

## THE CANADIAN MILITIA.

At the present time, when one branch of the Canadian militia force has taken the field in support of the cause of law and order, which every good citizen should hold dear, a little information as to the composition of that force as a whole will doubtless be deemed opportune. As the text for our subject, we cannot do better than quote the law under which the military forces of the Dominion are constituted. The Consolidated Statutes of Canada, chap 36, enact as follows:—

The Militia shall consist of all the male inhabitants of Canada, of the age of sixteen and upwards, and under sixty—not exempted or disqualified by law, and being British subjects by birth or naturalization; but Her Majesty may require all the male inhabitants of Canada, capable of bearing arms, to serve in case of a *levée en masse* (46 V., c. 11, s. 4).

The male population so liable to serve in the Militia, shall be divided into

### FOUR CLASSES.

The first class shall comprise those of the age of eighteen years and upwards, but under thirty years, who are unmarried or widowers without children.

The second class shall comprise those of the age of thirty years and upwards, but under forty-five years, who are unmarried or widowers without children.

The third class shall comprise those of the age of eighteen years and upwards, but under forty-five years, who are married or widowers with children.

The fourth class shall comprise those of the age of forty-five years and upwards, but under sixty years.

And the above shall be the order in which the male population shall be called upon to serve. (46 V., c. 11, s. 5.)

### DIVISION OF MILITIA.

The Militia shall be divided into Active and Reserve Militia—Land Force; and Active and Reserve Militia—Marine Force.

The Active Militia—Land Force—shall be composed of:—

(a) Corps raised by voluntary enlistment.

(b) Corps raised by ballot.

(c) Corps composed of men raised by voluntary enlistment and men balloted to serve.

The Active Militia, Marine Force—to be raised similarly—shall be composed of seamen, sailors, and persons whose usual occupation is upon any steamer or sailing craft navigating the waters of Canada.

The Reserve Militia—Land and Marine—shall consist of the whole of the men who are not serving in the Active Militia for the time being. (46 V., c. 11, s. 6.)

There is at present no marine militia in existence.

FEW among us seem to realize that the brave fellows who have just been ordered to the front by reason of their enrolment in "corps raised by voluntary enlistment," have, by their patriotic zeal in spontaneously enlisting, and their self-abnegation in subjecting themselves to drill and discipline, saved the rest of the community from having to participate in martial experience, *volens coens*, through being drafted to serve in "corps raised by ballot." The voluntary principle is undoubtedly the best for a free community, so long as it serves to keep the ranks of the organizations deemed necessary for the public service up to their full strength in numbers and in quality of material, for it possesses the great advantage of securing for enrolment men who have a taste for the profession of arms, who are proud to belong to military corps, and who, as a rule, are not burdened with domestic responsibilities. The term of service for which recruits enrol themselves in the active militia is three years, at the end of which period many drop out of the ranks in consequence of marriage or business ties depriving them of the leisure required for continued connection with their corps. It thus happens that a constant stream of young Canadians—the flower of the vigor and intelligence of the country—is constantly passing through the ranks, with the result that a very large proportion of the mature manhood of the Dominion is familiar with military drill and discipline to the moderate extent that so brief an experience is capable of producing. This is a valuable feature in the system, as, should occasion demand, many a retired militiaman would not only be ready, but fit, to resume his place in the ranks of the corps which he was formerly a member of.

A MILITIA organization, such as the Dominion possesses, is indeed a grand and important element of national strength and development. In principle it is based on the same foundation as the militia organization of the Mother Country, and in like manner derives its strength from its essentially national and truly democratic character. We have just witnessed, in the proclamation of the Gladstone Government embodying the militia force of Great Britain, evidence of the reliance which the nation feels in such a means of increasing the available regular army at short notice. Indeed, it has become a growing necessity, in time of danger to the British Empire, for the Queen's Government to fall back on the good old constitutional force of militia, so eminently suitable to the genius of the Anglo-Saxon races, to say nothing of the convenience of being able to take it up or lay it down at pleasure.

THE militia plays a prominent part in the history of both England and America. The armies of Edward III., which shattered the chivalry of France, were composed of militiamen. It is true that they were in those days taught to shoot with the bow instead of the rifle, the former being deservedly held in estimation as the natural weapon. Again, the battles of the wars of the Roses were fought by militia troops. On this continent Burgoyne, with his regulars, Hessians, and Indian allies, had to surrender at Saratoga to the militia of the English colonists. Numbers of militiamen, fresh from their local regiments, swelled the ranks of the British infantry at Waterloo; and lastly, the terrible battles of the Wilderness around Richmond were fought to the bitter end by militia troops.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, a prominent member of the British Association, who, it will be remembered, delivered last fall in Winnipeg a highly appreciative address upon the resources and prospects of the Canadian North-West, at a recent dinner of the Shorthand Writers' Association, London, England, in the course of a speech replying to the toast of "Her Majesty's Services," offered some remarks pregnant with matter demanding the careful consideration of those who assume to think that the British lion is approaching the period of senility, and that his fangs are no longer firmly rooted. He said that England was certainly a great military power. At present there were at least 100,000 British troops under arms or on the waters. Was this not an unparalleled achievement? Did they suppose that Germany flattered herself that she was the first military power? Could that country maintain that number of men abroad? Could Russia or France do it? He considered they certainly could not. England was the only power who could maintain that number of men solely by voluntary enlistment. No other military power could keep such a large number by voluntary enlistment. There were a million of men under arms in the British Empire. Every one of those men was a volunteer, as every one had enlisted voluntarily, whereas all other powers had to force their men into the army. He claimed for Great Britain one of the first positions as a military power. With regard to the navy, very many accounts had been seen of the ships that were being constructed, of the number of guns they were to have. If experts were asked, it would be found that it was one thing to have ships armed and manned, and another thing to have them ready to fight. It would be found that there were many ships belonging to other powers that were armed, but not ready to fight. He believed that if all the British iron-clads were turned out into the British channel they would overlap the fighting iron-clads of other empires.

MORE lives have already been lost with Riel's rebels than were sacrificed during the whole of the rebellion of '37, and more than were lost in the Fenian invasions of '66 and '70.

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