

in the person of the Governor General) can, of her own free-will and without any cause being given, dismiss in the most summary manner any officer she chooses. Of course I know that this can be done without any recourse against H.M. by the dismissed. The only recourse open to the dismissed is by his representative in the Commons of Canada in this instance, and by one dismissed from the Regular Army the House of Commons of England.

For what offences can H.M. summarily dismiss one officer in the army or volunteers of Canada? For, in fact, not very few, and they are laid down distinctly in the Queen's Regulations, and the Mutiny Act and Articles of War. They may be cashiered, reduced in rank, and suffer other penalties; but to summarily dismiss an officer because he took, even a very active part in an election contest, is something so very extraordinary, and *without precedent*, that it might, if persisted in in many cases, lead to extraordinary results. It might lead, mind I don't say it *ought*, to trouble to those assuming the responsibility.

Now for my own ideas on this subject of officers taking part in elections of any sort; when I say officers I mean, of course, those in receipt of full pay

I hold that it is not right, morally right, for officers of the Force, to take *any* part in an election contest, even I go so far as to say they ought not to vote. For this reason I say it; *because they might* be called out to put down a riot; and if they had taken part in that struggle of parties, and then had to put down a riot emanating from what they, by their very vote even, had taken part in (the contest of political parties) before called on in their military capacity, only see what a hard course would be theirs if a man, opposed to them in the election, was killed by the fire of the party they held military command in. Of course I know it is hard for a man, feeling strong about politics, to stand idly by, and see his opponents win perhaps, when, it might be, he has much influence in his hand for his party; yet I know my course would be plain to me, either I must give up my commission or refrain my hand.

I wish the present Government would put their foot down on this political trickery and favoritism in the Volunteer Force; refuse to bring in outsiders and put them in the staff positions; and pick out those *whose hearts* are in the service and are fit for the staff by knowledge, experience, and good manners. Let those seeking staff appointments first show their fitness for the post by spending their time and money on trying to benefit it by improving it with their knowledge and experience. What good does it do the Force, even have they the experience of old soldiers, bringing in officers retired from the Regulars? None, sir, none at all. It but disgusts the old soldiers already in the Force who have spent their time and money in

bringing it as far as it has got at present.

I know the feelings of the men, even, on this point, is with me. I know what the Non-Commissioned officers and privates think; aye and say too. But I must apologize for the length of my letter tho' I could discourse much more on this subject.

Yours truly

OLD SOLDIER.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

DEAR SIR:—I would suggest to my brother officers of the Active Force the great benefit it would be to themselves, as well as also to the Non-Commissioned Officers who may be aspiring to the Commissioned Rank, if some one would publish, say every three years, an edition in book form of all General Orders that affect the Force at the present time from the year 1860 or 1862. It would, I think, pay well as a speculation even, and I have not the slightest doubt it would be a great boon to most of us. Moreover, I think the Government should take the matter in hand, and either work out themselves or appoint some special clerk, or even some officer of the force to compile it. At the present time none but Canadian officers receive the printed sheets containing the Gazettes. I don't think the book would be very bulky as I would not enter any General Orders but those actually in force up to the moment of going to press; and there are many cancelled orders that would not be entered at all. As it is Company Officers have no such book for reference to in cases of doubt as to how they shall act, whereas if such a book as I suggest were printed they could simply turn up the General Order on the subject if it were not contained in the Rules and Regulations for the Militia issued by the Department.

Truly yours,

OLD SOLDIER.

There is a dead lock in the Newfoundland Legislature. Very little business has been done since the meeting of the House, and another general election seems to be the only solution of the difficulty.

The members of the Governor General's Foot Guards and their band are making preparation for a grand concert to take place in the Rink Music Hall at the opening of Parliament.

New York, 13th.—The organization of the new Reformed Episcopal Church was completed by the acceptance by Bishop Cummins of the rectorship.

There has also been a new Reformed Episcopal Church organized in the City of Ottawa; by the Rev. Mason Gallagher, D.D. They worship for the present in the Court House.

The London Times publishes a laudatory obituary article on the late Charles Sumner. Referring to the dispute between England and the United States, the Times says:—"Sumner was not able to judge us dispassionately, and we possibly have not understood all the influences which made him apparently unjust. It is better to forget those differences, and remember the strong impulses for good which had drew him from private life to expose that great national wrong, slavery, and which in spite of his many weaknesses remained his guiding principle ever to the end."

REVERSES IN THE ASHANTEE COUNTRY.

The reverse to the British Troops in the Ashantee country is not the first that has occurred there, through underrating the numbers, prowess, and determination of the enemy. In 1824, Jan. 21, the Ashantees defeated about 1,000 British troops, under Sir Charles McCarthy, at a place called Accra. And the defeat was a pretty serious one, the majority of the men, including Sir Charles himself, being slain by overpowering numbers. But they did not fall before dealing out terrible death among the warlike blacks. Feats of almost unheard of valor were performed, which the enemy were so impressed with, that they cut up the heart of Sir Charles McCarthy and divided it among the chiefs, each eating a piece in order that it might make him as brave as the fallen man had proved himself to be. His skull was taken and carefully prepared as a drinking cup for the King, and has since been preserved among the royal treasures with religious care. Previous to a recent engagement, poor McCarthy's skull was pressed into service and a pledge given to the court by the King, from the brim of it, to serve the English in 1874 as their ancestors had fifty years previously. But, though the defeat of 1824 was a serious one, it was avenged in 1826 by an expedition under Col. Purdon, who totally defeated them August 27th of that year, and made the black skins sue for peace. A minor war arose in 1863 at the instance of the Governor of Cape Coast Castle, which continued in a desultory fashion for about a year, when, after much suffering on the part of our troops, the war was discontinued at the instances of the Home Government. The recent losses under Sir Garnet Wolseley do not appear to have crippled him to any great extent, for though three hundred troops were killed, including some valuable officers, the Ashantees were driven off with great loss. Meanwhile, the English held their ground, and were waiting for reinforcements which were on their way up, an attack on Comassie being determined upon for the 4th of February. Of course, the English troops fighting under a blazing sun and in a bush country, are under much disadvantage, as the use of artillery is almost impossible to them. Yet it need not be doubted that the gallant band, that does not number one to a hundred of the enemy, will give a good account of themselves, and make Sambo sue for quarter, and give indemnity for losses incurred.

Later intelligence supports the above view, and gives assurance that the troops did all that was expected of them. The King has skulked out of Comassie, which was taken, and Wolseley may have the gratification of bringing back the skull of Sir Charles McCarthy.

The city of Portsmouth will give a public banquet to the troops returning from the Ashantee expedition.

The Governor of Bilbo has informed Marshal Serrano that he has received provisions sufficient to last until April, and that he will continue to vigorously defend the city.

The Carlists, report that their forces have entered Juan, and have begun operations against Olot.

Halfpenny, who has been missing since the early part of the winter, and of whom so much has been said, was found in the water at the head of the slide, by some of Mr. Bronson's men, who were engaged in taking out logs. The body was greatly disfigured, but was recognized.