



The Volunteer Review

AND MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

A Journal Devoted to the Interests of the Military and Naval Forces of the Dominion of Canada

VOL. VI.

OTTAWA, (CANADA,) MONDAY, JUNE 24, 1872.

No. 26.

REPORT OF THE ADJUTANT-GENERAL

(Continued from Page 281.)

On the 29th October, the expedition crossed the height of land which divides the waters flowing into the Arctic Ocean from those which ran into the valley of the St. Lawrence; at this time there was about eight inches of snow on the ground, heavy snow storms prevailing; on Kashaboiwio Lake, and Lac des Mille lacs, the Tug steamers were useless, pipes being frozen. On the 30th October, at Baril Portage, a way for the boats had to be cut for half a mile through ice three quarters of an inch thick, the moving of the boats and stores across Baril Portage not being completed until after midnight. On the 31st October, by midnight French Portage was crossed. On the 1st November, "Deux Rivieres" was reached, the boats and stores having been taken across "Pine Portage" during a tremendous snow-storm.

On the 2nd November, the men were compelled to jump into the half-frozen water to haul their boats along, owing to the shallowness of the stream. On the 4th November a way through ice had again to be cut, and at Loon Creek the water was so shallow that it took thirty (30) hours to get some of the boats through, during the greater portion of which time the men were obliged to be in the water; the stores had to be taken out and carried along the shore, while it required not less than twenty men to pull the empty boats through the mud, thus the expedition was pushed on day and night, its commander exhibiting personally to the officers and men an example of activity, energy and endurance, most honorable and praiseworthy; the same spirit with which he was animated being thus communicated to those under his command, all vied with one another in the display of similar qualities.

On the 11th November, Colonel Osborne Smith, fell in with the expedition on the Lake of the Woods (having come from Fort Garry, bringing with him twenty experienced voyagers of the Hudson's Bay Company, and a serviceable supply of provisions; a point was reached within fifteen miles of the North west angle, when further advance was stopped by ice, the Camp having to be formed for the night on an island; next day an attempt was made to force a passage which succeeded for a certain distance, but finally the troops were landed on the ice and marched to the North west angle, every man carrying his rifle, accoutrements, knapsack, and blankets. From the North west angle of the Lake of the Woods, to Fort Garry (about 110 miles) the distance was marched in four

and a-half days, (the cold being intense) and on the 18th November, the whole of the expedition arrived safely at its destination without accident or the loss of a man, in three weeks from the time of leaving Thunder Bay, in four from Collingwood, and in five weeks from the time I received orders to despatch it, the force required was in Fort Garry, completely equipped and ready for service, the distance from the point of departure in Ontario being about one thousand (1,000) miles, all of the men however having previously travelled great distances to the rendezvous. These facts speak for them selves, proving the efficiency both of the men and of the system.

From the time the troops left Thunder Bay, till their arrival at Fort Garry, the weather was unusually cold, stormy, and unfavorable, causing considerable delay. Every night the men had to camp out, and the privations to which these hardy Canadian soldiers were exposed, may be imagined from the fact, that on their arrival at their destination, they marched across the Red River and the Assiniboine, on the ice into Fort Garry, and the day afterwards the thermometer had sunk to many degrees below zero.

Mr. Dawson, of the Department of Public Works, accompanied the expedition through out this trying march from Thunder Bay to Fort Garry, and afforded it the greatest possible assistance, he speaks in the highest terms of the conduct of the officers and men, of their cheerfulness under privation, of their hardihood and energy, that the hardships endured, and the difficulties overcome in the Expedition of 1871, were incomparably greater than those encountered in 1870.

In point of time there can be no comparison, the expedition of 1870 having occupied about three months in making the same journey which that of 1871 accomplished in less than one.

It is true that upon neither occasion was there any enemy to meet or "Military Laurels" to be gained by the officers and men of these two Expeditions—the soldiers, nevertheless, who bore so well the hardships inseparable from both, are justly entitled to honorable consideration; the Expedition of 1871, composed entirely of Canadian Militia, commanded by a Canadian officer, and so promptly carried out, will long be remembered with feelings of pride by every Canadian as one of the most successful and remarkable marches of the kind.

By the Gazette of 16th October, 1871, Manitoba was constituted Military Dis-

trict No 10 and already the Militia System of the Dominion has taken root therein.

The active force consists of a Provisional Battalion of Riflemen, at present on duty, of 312 officers and men, of whom 200 are stationed at Upper Fort Garry. 2 officers and fifty men at the Stone Fort twenty miles lower down the Red River, and two officers with fifty men at the Hudson Bay Company's Post, at Pembina, on the frontier of the United States, where there is a post and detachment of the United States Troops.

In addition to this Battalion, two Cavalry Troops, one Demi Battery of Artillery and nine companies of Infantry have been authorized to be formed, and their organization is progressing.

Lieut. Colonel Osborne Smith, C.M.G., at present commanding the Militia in this District, reports that the "Demi Battery of Artillery is now organized, armed with two bronze rifled Mountain Guns (7 pounders), and that it will prove a useful and efficient corps; that four out of the nine Infantry Companies, gazetted are also formed, the organization of the remainder progressing, and that the Cavalry Troops will succeed in their organization as "Mounted Rifles."

Colonel Osborne Smith, in his Report on this District, which will be found in the Appendix, states, "that the description of force best adapted to the country is Mounted Rifles; that an excellent military spirit appears to actuate all classes, and their *physique* is admirable—perhaps no better material for Mounted Riflemen could be found anywhere than among the buffalo hunters of the great Western Prairies. The population from which the Force has been drawn, exclusive of Indians and scattered settlers, may be estimated at ten thousand.

"The settled country is well situated, geographically in a strategical point of view, for the formation of Companies.

"From the parallel of 49° (the boundary line of the United States), the chief settlements extend due north, along the Red River, for about ninety miles; this line of settlement is crossed by another running nearly east and west from Point de Chene on the River Seine, to the eastward, to Prairie Portage to the westward, on the Assiniboine River. Both these rivers converge at Winnipeg (Fort Garry), falling into the Red River.

"The settled country thus forms a cross, of which Fort Garry may be considered the centre, sixty miles north of the boundary line at Pembina, with Point de Chene and the Prairie Portage, distant