

snubbed. One solitary Major was the only Canadian allowed to accompany the expedition in Egypt and represent the full 4,000,000, or the fighting qualities of such.

When at one period Lord Wolesley organized a boat expedition and thought through former experience that the Canadian voyageur would be the proper man, he applied to Canada and the number was filled up at once to the great disgust of the Thames watermen, and I think I may reflect the sentiments of very many in this country in the speech of a militia Colonel, though very much after mess, when he said "that if England had asked for sixty thousand fighting men instead of six hundred boatmen she would have had them all the sooner."

The glamour of poetry which General Butler has thrown over his article by making "the wandering Esquimau" (in the far north) "mistake the flashing of the midnight sun reflected from our glorious flags for the scintillations of the aurora borealis," does not excuse his woeful ignorance or perversion of facts in his more serious statements, even if Butler's Esquimau becomes as famous a harbinger of Britain's decay as Macaulay's New Zealander who is to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's from the broken arch of London Bridge. From a limited acquaintance with the wandering Esquimau I am sure he would very much prefer the tender mercies of the Hudson Bay Companies' officers, to the Knights of the Carpet Bag.

To conclude it is to be hoped (from a Canadian point of view) that in case an invasion of Canada by the United States should unfortunately occur, the generals commanding the armies of the Great Republic may display as profound an ignorance of Canadian military history and topography as does General Butler.

### St. John, N.B., Asking Fortification.

(Daily Telegraph, 9th November.)

Early in the history of the Dominion the necessity of providing for the defence of Canada against possible invasion was seriously considered. It was then pointed out that only Halifax and Quebec of all our Dominion cities were fortified, and that neither of these was in a position to be of any use in defending the provinces against a land attack. If Quebec province were invaded the invader would make Montreal his point of attack, because it is defenceless, possessed of great wealth and is the converging point of many railways. Ottawa, equally defenceless, would be an object of attack because it is the seat of government, and a railway and distributing centre. But in one sense neither of these cities possesses the importance of St. John, which, in the event of war, would be the main gateway for Canadian commerce, and a strategic point of the first importance. St. John guards the entrance to a great river, and the rich valley which includes half of the wealth and population of our province. Having the Chignecto ship railway completed, as it will be within a few years, with the Bay of Fundy, the Gulf and River St. Lawrence, there would be a covered way for the passage of ships from the great lakes to the Atlantic. St. John, if strongly fortified, would stand sentry at the gate of this system.

We hope and trust that the day may be long distant when we shall be called to fight for our homes and firesides, but our common sense tells us that Canada cannot always escape the common lot of nations. And in the event of war with our neighbours, about which they are from time to time blustering, it is clear that St. John might be early made a point of attack. Its contiguity to the border, and its strategic importance would alike lead to this result. The natural inference is that our city, now practically defenceless, should be fortified and made ready for an emergency. Our neighbours are fortifying their seaports and building an ironclad fleet. While they do this we, with but one-tenth of their numbers, cannot afford to neglect the opportunity to strengthen our position and defences.

The opinions of experienced engineers have been expressed to the effect that St. John can be made quite as strong as Halifax against attacks by sea, and almost impregnable by means of earthworks against a land attack. The Dominion Parliament once voted to borrow \$5,000,000 to be expended in fortifications, one million of which was to be set apart for St. John. Since then the scheme has dropped out of sight for the time, but it must some day be revived. Canada has two principal Atlantic seaports, St. John and Halifax. The latter is fortified, the former defenceless. There is quite as much reason why St. John should be fortified as Halifax.

Signor Brin, Minister of Marine, at a recent banquet at Turin, said the navy, which in 1866 was worth \$30,000,000, is now valued at \$70,000,000. The recent manœuvres bore testimony to the fact that a large portion of the fleet could be manned without recourse to unusual recruiting measures. The progress made in naval affairs was very satisfactory, considering that Italy did not aim at an aggressive policy.

### The Volunteers' Schools of Instruction.—I.

(United Service Gazette.)

In bygone days many gentlemen of means and leisure would frequently apply for a commission either in the Militia or Volunteers, and, as no examination as to fitness for command was then in vogue, the sorry sight was often witnessed of officers standing behind their companies, with a long-suffering non-com. at their elbow, giving the necessary cues for the word of command, to be repeated parrot-fashion by the officer.

All this, fortunately, is now done away with, and every volunteer officer is now required, at or before the second annual inspection after his being gazetted, to pass a moderate examination showing that he is acquainted with the duties of his position, and can fairly give the words of command.

A certificate of proficiency, however, varies very considerably in its value, as we shall proceed to show.

Any non-commissioned officer appointed to hold a commission is absolved from further compulsory examination, provided he held a sergeant's certificate of proficiency, which is signed by the commanding officer and adjutant of the corps to which he belongs.

These certificates were formerly often somewhat laxly given, and were sometimes looked upon as a reward for long service rather than a strict test of military knowledge and fitness for command.

That a non-commissioned officer is, *pari passu*, a better man than an ordinary untried civilian goes without saying, and in referring to the "P" certificate held by officers formerly non-coms. it is merely as an illustration of the different value attaching to the various forms of the certificate, all of which however, are recognized as conferring the right to an additional capitation of 50s. per annum.

Next we have the certificate obtained by a "pass" before a military board, consisting usually of a regular officer and an adjutant of militia or volunteers. Any officer who cannot spare a month to go to a school may present himself at these boards, providing he has previously satisfied his commanding officer and adjutant that he is fit to go up for examination.

The test in this case consists of about half an hour's instruction: drill to a company, then some company drill, giving necessary words of command, the manual and firing exercise, followed by examination papers on guard mounting, company and battalion drill, and the duties of superintending practice at a rifle range.

If an officer qualifies in these subjects, usually a matter of about half a day's examination, he also obtains a "P" against his name in the *Army List*.

It will be observed that both the above represent examinations of men who have previously learnt their work; but the schools of instruction, to which we now come, teach the officer his work and examine him during and at the end of his course, and, if successful, he obtains the higher distinction of "p.s." together with pay and lodging and light allowance calculated for the number of days under training, together with travelling allowance once each way to and from the head-quarters to the school.

That all officers who can spare a month should go to a school is so obvious, from the results obtainable, that we venture, for the benefit of those who may not yet have undergone the ordeal, to give a synopsis of the course adopted.

Until somewhat recently every candidate was required to attend daily from 10 to 12.30, and again from 1.30 to 3.30, thus taking up practically the whole of a professional man's day, if we include the time occupied in changing uniform for mufti, and during which a hansom has transferred him to his place of business.

Now the practice is for officers to attend at a quarter to nine in the morning, and do the whole day's work at one spell, thus enabling them to leave the barrack-yard at half-past twelve, and so be in business well by mid-day.

This has been found to be of the greatest assistance to volunteers, of whom the very great proportion are engaged in business of some description. Amongst the twenty candidates or so usually composing a school, from two-thirds to three-fourths are generally officers from volunteer corps, the remainder being made up from candidates from the militia.

The instruction given is so thorough and complete in every particular that it is not surprising to find the fame of these "schools" extend far beyond the immediate circles of the officers who have passed there. Quite recently officers from our Australian Colonies, and some even from India, have presented themselves to be thoroughly ground in the profession they have adopted, either for their amusement and relaxation in spare time, or from the higher sense of duty to their country.

Since the Duke of Edinburgh has been in command of the Mediterranean Squadron, says a *London Times* correspondent, "it has been longer at sea, and cruised more incessantly during the year than any squadron in the world."