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Topics of the Week.

Canon Liddon's sermon on "Religion and Arms," delivered recently in St. Paul's Cathedral before the London Rifle Brigade, has just been published. It is an interesting, instructive and eloquent discourse. Speaking more particularly to the volunteers, Canon Liddon says: "There are more reasons than one why the volunteer movement should be looked upon with interest by those who have at heart the interests of religion. It not only adds greatly to the strength of the country, and so, indirectly, to whatever of religious efforts is associated with the well-being and enterprise of England throughout the world; it strengthens the country without involving those drawbacks which, from a moral point of view, are more or less and inevitably associated with large standing armies. A volunteer force, while capable of rendering invaluable service in the defence of our homes, cannot easily be employed, like the great armies of the continent, for the furtherance of an aggressive or ambitious policy. And, moreover, the volunteer is a soldier who does not thereby cease to be a civilian; and, if this should be held to imply any professional inferiority—a point on which obviously I could not venture an opinion—it is not without decided moral advantages. The conscripts who made up the vast hosts which the first Napoleon poured across Europe, from Madrid to Moscow, were young men, taken from their homes almost in boyhood, and necessarily exposed to the mischiefs which the early removal of domestic influences surely involves. If these evils are now generally lessened by systems of shortened service, they cannot be held to be altogether done away with. The volunteer soldier lives not in barracks, but at home; and he enjoys these great advantages which the effort and discipline of a soldier's life confers, without forfeiting the aids to purity and unselfishness which belong to the duties and restraints of home. This does not mean that he escapes that sacrifice of time, and it may be of health, which military service often exacts; and the widows and orphans of our volunteer forces have a claim upon the charitable assistance of the country, all the more emphatic in that the time and toil of their departed relative have been unremunerated, except by a sense of duty."

In a report recently made on the Pennsylvania National Guard, Adjutant-General Hastys has this to say of those members who wear the soldier's uniform without appearing to realize his responsibility:—"Experience has shown the futility of wasting time or money on a poor company or inefficient captain. With the growing public interest and pride manifested in the organization, and with volunteer organizations in every quarter of the State knocking at the door for admission, there is no longer room for any other than first-class company organizations.

There are over 100 applications on file for permission to raise companies of infantry, and they are constantly coming in. Occasional requests are received for authority to raise a battery or cavalry company. It is evident from these applications that the strength of the Guard could easily be doubled in a short time. It is, therefore, undoubtedly for the best interests of the service to muster out all laggard and inefficient organizations and replace them with those who are anxious to enter the service.

Lord Wolseley is giving his encouragement to a movement on foot in London, England, for the formation of a cadet corps of young lads living in Southwark, the plan having already been successfully tried in Whitechapel. The work has grown out of that connected with Redcross Hall and garden, where a gymnasium and boys' club have attracted a certain number of lads who might be expected to volunteer for such a corps. The corps will be attached to the 4th Volunteer Battalion Royal West Surrey Regiment by the kind permission of Colonel Haddon. Capt. Salmond has agreed to take the command, and the other officers will be appointed. The lads will be drilled regularly, will have a uniform, arms, and a band of their own, and will march out on Saturdays. A place for drill, both indoors and out, has been secured without cost; but to start the corps well a sum of £300 is required. At a meeting called in this connection, Lord Wolseley said one of the best ways of giving them healthy recreation was the ordinary army drill. It was for that reason that the great volunteer movement—if there were no military object to be gained by it—was of great use in the physical training of the people. He felt he was justified in saying that the authorities of the War Office would give every encouragement to this project.

Another disclaimer of that anonymous letter published in the *Broad Arrow* anent the Minister of Militia, has been received, this time from General Oliver, lately in command of the Royal Military College, who wishes it stated that he was not the author, which some might think possible from the fact that it has been attributed to an officer once in Canada but now resident in England. Our information on the subject, very positive in its character, pointed to another person than General Oliver; and that officer is known in Canada to be too honourable to deal such a stab in the dark, and too well posted on Dominion affairs to make such a foolish exhibition in the press.

A deluge in miniature which descended upon the camp at Gananoque last week made it imperative that there should be an issue of rubber sheets to keep the men from exposure to the damp ground. The exceptionally cool weather had occasioned the issue of two blankets per man, at the assembly of the camp, in place of one as prescribed by the regulations. The last week of the camp, therefore, the men were perfectly satisfied with their sleeping accommodation. It is to be hoped that this allowance, which has for many years been vainly asked for, will be a permanency for the future.