

## MILITARY ORGANS AND THE VOLUNTEERS.

The characteristic of every genuine organ is a complacent satisfaction with the tunes ground on its barrel. The handle may move jerkily, the little brass pins may be bent or broken, may even have been misplaced by the maker, or by some ambitious and unskillful tune mender—*n'importe*—the repertoire is ground from first to last while little clicks between each tune, and a snort as of triumph from the bellows when the whole round is accomplished.

Organs are generally, like children of this world, wise in their generation; thus there be organs ecclesiastical with the Old Hundred and Luther's Hymn for respectable and quiet neighbourhoods, and "Ancient and Modern" tunes and "infallible" chants for St. Albans and St. Barnabas. There be also organs political, rejoicing in "Croppies lie down" and "Boyne Water," or the "Shan Van Vocht," but of all the organs ever ground, the organs military are to us the most interesting. Some are new and some are old, some are large and some are very small, some are loud and some are very soft, some are preternaturally deep, and some whistle their little tunes, like Pandean pipes; but organs, however proud of their tunes, are neither musicians nor composers, they are organs and nothing more, ground to order, and subsidised by the grateful pence of their discriminating patrons.

Now this happy and contented state of organic life is just the very condition that the *Broad Arrow* does not aspire to. It is not the organ of the Army, for it thinks first of the nation, secondly of the Service; and were it advisable to bespeak a barrel, the tunes to be set on it would be more in the spirit of the "writing on the wall," than appropriate to the toast of "our noble selves." It is not the organ of the Navy, for with that the old tunes are a thing of the past, and of new ones, where are they to grind? With this negation of such ambition, how therefore can it be possible, as stated by a contemporary, that the *Broad Arrow* has striven to become "recognised as an organ of the Volunteers'?"

From the day of its first publication up to the present time, the *Broad Arrow* has been "a paper for the Services," but an organ for no one. Bound to the chariot wheels of no clique or interest, it has not even claimed the privilege of a calculating neutrality. Fearing neither to attack what is powerfully supported when the attack is a duty, nor to defend what is unpopular though just and proper, we never aimed at greater credit and *éclat* than to be deemed honest and impartial, telling the truth, however bitter to our friends—when needful—and not begrudging to our enemies, those deserters who are not of the stern stuff to welcome wholesome correction. As we have been, so we design to remain, content with the infallible sign of approval given by the Services at large, when the circulation of the *Broad Arrow* first became greater than that of every other military paper published in London:

But why this peroration? Is it to glorify the success of the *Broad Arrow*? Yes, partly, since it may be useful for many to know that "a paper for the Services" may far outstrip its fellows in the contest for public support, without pandering to the great or truckling to the small, without expressing an admiration of abuses which it does not feel, or professing to deem a grievance that which is in truth a necessity.

Our recent remarks on the lack of zeal evinced by the Volunteers in hanging back from the Autumn Manœuvres, were written in this spirit, and not, as suggested by the *Volunteer News* of the 4th instant, from a feeling of antipathy to the Volunteers. As justly might it be said that a feeling of antipathy to the Whig Government dictated our strictures on those responsible for jeopardising the lives of our sailors in the *Megara*, or that antipathy to tall men suggested our opinion that the Household Troops are not the most useful regiments in Her Majesty's Service.

Unfortunately no supernatural antipathy need be suggested as the active motive in either of these cases.

The Volunteers are a splendid material, by turns petted and neglected. Sprung from the military spirit and patriotism of the nation, they have been permitted (after many long years of tentative probation) to remain without any organisation worthy of the name—to subside into a sullen sense of wrongs undeserved, and thus to fail at a crisis of their history in that active zeal and readiness for self sacrifice which have always hitherto been their main claim to the admiration of their fellow-countrymen.

