

THE
CANADIAN. MONTHLY
AND NATIONAL REVIEW.

VOL. 5.]

MARCH, 1874.

[No. 3.

OUR MILITIA.

IT has been well observed by the able author of the "Wealth of Nations," that danger to a state necessarily accompanies the production and accumulation of wealth, for, as argued by Adam Smith, "the transition from the ruder state of husbandry to the employment of improved means and appliances calls for more constant supervision on the part of the husbandman, while the increase and improvements in arts and manufactures naturally engrosses the attention of numbers whose time is completely absorbed therein. Hence it follows that military exercises come to be as much neglected by the inhabitants of the country as by those of the town, and the nation becomes unwarlike. That wealth, at the same time, which always follows the improvements of agriculture and manufactures, provokes the invasion of all their neighbours, and, unless the state takes some new measures for the public defence, the natural habits of the people render them altogether incapable of defending themselves."

We would fain hope that this country has

not yet gone far towards this stage of national decline, in so far at least as that is represented by a loss of warlike spirit—though the above causes, which are said to produce such a state of affairs, are rapidly developing. But there are symptoms of a tendency in this direction, noticed by careful observers, which may well lead her rulers to take such steps as may serve to arouse the dormant spirit of the people—a spirit surely not, as some would say, requiring the stimulus of another Fenian invasion to call it into action.

The following somewhat desultory observations may, I hope, afford matter for consideration to both the theorist and practical worker; and taking it for granted that none will gainsay the assertion that, like our comrades in Great Britain, "Defence and not Defiance" should be our motto, I hope to point to what may be a step in the right direction towards attaining the maximum of the former with the minimum of the latter.

I do not purpose now to enter at all on