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THE CANADIAN

# Military Gazette

Successor to the Canadian Militia Gazette.

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## Notes and Comments

It does not say much for the patriotism and general appreciation of Canadian politicians that they do not take the least interest in the militia. The liberals held a big meeting in Montreal the other day, when the leaders of the party presented to the people of the commercial metropolis what they were pleased to call a complete exposition of the policy of the opposition party. It is invariably the same thing at conservative meetings. Fiscal policies, railway policies, colonization policies, trade policies, navigation policies and other policies galore were discussed *ad nauseum*; but never a word was said about a defence policy or the mili-

tia. What would they think in England of a statesman who should pretend to propound a political platform and failed to refer to the question of national defence?

Of course Canada is not in close touch, like the Mother Country, with the constantly threatening and ever restless European and Asiatic powers, and our young Dominion has so far found ample protection in the strong arm of the Empire. But has not this country, from a military point of view, been living in something like a tool's paradise? What would be the position if Great Britain were tomorrow involved in a war with one of the first rate powers? Would the Canadian militia, as at present constituted, equipped and drilled, be competent to back up any regular army the Imperial Government might find itself able to spare for the defence of this country? We prefer to leave the question for those who know something about the real position of affairs to answer.

Sentimental questions out of the way altogether, Canadians know that it is a good thing for the Dominion to form part of the great confederation of kindred nations which makes up the British Empire. Canadians, true to their breeding, are a practical people, a nation of shop-keepers, and their devotion to British connection is almost as much due to their appreciation of the fact that it pays, as to their in-born loyalty to the Crown of Britain. But if we are to possess the glory and advantages of British connection, we have to assume the risks and responsibilities which

that connection implies. It is the duty of Canadian statesmen, not only to this country but to the empire, to see that the vulnerability of Canada from a military point of view is reduced to a minimum. Nor is this all. Canadians, with any loyalty and honesty in their composition, must realize fully that Canada owes it to her national honor to contribute her mite towards the maintenance of the defensive forces of the empire. Here surely is scope for statesmanship which can rise superior to gerrymander laws and ward politics!

Then there is the immediate necessity of ample armed protection against internal disorder. We do not want a repetition of the bloodshed and disturbance at Brooklyn in Montreal, Toronto or St. John. Halifax is safe, but what other city in Canada is? The Canadian militia have been called out scores of times to maintain the civil authority, but the men hate this police duty, and militiamen should certainly never be called out to shoot down their fellow citizens, even if they are engaged in rioting. Then the difficulty of summoning the militia on an emergency must be considered, and it is not very comforting when one reflects that at the recent noisy demonstration of the unemployed in Montreal, a spokesman of the crowd bluntly told the Mayor that under the very shadow of Mount Royal men were clamouring to be organized into bodies which should use physical force to obtain their ends. Which party, what statesmen will have the common sense to draft a comprehensive defense policy and the pluck to