

The Militia School.

Under the old militia system, now about to give way to a better, there was a great show of strength, but little of its reality. The Province was divided into districts, each one of which was supplied with officers. In the event of the militia being ordered out, the officers were to march them to the rendezvous appointed, there to be re-organized as the Commander-in-Chief might require. But by no means followed that the gentlemen who in time of peace had sported the names and uniforms of captains, majors and colonels, would be vested with the control of the troops. The law contemplated no such absurdity. It provided that those among them who were fit and willing, might be re-appointed at the pleasure of His Excellency, but for the rest, they were at liberty to go home and to thank their stars, if so minded, that their rank exempted them from the operation of the draft. When they got their men to the rendezvous, in fact, their work was done.

The effect of the law thus would be, that in the event of the militia assembling, we should have to seek for officers elsewhere than in the Province. The deficiency could not be supplied from Canadians, for there are not enough men among them qualified to discharge the duties which should be required. Necessarily we should have to look to England, and may be, also, to those European countries, in which we have always been found, willing to fight for any power which will hire their swords. And when both these sources were drained, we should be far short of the complement necessary. The vacuum could only be filled by the employment of undrilled men. Great drill would necessarily be the consequence. Before our militia could be placed in the field ready for active service, months would elapse, during which the brunt of the contest would fall upon the regular troops, aided by the volunteers.

This defect has long been recognised by all. To remedy it, it has been proposed to call out a large portion of the militia each year, and to drill officers and men together. But the proposition has these great defects. If, in order to save expense, the number of days are limited to fourteen or twenty-eight, not only would a enormous expense be incurred, but the time would be insufficient to give the militia more than a smattering of the military art. If, on the other hand, three or six months drill were named, the cost was felt to be too great for the Province to bear. Thus nothing has been done.

In the Bill which last session passed the Legislature, Mr. J. S. Macdonald propounded an original scheme, now about to be put into practice. The militia of the Province was divided into two portions, the "service" and the "non-service." Instead of dismissing the officers of the sedentary force, they have been taken, and are to be re-trained in the service branch. To the "service" branch, that portion which will be first called upon to meet the enemy, should we ever have one, no officers have yet been appointed. To commission a number of gentlemen altogether unacquainted with drill, would be an absurdity it is not proposed again to repeat. Instead thereof it has been determined to open a military school where instruction will be given at the cost of the Province. Those who choose to attend, will, upon passing the requisite examinations, be commissioned to the service militia. We shall thus by degrees obtain a body of officers, who will be soldiers, not only in name, but in reality. They will be qualified not only to muster their men and to march them to their rendezvous, but to drill them when there, and to lead them into the field. One of the chief, we may say the chief, difficulty in the way of organizing the troops and fitting them for service, will by these means be at once overcome. The men themselves may have little knowledge of drill when called out, but with officers thoroughly versed in it, it will take fewer weeks to make soldiers of them than, under the old system, it would have taken months. The title of captain or colonel will not now be one at which a sensible man ought to blush; but an honor, won by knowledge and by merit, of which all who obtain it may be proud.

A general order, for the purpose of making preliminary arrangements for the opening of a military school, has just been issued from headquarters at Quebec. From this circular it appears that two classes of certificates have been decided upon. A "first class" will be given to those candidates for commission, who, after passing an examination before a commandant of the school, shall have proved themselves "able to drill and handle a battalion in the field, and who shall have acquired a competent acquaintance with the internal economy of a battalion." A "second class" will be given to those candidates "who shall have proved themselves able to command a company at battalion drill, and to drill a company at company drill." It is not made incumbent upon any man to gain more knowledge than will enable him to handle a company; but unless he can drill a battalion, he will not be competent to obtain a field officer's commission. No candidate will be allowed to remain in the school for more than three months; for it is justly considered that the person who cannot qualify himself in that time to take both degrees is scarcely possessed of the average amount of brains. Neither is it incumbent upon any man to stay the whole of the three months. If his previous acquaintance with military matters will enable him to do so, he may at once prove his competence and earn his certificates.

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The Duke of Newcastle and the Orange Men.—The Prince Edward Island Legislature having passed an Orange Incorporation Bill, it went home for Her Majesty's sanction, which Her Majesty has been advised not to grant. The Duke of Newcastle, after acknowledging the receipt of the bill, and petitions for and against it, writes: "I deeply regret that the Legislature of Prince Edward Island should have given its sanction to a class of institutions which all experience has shown to be calculated (if not exactly intended) to embitter religious and political differences, one which must be detrimental to the best interests of any colony in which they exist. Holding the views respecting the measure which I have felt it impossible to advise Her Majesty the Queen to signify Her Royal approbation of it, without which, I am glad to observe, it will not take effect." The Act therefore will remain inoperative.

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The Herald.

CARLETON PLACE.
Wednesday, Nov. 18, 1863.

