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The Civil Service and the Militia.

We cordially endorse the strong ground taken by the *Ottawa Journal* in protesting against the rule which forces a member of the Civil Service to sever his connection with the militia on his attaining to the higher commissioned ranks. The ground taken by the Government is that military duties are apt to conflict with those of his office; but this view cannot be considered a logical one, and is also at variance with both Canadian and English precedent. If a business house with longer and more varied hours than those enforced by the Departments can permit its employees to serve their country in the militia, how much more should the Government do its utmost to encourage and help the service. More than this—instead of throwing obstacles in their way, the Government should set a patriotic example, revive the old Civil Service Corps, and make it the rule that each male employee on entering on official duties, become a member of the battalion and serve the regulation three years, unless physically disqualified. A splendid regiment could be formed from the Departments; it would give many young men a new and useful interest and possibly keep them out of mischief. The public service need not suffer one iota by military duty in such a corps. In London, at least three strong battalions are formed solely from Government employees; in Canada, with a militia force infinitely weaker than that of England, and possessing the merest skeleton of a standing army, the need is far greater for every measure of assistance that our government can afford to give.

England's New Route to the East.

It seems to be a settled fact that a large body of Royal Marines and sailors are to be moved from Victoria to Halifax and *vice versa* over the Canadian Pacific Railway in a few weeks. This will be a most important step in Imperial relations, as the first occasion when any considerable body of the regular forces destined for the Pacific station is taken over Canadian territory. The movement can hardly fail to be a success, and as such, will in all probability become the permanent military highway to the East,—a *desideratum* long anticipated but never yet realized. The benefits that will result from this are enormous, both to Canadian and

Imperial interests—the C.P.R. being essentially a Canadian road, manned almost exclusively by our own people and with its vast expenditure of money circulating chiefly in the Dominion. To Imperial interests in time of war, the material advantages of this route will be incalculable—in peace of great value. There is little reason to doubt that not only would the Victoria and Hong Kong garrison and naval reliefs be fed by our route, but that the bulk of the supplies for India itself would come this way; and in case of any European complication communication between England and her eastern possessions would naturally come solely by this safe and speedy channel, thus freeing the Mediterranean fleet from all cares of transports. Governments are slow to change and usually act only after careful experiment; but when they do move, the interests transferred are enormous; and the private patronage that invariably attends an official route is proportionately very great. One warning may not be out of place. The withdrawal of the Guards and other regiments from the Montreal garrison in 1864 was materially hastened by the greed of contractors and proprietors of the buildings rented to the Crown for barracks; people who took advantage of Britain's prompt action in our defence, and charged the military authorities excessive prices for everything. John Bull does not like being swindled, and soon punished the city by taking away regiments whose officers were proverbial for wealth and lavish expenditure. In the coming transfer across the Continent, it is to be hoped that the expenses will be made as moderate as possible, as this would undoubtedly aid in establishing the permanent military use of the Canadian route.

Quebec's Disgrace.

The evidence adduced before the Senate in the Baie des Chaleurs case is before us, and its perusal is not calculated to imbue the people of this Province with much respect for its present government; but it is bright and inspiring compared with the disclosures that have been made before the Royal Commission—disclosures so damning as scarcely to admit of the possibility of any evidence in rebuttal. The extraordinary lapses of memory which have afflicted the Minister of Public Works on recent events of acknowledged great importance, indicate the necessity of his following the example of the late Dominion Minister with same portfolio and making way for a man of more lasting mental powers. All the evidence goes to show that HON. MR. MERCIER has been assuming a false position. He has been posing as the stage manager for many months, and lo! MR. PACAUD now appears to have been the real director, and to have worked the puppets as he pleased. In the light of authority the position that matters have assumed is decidedly humiliating for the First Minister and his cabinet. In the light of public opinion the blackest page in the history of the Province has been laid bare; and any man who cares for honest government should, when the time comes, strain every nerve to give us an administration run on principles of integrity and honour. Politics have nothing to do with it; in other Provinces we see governments professing the same party creed against whose members little or nothing has ever been proven impugning their honesty. It is a fortunate thing for the people of this Province that it has a Lieutenant-Governor who, acting on his undoubted constitutional rights, has had the courage to act independently and in the best interests of the country

at large; not only is Quebec's reputation at stake in this matter, but that of the whole of Canada is more or less involved, in view of the important position this Province occupies in the Confederation; while by readers abroad, especially in view of the recent Ottawa exposures, no nice discrimination between the Provincial and Dominion Governments will be made.

To Our Subscribers.

Orders for our Christmas Number are now coming in freely; as the edition will be a limited one, we would recommend our friends to send in their orders without delay, and thus ensure prompt delivery.

Literary and Personal Notes.

The oldest Indian written book has been discovered by an Indian officer in the ruins of a buried city near Kashgar, Central Asia. Its date is the fifth or sixth century of our era, and it is written on birch bark leaves by a Buddhist monk, who has described the medicines known to him, and also noted down some Sanscrit proverbs, prayers and charms. Clarified butter is one of the medicines given as valuable.

A new edition of the Waverly novels is in preparation which promises to be of unusual interest. It is to be edited by Mr. Andrew Lang, who is having access to all the MS. and other material now at Abbotsford. The work will be issued in 48 crown 8vo. volumes, and will be illustrated with about 300 new etchings illustrating the scenes and characters of the tales.

It is a sign of the increase of bibliophiles in the United States, that Messrs. Duprat & Co., of New York, announce the first of a series of descriptions of the private libraries in the United States, beginning with a monograph on "Four Private Libraries in New York," by M. H. Pene du Bois. A series of illustrations of the bindings will be given and the work will be printed by Mr. De Vinne, the printer of the Grolier Club.

Propos of Sir Walter, a very pleasant personal reminiscence of the great novelist is given in a recent work by Dr. Hedderwick, an old-time Glasgow journalist. He had occasion to visit the Court of Session, Edinburgh, where Scott sat as one of the clerks. He was attired in a black dress suit, with white cravat, and looked remarkably like a country clergyman. His voice had a soft, lowland hurr, pleasant to hear, and at each step he bent over his stick pressing it close to his right side; his lameness was very apparent, but his bearing was lofty and imposing. All along the High street, the North bridge and Princess street he was observed with kindly reverence by all.

The same writer tells of an extraordinary resemblance between Thackeray and a Mr. Carruthers, editor of an Inverness paper. He says that on one occasion

"Carruthers told me that he found Thackeray somewhat indisposed. Yet he had to lecture that night, much to his annoyance. As the hour approached he became more and more reluctant to leave his fireside; and at length he proposed that Carruthers should take his manuscript, boldly make his bow to the audience, and read the lecture in his stead, without explanation or authority. He did not think the audience would discover the difference. But a more definite proof of the likeness existing between the two gentlemen may be stated. Mr. Thackeray, hearing that Dr. Carruthers was in town, called and asked for him at his lodgings, whereupon the servant-maid burst into a fit of laughter. The Doctor had just gone out, and here was he back, as she thought, gravely enquiring for himself."

The death of the Hon. W. H. Smith has naturally received most attention on political grounds; but the details of his connection with the dissemination of literature are not without interest. He instilled a new life into his father's business, and for many years devoted his energies exclusively to its advancement. He worked behind the counter for a long time, and used to rise early enough to superintend the despatch of papers by the early morning trains. In 1849 his firm purchased all the bookstalls on the line of the London and North-Western Railway, which added vastly to their operations; in 1860 they opened a circulating library, and since then have spread their business in every direction. The chief premises in London have just been doubled in size—an addition Mr. Smith was never able to visit owing to his long-continued illness.