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The Volunteer Review,

AND

MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

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

OTTAWA, MONDAY, AUGUST 19, 1872.

LIEUT.-COLONEL WAINEWRIGHT GRIFFITHS, at present on a tour through British Columbia, has kindly consented to act as the Agent for the VOLUNTEER REVIEW in that Province.

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 in 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.

ONE of the most important questions which has agitated the public mind in Great Britain is that of the Coal supply, on which her very existence as a manufacturing power depends. Royal Commissions have been organized to investigate the probable extent of mineral fuel in Great Britain, and notwithstanding a somewhat favorable Report the excitement consequent on the agitation of the question of limitation of supply has been by no means allayed.

To complicate matters more the *strikes* of the Colliers and Ironworkers have culminated, in the words of a contemporary,—“In

consequence of these “strikes” the iron-master in the district of Wolverhampton, England, “is paying to-day 100 per cent. more for his coal than he was paying last August and September.” But the iron master has to contend not only with strikes in the coal trade, but in his own; and the result is, that pig iron, which sold at \$20 per ton, now commands \$45. There is nothing that contributes to the production of iron, whether material or labour of any kind, which is not largely increased in cost, so much so that the *Scottish Mail*, of last month, says,—“A comparison of prices with quotations of eighteen months ago, shows that in this short period the value of iron has increased from 50 to 80, and in some instances to 100 per cent. There is every reason to warrant the belief that prices are not yet so high as to threaten a break in the market by causing an appreciable falling off in the demand.”

Without waiting to analyse the effect on the development of the Belgian, French, Prussian and Russian manufactures of iron, or the impulse given to that of the United States, the bearing of this rise in prices in Great Britain on our own interests cannot but be very momentous and important.

It is evident that the investment of capital in those industries in Great Britain has been over-done, and that a portion of it must be withdrawn to be invested elsewhere. As the Dominion of Canada possesses in the Provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, the North West Territories and British Columbia immense and practically inexhaustible deposits of coal, and in all the Provinces (including Quebec and Ontario) valuable ores of iron, including all varieties of the mineral from magnetic ore, yielding 75 per cent of smelted iron, to the cheaply mined argillaceous ore yielding 35 per cent.; British capital which cannot find profitable investment at home in the iron trade should be induced to seek it here.

This change of prices will increase the cost of constructing the *Pacific Railway*, but it has also rendered it more than ever a necessity, because it will bring the magnetic iron ore of Ontario, the hematites of Lake Superior, the argillaceous ores of the North West, and the Saskatchewan coal fields together.

One great disadvantage of our democratic-monarchical government is the impossibility of executive action for the good of the people, capital in the hands of individuals is a monopoly, and the development of the national resources of a country is effected thereby at the expense of the working class.

In Russia those matters are better understood, the mines of the Oural Mountains and Siberia are worked by the Government with convict labour in part, and for the benefit of the State. The superior quality of the article produced is well known, and it will bid fair to replace Great Britain in the world's economy in the production of that necessary article.

If our Government could aid the development of iron manufacture, either by bonus or otherwise, they would be doing the State a service. The Saskatchewan is navigable for 900 miles, a series of broken water communication for 420 miles connects it with the Lake Superior mineral region—the problem to be solved is whether the iron is to be brought to the coal or vice versa or both to be carried to the point where the broken and interrupted navigation meets to be manufactured.

Whatever may be necessarily decided in this case will be the result of some deliberation, but there need be none about giving direct and speedy encouragement to the manufacture of iron in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, a liberal bonus, freedom from fiscal arrangements for a given period, and such other encouragements as may be necessary to establish the trade on a large scale.

It will be a grievous mistake if we allow this opportunity to pass without taking advantage of it, and the Provincial Legislatures should offer to pay the cost of the necessary buildings and plant to induce bona fide English *Iron-masters* to invest capital in the manufacture of iron in Canada.

“The opinion gains ground in France, as well as elsewhere, that powerful gunboats will in future form one of the most important branches of the marine, and Admiral Pothau is engaged in organization of special corps of workmen, foundries, fitters, and engineers trained in the building, fitting, and refitting of gunboats for river and other service, but especially the former, where in future the employment of such boats should, it is said, be general. The maritime prefects of Brest, Cherbourg, Rochefort, and Toulon, have received instructions to furnish all possible information on the subject, and this fact proves pretty clearly that, although stress is laid on gunboats for river service, the new organization is not to be confined to them alone.”

The above extract from an exchange, furnishes a pretty fair indication of what the cruising vessels of the future Navy will consist—Gunboats—light handy vessels heavily armed, swift under steam and canvas, with small draught of water and good sea-boats.

A squadron of properly found vessels of the class indicated would be able to go anywhere despite amour-plated monitors or torpedoes.

The people of the United States; the inventors of the first named nondescript, (for they are neither ships nor floating batteries) appear to have found out their defects and quietly allowed the system to pass, out of their service.

With a thoroughly defenceless coast line of vast extent it would seem that the whole attention of their naval administration is directed to perfecting a system of *torpedo boats*.

A Lieutenant BUCKNILL of the Royal Engineers has been enlightening the world on this subject. The *United States Army and Navy Journal* thus discourses of his pamphlet:—