

## CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for individual expressions of opinion in communications addressed to the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.]

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR,—The Adjutant General's Report with the recommendations respecting the Militia contained therein affords me sincere pleasure. It must be evident to every member of the Volunteer force that he has endeavored to promote the best interests thereof, as well as to secure fair play for all ranks.

Having served for many years under the late Duke of Wellington and several of the old Peninsula officers, my experience proves that any officer who discharges his duty to the country and those who served under him always came out with distinction, because his precepts and example inspired sentiments of honor and enforced discipline on all under his immediate control.

The report shows distinctly that it rests with the representatives of the people to make the Canadian militia, as a military force, equal to any other in the world. I look upon the recommendation for aiding the Volunteer force by enforcing the ballot in the rural districts as of great importance. At present, as pointed out in the report, military duty presses very unequally on the population and has all but exhausted the Volunteer element in the agricultural districts.

The remarks on the Five Forks action in 1864, by a cavalryman of the United States army, in your issue of the 10th inst., on the comparative merits of young and old officers and soldiers affords much food for reflection and an example which should not be lost sight of.

Your obedient servant,

AN OLD CAMPAIGNER OF THE ACTIVE FORCE.

Burrill's Rapids, 11th April, 1871.

## "OUR MILITARY FUTURE."

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR,—The approaching removal of the last of the Imperial troops from Canada seems to excite a good deal of anxiety in the public mind as to the future, and our Government would appear to be inclined to experiment in the direction of a standing army by their enlisting 200 men for service as artillerymen.

There can be no doubt that, leaving the possibility of foreign war out of the question, every country absolutely requires a certain number of troops to ensure the safety and maintenance of the civil power; a number proportioned of course to the population of the country and the character of its people. Taking our circumstances to be the same as those of the United States, (than whom there does not exist a people more indisposed to the maintenance of a standing army) we would require—on their basis of 30,000 men—at least 1000 or 2000, probably the latter number in view of the garrisons

which will be required in the vast territories lately added to the Dominion, and we should bring ourselves to regard this as being absolutely necessary for the safety and prosperity of the country.

The question next arises, how best to get this force combining economy and efficiency? Getting the men in Canada is almost out of the question, as good men could not be induced to serve for anything like the pay given the British Army, high as that is in comparison with that of continental armies.

I would suggest following the plan so successfully adopted by the late East India Company, whose army has added so much lustre to the British name, but with some modifications suitable to this country. Raise all or nearly all the men in England from among the farming population, enlisting them for five years at the same rate of pay as in H. M. Service, and giving as an inducement a free grant of land, in any part of the Dominion they may choose, on the expiration of their service. The regiments to be officered by Canadians who should be educated at a Military College to be established for the purpose, and subjected to a very rigid examination so that we should have officers whom the men would respect, and who would be a credit to the country—as a beginning half of the Field Officers might be selected from the British Army, and we would then have reliable men to organize the system.

The depots in England might be under the charge of Canadian officers to be stationed there in their regular routine, so that the men on landing in this country would find themselves under control of the same class of officers as they had been accustomed to since their enlistment.

By this means we would effect a military colonization of one of the finest countries in the world by the very best class of men to be had, and at the same time have the best and most economical force we could get.

Hoping that, should my suggestion meet with your approval, you will keep the matter before the eyes of the public.

I am Sir,

Your obedient servant

"CANADA."

April 10th, 1871.

[Our correspondent has not sent name or address; as his suggestions are worth noticing, we have departed from the invariable rule in this case.—ED. VOL. REV.]

Forty pounds each is the price offered for artillery horses in England, and there are 2000 wanted. These, said Mr. Edward Tater in a lecture, might be procured, but there would be much difficulty in getting the 2000 wanted for the cavalry. About 30,000 horses had gone from England to France during the war. In the Crimean war £19 was given, since then the price had come down to £23 for three-year olds, and £35 for four-year olds. Then the Austrians and Prussians came into the market, and in seven years, from the ports of Hull and Harwich alone, 14,000 mares were sent off.

## RATIONS AND MANAGEMENT OF THE MESS.

## THE PRACTICE IN THE RUSSIAN ARMY.\*

The pay of the enlisted men of the Russian army being very small, the Government must provide for their support completely. The highest pay which any enlisted man can receive amounts yearly to 68 rubles 70 kopeks (about fifty dollars in gold,) the rate of pay of a first sergeant of the Finland sharpshooters of the guards. Generally first sergeants receive 36 rubles; sergeants, 9 rubles 30 kopeks; corporals, 7 rubles 80 kopeks; privates, 5 rubles 25 kopeks (four dollars gold.) With such a low rate of pay, it is quite natural that the Government should furnish subsistence for the men in all respects sufficient. This is done by issues in kind, and by the payment of money. The issue in kind consists of flour and groats drawn from magazines monthly, at the daily rate of 2½ pounds of flour and ¼ pound of groats. The pay of the guards and of the troops of the line differs. For the former the sum necessary for the support of a certain number of men per year is ascertained, and the rate thus obtained forms the basis of the sum paid for one man. The troops of the line receive a fixed sum, varying in amount according to the locality in which the troops are stationed.

The whole empire is divided into three districts in regard to the payment of ration money. The first district comprises the Government of St. Petersburg, Archangel, Pskov, Esthonia, Taurin, and Finland; the second, all the governments of southern and western Russia; the third, all those of eastern Russia.

In the first class each man is allowed 3 1-2 kopeks; in the second, 2 7-8 kopeks; in the third, 2 1-2 kopeks; in Poland, 5-6 kopek daily; the kopek being three-quarters of a cent. This money is paid to each company three times each year, for four months in advance, calculated on the strength of the company, and forming the company subsistence fund. This fund is intended to provide for the daily support of the men; in other words, it is to be used for the purchase of sufficient meat, butter, oil, or vegetables for two meals daily. It is found, however, generally insufficient on account of the high prices of provisions, and other means had to be thought of to increase it. The quantity of flour allowed daily gives three pounds of bread, but, as no man can eat this amount, only enough bread is baked to satisfy the men. The flour thus saved is partly used for the preparation of "quass," a beverage which is used during each meal in Russia. The remainder of the flour is sold. But even this addition to the subsistence fund would hardly suffice, and the men might often have but scanty fare, if no other means were available. The men themselves contribute to the improvement of their mess by the proceeds of work done for citizens, a practice original with Russia, deeply rooted in her social condition. The country is very destitute of laborers, and it is to meet this want that soldiers receive permission at the close of the annual encampments, and, when circumstances seem to demand it, sometimes during the encampments, to assist citizens in their work, especially during harvest time. During the four or six weeks furlough these soldiers earn, as their labor

\*So far as this article relates to the Russian ration it is translated from a work published November last, at Berlin, entitled: "Die Heeresmacht Russlands," three Neugestaltung und politische Bedeutung" (Russia's military power its reorganization and political importance.) To this is annexed some remarks about the management of our Army rations.