

live. It is an age of revolutions, quiet we acknowledge, but nevertheless of tremendous force, and not the least singular of its indications is the application of science to the art of destruction. Intimately connected with this is another question of vital importance to the nations, and one which has occupied the attention of ruling minds on the continent of Europe for many years of late, and that is the problem of national defence. Austria neglected the study and received a terrible punishment for her ignorance; Italy, Spain, and Turkey, are likewise examples, and one after another they will be made to pay with blood and treasure for the national sin of omission. Despite the preachings and teachings of transcendental philosophers the age is aggressive, decidedly so; it is a hard, practical, selfish age wherein the grand object sought is power. Power, not for the furtherance of good, but for national or personal aggrandizement, hence the wars which have within the lifetime of our readers shaken the whole political fabric, and to which other wars must succeed before the material age will merge into the philosophic. Such being the condition of the world it behoves the weaker nations to look closely into and study deeply the powers inherent in themselves for protection against the possible desire of an overgrown neighbor to absorb them. In the comity of nations they bear the same relation to the powerful as, in the kingdom of nature, the weaker animals bear to the stronger. To continue the simile, an animal may be small and apparently weak and yet be endowed with such powers as make it formidable in its own defence. So is it with nations which, though small in territory and population, are yet dangerous to the aggressor by reason of the courage, compactness and determination of their people joined with that organization which a public power must perpetuate for the preservation of its independence. Herein we may then observe the germ of that principle which has won almost universal acceptance in all civilized communities, and which is known as armed nations in contradistinction to national armies. Or, to put it in other words the people themselves must compose the national force for defence, and every citizen be a soldier when his services are required. As nothing can be more dangerous to liberty than a huge standing army, so nothing provides for it a surer safeguard than a popular citizen force. The one is an engine that may at any time be used to subvert the liberties of the people, the other, on the contrary, furnishes a bulwark the most daring would hardly venture to assail. From the earliest ages down to the present time history teems with examples of what we have endeavoured to point out. We have but to refer to the citizen armies of Greece and Rome the lustro of whose conquests are reflected to day in our language, laws and literature, and will continue to be

so diffused, as has been strikingly remarked by Macaulay, so long as civilization exists; and that will be as long as the power of mind sways the functions of inert matter. To come nearer to our own days we find the force of a nation delivered, as it were, through the arm of one man prostrating and annihilating fabrics whose foundations were laid so long ago that people believed them indestructible. They "mistook the slumbering Leviathan for an island," and like the venturesome sailor suddenly found themselves in the midst of a sea of unknown dangers. Again, to come to our own day, we have seen how Prussia, a nation of soldiers, overthrew in two terrific weeks the gigantic standing armies of Austria; and how, in Italy, the sound of "Il climeso Rosso" was sufficient to cause a stampede among the mercenaries, while in the American States we have beheld two portions of the people rushing at each others throats, stabbing, biting, and gouging like two of their own bullies until one overcome by exhaustion was compelled to succumb.

In none of these instances however have we an exact parallel to what may at some future time occur to Canada, but nevertheless the lessons they convey impress upon our minds the necessity for preparation. If we are prepared we need not fear invasion, nor revolution, nor oppression. Finally, while we maintain the principle of armed nationality, we provide for all possible contingencies. To the people is entrusted the duty of defending themselves, their homes and liberties, and, while guarding against outward attack, render innocuous more insidious intestine dangers. Upon this principle Sir G. E. Cartier framed his famous Militia Bill and we believe the time is not far distant when those who have derided the measure will acknowledge its wisdom. We do not pretend to defend all the provisions of that act, by and bye, perhaps, we will see some modifications; but the idea upon which it was framed is the most correct that could be conceived, inasmuch as it enforces the duty of every citizen to defend the country, and no longer leaves the patriotic willing few to bear the burdens of many.

On entering the army the chief lesson impressed upon the mind of the recruit is obedience, which he is informed is his first duty; the keystone in fact of the whole system of which he forms a unit. The principle is one which must be enforced at all hazards, even should it, as in some cases which have come under our own observation, bear hardly and perhaps, unjustly, upon the unoffending. We all know that for the successful administration of a military force unquestioning obedience is an absolute necessity, as much to the popular leader of a revolutionary army of volunteers, as to the Imperial General of disciplined masses. This being established it necessarily follows that every man who

joins a military body surrenders, according to the circumstances, a greater or less share of his personal liberty. That he may be of use to the cause he has espoused he must be content to obey those who are placed above him; hence insubordination is regarded as the worst of crimes in the military calendar, and one punishable by the severest penalties. Cases may sometimes be modified by circumstances, as, for instance, the same amount of discipline is not expected nor insisted upon in a volunteer corps as in a regular regiment, the former is a part of the people and partakes in a great extent of the passions and feelings of the populace, the latter is entirely distinct and has objects and associations entirely apart from what may be supposed to sway other classes of the people. In Canada our military organization is essentially popular, and partakes of the same nature as our other political institutions, but that fact does not destroy the principle of discipline, inasmuch as we by volunteering place ourselves under the command of others, and by doing so bind ourselves to obey them.

Apropos to the circumstances which elicited these remarks we would call the attention of officers of the Canadian Militia and Volunteers to an historical instance of peculiar significance. In the year 1782 the Irish volunteers were considered the best drilled organized and equipped force in the three kingdoms; but unfortunately they formed themselves into a political league for the purpose of enforcing the passage through Parliament of certain measures with which, as volunteers, they had nothing whatever to do. The Irish Parliament was then in session at Dublin and the delegates from the volunteers met at the Rotunda, the latter to overawe the former and compel them to accede to their demands. Things were growing serious, and, to save the country from a military insurrection, the Earl of Charlemont virtually disbanded the volunteers by dissolving the convention.

In this circumstance we behold the evils arising from the endeavour to make a popular military organization an engine for the furtherance of political objects. Both are essentially different and the attempt to make one subservient to the other is sure to lead to the demoralization and consequent destruction of the military element which, dependent through its various grades upon the central authority, must cease to exist when that authority is withdrawn. With reference therefore to the organization of associations of volunteers we would ask those who have undertaken that object to pause and consider well what they are about. When in our remarks upon this same subject some weeks ago, we spoke of such an association, we recommended the officers of the Force to "united action when questions which affect them as volunteers come before them in their capacity of civilians," we had too lively a knowledge of a soldier's position