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Volunteer Review,

AND

MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

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

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, FEB. 10, 1874.

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 republish in another column from the pages of the *United States Army and Navy Journal*, the report of a speech in the House of Representatives by a Mr. ARNER, on the condition of the naval force of the United States, which exhibits in a striking manner the state of decay into which it has been allowed to fall; and we cannot but be astonished that a people so astute as our neighbours, should so thoroughly neglect what is to every power with a sea frontier a first consideration, the maintenance of a primary line of defence. The object in detaining the Spanish frigate, *Arapiques*, in dock at Brooklyn, is now more fully apparent, as that vessel alone would be quite able to lay New York under contribution, or do it such injury as the cost of a naval force many times greater than the United States ever maintained could repair; and it is evident that there is not a city on the whole sea

board that could resist insult from a third class naval power.

We should be sorry to think the sober sense of the majority of the nation approved of the course pursued by the majority of the members of Congress in crippling the navy and reducing the military force—it is undoubtedly to be traced to the commercial spirit which has pervaded the Legislative body and cannot look on anything that has not the appearance of immediate gain, —this spirit has of late years dominated amongst all people who have adopted Representative Institutions, and is most destructive to all notions of patriotism or national honor. It cannot be a very pleasant reflection for those officers and soldiers who have shed their blood freely for their country, to find the arbiters of that country's destiny and their own usefulness to be of higgling backwoods grocers ready to barter both for the chance of making a saving, as they call it, of a few dollars, which, as Mr. ARCHER fairly showed, would in the end be the means of squandering untold millions. Meantime the exposure is not a pleasant one, the *millennium* has not yet arrived, many repetitions of the *Virginius* affair will occur before it does, and it is just possible our neighbours may be caught napping. We should very much regret the occurrence of a *contre temps* which is inevitable if their naval force is allowed to sink lower in the scale.

The following from the *Quebec Saturday Budget* of 17th January, points out the inevitable fate of all fortifications under the ancient system, and although we may regret the loss of the walls of the ancient capital of Canada, with the stirring historical recollections which they never failed to awaken in the mind, we cannot gainsay the fact that they have served their purpose, are not only now useless, but obstructive, and therefore the city council has acted in the interest of the community.

"As a preliminary step to the removal of the useless barriers created by the crumbling walls of Quebec to its progress and advancement, we are happy to see that Councillor Woods, at the last meeting of the City Council, gave notice, seconded by Councillor M. A. Hearn, of the following motion, which he intends to make at next meeting, and which we expect to see adopted without objection:

"That various parcels of ground and other property within the city limits, formerly owned by the Imperial now by the Dominion authorities and held by them for military purposes are admitted no longer to be required, or if required to be of any services for purposes of defence.

That the old city walls no longer serving their original purposes, and now fast falling into ruin are artificial barriers to the natural growth of the city proper, being a serious impediment to its development, that while such were necessary in the past when our city served the important purpose of a military fortress for the defence of the province, such reason now no longer exists. See

ing therefore that our city has so long served a national purpose without any reference to its commercial or municipal requirements, this Council thinks that the time has come when they should claim on behalf of the city a cession of all properties, the use of which for military purposes has been abandoned by the present holders.

"That a memorial be prepared and forwarded to the Governor-General in Council, setting forth the claims of this city, the grounds upon which the same are based and respectfully praying for the several reasons therein stated that the various properties, a schedule of which is herewith annexed, be ceded to this city.

"That such memorial be given in charge of one of the gentlemen who may for the time being represent one of the divisions of this city in the Dominion Legislature who with the other city representatives be requested to use their influence in favour of granting the prayer of such memorial. And further that this Council appoint a deputation to proceed to Ottawa during the approaching session to urge on Government the expediency and justice of granting the prayer of the memorial in question."

Our neighbors of the United States are still active in experimentalising on *torpedoes*—it does not, however, appear that any great amount of success has as yet attended the investigations into the best and most effective mode of manœuvring those sorry substitutes for an efficient naval force; but we give our readers the benefit of the following:—

"The *Ossipee*, upon making her way to the Washington Navy-yard, ran ashore at (Goshorn's) point, on January 9th, but in half an hour succeed in getting off, and again ran aground in the Eastern branch, off Buzzard's point. The *Geltingsburg* proceeded to her assistance, and pulled her off, when she steamed out into the main channel, off the arsenal, and anchored until high water late on the evening of the 9th instant, when she finally reached the yard. The *Ossipee* is direct from New York. The experiments with the torpedoes were continued at the Navy-yard on January 9th. A large cable chain, the links of which were two and a half inches in diameter, and the whole buoyed by spars, was lowered six feet under water, and extended from the eastern dock to one of the ironclads in the stream. A torpedo, containing one hundred pounds of powder, was lashed to the cable, but the first attempt to explode it was unsuccessful, when another torpedo was added, and fired by means of the electric battery upon the wharf. The second effort proved a complete success—the explosion sundered the cabin chain and hurled water, mud, and fish high into the air. The sight was a novel one in the Eastern branch. The experiment, which was conducted under the direction of the ordnance officer, Commander Sicard, was highly satisfactory, and showed that, with two torpedoes, containing 100 pounds of powder each, the largest ironclads in the world could be blown into atoms. These torpedoes were manufactured in the yard under the instructions of Mr. James Davis, foreman of the ordnance department. The experiments will be repeated to day.—*Washington Chronicle*, January 10.

Captain COLMAN, R.M.A., in his admirable paper on "Colonial Defence," shew conclusively that mere coast defence is only a sec-