

and were fit and ready for any work. Two companies of that battalion were, if I mistake not, in the "Midland" battalion of last year. Not six years ago I belonged to a city battalion in the west of Ontario, and they were a set of fellows calculated to scare more than crows, and were well up to strength. That corps was also in the N. W., and is known to the Halifax boys who were up there. It would cost me but the trouble of writing, to obtain from my old comrades in those corps fair accounts of the real state of their battalions, and I could get similar information from men I know in at least half a dozen more.

That "whole Battalions melted away as if by some talismanic agency at the war-cry of the Indian and the Half-breed," is, no doubt, pretty writing, but it is very flowery, and is introduced solely to lead to a description of the "feeling" of a section in the Maritime Provinces against lending aid in the cause of order, to a remark on the "barren attempt of Sir John to knit the confederation more closely together," and to the writer's opinion of the sand-like quality of the adhesion of the Provinces. What have these political opinions, lugged in by the ears, to do with the qualities, the administration, or the organization of the Canadian Militia as a whole?

"When it came to the point, regiments that were down for four hundred strong, failed to muster much more than half their tabular strength. In some instances whole companies had to be rejected on account of physical disabilities. Others were ruled out by the score for being mere children—not fit to leave the parental roof." The italics are mine. Surely this is exaggeration. Even if it were the case in Halifax, which I question, my long experience leads me to doubt if it was applicable elsewhere.

I say my long experience, because I have been more than thirty years a Volunteer Officer—28 of them in Canada—and not only an officer, for I served in the ranks when there was occasion, long after I was an officer, and served up through the ranks to a commission in the first place. It is natural therefore that, though probably past active service now, I should have the honor and credit of the force at heart.

I distinctly disbelieve, therefore, that "the Riel rebellion was signalized by anything but military ardor among the Federal troops." Known facts indeed, the facts of action and endurance, disprove the allegation; and I am a little surprised that no Militia officer here who was present has alluded to it. I know the temper of a large section of the Ontario and Winnipeg volunteers too well to believe there was no enthusiasm. But C. P. M. would have us believe that "there is no unappeasable appetite for the task in hand," because the trouble had its origin, "so far as (in his opinion) can be discerned," in the culpable neglect of the North West by the Government.

The allusion to Leonidas and his Spartans is touching, but you see their hair was short (our fellows' hair I mean) and they couldn't strike the Greek pose of combing out long locks on the morning of battle. That the "errand" was "humiliating" is simply the perverted idea of a political partizan. The errand was as honorable as necessary, and the force employed accomplished it as "heroically" as those of old whose actions are dwelt on in the next paragraph, with truth and distinctness, but apparently only with the object of pointing out the contrast to the apathy which C. P. M. assumes to have characterized the late struggle. No doubt Batocho was carried in a thoroughly apathetic manner, and Otter displayed a masterly apathy in his onslaught on Big Bear.

Yet a little further on C. P. M. says that the "Rebellion brought into existence a hardy lot of soldiers, thoroughly seasoned, and inured to hardships of the most exhaustible character," and implies a regret that (as if they could have been!) they were not formed into a standing army! As yet we have no practical upshot of a good deal of exceedingly good writing, so good that it would be thoroughly effective if the writer went straight to his mark, and did not make Military Status and historical reminiscences mere stalking horses for the expression of political animus.

To go on to the article of Nov. 4, No. 3. After all a million a year is no great sum to maintain the whole Military Force of a nation of five millions, even if it amounts to no more than 25,000, and we shall presently see what is being done for it besides mere "military pageantry." But the Militia vote is not given altogether ungrudgingly, and it would be easy to foretell the fate of any great measure unprompted by a pressing necessity. How impossible, even setting aside treaty obligations, it would be to place a commanding Naval Force on the Lakes any one may judge for himself. Probably the best Adjutant General we ever had under the older regime, resigned because his comparatively moderate measure was rejected.

That in spite of "all her expenditure Canada has not a soldier on her roll who was thought competent to take command of the recent campaign" is putting it a little invidiously, and without consideration of circumstances. That General Middleton had been in the Dominion but a year, and that a "score or more" of his right hand men were Britons is an implied impeachment of the present arrangement which has as little reason.

I think no man in the Militia of Canada has a stronger feeling than I that it should acquire a character, traditions, and discipline of its own, and emancipate itself from anything like a servile imitation and aping of the Imperial Forces. For this reason I rejoiced exceedingly that the success of Canadian troops was unshared by regulars. Had it unfortunately been so, I fear we should have seen the brilliant service of our own men overshadowed and ignored, as was absolutely done in Capt. Huyshe's account of the expedition of 1870, notwithstanding Wolseley's appreciation of the Canadian Militia.

C. P. M. seems to have no love for "Britons," but his apparent dislike does not alter the fact that as long as we are British subjects, Englishmen, if they come here, have the rights of British subjects. That some of the superior officers should be of the British army was unavoidable.

The Militia Act prescribes that the commander of the Militia shall be an army officer of a certain rank. Every General has a right to his choice

of aides; and, as regards many other superior Militia officers, it is no bad thing that at present they should be, as so many of them are (D. A. G.'s and others), men of army experience.