A Speck of war.
It appears, from recent developments which have taken place, that a party of Secessionists, who have found an asylum on the neutral ground of Canada from the dangers of war on the other side, have been lately mischievous against their own country; and devising plans to make the territory of Canada the starting point of an expedition against the States. Nothing could be more futile, insane, or ill-advised than such a scheme; and, yet, it appears, the matter was seriously thought of by some of the unworthy hot-heads who, since the war commenced, have been enjoying the hospitality of Canada. Fortunately the thing has been nipped in the bud, and before it could become the means of complications and misunderstandings between the Canadian and the Washington Governments. And several telegrams and notes have already passed between the proper authorities.

Washington, Nov. 11th—midnight.
To the Mayor of Buffalo:
The British Minister, Lord Lyons, has to-night officially notified the Government that, from telegraphic information received from the Governor General of Canada, there is reason to believe a plot is on foot by persons who have been allowed to remain in the school for more than three months; for it is justly considered that the person who cannot qualify himself in that time to take both degrees is scarcely possessed of the average amount of brains. Neither is it incumbent upon any man to stay the whole of the three months. If his previous acquaintance with military matters will enable him to do so, he may at once prove his competence and earn his certificates.

The pecuniary assistance offered is upon a most liberal scale. For each certificate a gratuity of \$50 is offered, and the actual travelling expenses to and from the school will be paid. Thus, even though a cadet stay the whole three months, and take a certificate in both degrees, he will be paid at the rate of nearly \$8.50 per week, a sum abundantly sufficient to meet all legitimate expenses. But the offer is even more liberal than appears upon this view. Intending candidates are urged by His Excellency to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by the drill instructors now distributed throughout the Province, to perfect themselves in company drill before going to the school. They may do this, and obtain the first week, it may be the first day they present themselves, and another \$50 a month or less afterwards. "No fixed period of attendance is required."

Prophecies that the plan proposed by Mr. J. S. Macdonald would prove an utter failure have been plentifully indulged in by the Opposition. The future, we doubt not, will refute their evil forebodings. The opportunity afforded gentlemen to qualify themselves for the service of the Queen is the best Canada has yet seen, and will be promptly embraced by very many young men who can command the time necessary. It is not any military spirit in the general, but the offer of a good education, and the opportunity to prove the case, we have evidently nothing to hope from the adoption of a compulsory system; for if volunteer officers cannot be found by the plan now about to be put in force, the plain conclusion is, that the ordinary Government would not sustain this, or any other Government, in turning out the militia for a period sufficient to give them an adequate knowledge of drill.

The plan, we think, is well considered, and will meet with the approbation of the public at large. It is another proof—

The Coloured People—United States Commissioners on a Tour of Inquiry.

Some time ago Messrs. Howe, Owen, and McKay, were appointed Commissioners to make a personal examination into the condition of the free coloured population of the United States and Canada, and to report on Washington. Some three weeks ago Mr. Howe and Mr. Verrington, Secretary to the Commission, paid a brief visit to Elgin Settlement, in the Township of Raleigh, in this country, and we are informed that they were highly gratified with what they saw, and went away greatly strengthened in their faith in the capacity of the free coloured man for self-government and the full enjoyment of the rights of citizenship. From Canada the Commissioners proceeded Southward. On the 14th inst., a general meeting of the Board is to be held at Louisville, where it is more than probable that the notes of the several gentlemen comprising the Commission will be compared with the view before the meeting of Congress, of submitting a plan to solve the great important question, "What shall be done with the black man?" The impression of those who have reason to be better informed as to the state of the negro, is to be that a general scheme of emancipation will be recommended, one of indemnifying all loyal slaveholders, and emancipating all others, without compensation.—*Chatham [C. W.] Planet.*

SHEDDY BECOMES AN OBSTACLE.
The Springfield New York Herald says that at supper the grand Russian ball "legionated" into an immense "mus," which went from bad to worse until shoddy at length became so obnoxious that the police appeared to have thought there was a riot. They accordingly went to put it down, and looted men and women indiscriminately out of the way, helped themselves to the wine and shortly became as bad as their betters. Certainly the police became unruly and charged into the supper room, and helped themselves—and they have before this been in the same manner. We have heard that they have ended order to account for it in the riot theory, as it is a matter difficult of explanation in any other way; but it was distinguished from other unmanly demonstrations of the night only as it was the last.

The Richmond Whig, of the 31st ultimo, says:—
"It is useless to mince words; it were folly to remain silent, when we see every day evidences of an approaching bread famine in this city, whilst within the limits of the State, it is believed, there is food enough for all the people for twelve months. The population of Richmond cannot live upon it, and while the majority would be willing, we are sure, to subsist on half rations of bread, there is at present no prospect of obtaining this much during the winter."

A NEW COMET.—A new comet was discovered on the 14th October at Madrid, by M. Tempel. He describes it as telescopic, its position being right ascension 9° 52' 44", and declination 34° 7'. In the course of an hour it increased a little both in right ascension and declination, so that it seems to be moving in a northeasterly direction. About the same time a comet was perceived at Amiens, but does not seem to be the same, since it is described as having a tail of an apparent length of two metres, while M. Tempel's is telescopic, with a mere radiance of a tail.

