

## THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW

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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.

All letters must be Post-paid, or they will not be taken out of the Post Office.

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

### OUR AGENT.

We beg to notify our numerous friends and subscribers that Mr. J. J. BELL is authorised to act as General Travelling Agent for THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW; to receive subscriptions and transact any other business connected with the paper.



## The Volunteer Review,

AND MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

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

OTTAWA, MONDAY, JULY 27, 1868.

By the kindness of a medical gentleman of this city we have seen a copy of the *Lancet* for the 27th June last, in which there appears an article deserving the careful consideration of all who have the good of the Volunteers, as a reliable military force, at heart. The writer of the article to which we refer comments severely upon the neglect, by the authorities, of supplying adequate medical attendance to the Volunteers on the occasion of the Review at Windsor; and the utter absence of those provisions positively required when a large number of people are brought together, especially in the summer season. The commonest precautions against the incidental casualties of a field day and the necessary arrangements for making the efforts of the medical officers available, seem to have been altogether overlooked. The following are the *Lancet's* remarks:—

"It is an unspeakable disgrace to the authorities who superintend the Volunteer force that, at the review of Saturday last in Windsor Park, thousands of honest, hard-working men, who willingly encounter any necessary fatigue, trouble, and expense in their country's service, should have been exposed to treatment which would have been barely excusable in an expedition into an

enemy's country, but which is simply disgraceful as occurring in a royal park within twenty miles of this metropolis. We do not care upon what details to illustrate the shameful incapacity which characterised the arrangements, but need only refer to one or two broad facts. About 27,000 men were assembled—not suddenly, but after days, nay weeks, of preparation; yet of these the majority were starved throughout the whole of a day which, from the heat of the weather and the fatigue of the operations, was one of exceptional severity. These poor fellows could not get food, and, worse than this, a very large number could not get even water until some good Samaritans at Datchet, Virginia Water and other places, helped them, late at night, to this simple restorative. Worn out with exposure to the sun, men were falling out of the ranks in all directions, and the medical officers were busy in doing what they could for the sufferers. But their powers of help were very limited. Not a word of information had been conveyed to them as to the location of any hospital accommodation or ambulance, and they were left to administer what assistance they could with a flask of brandy or a word of encouragement. The day will come, we are sure, when it will not be believed that at the present time the medical officers of volunteers (the only officers who have really any serious responsibility) are totally ignored by the authorities. They have no organization, no chiefs, no orders, no appliances. For years past they have been protesting against the anomalous position which they are forced, utterly against their will, to occupy. It is only quite lately that they again made an effort at the meeting of the National Rifle Association to remedy this evil, but of course unsuccessfully. The blunders of the review at Windsor are simply examples of the same incompetence which killed thousands of our men in the Crimea, which has over and over again decimated regiments with cholera in India by marches taken at improper times and without proper preparations, and which only the other day outraged public feeling by sending a cavalry regiment from Hounslow without food or care for the men. It is lamentable that, in a civilised country in a state of peace, with ample time for preparation, a citizen army of 27,000 men cannot take a walk in Windsor Park without suffering the miseries of famine and thirst, experiencing hours of delay in transport, and finding that there is a reckless disregard on the part of the authorities for the decent accommodation of those who, under such circumstances, necessarily break down. Somewhere between the War Office and the commanding officers of regiments there lies a weight of responsibility for the unnecessary suffering of Saturday last, to which we fear the public generally is not alive. Volunteers will do anything rather than complain of privation; but we are in a position to say, from all we have learnt, that their treatment at the late review was an instance of disgraceful mismanagement, and, in the name of the medical officers we protest against the utter want of system which entails such disorder, and which threatens to ruin the reputation and sap the vitality of the force."

Volunteers even more than a regular force require to be provided with provisions of water, food and medical treatment when brought into the field even for only a few hours, and common humanity requires that men who voluntarily sacrifice their time, business and personal comfort in behalf of

the nation should have the necessities of their health looked after by those into whose hands they commit themselves; for it is impossible that they, in the capacity of soldiers, can make provision against the accidents, incident to their assumed position. A great outcry has been raised in England against the Volunteers who took part in the Windsor Review for having broken through all rules of discipline, and, after the display was over, making a grand stampede for their homes; but, if what the *Lancet* says be correct, we can hardly wonder at such a conclusion to the day. It is exceedingly hard, as we know from experience, to maintain discipline among tired, hungry and thirsty men. Although the English Volunteers have in this instance laid themselves open to severe reprehension, we think those who should and did not make proper arrangements for their relief are the real parties at fault and to blame for the disgraceful scene.

The establishment of a good and efficient Commissariat and Medical Staff for Volunteers should be, as it deserves, a primary consideration; and we have copied the foregoing remarks from the *Lancet*, as giving a remarkable instance of the danger arising from neglect of these primary considerations to an army in the field; especially when that army is composed of volunteers to whom habits of restraint and discipline are comparatively strange.

Should this country unfortunately be involved in war it is to the volunteers that the government and people must look for defence and protection. This force is invaluable, containing the best elements of the manhood of the nation, should be carefully attended to; for there is nothing which sooner destroys the morale of any military force as a deficient Medical and Commissariat Staff. At the passage of the new Militia Act, which is to come into force on the 1st of next October, Dr. Grant, M.P., in an able speech in the House of Commons, pointed out how necessary it was for the Canadian Militia to be supplied with proper medical appliances, and, at his suggestion, the Minister of Militia interpolated a clause for the due establishment of this branch of the service. By recent General Orders steps have been taken to secure the services of efficient medical officers for each battalion; so that, as far as can at present be done, the authorities have not been backward in this respect.

In a former number of the *VOLUNTEER REVIEW* we gave our readers an excellent paper from the pen of Dr. VanCortlandt, of Ottawa, in which many valuable suggestions, the fruit of much experience, were offered to the Medical members of the Force.

This is a subject of such paramount importance that no pains should be spared to place it upon the best possible footing of efficiency. We have all read, and some of us have experienced, the miseries of campaigning with insufficient supplies. We can