

ago because he accompanied his regiment on frontier service, only succeeded within the last few days in his attempts to obtain re-employment. Fifteen months enforced idleness, and consequent dependence on one's friends, is a pretty heavy penalty to pay for patriotism. We fear this is not an isolated case; but no matter—employer's warehouses have not been sacked, and the country is safe."

Further comment would be useless, but we anticipate for these meanly unpatriotic a retribution well earned and severe.

ORACULAR WRITING.

Some Western Journals have become very conspicuous lately by giving what they pretend is a true synopsis of the forthcoming Militia Bill. The scheme which they oracularly propound does infinite credit to their ingenuity; and their modesty in not claiming the offspring of their genius is only equalled by their generosity in fathering the authorship on the gentleman who has been engaged in framing the measure to whom the whole thing, as they propound it, is refreshingly new. By assuming a tone of superior information these Journals mislead the public in forming an opinion of this new law, which is calculated to do much mischief. It is of paramount importance that a measure which deals with the subject of national defence should be allowed to come before the public with its provisions fairly set forth that no misconception may arise. As this is a vital question and one that will no doubt create a great deal of discussion not only in Parliament but among all classes of our people, and one that needs the most careful consideration, it would betoken more wisdom on the part of these self-inspired prophets if they were to confine themselves to actual probabilities, and not seek to regale the public with phantasies which, however cleverly concocted, cannot but be of a tendency mischievous to the fair consideration of a measure of Militia reform which will combine cheapness with practicability. It is altogether probable that the measure will undergo many modifications before it becomes law, and it would be very foolish to pronounce upon its merits before its nature is known.

VOLUNTEER ARTILLERY.

This branch of our Volunteer force has been strangely neglected, and we would be glad to see more attention bestowed upon this very important arm of the service. The great advancement made in the science of war of late years, has made Artillery the most important portion of all armies taking the field, and a thorough acquaintance with its use is absolutely necessary if we wish to have an effective Militia organization. We have a good many Volunteer Companies which are called Artillery, but, if it were not for the name and dress, they might as well be called by any other name. There is something very absurd in a corps bearing the name of Artillery and being supplied with

the dress, accoutrements, etc., appertaining to that arm of the service with the one grand exception of guns. It reminds one of a story told of a worthy Mayor who had ninety and nine good reasons why he did not fire a royal salute for the king, the first of which was he had no guns, and these and no powder; as might be expected His Majesty did not require the remaining reasons. This is exactly the position of the Garrison Artillery companies in the towns of the Dominion where such have been formed. Now as it is a conceded fact that, if we should be called upon to-morrow to defend our country, the foot artillery, as at present organized, would be utterly useless, it is of the greatest importance that this part of the force should be given the means of acquiring a knowledge of the drill and duties of Artillerymen. To further this object we believe it is the intention of the Government to do all in its power to make the Volunteer Artillery as effective as possible. This can only be done by supplying them with guns; for without these they might as well be riflemen, which in fact they are with the exception of dress. On more than one occasion we have published communications on this subject, and we hope soon to see the Volunteer Garrison Artillery placed on such a footing as will no longer leave them an isolated and, for all practical purposes, useless branch of the Volunteer force.

THE DEFENCE OF CANADA.

Amongst "the Curiosities of Literature" may justly be classed a pamphlet dated at Port Hope, 28th October, 1867, entitled "A Letter on the Defence of Canada," to the Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald, K.C.B., by D. Bethune, Esq.

Before reviewing the subject matter of this epistle, it may be as well at once to promise, that the writer thereof is neither a soldier in the professional sense of the term, nor has he received a military education—consequently our readers will not be surprised at the extraordinary system of defence advocated, nor at the coolness with which the expressed professional opinions of the late Commander-in-Chief are made to give place to the author's assurance. Starting with the usual introductory preface, the pamphlet states that "much has been said of late respecting the proper mode of defending Canada. A distinguished officer—Sir John Michel—recently in command of Her Majesty's forces in this dominion, has recommended that Montreal, Kingston and Prescott should be immediately fortified—"whilst the Grand Route to the sea by the Ottawa and French Rivers should, as soon as possible, be undertaken, giving a backbone of military strength." He then goes on to state that THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW "strongly advocates the opening up of a line of Water Communication from Ottawa to Lake Huron for the transport of troops." After comforting the people of Canada,

through the Premier, with the idea that the Canal will be built in "course of time"—assuming the prophetic to foretell it—the mantle of Mr. Galt appears to have descended on his shoulders, and he gravely informs Sir John that "at present the means of the Dominion will not warrant any such absurd expenditure of money as that vast work will require," and coolly tells him that "as a military work of importance to the defence of the country, I beg to express my entire dissent from the view taken of it by Sir John Michel."

The strategical reasons for this cool piece of effrontery are curious—and they are that—"Canada must be defended "on its frontier"—(an idea about as original as that of the renowned inventor of Jack Knives) "and that the interior line of defence recommended by Sir John Michel and its other advocates cannot be of any use if our frontier be penetrated and held by the enemy between Montreal, Kingston, or even above Kingston." It is also contended that the holding of any of these points would be useless if the enemy took possession of the intervening country—and that if Lake St. Louis or St. Francis were carried in force—"what use would the Ottawa Canal be?" The plan propounded by THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW is scouted, as "so utterly absurd that I am astonished at its recommendation." It is gravely proposed to march troops by the interior ten or twenty miles from the frontier, or carry them "by carriages in Summer or sleighs in Winter, as much easier than by the Ottawa route, in case the communications were obstructed."

Extracts such as these are quite sufficient to stamp the character of the writer with a total ignorance of the common rudiments of Military Science, or any knowledge whatever of the subject on which he addresses the Premier of Canada. Indeed it is hardly worth while controverting such absurd theories, if it were not for one fact which appears prominently amongst the mass of chaff, and that is the hostility displayed towards the advocacy of the Ottawa and Lake Huron navigation.

This gentleman who snubs Sir John Michel and who would defend Canada on the Frontier, has a plan as well as others for that purpose, and it is the construction of the Caughnawaga Canal, which "would not be less than eighty feet wide at the surface of the water, nor less than eleven feet deep." On the East side of this Canal "Earthenworks" are to be erected—"say every three miles—surrounded by wide ditches having eight or ten feet water in them—in which earthworks an Ironclad Block House should be erected, say 40 feet by 80, with casemates at the four corners of the Earthworks (also Ironclad) for Infantry, armed with short repeating Rifles to destroy any enemy that might gain an entrance inside the Earthworks, and by having at least two turrets—one at each corner of the work next the canal armed with powerful Armstrong guns.