'Tis useless to talk of money considerations as satisfactorily accounting for such a state of things. The lack of increased Government support may certainly have led to the decreased zeal and spirit of our Volunteers, just as the lack of increased remittances from the governor may be quoted as a fair ground for Young Hopeful's decreased wine parties at Oxford; but just as the latter has no right still to claim *éclat* as a lud of spirit for the wine fountain which has ceased to flow, so must the Volunteers be content to part with their character for romantic patriotism, when but five thousand out of the hundred and seventy thousand of our Volunteers respond to an offer of a seven days' training under canvas in mimic war. It may be the duty of a Volunteer organ to discourse sweet music to the absentees, but "a paper for the Services" has to tell the truth and warn the Volunteers of their position.

The first great impulse which was given to the Volunteers came from the desire to avoid the Militia Ballot, and indeed many a young man of good family took a commission in the Militia for the same reason. Since that time compulsory service has, year after year, most unwisely been postponed. The fear of being drawn for the Militia has consequently lost its terror. The Volunteers have been allowed to linger on still unorganized, as if they were looked upon by the Government not as available troops, but simply as a spontaneous happy-go-lucky school of elementary drill.

By this means a very large proportion of the manhood of the middle classes has been passed through the ranks of the Volunteers and obtained that amount of military training which will undoubtedly leaven the whole mass of the population, and make it comparatively easy to raise reliable troops, should the crisis requiring their employment occur. But although this great object, if object it was, has been so far accomplished although the best blood of the middle class will not, in case of future need, be found wholly untrained to arms, there is something further to be done by and for the Volunteers before they can with justice take and hold the place to which they have honorably aspired, and which they have a right to acquire.

The organization of the Reserve Forces within the several Military Districts is now in process of development, and we may be

permitted to hope that in the future the Volunteers may be enabled to benefit within a reasonable distance of their headquarters by those "Autumn manœuvres" of which the late campaign was merely an experiment.

It is to be hoped also that the Government will gradually wean itself from the policy of throwing the cost of zealous attempts to promote the efficiency of the several corps, on those commanding officers whose pride it is to see their men smart and efficient, and give them the opportunity of drill and experience at a distance from their own headquarters. But whatever the short comings of the Government, however ill-calculated the pittance they afforded, to secure a full proportion of Volunteer corps from distant stations, the fact remains the same, however accounted for, that there was no enthusiastic rush of Volunteers to avail themselves of the first great occasion which has been offered them, to experience for seven days a foretaste of the life which all must be subject to if ever they are called upon to serve their country in earnest.

The truth must be spoken. The bud and flowering of the Volunteer movement has passed away. The fruit must now set and be allowed to ripen; and those who deem this process to be aided by the flattering notes of the most dulcet of organs, debar themselves wilfully from the benefit of that honest criticism which we trust will always be the characteristic of our "Paper for the Services."—*Broad Arrow*.

## BRITISH COLUMBIA.

By private advices from Lost Creek, Ominica, British Columbia, it is said that an experienced miner states that the benches in that district will all pay largely, and that he has seen miners pack a flour sack of dirt to a creek and wash out fifty dollars of gold. Let those who are starving and struggling at a dollar a day think of this. How desirable it would be to transport the thousands of people who are at present starving in Europe to such a country as that! It is probably true that provisions are at present very high in British Columbia, but when the railroad is completed they will be as cheap as anywhere else in the Dominion. Here is a country where every one who is industrious may make a living if not a fortune, and this is the same province which the Opposition informed us last session was not worth having in our Dominion being made up of mountains inaccessible and of no value, with not ten acres of arable land in the whole colony. The "ten acres of arable land" in British Columbia will hereafter become a by-word. There is one plain alone, namely, the Chilcote plain, which is one hundred and twenty miles long by forty miles wide, is as picturesque as an English park, and as capable of cultivation as any portion of the Saskatchewan Valley. The timber of British Columbia is acknowledged to be the finest in the world. Some of the trees are three hundred feet high, and frequently as many as ten hundred of them to the acre. In fact no finer lumber district exists anywhere than in British Columbia. Then the Fisheries are considered of such importance as to induce the Dominion Government to place at the disposal of the Provincial Government a couple of vessels for their protection. The salmon fishery is profitable beyond description. A consignment of salmon from San Francisco to Sidney, has just been spoken of most favorably. Salmon are so extraordinary plentiful in British Columbia that whole ship loads could be procured and forwarded to our southern colo-