

THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW

And Military and Naval Gazette.

VOLUME V.

1871.

THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW enters on the fifth year of its existence. When it was first projected fears were entertained for its ultimate success, as two efforts of a similar kind had been made and failed for want of support; but we are happy to say these fears were groundless, and that the VOLUNTEER REVIEW may now be said to be firmly established, thanks to the support it has met with from the hands of the Volunteer Force of the Dominion. It now circulates largely through Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and even the new Province of Manitoba, has extended its generous support. Nor is it confined to these Provinces only, but in the Mother Country, and even the United States it has subscribers and supporters. No other Journal in the Dominion has so wide and extended a circulation as the VOLUNTEER REVIEW, and therefore it offers unparalleled facilities to general advertisers. Our terms for advertising will be found liberal on application, either personally, or by letter *post paid*.

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Full and reliable reports of RIFLE MATCHES, INSPECTIONS, and other matters connected with the Force appear regularly in our Columns.

AGENTS.

Liberal terms will be offered to Adjutants, Instructors, and others who act as agents for us in their several corps.

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TO CORRESPONDENTS

All Communications regarding the Militia or Volunteer movement, or for the Editorial Department, should be addressed to the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW, Ottawa.

Communications intended for insertion should be written on one side of the paper only.

We cannot undertake to return rejected communications. Correspondents must invariably send us confidentially, their name and address.

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Adjutants and Officers of Corps throughout the Provinces are particularly requested to favor us regularly with weekly information concerning the movements and doings of their respective Corps, including the fixtures for drill, marching out, rifle practice &c.

We shall be obliged to such to forward all information of this kind as early as possible, so that it may reach us in time for publication.

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The Volunteer Review,

AND MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

"Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
To guard the Monarch, fence the law."

OTTAWA, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1871.

A GREAT deal has been written on the necessity for re-organizing the Canadian army, and very many valuable suggestions offered by officers whose opinions command respect as to the most proper method of effecting that object; but whatever may be individual desires and opinions as to the value of our present organization, it is evidently well adapted to the social condition of our people, and has triumphantly stood all the tests to which it has hitherto been subjected; and it is evident that any radical change involving the destruction of any portion of the present organization would be not only ill-advised, but mischievous, for the reason that a military force must possess stability as the main element of its organization. Provisional or progressive regulations introduced as initial principles, are only productive of confusion; the laws which must govern an organization must have sufficient elasticity to meet every contingency, and that is just what our Militia Law is. The principle which gives stability to the whole is that "every man owes the state military service;" but it wisely leaves it optional with the individual to render that service, voluntarily or under compulsion. The advocates of change say the first has been tried and the objections to it are narrowed down to the unequal pressure of military service on the willing, while the unwilling escape Scot free. In our last issue the

means of making shirkers pay, not for exception but impunity, was suggested, and if the advice was applied to the municipal authorities as well as to the legislative an entirely new aspect might be put on the whole affair without any change whatever. In every township there are sufficient young men to form a company of active militia; the question now is, whether they shall be forced to take service by ballot, or by gentle means induced to come forward as Volunteers. The term of service of the present force expires in January next; the test value of the organization will be whether the ranks will be re-filled by Volunteers or whether the ballot is to be enforced to provide the small force of 40 000 men the present regulations require. We venture to predict that the ranks will be kept full without the ballot, a resort which would at once abolish the active force, a calamity which we hope the military spirit of the country will avert, notwithstanding the wish of many officers therefor, and we would seriously advise those gentlemen who have so nobly done their duty by the country and imbibed that spirit of the true soldier which is not satisfied with anything short of perfection in the rank and file, to seriously consider the consequences of any change which will deprive the country of their services. It is all very well to advocate a theory but when it is found that the practical working out thereof is attended with disastrous results, the course to be pursued in all conscience is plain enough. To thinking men the great value of the voluntary system is to be found in the fact of its scattering broadcast on the country a multitude of partially drilled soldiers, it is hardly possible to visit a hamlet without finding some one capable of roughly drilling his fellows, and when we consider the utterly defenceless state of Canada in 1860, it must be confessed that a great and important step has been taken and a vast improvement effected since. It is entirely within the mark to say that 200,000 men could be found in the Dominion to-day thoroughly acquainted with the use of the rifle and most if not all have been at some time or other under the drill sergeant's hands; while it is quite safe to venture the assertion that including those of the present active force from three to four thousand officers could be found as well up in their various duties as the officers of any other army. Now, will a change to the ballot produce anything but the loss of the services of gentlemen, a great majority of whom have served from seven to ten years, have a thorough knowledge of their duties and to whom the details of a further organization in case of emergency can safely be entrusted, or will the ballot do more than give the country new men and officers with two years service and all the knowledge they can acquire in thirty-two days training, those in turn to be succeeded indefinitely by a similar force with precisely the same oppor-