

in the early discovery of the revolving principle—the thing is simple enough; but the marvel is that, once discovered, it should have been abandoned in favor of bungling contrivances of several barrels joined together—an undoubted retrogression from the simple barrel and revolving chamber. Another curiosity is an Italian piece, loading at the butt. As the wheel of the lock was wound up the powder and ball were forced into the barrel and the priming deposited in the pan. This singular engine is said to have fired twenty shots per minute, but, as Sir John Maundevile would say, "I do not know, for I have not seen it done." These historic relics are supplemented by a fine collection of more recent small arms—a breechloading piece made for the late Duke of York, and in a central case specimens of the Chassepot, Martini Henry, Peabody, Remington, Snider, and Spencer rifles.

Swords of all kinds, shapes, and sizes are deposited in cases or displayed in trophies on the walls. Great two handed swords are among these, and also a fine specimen of a German headsman's sword, engraved with a figure of Justice. Malay kreeses excite admiration by the exquisite "skeiny" appearance of their blades—a quality shared by the right Damascus. The dagger family is very well represented—broad bladed khandjars, heavy Coorg knives, and Moorish poniards adorned with priceless metal work. In armour for horse and man the United Service Museum cannot compare with several other collections, but yet has many excellent specimens, among which may be noted a superb morion of *repoussé* work richly gilt, and a remarkable series of defensive costumes, commencing with breast-plates of hogs' teeth, and complete fighting suits of wicker work from the South Sea Islands—whence comes a helmet of true Greek form—passing through the chain mail period, and ending with the plate armour which finally became unbearable.

In curiosities the museum is particularly rich. In ghastly juxtaposition are a gillo-tine axe taken at Guadaloupe in 1794, and a headsman's axe—a hideously rough instrument said to have been used in the Mauritius to a comparatively late date. A choice collection of revolutionary pikes merits a passing glance, as these are weapons formidable enough until met by a "whiff of grape-shot." Here are Irish pikes of 1798, Welsh Chartist pikes of truculent aspect—and bran new Fenian pikes from the workshop and guiltless of blood. More ferocious trophies come from the summer seas of Oceania and the wild region of Central Africa—the trunk of the tree beneath which fell Captain Cook, at Hawaii—bracelets of boars' tusks, war trumpets of human bone, mighty war drums, Zenzibar spears, Abyssinian shield and ockward looking swords. Invested with greater interest are the weapons once worn by great captains and intrepid navigators—the sword used by Cromwell at the siege of Drogheda, which made the name of the "greatest prince that ever ruled in England" a bogey and a byword in Ireland—the sword worn by gallant Wolfe on the heights of Abraham, where he won Canada but lost his own life—Captain Cook's cutlass or "hanger," as it was then called—a vicious looking little swordling—Lord St. Vincent's sword, and the unconquered blade with which Nelson boarded the *San Josef*. The relics of Tipu Sahoo, his tiger pistols and the dress he was killed in, are also worthy of a glance, and side by side with these are Sir Ralph Abercrombie's pistols, the sash in which Sir John Moore was carried from the field of Corunna, and the pistols carried by the South Ameri-

can patriot, Bolivar, through many a hard fought campaign. To the ordinary visitor relics will perhaps be the principal attraction, but it is impossible to overlook the useful side of the United Service Museum. Within a stone's throw of Charing Cross, it affords opportunities which cannot be over-rated for referring to various kinds of ordnance, and many a time and oft saves the time and trouble of a visit to Woolwich. Admission is easily obtained by applying in writing to the Secretary, Capt. B. Burgess.

### Our Militia.

[From the London Daily Telegraph.]

