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## THE CANADIAN MILITIA.

THE forecast published by the London Times of General Sir John French's report upon the Canadian Militia has every appearance of having been inspired by someone in authority who has had access to the report. Assuming this to be correct we may also assume, that the publication of the forecast is not without an object; and until evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, it is the merest courtesy to take it for granted that the publication has the tacit approval of the Dominion Government. Hitherto all British professional criticism of the Canadian Militia has been fiercely resented, not by Canadian soldiers, but by Canadian politicians. In this case, common sense suggests that when the Dominion Government invited a soldier of Sir John French's standing to pass judgment upon the Canadian standard of military efficiency, it did so because it wanted to know the truth from a man competent to know. Certainly this is what the people of Canada want. Sir John is not the kind of man to undertake a job of whitewashing; and on the other hand he has already shown the greatest appreciation of the material and the spirit of the Canadian citizen soldier. For the man behind the gun, he evidently has a warm admiration; but he pronounces the organization entirely faulty and declares that it would be almost impossible to produce rapid mobilization and intelligent cooperation. He says that the administrative services though conceived on the right lines and possessing ample material, fall through the absence of systematic peace organization, and he concludes that the military forces of the Dominion are in need of thorough reform.

The forecast, if not true is very truth-like; too truth-like to be attributed to the imagination of a London journalist. It paints the picture of a great and patriotic military organization rendered ridiculous by the dry rot of political influence; as it has been to a greater or lesser degree under every political regime. If our people give the matter ever so little serious consideration they will insist upon the Canadian Militia being taken as far as possible out of political control, no matter who is in power. The Department of Militia and Defence costs something to the people of Canada. Are they getting good value for the money or not? Under the British military system, governments come and governments go; but the Roberts's and the Kitchener's and the

French's remain. Under our system, the fate of the most distinguished general may depend upon some chump, who does not know his hay foot from his straw foot, getting a commission. All this notwithstanding the fact that the present Minister of Militia is the most efficient head of the department that ever held the portfolio.

## CAMPBELLTON FIRE SUFFERERS.

Governor Tweedie had to say at St. John, N.B.:-

"I am somewhat surprised and disappointed that the generous-hearted people of the Dominion have not responded as quickly to the call for aid as might be expected. When we find contributions of \$10,000 coming in from the city of Boston and no amounts from many wealthy cities of our own Dominion, it is proper to infer that the people are not thoroughly aroused as to the necessities and the utmost need for large and generous assistance. Money, food and clothes are needed."

Montreal should naturally be the very first place outside of New Brunswick to which the victims of the Campbellton fire would look for assistance. As the metropolitan city of the Dominion it is Montreal's high privilege to be the first to help in such an emergency. That there is a law against such contributions is quite true; and on the whole it is a good law. But it is a law, which has properly been ignored in similar but less urgent cases; and we think the City Council might with safety trust to the Quebec Legislature to ratify any grant it may feel disposed to make by a unanimous vote in a case of such extreme and urgent need. The more so as Sir Lomer Gouin's government has already expressed its sympathy with Campbellton in practical fashion. The action of the city of Boston is most generous, and surely Montreal cannot afford to be behind Boston in rendering aid to a Canadian town in a case of dire need. It is a condition we are confronted with, not a theory. The people of Campbellton are suffering severely from privation at the present moment; and they have an unquestionable right to look to Montreal for immediate help. Their attitude in the face of an overwhelming calamity has been in the highest degree praiseworthy; and not even the British North America Act itself should be

