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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, TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 1876.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Letters addressed to either the Editor or Publisher, as well as communications intended for publication, must, invariably, be pre-paid. Correspondents will also bear in mind that one end of the envelope should be left open, and at the corner the words "Printer's Copy" written and a two or five cent stamp (according to the weight of the communication) placed thereon will pay the postage. No communication, however, will be inserted unless the writer's name is given, not necessarily for publication, but that we may know from whom it is sent.

We have for the past nine years endeavored to furnish the Volunteer Force of Canada with a paper worthy of their support, but, we regret to say, have not met with that tangible encouragement which we confidently expected when we undertook the publication of a paper wholly devoted to their interests. We now appeal to their chivalry and ask each of our subscribers to procure another, or to a person sending us the names of four or five new subscribers and the money will be entitled to receive one copy for the year free. A little exertion on the part of our friends would materially assist us, besides extending the usefulness of the paper among the Force—keeping them thoroughly posted in all the changes and improvements in the art of war so essential for a military man to know. Our ambition is to improve the *Volunteer Review* in every respect, so as to make it second to none. Will our friends help us to do it? Premiums will be given to those getting up the largest lists. The *Review* being the only military paper published in Canada, it ought to be liberally supported by the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of each Battalion.

ENGINEERS.—"There are but two companies in the whole Dominion. An application made by Lieut. Colonel Scoble, through Lieut. Colonel Gzowski last spring, for the creation of a company at Toronto was conditionally acceded to if the quota was not exceeded. The quota of men is complete, but I submit this company should be enrolled unconditionally as to quota, to the extent of 70 men, because engineers are difficult to obtain, must be skilled artificers and artisans and form an indispensable ingredient of every army corps. The names of the two well known officers I have mentioned ensure the efficiency of such a company."—*Militia Report*, page XVIII.

The above extract from the *Militia Report* of 1875 is a practical commentary on the undeveloped state of our military organization.

tion. Here is an announcement of the fact of an evil now existing for eight years without any attempt being made to provide a remedy for an error of such magnitude in the progressive development of our military system.

It is true the two gallant officers who have proposed to do something towards supplying so grave an omission are both thoroughly conversant with the wants of the Canadian Army in staff and scientific corps, and both qualified to command at least one branch of the missing arm.

If Engineers are as necessary to complete an organization as infantry, we can see no reason why the general organization of such a corps should be left to individual effort—especially as if the rank and file are restricted to mechanics alone, such corps will be confined as a matter of necessity to a few of our great towns, such as Quebec, Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, &c. It is quite right, and in accordance with the scientific requirements of modern warfare that a corps of trained artisans should be attached to the army—but in this country most of our military engineering works will be the results of the *spade, pickaxe, and axe*, and the constituent parts of the corps as far as rank and file are concerned, easily found.

It is with the officers the chief difficulty will lie, and there is nothing in the organization or future promise of our Military College to warrant the idea that it would turn out enough trained pupils in *fifty years* to supply our wants; and even if it did, there would still be the most important element in their training wanted—practical experience—in the peculiar operations necessary. Our readers will remember that feature of the late contest in the United States where the chief engineering feats were the bridging of large rivers, repairing railways, and throwing up temporary breastworks that the whole of those works, vast as they were, had to be performed by an improvised corps of Civil Engineers and the labourers they organized. Now it is precisely the same operations our Engineer corps in the Canadian military service will have to perform for the next half century at least. We say then that it is lost time to be depending on the isolated efforts of individuals to supply at their own expense a want which the Government and Militia authorities can effect far less expensively. In the organization of the Engineer Corps required for military purposes in Canada, it is not the rank and file that are the main requisite—it is the officers.

Those are to be found in the civil employments of the country, and the sole cost to Government would be that of the paper or parchment on which their commissions should be written, and the labour of the clerks in filling up the documents.

There are in this country men who know practically its topography, resources and climatic peculiarities who could camp out

troops in winter without loss or inconvenience, who could organize transport service, and who thoroughly understand every pass road and foot path in the various military districts to which they belong, and yet it seems as if it were too great an effort to set about organising a valuable power ready to hand. It is no doubt much more imposing to set on foot college with a staff of professors capable of teaching the rising generation the higher branches of military science, and it is no doubt necessary that the nucleus of a Woolwich or West Point should be established amongst us, but it will not supply present wants, and present wants are pressing necessities as well as burning questions.

In order to make the artillery arm effective two well appointed schools under thoroughly talented and capable officers of the regular service were established, they have been in operation for some years, but their full value has not yet been realized and their very success so far only proves that to make any institution effective for an armed nationality it must be localized.

In like manner cavalry, artillery, engineers and infantry must be raised and trained each in the military district to which its rank and file belongs, and if possible in its troop, battery, or company division. We thus see the wisdom with which the "Militia Bill" of 1868 was framed by its authors—every district is intended to be a *corps d'arme* complete, and the organization should strictly follow what may be called natural conditions, which prescribe a *local staff* in addition to the present administrative staff—such staff to consist of Engineer Officers, and officers on the unattached lists; and this brings up another feature of the admiral law under which the present force is organized.

Its history will be instructive—in 1862 Major General Lxons then serving as Deputy Quarter Master General to the British forces in Canada prepared a Militia Bill with provisions so stringent respecting compulsory service that it was rejected by the then House of Assembly—immediately afterwards a much modified measure which called the present *Volunteer* organization into existence was passed; the "Fenian Raid" of 1866 shewed the weakness of this system, and the late Sir G. E. CARTIER and the present Adjutant General prepared the present Militia Law. It is founded on the old French system in force when Canada was an appanage of France. It had enabled a weak colony of 80,000 inhabitants all told to resist the arms of Great Britain, and 2,500,000 of her colonists for four years, and when the *Drapen blanc* and *golden lillies* succumbed to superior force they went down in a blaze of military glory which no previous or subsequent event in French history can eclipse. The system which achieved all this was very simple—the colony was marked out in company divisions, the Captain of which marched his contingent (the first names on his muster roll) to the point indicated to be