

THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW

Is published EVERY MONDAY MORNING, at
OTTAWA, Dominion of Canada, by DAWSON
KERR, Proprietor.
TERMS—TWO DOLLARS per annum, strictly
in advance.

TO CORRESPONDENTS

All Communications regarding the Militia or
Volunteer movement, or for the Editorial Depart-
ment, 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 com-
munications. 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 in-
formation of this kind as early as possible, so that
it may reach us in time for publication.

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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, MONDAY, MAY 10, 1890.

MR. G. B. DOUGLAS of Toronto is appointed
General Agent for THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW
in the Province of Ontario.

According to reports pretty plainly con-
veyed by the British newspaper press, the
relations at present subsisting between the
War Office and the Horse Guards are not of
the most cordial character; indeed it is
said that the breach between them widens
every day and threatens to seriously inter-
fere with the proper administration of the
public service. Our readers are doubtless
aware that the authorities have gone in very
strongly of late for a thorough "recon-
struction," as we would say in America, of
the administrative department of the Army,
and the consequence has been a general
and sometimes awkward shaking up of dry
bones hidden in that mysterious and incom-

prehensible temple, never mentioned in the
army without a certain kind of awe—the
Horse Guards. We remember with what a
hopeless feeling of resigned aggravation
many a gallant officer accepted the fiat of
that unapproachable authority; and how
many a solemn absurdity was perpetrated
under the inexorably cruel name of disci-
pline. For a great many years the British
army has been governed by prejudice, in-
deed there are few institutions in the world
where the pig-headed adherence to fixed ideas
has been more beautifully illustrated than
by the ruling powers of the army. At one
time the name of Prince George of Cam-
bridge stood as high in the affectionate esti-
mation of the British soldier as did that
of the Duke of York in a former genera-
tion, and great were the anticipations
of all the good he would accomplish when
he came to power. How these dreams have
been fulfilled the soldier of to-day can tell.
The Crimean war, which so rudely upset
many pet theories, did much to advance the
antediluvian machinery of army adminis-
tration, but the wheels were too deeply
sunken in the ruts of a bygone age to be
easily removed. The Duke of Cambridge,
however, has done much good in his day,
but the Horse Guards, like Lough Neagh,
seem to possess the peculiar property of
petrifying whatever is emersed therein, to
this singular rule His Royal Highness is no
exception.

In the English House of Commons lately
Lord Garlies opened up a curious episode
of military discipline says the correspon-
dent of the *Scotsman*, he elicited from the
Judge Advocate-General (Sir C. O'Loughlen)
that he and the Horse Guards authorities
are at variance in regard to the branding of
deserters. Sir C. O'Loughlen thinks that
one branding should suffice. The Adjutant
General, inspired, of course by a very su-
perior personage (the Commander-in-Chief),
insists that there must be a separate brand
for every act of desertion. Sir Colman hav-
ing remonstrated with the Horse Guards in
regard to a recent case of branding, both on
grounds of law and humanity, received, it
is said, a severe rebuke for meddling with
matters of discipline solely under the con-
trol of the Commander-in-Chief, concluded,
if report speaks true, in language with
which gentlemen are now-a-days happily
unfamiliar. The letter, in fact, was of so
outrageous a character that the Judge-Ad-
vocate felt bound to lay it before his chief
at the War Office. Mr. Cardwell, as indeed
he acknowledged in the House, urged that
a single branding was alone permissible;
but, apart from the particular question at
issue, he also resented the manner in which
the Horse Guards had addressed one of Her
Majesty's Ministers. A correspondence en-
sued, and which is perhaps still going on,
that is thought to be of too compromising a
nature to one at least of the distinguished
personages concerned to render it likely

that it will ever be produced, as Lord Gar-
lies requested. The relations between the
War Office and the Horse Guards, which are
at present of a very curious character, will
probably be set forth pretty plainly in the
course of Major O'Reilly's motion on the
military administration. There are also
awkward movements in regard to recent
allocations of certain commissions through
a peculiar (though not altogether prece-
dented) channel.

The barbarism of the brand and the lash
has often been attacked and their use as
physical means for purifying the moral at-
mosphere of the army greatly depreciated,
and it cannot be denied that to insist upon
the minute details of enforcing them dis-
plays not only retrogression of sentiment
but a spirit at variance with the feelings
and ideas of the age. Branding is not, as
is vulgarly supposed, the burning upon the
flesh of the culprit with a red hot iron the
disgraceful letter "D." It is a simple and
nearly painless process similar to that by
which sailors are accustomed to in tattooing
upon their arms those curious and often
wonderful devices in which they delight.
Therefore, as regards the physical torture
of the operation, it is a mere nothing, the
disgrace attaching to a man when so marked
is really the principal pain. To abuse the
Commander-in-Chief or any officer in the
army is simply absurd, they are merely per-
forming their duty in awarding the punish-
ment distinctly authorised by yearly act of
Parliament. The Duke of Cambridge may
be wrong in insisting upon an additional
brand for each act of desertion, but it is not
his fault if the Act be so loosely framed as to
bear that interpretation. Viewing the mat-
ter in a light altogether distinct from Sir
Colman O'Loughlen's "law and humanity"
point, it resolves itself into a simple question
of finance, branding being adopted by Par-
liament for the purpose of preventing fraud
by men who would make a trade of deser-
tion if some such means were not adopted.

Our Brockville correspondent in his letter
which will be found under the head of cor-
respondence refers briefly to an extraordi-
nary and unprecedented action on the part
of an officer of Volunteers in Perth who
without any authority whatever, either from
the Deputy Adjutant General of the District
or the Adjutant General at Ottawa, has
made arrangements for a large gathering of
volunteers at that town on the Queen's
birthday, and has written to various gentle-
men requesting their co-operation on the oc-
casion. Now we have not the slightest
doubt but the motive which influences him
is a very laudable one, and he may be fully
assured of the active assistance of all to
whom he applies, but he has forgotten the
first and most essential point and that is.
By what authority does he presume to call
those men together? The regular officers of
the district whose business it is to take part