For it is the fact, as C. P. M. only implies, that the opportunities of the Canadian Militia have not been such as to give any number of Militia officers field experience. That there are men in the force whom opportunity would bring to the front, it would be a slur on Canadian capacity to doubt. But there have been scarcely any opportunities. Nothing since 1866, when the want of experience, and we may say discipline, was somewhat painfully manifested at Ridgeway, very nearly turning what a little cool judgment and obedience to orders would have made a brilliant success, into a disgrace. I do not take account of the Red River Expedition of 1870, (to which C. P. M. pays a handsome tribute) because no enemy was then encountered. But the selection of Imperial officers for command of some important force has not been a rule without exceptions. When in 1870, two companies of the Red River Militia battalions were left in the country, the command was offered to the senior Major of the two corps, and, being declined by him, was accepted by Major Irvine, then of the Quebec battalion. Two companies were sent up as a reinforcement in the Fall of 1871, under the command of Captain Scott. Major Irvine held the command of the Provisional battalion so formed for a considerable time, and was then made Assistant Commissioner of the Mounted Police. Lieut.-Col. Macleod, who got the C. M. G. for the Red River Expedition, was the first Assistant Commissioner, and succeeded Col. French as Commissioner. Lieut.-Col. Irvine succeeded Col. Macleod and is now Commissioner. All the officers mentioned, (except Col. French) were Militia officers, pure and simple, as is also Col. Otter, who has not only been appointed to the command of one of the schools of instruction, but also to that of one of the columns of General Middleton's force.

Your contributor must know that an endeavor to enforce the full draft of the Militia Law, except in great emergency, is impossible. If the taxpayers growl at a million a year, what would they say to the expenditure it would require to make a "trained force" of the 50,000 he hints at as desirable. Canada cannot, or will not, vote a large military budget on the contingency of a possible invasion by the United States. In one point, however, I fully agree with C. P. M., "that it is not necessary or advisable that the hard and fast discipline of a regular army should be the ideal of the Canadian Militia."

FRANC-TREURE.

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

RAMBLING NOTES ON BURMAH.

Buddhism is the religion of Burmah. Countless are its shrines, monasteries, and dagobas. The dagoba—Pagoda it is sometimes called, but that name properly belongs to the Hindoo temple—consists in a solid, bell-shaped mass of plastered brick work, crowned with the sacred tree or umbrella, usually of open iron work.

Most famous of these dagobas is the Shooay Dagon, at Rangoon. Its foundations are supposed to have been laid over 2,000 years ago, when Buddhism first spread to this land from its home in India. It surmounts some relics of the first Buddha (and founder of the religion) Guatama. Standing upon a hill at a short distance from the city it forms "a stupendous mass of solid masonry, tapering gradually from an octagonal base of 1355 feet, to a spire of small circumference, which is surmounted by the umbrella." The umbrella in this case is of solid gold, and laden with jewels, and is a recent votive offering from the King of Ava, (1875). The whole pyramid, from base to summit, is covered with gold leaf, and blazing in the sunlight, forms a magnificent object, which is seen at a great distance.

The brow of the hill is reached by a covered stairway. This is of wood, and mounts by an easy ascent, through a series of terraces. Both roof and sides of this stairway are painted. On the left, we have pictured the tortures of the damned—and luckily the Buddhist hell is not eternal—it is rather a purgatory, where the ill-doer expiates his past offences, before beginning a new phase of existence—horrible and grotesque these pictures are, yet not wanting in a fiendish invention, which would have done credit to a grand inquisitor.

On the right are scenes from the life of Guatama, illustrative of his virtues, his charity, his humanity, his self-sacrifice, and of the life of pleasure he abandoned, to devote himself, by study and contemplation, to the acquisition of supreme knowledge, and the final attainment of "Nervana."

On the steps, at intervals, we meet groups of monks (Poungyers) and nuns. The monks, shaven, crowned, and bare-footed, and robed in yellow. The nuns entirely in white. The latter are old and wrinkled, and have evidently taken to the religious profession as a last resource. They have strings of beads in their hands, and are reciting a Rosary, though the ardour of their devotion does not blind them to the chance of eleemosynary coppers. Some of the monks are provided with bells, which they are constantly beating. Others, at small stands, within the enclosure, are retailing flowers, gold leaf, and votive candles, to the faithful, to be used in decorating the shrine and dagoba.

The worshippers prostrate themselves before the altars, round the base of the pyramid, which sustains each a towering figure of the Buddha, seated cross-legged, and with folded arms, in that attitude of perfect apathy which is the Buddhist's ideal of eternal happiness. The shrines are not one, but many; and numberless are the statues of the Buddha. Before the principal ones they burn incense and votive candles whilst the priests recite prayers in Pali; but his short prayer recited, the Burman gives himself to converse with his friends, and to merry making; and loud and pleasant to hear are the voices of men and girls, as they echo through the temples.

The monastic life is held in great reverence in Burmah. As boys, a large number of its people enter the monasteries, and, living apart from the