

monious—I care not which—to provide for a necessity which is appallingly self-evident?

Is the spirit which animated our forefathers in 1812, and ourselves in 1837, 1860 and 1866, to be damped and crushed by the indifference of our political rulers? Are the efforts of those whose spirit has animated and kept alive the Volunteer Force since 1858 at last to go for naught? I should be sorry to think so, indeed. What, I would ask, is this? Let us see this new Militia Bill,—let us have it, to canvass its provisions before the House is called upon to decide if it shall be our Law, or no. And if the Adj. General is balked in his good intentions; if the Minister of Militia has cramped his efforts towards the safety and peace of the country, let us know it also. Again, regarding the annual drill, let it be performed at once. The Volunteer Force is Battalionized, and each Battalion is provided with a competent Instructor. Why not assemble each Battalion at its Headquarters about the 1st March, to perform eight days' continuous drill, which would be of more benefit to the Force than the occasional meetings of companies in the evenings. Nearly every Battalion has its Headquarters Drillshed in which to parade. Let the men get their annual pay at the termination of their annual drill, and not six or eight months after. Let the officers be paid \$1 per day each in lieu of pay and allowance, with a horse allowance of 50c. per day for mounted officers. And let us feel that we are the pride and defence of our country, and not the burden and bugbear and subjects for retrenchment that we seem at present. And should General John O'Neil show his nose on our borders the Canadian Volunteers will remind him that there is such a section in the Yankee Drill Book as "Right about turn, Double March."

A FRONT RANK MAN.

[The remarks of our correspondent are rather sharply put, but he seems to forget that the Adjutant General is not a legislator, nor could he have any hand in framing a Militia Law, except he were directed to do so by the Government. We are informed that the Minister of Militia will introduce a measure, early in the coming session, which will be calculated to place the Forces of the Dominion in that state of efficiency so much desired by all who have the true interests of the country at heart.—ED. VOL. REV.]

FOR THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

#### THE BRITISH NAVY—MATERIAL AND PERSONNEL.

There is scarcely a subject of national interest concerning which there exists in Canada so much ignorance and misconception as that of the British Navy. But little commented on by the Canadian press, such notices as do occur are more often incorrect than otherwise. Thus, in a recent notice in a leading journal of the launch of the iron-clad

*Hercules*, that ship is stated to be the largest afloat. A reference to the accompanying list will show that, although of immense size, she is nearly 1000 tons less than the *Warrior*, the *Black Prince*, and the *Achilles*, and nearly 1400 tons less than the *Minotaur*, the *Alincourt*, and the *Norihumberland*. On the other hand, such impressions as we for the most part receive reach us through the blatant medium of the American press, so that it is not uncommon to find Canadians adopting the tone of almost the only information available to them, believing England to be an effete naval power, and giving blind credence to the garbled and unscrupulous braggadocio of American newspapers. For instance, the tremendous flourish of trumpets with which the launch of the American iron-clad *Dunderberg* was heralded to the world may be within the recollection of many of your readers. Nothing was to be compared to her: in size she far exceeded the largest English vessels of a similar class, and was, in short, clearly destined to "whip all creation." Well, the tonnage given was, certainly, by a few tons (less than 100), in excess of that of the *Achilles*, just then the largest British iron clad launched. I cannot say whether her tonnage was overrated, or to which side, in point of size, the English and American systems of measurement might give an advantage. The measurement of naval tonnage is somewhat precarious and arbitrary—in this wise, that the carrying capacity may be larger or smaller in different ships of the same nominal measurement, as the lines of the hull may be fuller or finer in certain parts of the bottom, or, in plainer words, according to the general shape of the bottom. Whether or no, it is pretty certain that our American cousins are not addicted to underrating their advantages, and it is equally certain that we have as much abhorrence of statistical exaggeration as they have affection for it. When, therefore, we couple with this knowledge the fact of the early sale of the redoubtable *Dunderberg*, it is difficult to imagine that she was other than a failure. Staunch, sea-worthy, and efficient iron clads are as yet too precious to permit the supposition that a great naval power possessing one would lightly part with it. As a broad matter of fact, our iron-clads are thorough seagoing vessels, and I fancy that is more than can be said of the United States iron-clad navy, except in a few cases.

These remarks are, however, somewhat digressional, and only serve to lead to the point I propose to illustrate, viz., the enormous power of the British Navy, even in the newest armament. I have no information at hand at this moment as to the actual strength of the French Iron-clad Navy, but we know that stupendous exertions have been made for some years in the Imperial dockyards, and I believe the actual number of such vessels, building and afloat, equals, if it does not slightly exceed, our own. It is, however, altogether improbable that the

material and workmanship are quite on a par with ours, and the efforts of Franco are spasmodic, whilst our increase is, so to speak, natural and steady. It should also be borne in mind that we suffer in expense and labour under the necessity of adopting a new style of vessel far more than a less powerful nation. In proportion to the number and magnificence of our old class vessels, is our loss in converting, putting aside, and otherwise disposing of them. The extent of our power under the old regime, I purpose to illustrate in a future article, and how far our remaining wooden fleet is still of a serviceable character, notwithstanding the introduction of iron-clad vessels.

For the present, recognizing the undoubted fact that armour-plated ships will, in course of time, entirely supersede wooden vessels of war, it will be sufficient briefly to consider what progress we have made in the development of a navy of the new stamp. It is about seven years since the *Warrior*, the first of our iron-clads, was launched. It may here be remarked that an impression is generally prevalent that the idea of armour-plated vessels is due to the Americans. I believe the French *Gloire* was the first specimen of her class afloat, and that she was followed by the *Warrior* before the Americans had launched any iron-sheathed craft. The number of vessels on the annexed list (38) shows an average of five per year for the last seven years, allowing for three of the five now building being quite recently laid down. In my next article, I shall show some curious comparisons of the relative tonnage of vessels of war at different modern periods, which will illustrate the stupendous size and power of our newest ships. That they are thoroughly sea worthy and capable of keeping the sea has been proved—as to the former quality, by plenty of heavy weather (as in the case of the *Prince Consort* in the Irish Sea, some four years ago,) and as to the latter capability, by the number we have in regular commission on foreign stations, and by the fact that we have no less than four Admirals' flags flying from iron clads, in different and widely remote quarters of the world. There is no question that the American Monitors are a formidable class of vessel, but there is a good deal of question about their seaworthiness, and there is, I believe, no doubt that on a recent occasion the much talked of *Miantonomoh* had to be convoyed across the Atlantic for fear of accidents. This is not the style of thing for which British ships are built, and I have as little doubt, should we unfortunately become involved in war with the United States, of any naval action on tolerably equal terms as Captain Broke, of the *Shannon*, had when he sent away his consorts and invited his equally chivalrous opponent of the *Chesapeake* to try their respective national fortunes in fair fight.

For fear of occupying too much of your space, I will only now add that in the list I furnish (which is taken from the Navy List