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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, NOV. 11, 1873.

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.

We commend to our readers the careful study of the following article from *Broad Arrow*, of Oct. 4th, it will help to explain our reasons for holding cheaply the effect likely to be produced by arming the British Navy with Rifled Artillery and all the improvements so available in a case-mated battery, but the veriest rubbish that was ever inflicted on an unfortunate seaman gunner.

If commander MOLLARDY, R. N., has done no other service than that of pointing out the difficulties the Naval artillerist has to contend with, he can lay claim to having done the State some service, and may enjoy his soul in peace till the experimentators perfect the *Torpedo*; and then their powerful attention may be turned to the necessities of the Naval artillerist.

"An anxiety not to see the old *Excellent* rammed off the mud or blown up by a Harvy torpedo must," writes Commander W. B. MOLLARDY, R. N., in the new number of the *Proceedings of the Junior Naval Professional Association*, "be our excuse for entering on

this subject" of the heavy gun *versus* rams and torpedoes. As an engineering officer, he affirms that "The navy does not possess sufficient skill in firing at objects in rapid motion to ensure either accuracy or rapidity. There are no men especially taught by intelligent eye-training to attain these results. Our naval gun sights are ill adapted for adjusting rapidly to suit ever changing distances. There are no officers or others specially trained and distinguished for their skill in directing the fire of the guns simultaneously on fixed bearings. There is in use no instantaneous and general method of measuring the distance of swiftly moving ships, and this want is not supplied by training either officers or men, especially in the art of accurately judging these distances. There exists no suitable means of communicating to each gun the distance and bearing of the particular ships it is desirable to aim at. There is no system of target practice carried out which can enable officers to judge of the respective value of end-on or bow-fire, broad-side-fire, converging fire, and independent fire under the various circumstances in which they are likely to come into play in action. If the fleet were to be engaged to-morrow, the value of its artillery fire would probably be quite inappreciable, and yet observe the patient, labour which is devoted to perfect it. How is this? We fear the only reason for it lies in the total absence of any appreciation of the great importance which attaches itself to the points referred to."

As for torpedo instruction, Commander McHardy adverts on the fact that, "although years have elapsed since their introduction, no officers are yet familiar with their use. So far as we are able to judge from personal observation, all knowledge of this subject is carefully withheld from the majority of the naval profession, and the few privileged ones, who are supposed to make themselves acquainted with it, do not appear, either experimentally or otherwise, to turn their knowledge practically to any useful purpose." Commander McHardy does not appear himself to have been one of "the few privileged ones," or to be "yet familiar" with the use of torpedoes, as he speaks of it as a "dreamland, a region of conjecture and theory; for unfortunately all our reasoning as to the value of one arm over another must, in the absence of any useful details to guide us, be based entirely on theory and mere conjecture." If this be the system of instruction pursued on board the *Excellent*, we can understand Commander McHardy's anxiety as to the fate of his old ship.

The following, which we copy from the *United States Army and Navy Journal* of the 18th inst., shews that our neighbors are taking a lively interest in the dissemination of professional knowledge. Having always numbered in their Army and Navy a class of highly educated scientific officers, it has been a matter of surprise that Associations similar to "the Royal United Service Institution," had not previously existed in the United States. However, the inauguration of the "United Naval Association" will bid fair to supply a want felt in the military world, and that the experience which both branches of the Service in the United States can give of the peculiar operations in which they have been engaged.

To the military service in Canada this Institution will be of great value, because it

will be enabled to give an insight to the peculiar mode of warfare on the frontiers, and to place on record events, which, when detailed by a mere newspaper reporter possessed no interest at all for a military man, as it failed in technical description and always omitted the objective of the operation.

If conducted on the principles of "The Royal United Service Institution," its journals will be a valuable addition to the military literature of the age, and will furnish the opportunity for a strategical and tactical analysis of the operations of the late contest between the Northern and Southern States.

We would advocate the organization of a similar Institution here, but Canadian soldiers are eligible as members of The Royal United Service Institution, and a Colonial organization would be superfluous.

"There has lately been formed at Annapolis an association of naval officers, called the United Naval Association, the purpose of which is the discussion of matters relating to the naval profession. The association is composed of officers of both the line and staff, who unite harmoniously for the common good. Contributions to the discussions are asked from the whole Navy, and to this request we gladly give publication here. The first meeting was held on the evening of October 9, at the Naval Academy, Rear-Admiral Worden in the chair. Commodore Foxhall A. Parker read a valuable paper on the battle of Lepanto, of which we shall begin the publication next week. We are gratified to be able to announce that we are promised regular reports of the doings of the association. Commodore Parker has given close attention to the subject of this battle and the events that lead to it, and as his account will be found to differ from received accounts—written for the most part by men of letters who have given us delightful descriptions of what from their ignorance of nautical affairs it was impossible for them to understand—he has thought it proper to back his opinion by copious notes, which we fear, because of the length of the articles, we shall not be able to print *in extenso*. The authority upon which he has principally relied, we may say, is Contareni, a Venetian senator who had access to all the documents, and "whose rank and lineage," as Sufano well says, "made it impossible for him to state what was not true."

"The extensive research of the author is shown in the exhaustive manner in which he treats his subject, and the clearness and simplicity of the style will commend the narrative to the attention and interest of every reader. The causes which led to the great sea fight, the preparation of the allied fleet, the conflict, with all its varying fortunes, and the final disastrous defeat of the Turks, are described with a minuteness of detail that brings the scene vividly before those who follow the story of the writer.

"The need of an association in this country similar to the British "United Service Institution" has long been felt by many of our naval officers. The advantages to be derived from the discussion of subjects of professional interest, and from a free interchange of ideas are so unquestionable as to need no argument to point them out. We therefore welcome the start of the movement for the formation of such an association in this country, and hope it will speedily grow into importance."