We all know, or ought to know, that Canada turned a deaf ear to the voice of the charmer, and was so ungrateful as to receive Montgomery and Arnold, when they attacked Quebec in 1775, with grape and canister, which cost the first his life, and inflicted a grievous wound upon the second. A century has since passed, and, through no fostering care or maternal solicitude upon our part, the noble empire of British North America has been growing in loyalty and affection for the Mother Country, as decade has followed decade. It is a singular circumstance, and especially noteworthy in the eyes of those few Englishmen who have closely watched Transatlantic history for the past quarter of a century, that within the last ten years the annexation of Canada has ceased to be a secret, unavowed plank in the "platform" of every political party in the United States. During the early years of the present century, when England was locked in a death grapple with Napoleon, there was no lack of Canadians who, in common with nine tenths of the American population, sympathised with the arms of France. Many still living, among them Lord Russell, Sir George Grey, Lord Grey, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Roebuck, will remember that the first Parliament of our present Queen, which assembled in November, 1837, was occupied night after night with grave debates on the rebellion in Lower Canada which is identified with the names of Papineau and Mackenzie. So late as 1850, Mr. Webster, in almost the last speech that he ever delivered in the United States Senate, said, in allusion to "the proximate annexation of Canada," that "it was as necessary to protect its everlasting snows from the foot of slavery by an Act of Congress as to insert a Wilmot Proviso in the territorial government of New Mexico," which already belonged to the Union. In 1858, Mr. Seward, who was then thought likely to be the Republican candidate for the Presidential chair, made a "speaking tour," through the North Western States, and delivered a powerful harangue in Minnesota, which plainly foreshadowed his views of the Union's "manifest destiny," and concluded with the well known lines, "No pent up Utopia confines our powers, but the whole boundless continent is ours." Then came the Titanic Civil War, and, long before its close, the dream that Canada was about to be absorbed had passed away. The Americans, as a practical people, have no superior among modern nations, and it was generally felt throughout the length and breadth of the Union that the bait of light taxation and untroubled internal tranquillity, so long held up by them before Canadian eyes, had lost its attraction. The scandalous corruptions which, since the end of the war, have brought American institutions into discredit are of a nature to make Canadians more than ever satisfied with the comparative purity of

their own Government, with the light pressure of their municipal and imperial taxation, and with their immaculate administration of justice, which contrasts so favourably with the law courts of their neighbour.

But our Canadian fellow subjects could be guilty of no greater error than to imagine that the present transparent clearness of their political horizon justified them in neglecting those obvious precautions, with a view to self defence, which are necessarily imposed upon every free nation that values its independence. We welcome, therefore, with satisfaction an able "Memorandum on the Militia System of Canada," which has just been put forth by Lieutenant Colonel Fletcher, the Military Secretary to the Governor General, Lord Dufferin. Col. Fletcher, whose active experience of war began in the Crimea, and who is not the least practical among our trained soldiers, warns his Canadian brethren "how oft," in King John's pregnant words, "the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done." Neglect all preparations for organizing your resources of self defence upon a sure basis—such are substantially his wise words of advice to the Government and people of the Dominion—and you will tempt your powerful neighbors to renewed schemes of cupidity and aggression by the sight of your very defencelessness. He reminds them that "there is much in the life of a Canadian that qualifies him for military service, and that, owing to the great changes of climate, from an almost Arctic winter to an Italian summer, men have to accommodate themselves to circumstances not met with in England." He points out that the organization of the gangs of "lumberers," added to their necessary provisioning, their discipline, and the care taken of their general well being, demand many of the characteristics essential to a military force. "The skill of the lumberers in road making in hutting themselves, and in the rougher engineering work, might prove invaluable to soldiers campaigning in a forest country; their practice in driving teams over roads which an English carter would deem impassable, might go far to qualify them for artillery drivers; while the excitement, and even danger, attending a portion of their labours would tend to bring out qualities not dissimilar to those called forth by active service." Nothing is more certain than that England would never think of coercing the Canadians into refraining from declaring their independence, or from joining the American Union, if such was the desire of a majority among the inhabitants of the Dominion. Equally certain is it that we should not look quietly on and see our Canadian brethren absorbed against their will into the neighbouring Republic, without actively interfering on their behalf. But John Bull has an undoubted disinclination towards helping those whom he finds unable or unwilling to help themselves. We trust, therefore, that the suggestions of Colonel Fletcher will not be like seed sown upon barren soil. A country such as the Dominion, with light taxation, abundant resources, and ever increasing population, should not be satisfied to have a trained and efficient militia of less than 40,000 men. Past experience has shown that the excitement of danger awakened by the Fenian raids which followed the American War has produced the happiest effects upon the sense of responsibility felt by the Canadians. All that is necessary for Canada is that she should have a good organisation, and sufficient force to resist a sudden attack. Help would not be long in reaching her from the