was because their field of selection was so limited. No officer could hope to attain the supreme command of their armies unless he had been a student in their military academy, called West Point, on the Hudson river, in the State of New York. The number of these students, deserving as they might be, was and is extremely limited.

"The Southerners adopted the same pernicious system of exclusiveness, as many of these West Point officers have joined their side, and their President had also been at the academy. It was, perhaps, fortunate for the North that the South did not seek for talent among the mass of its people. It is said, I know not how truly, that the genius of a civilian, Ericsson, by the invention of a monitor, alone, saved the Northern Navy from destruction.

"It is evident that the chance of obtaining a distinguished general increases as the field of selection widens, and diminishes as it contracts.

"In our army every soldier may aspire to the supreme command, but in the American armies the line of demarcation was drawn as deeply as between the former slaves and their masters. The volunteer who represented the great bulk and strength of the people might, indeed, attain distinction in a subordinate position, but the highest place of all was forbidden.

"In regarding the records of the American civil war, it really appears as if the whole contest was between a few officers of West Point, and the mighty heart of the nation had never throbbed. The aristocratic system, which the Americans still follow, was formerly the practice in all European armies. In the revolution of 1793, Carnet, the French Minister of War, first abandoned it, and we have followed.

For the sake of example, and not binding ourselves to any exactness of figures, except that the one is very small, and its opposite, with which it is compared, very large, let us suppose the number of West Point officers to be 500, and the number of Prussian soldiers 500,000. Evidently as we have a fund a thousand times larger to draw upon, to render the chances of obtaining a great general equal, each American must possess a thousand fold the talent of a Prussian, which is absurd."

It is of course rank heresary to differ, even in the smallest matter, from a soldier who has conducted such a tremendous Tuetonic contest as the late Franco-Prussian War, to a victorious conclusion—but we do not read history with his eyes.

The late American contest *did* produce

Great Generals—on the side of the South, ORRIS LEE, JACKSON, and JOHNSON—on the Federal side SHERMAN, SHERIDAN, GRANT, and THOMAS, all and several (as the lawyers would say) "West Point Men." It is true, and no man is more willing to admit it than the greatest soldier of all—that eminent military talent was developed from the purely civilian element which the peculiar organization of the United States Army brought into the contest—but the Count is entirely mistaken in supposing that any advantage is to be gained by throwing the command of the army into the hands of a democracy—his experience of what the French armies had become by a similar policy should have made him cautious in that respect—and it was not till the democratic principle was carefully rooted out of the United States Army that it became in the hands of the "aristocratic West Point Cadets"—the effective machines that re-established the shaken authority of the Federal Government.

The Count's mathematical formula would not convince an experienced man that the chances of finding a General amongst the smaller number would not be greatest. At all events in the case cited it was from their ranks the Generals were drawn.

If Count VON MOLTKE intended to condemn the fallacies of over education so characteristic of the period his strictures were to a certain extent deserved—but at West Point experience has proved that only *true soldiers* will endure the novitiate, and it is nonsense to train any others. But it is quite possible to arrange a military organization with a sufficient number of highly educated scientific officers such as West Point produces, and at the same time and in the same service to have every particle of military talent natural or acquired in the population of the State.

It is only a question of adaptability, or as Mr. DARWIN would put it, "selection," by which the particular and peculiar place of every individual could be assigned to him. An army is a machine—all the parts of which should be well fitted and properly adapted to the work it has got to do—the master mind which sets it in motion may be inspired or the result of mechanical training as the case may be.

Blackwood's Magazine for August has an exceedingly able article on the "State of the French Army," which affords us some curious glimpses of life under a Republic, and an interesting review of the means taken to reorganize the military force of that country of which we publish a condensation from the *United States Army and Navy Journal*—especially as it is admitted to be an exact description of affairs as the following paragraph testifies:

"Referring to the articles in *Blackwood's Magazine* on the French Army a French correspondent of the *Times*—after carefully