

THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW

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TO CORRESPONDENTS:

All Communications regarding the Militia or Volunteer movement, or for the Editorial Department, should be addressed to the Editor of THE VOLUNTEER REVIEW, Ottawa.

Communications intended for insertion should be written on one side of the paper only.

We cannot undertake to return rejected communications. Correspondents must invariably send us, confidentially, their name and address.

All letters must be Post-paid, or they will not be taken out of the Post Office.

Adjutants and Officers of Corps throughout the Provinces are particularly requested to favor us regularly with weekly information concerning the movements and doings of their respective Corps, including the fixtures for drill, marching out, rifle practice, &c.

We shall feel obliged to such to forward all information of this kind as early as possible, so that we may reach us in time for publication.



The Volunteer Review,

AND MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE.

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

OTTAWA, MONDAY, MARCH 30, 1883.

MILITIA ORGANIZATION.

The articles which have at various times appeared in the VOLUNTEER REVIEW on the very interesting subject of *Militia Organization*, have succeeded in awaking attention to and promoting discussion on the best mode of creating our national army of defence. It is, however, evident, that in the consideration of the subject hitherto, sufficient attention has not been paid to one great principle, and that is the fact that "the Canadian troops are designed for purposes of defence, not aggression, and consequently no costly outlay need be incurred in the effort to make them forget their individuality in the attempt to train highly disciplined soldiers. "The peculiar topographical features of the country reduce its defence to a war of fortified posts and lines, which can be so placed as to afford mutual support, and, at the same time, each post and line can be garrisoned and defended by the inhabitants in its immediate vicinity. Consequently long marches, strategic manœuvres, and the whole of the science of handling large bodies of troops in the field, are matters, the consideration of which may be safely postponed till after the more material one of organization."

In the last issue of the REVIEW there are two letters, one under the caption of "Canadian Volunteers," the other "Our

Militia Organization." The writer of the first, practically acquainted with the present organization, points out clearly its principle evils—"the fact that the duty of the Government is allowed to be discharged by the officers of the force who are the *laughing stocks* of those who shirk their own share of it," as well as the burdens needlessly imposed on them by holding the Commanding officers of companies responsible for clothing, arms and appointments, and endeavors to refute the arguments of "Another Volunteer," whose great grievance is that his Captain wishes to keep the clothing in the Armory, and declares it impossible to have country companies efficient without three weeks or a month of Battalion drill. The Military Schools are next dealt with, and a just tribute paid to their value, and the judgment of their founder, the Hon. J. S. Macdonald.

It is a most extraordinary circumstance that no attempt has been yet made to relieve individuals from the responsibility and expense attending the organization and command of Volunteer Companies. Not only has an officer to exert his personal influence with his countrymen to induce them to become members of his corps, but he has to take charge of arms and clothing at his own expense, and bear a variety of other charges for which he is not remunerated, but he must make good, at his own expense, any deficiencies which may occur in his stores by the carelessness or other mismanagement of the men, who are generally prone to think that they may do as they please with the Government outfit. The great fault of the Volunteer organization is, that no encouragement has been given to companies raised in the rural districts. As it is within a year that the system of grants for Drill Sheds became prevalent, even so: when it is considered that the men belonging to those corps have often to come five or six miles to drill, after a hard day's work, their inefficiency need not be wondered at, nor will withdrawing them from profitable pursuits for three weeks or a month each year cure the evil. All institutions that are experimentally established like the Military Schools, are liable to abuse. No doubt many Cadets have obtained certificates whose social position would debar them from holding a commission in the Militia, but that is the fault of the original design, which contemplated compulsory service, whereas no fact can be better established than that the Militia of Canada cannot be made to serve by compulsion, and must be commanded by officers possessing the confidence and respect of the men, and this arises from the small social difference existing between the various classes in the country.

The writer on "Our Militia Organization" lays down as a principle, that a special tax should be levied on each of the five hundred and sixty municipalities into which the Province of Ontario is divided, for the sup-

port of a company of one hundred men in each—and this would produce, with the cities, 60,000 men. Now, both writers evidently establish the fact that the present organization is defective and practically useless, that the burden of the defence of the Province is thrown on the shoulders of individuals, and that nothing short of local taxation will meet the circumstances of the case. It is well established that no portion of the population of the Dominion can be detached from their more profitable pursuits to acquire a "thorough knowledge of discipline," that 60,000 men "are as insufficient as 35,000, for the purposes of defence, that any compulsory organization will be inefficient, because it is distasteful to the people, foreign to their institutions and habits, and injurious to the best interests of the country; that no special taxation would be submitted to, nor would any law bearing on a particular class have effect. 'That the proposal of raising one hundred men in each township, would be as ineffective as the present Militia Law; respecting the first class Service Militia, it could not be enforced, and finally, that any measure to be effective, must be universal without exception.' What the country really wants is a general Militia law, by which every man capable of serving, from sixteen to sixty, should be enrolled, and drilled at least four days in the year, the time to be chosen so as not to interfere with the general business of the country. The mode of organization should be by county regiments divided into Battalions according to population. At every Company Headquarters, a Drill Shed and Armory should be provided at the expense of the municipality, who should also provide for the care of arms, clothing, stores, repairs, and removal of same; but no pay should be given to any man except the *Store-keeper*. The General Government should be prepared to give an allowance to an Adjutant and Drill Instructor to each Battalion, and this ought to be paid out of the proceeds of the Ordnance lands, which were handed over for Militia purposes. It should also pay the Staff from the same source. Such Cadets of the Military Schools as hold commissions in the Reserve or Volunteer Militia should retain their respective ranks as seniors thereof, at least in the new organization. The remainder should be placed on the Staff or unattached list for future service, the latter number would be small, and care should be taken to make it most effective. In the event of Corps being required for service, a draft could be made on each county regiment for a sufficient number of men, which could be taken in due proportions from such Battalion, either as Volunteers, or as first on the roster, formed into Provisional Battalions, the command of which should be given to such Cadets as were qualified therefor, and the subalterns, and all other officers, chosen from the same class, care being taken to select the Cadets