



The Volunteer Review

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NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE Hon. the Minister of Militia presented to the House of Commons on the 22nd, the Annual Report of the Acting Adjutant General, Lt. Col. W. POWELL, on the state of the Militia, from which we learn that the number of officers and men who put in their annual drill, was 19,983. We have no room for remarks this week on this elaborate and cleverly got up report, but will, as is our wont, publish it in full for the information of our readers and the Force generally.

In the meantime we direct attention to the following remarks of the Premier and others in reference to the Militia.

MILITIA EXPENDITURE.

With regard to militia expenditure—

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE stated that the expenditure was slightly increased by the decision of the Government to place at the head of the militia a Major General of the British Army. It was considered necessary to have a military school of a similar character to that at West Point, though not so extensive or so pretentious as that establishment, or the military Academies in England, France or Germany. He had hoped to have introduced the measure for the establishment of this school before the militia items in the estimates were reached. The sum asked for the military colleges was only \$40,000, and they hoped to avoid increasing the expenditure by utilising the existing military stations. He stated that it was intended to qualify students for other Government services than military. It was proposed to make a survey of the works at Quebec, Kingston, and other points, which had been handed over by the Imperial authorities for the purpose of ascertaining the best means to be adopted to keep them in repair. It was proposed to decrease the force, pay them better, and make them more efficient. Such corps as had been irregular in their drill would be disbanded, and it was thereby hoped to obtain a better, although a smaller force.

In answer to Sir John A. Macdonald,

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE stated that the Major General would assume the duties of the Adjutant General, and would have the assistance of the present Deputy Adjutant Generals.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD thought a great mistake would be made if they gave the Deputy Adjutant General the command of the office work and the Major General charge

of the field work. He thought that such an officer would be in the way, and if pretentious in the charge given to him, it would prevent the Imperial Government from sending out the best men at their disposal. He cordially approved of the establishment of a military college, as it would tend to increase the efficiency of the officers. If the late war in the States proved anything, it proved that victory sided with the army commanded by the bravest and the most scientific officers. He contended that no volunteer officers had come to the front or made their mark except those who had been educated at West Point. The Northern and Southern armies were led by men who had been trained in their youth as soldiers; therefore, he cordially approved of the scheme of the right hon gentleman for a school of this kind, for however brave the men might be, they were of little value unless they had skilled officers to lead them. The slight training their officers had was only enough to mislead them, and when they came into command they generally knew very little.

Hon. Mr. H. CAMERON said, in reference to the duties of the Major-General, that his right hon friend from Kingston looked upon that officer as the head of the Militia Department. He did not understand that he was to act as commander of the militia.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said there would be a Deputy Adjutant-General in each military district, but no Adjutant-General. The Government would probably have to consider the whole organization of the force that was essential, but they did not feel justified after the few months, he might say few weeks of office, in commencing such a radical change in the staff, which they might not, perhaps, be able to justify or defend to the country. The rank of the new commandant would not materially change the duties involved upon his predecessor. That would, however, depend somewhat on what they found necessary. In making the new arrangement in the office formerly held by the Adjutant-General he was desirous of maintaining the same cordial relations with the Imperial army as ever. In the case of a war, of course, their army would be commanded by the Imperial officer. He was glad his right hon friend had approved of the scheme for the Military School, as he had never felt clearer as to the necessity of a public institute than for that.

Mr. WALKER did not think there would be any confusion such as the honorable member for Kingston suggested from the clashing of Major General with the officers sent out from England in case of war. It was the custom in cases of equal rank for the senior

officer to take the command. He was glad indeed, as a member of the force, to see the Government endeavoring to secure greater efficiency in the service.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD reiterated his statement that this appointment would be prejudicial to the interests of the service, for that officer could only be superseded by a superior officer, which circumstance might deprive them of the services of some of Her Majesty's finest officers.

Hon. Mr. MACKENZIE said the same objection might be made against the Commander in chief in England. The correction rested with the Executive.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Montreal) approved of the plan. He could not see that any confusion would arise between the officers.

The following militia items were adopted. Services of military branches district staff, \$55,000, salaries of Brigade Majors, \$28,500, allowances for drill instruction, \$40,000; military college, including three ordinary schools under district staff, \$10,000, ammunition, \$40,000, clothing, \$25,000, military stores, \$25,000, public armouries, including the pay of storeroomers and caretakers, storemen, and the rent, fuel and light of public armouries, \$52,000, drill pay, and all the incidental expenses connected with the drill and training of the militia, \$375,000; contingencies and general service not otherwise provided for, including assistance to Rifle Associations, and bands of efficient corps, \$63,000, targets, revolve, \$3,000, drill sheds and rifle ranges, \$10,000; extraordinary gunboats, \$5,000, maintenance of fortifications and buildings connected with military grounds, \$50,000; for improved firearms, snider rifles and Henry Martini rifles, \$40,000, ordnances and equipment of field batteries of artillery, \$20,000; pay maintenance and equipment of A and B Batteries of Garrison Artillery, and School of Gunnery, including salaries and all allowances of the Inspector of Artillery, and warlike stores, and the Commandant of A Battery at Kingston, and the Commandant of B Battery, and Inspector of Artillery, &c., for the Province of Quebec, \$100,000, total, \$953,500. Pay and maintenance of Dominion forces in Manitoba, viz., 243 officers, non-commissioned officers, and men including the expense of providing barracks, accommodation and contingencies, \$175,000; mounted police, Manitoba, \$185,000; total \$1,313,500.

The committee rose, reported, and asked leave to sit again.

The House of Commons has voted the grant of £25,000 to Sir Garnet Wolseley recommended in the special message of the Queen.