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The Volunteer Review,

AND

MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE

"Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
 To guard the Monarch, hence the Law."

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 1875.

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.

LIEUT. J. B. VINTER, of Victoria, and Captain H. V. EDMONDS of New Westminster, are our authorized Agents for British Columbia.

THE readers of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW may have thought the strictures on Captain Hume's "Essay upon the best method of obtaining recruits for the British Army" too severe—but we publish to-day, from *Broad Arrow*, three letters addressed to that journal, and its report of the discussion at the "Royal United Service Institution"—on the essay as proofs that the matter was treated on its merits alone in our article. It will be perceived that the writers of the letters raise the same points of objection that occurred in our article, and that those points were valid is evident from *Broad Arrow's* reference to the object with which the essay was written. In fact, it was altogether an essay on a new organization based on compulsion, or forced service—thus shewing that Captain Hume had no idea of popular feeling, or political economy—and also proving what we have always maintained that the soldier of the regular army with rare exceptions does not understand the proper organization adapted to the social condition of the British people, or how to utilize their military aptitudes. The one idea is "force," and the ordinary military mind seems incapable of grasping any other—and this is evidenced by the discussion at the Royal United Service Institution—only one officer out of the many who took part in it seemed to appreciate the value of the old

constitutional force which supplied better soldiers than was ever yet raised by the Prussian or any other system—the militia—the English yeomanry—the descendants of those men who decided Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, and whose fame is a household word.

It is not enough to say that the spirit of the average Briton is as staunch as that of his forefathers, or that it needs the wrangling of military pedants to point out the solution of their problem after which they are groping. The volunteer organization in Great Britain is ample evidence of what could be effected if those philosophers and their hobbies were put aside, their petty selfish professional jealousy curbed, and themselves taught to know that the interests of the Empire was of far more importance than the harlequin hobbies with which the public has been deluded—and that Britons will not submit to be ruled by any clique whatever their pretensions may be, whether of superior knowledge, or worth, nor be forced to give the service they owe their country at the bidding of mere specialists whose own department is after all the mere perfected outcome of the voluntary system.

With the examples afforded by the present militia and the failure of the regular army it is at the least surprising that none of the speakers at the discussion could find courage to propose a system suited to the social condition of the people out of which a regular army worthy the name could be got by volunteering. The facts are, that the war office, with its various departments, regular army and belongings, are antiquated, obstructive, and no longer answer the purposes for which they were slowly devised. If England is to keep up a force commensurate with her population—she has only to embody her militia—raise a regular army therefrom by proper pay and inducements, cut down the cost of administration, and keep merely depots of her regular army at home.

Those who talk of a small force for the defence of the British Isles forget that it is not on British soil that defence has ever been successfully fought out, but on the fields of France, and to be successful there, she must show something more than thirty thousand bayonets, even as a contingent. With a proper organization (and she has that if the professionals are muzzled) she can show such a front as would make Prussia, Russia or any other two powers combined think twice before they gave her cause to move to the Rhine; and this can be effected without compulsion or injury to her industrial resources which it certainly cannot be effected by Captain Hume's recommendations, nor by the brilliant ideas of those who perpetrated the *Irish bull* of awarding a gold medal for an essay on a totally different subject to that for which it was offered, nor by those who so brilliantly discussed the results of the aforesaid *Irish bull*.

Our respected contemporaries within the Dominion of Canada who are so nervously careful of the twenty-five cents they annually contribute to the maintenance of the Canadian militia and who require greater efficiency as well as the supervision or improvement of the present system, will doubtless be surprised to hear that the organization has never been fully developed.

It has no staff corps, no engineers, no ambulance, no commissariat; and as they write about it as if an importation of the "Prussian system" would be an advantage, we beg leave to direct their attention to the following paragraphs in which the working of that system is shown:

"Since the late war between France and Germany considerable changes have been effected in the organization of the German Corps of Engineers, particulars concerning which are given by the official gazette of the Empire, the *Reichsanzeiger*. In the North German Army (exclusive of the Bavarian contingent) the Corps of Engineers is divided into four 'inspectors,' and numbers on a peace footing a roll of 600 officers. It is placed under the command of an 'inspection-general,' to which is attached a scientific 'committee of engineers' as an advising body. The changes effected in the engineers are as striking as those which have taken place in the sappers and miners. This force is likewise divided into four 'inspections,' embracing from three to four battalions each. There are, moreover, 'fortress inspections,' with from four to eight fortresses allotted to each. The 'inspection' for Strasbourg remains for the present over and above this organization. Every battalion of 'pioneers' consists of three companies of 'field pioneers' and a fourth company specifically 'miners.' The three field companies are instructed in pontooning, digging trencher, and mining generally, but the fourth company is taught some special mining knowledge. Upon the force being mobilised, the fourth company in each battalion is to be broken up, its men being partly attached to the other three companies, partly separated as a depot and recruiting troop. A third part is to be used as the nucleus of three companies of pioneers for 'siege and fortress service, to which the reserves called out are attached. Two pioneer battalions, even in peace, comprise a large number of men, having twelve telegraph corps attached to them for distribution among the various army corps during a campaign. Each telegraph corps consists of three officers, ten sub-officers, eighty-three men (engineers) with a column of military train, consisting of an officer and fifty men, attached to it. The two pioneer battalions thus distinguished are the pioneers of the Guards, and the fourth battalion, which is apparently intended to serve as the nucleus for possible further extensions of the service. Over and above the forces already detailed, there is a 'bridge train' attached to each battalion. On the outbreak of war every army corps is supplied with two divisional 'bridge-trains,' told off severally to the two divisions, and each carrying with it thirty-nine metres of bridge material, and one corps 'bridge train,' reserved for emergencies and placed under the immediate command of the general commanding the army corps. The corps train carries with it thirty-two pontoon boats, sufficient for thirty-two metres of bridge. In addition, two reserve 'pontoon trains' are kept at Coblenz, Glogau, Magde