

## Annual Report on the State of the Militia for 1875.

HEAD QUARTERS,  
OTTAWA 1st Jan., 1876.

The Honorable

The Minister of Militia and Defence, &c.,

Sir.—The usual period for submitting the annual report on the Militia has again approached, it becomes therefore my duty to touch briefly on the various points on which the Government should be informed.

In the course of the past year I have had the pleasure of inspecting several Brigades and of making myself thoroughly acquainted with the Dominion of Canada from the shores of the Atlantic to its most westerly confines on the Pacific Coast.

My report to the Honorable the Minister of Justice upon the general condition of the North West Mounted Police, and other subjects connected with the North West Territory, under the official instructions I had received from him, embraces a short sketch of my journey through the country and across the Rocky Mountains to British Columbia during the Summer and Autumn of this year. The report (B) is annexed.

Two other reports to the Honourable the Secretary of State having reference to the result of my conferences with the general officers of the U.S.A. commanding in Montana, Washington and Oregon Territories, to whom I was accredited by the American Government, have also been duly submitted.

These reports (A) were prepared in pursuance of instructions I received from the Secretary of State to confer with those officers in the course of my official tour, on the subject of the repression of crime and capture of criminals along the international line. They are also annexed.

The very friendly reception I met with from all the American officers with whom I was fortunate enough to become acquainted, in the course of that duty, will be seen in my special report on that subject.

My official tour between the 24th of May and the 15th November embraced a distance by the route travelled in going and returning of about 11,600 miles, of which over 2,000 miles were performed on horseback, and 600 with pack animals.

### PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

On reaching this Island through the province of New Brunswick I found the Militia had not been reconstituted since Confederation and that considerable misconception existed on the subject.

In the year 1851, it had been disbanded, but at the time of the Fenian commotion a few independent companies were organized in consequence of a despatch from the Secretary of State—these were kept together until July 1873. I found considerable apathy existed when I arrived.

The quota for the Island is 700 men in 4 regimental divisions, with 4 batteries of Artillery and 12 Infantry Companies.

On my arrival I found there was a hesitation to enrol under apprehension that the companies might be liable to be sent into camp on the mainland, for which they could not afford time, but on my assembling as many officers as I could collect I set their minds at rest on that point, upon which I received assurance that no further obstacle existed. Permission was also given to carry out the drill at Company Head Quarters for this year.

Some dissatisfaction had existed on account of vested interests as to officer's rank

in the Provincial Militia, not having been observed in the reconstruction after Confederation. This has been satisfactorily disposed of.

I also heard complaints at no salute having been fired on the Queen's Birthday. There is a battery of 6 pounder brass field guns in excellent order, also an earthwork to command the entrance of the Bay of Charlottetown armed with 32 pounder guns and an old iron 6 pounder, but there was no powder in store. This has since been remedied.

Misconception also existed as to furnishing Guards of honor for the opening and closing of the Provincial Parliament. It was believed that such guards could only be furnished by Infantry. I desired it might be clearly understood in future they could be supplied by any available arm of the service, and that requisitions from the Lieutenant Governor should henceforth be punctually attended to, under provincial regulations for payment.

The Paymaster's Department required re-adjustment, which has been done.

In fact, from a very unsatisfactory state of things, I believe that since my visit, the Island Militia is restored to a proper footing, clothing for all the troops has since been supplied, and the greater portion have been trained in the past season.

It is suggested that a new platform for the 4 gun battery, referred to, should be laid down, to render it serviceable, and that some repairs be made to the parapets of the earthwork.

It is desirable that a school of instruction should be opened at Charlottetown for young officers and men. There are only two drill instructors for Infantry and one for Artillery in the Province, but few of the old Volunteer Officers will serve again, therefore those now appointed will require equal instruction with the men.

There is a District Adjutant at Charlottetown who was a Captain in the Army and retained since Confederation. I suggest he be confirmed; he would be useful in the Military School for giving general instruction, under the Deputy Adjutant General.

There are three drill sheds, viz: at Charlottetown, Summerside, and Georgetown in very good repair; that at Charlottetown is one of the best I have seen.

I suggest that the 6 pounder field guns in store at Charlottetown be distributed for practice, two to each battery of Artillery,

Returning by the Gulf of St. Lawrence I visited Gaspé, where an Artillery Company is formed, but without battery or guns. I suggest two 24 or 32 pounder guns should be supplied and mounted for practice; there is an excellent position for them at the entrance of the river.

Passing through Quebec and Ontario where I made inspections of several Brigade Camps, alluded to hereafter, I went by Lakes Huron and Superior, and so reached Manitoba.

For military purposes in years to come as well as for commercial intercourse with the North West, it will doubtless be found necessary to cut a canal on Canadian soil at the rapids of Sault Ste. Marie. The present canal, on the American side, has a depth of 12 feet, it could not, however, be used for the passage of armed Canadian troops. On the opposite side of the rapids, by cutting through a narrow neck only 500 yards broad, a canal would be approached at both ends water deep enough for large vessels.

This will naturally become the highway to Manitoba, and the North West, when the railroad now in progress of construction from Fort William on Kaministaqua River in

Thunder Bay, is open, even as far as the Red River.

On the South West side of St Joseph's Island, and close to Neobisch Rapids, there is some Ordnance property which is valuable as affording a suitable position for a battery to command the narrows between Lakes Huron and Superior.

### MANITOBA.

When I reached Fort Garry, the provisional battalion consisted of only a few men, those whose time had expired had just gone, and the recruits had not come up. There is an excellent barrack half a mile west from Winnipeg, but a magazine is very much needed.

The Garrison now consists of only 100 men of whom 25 are Artillery, with two 9 pounder rifled guns, and two 7 pounder mountain howitzers; two of the latter description have been supplied to the Winnipeg battery of Militia Artillery.

The Militia of Manitoba is composed of two companies of Infantry and the battery of Artillery, the latter is in fair condition, while the Infantry has but little solidity. The Deputy Adjutant General was about to reconstitute the Infantry companies which he hoped to render more serviceable.

Owing to the fluctuating character of the population of this new province, however, I am not much impressed by the stability of the Militia at the present time.

I venture to make some observations here from reliable information given me on the spot, relating to the beneficent results arising from the presence of a military force at Winnipeg, since the troubles of 1859—70.

Since a force has been established in their midst, regularity and peace have prevailed, with protection to life and property, the presence of the military and their influence on the minds of the people are guarantees of good order.

Comments no doubt were made upon the expense of keeping troops when their service are not ostensibly required, but such remarks though reasonable enough from persons who don't thoroughly know the country are at variance with the opinions of good and true thinking men on the spot who desire peace and have interests at stake, looking to the security of the Community and the ascendancy of trade and commerce over strife and disorder. True enough there has happily been no occasion for calling on the intervention of these troops, except during a Fenian bubble, and though no troops can be maintained without expense, yet the money so expended gives security and is for the most part spent among the tradesmen of the Province.

Their being only once called out is hardly a criterion as to their use or uselessness. They are always ready and efficient when required and their presence alone is quite sufficient to keep order in a mixed population composed of different nationalities and prejudices, situated so close to the boundary line of a foreign State that the Province as yet continues a refuge for persons of lawless character from the other side, seeking as a pretext, employment in various capacities.

The withdrawal of troops at present from Winnipeg would cause a feeling of alarm and insecurity, and I am led to believe might result in disturbance among the cosmopolitan and as yet only partially settled population of that young but thriving province.

Some idea may be formed of the rapid increase of population in Manitoba by the fact that in 1872, the inhabitants of Winnipeg hardly numbered 600 souls, while now there are about 5 000.