

The National Guard.

It is evident that there is a great deal of confusion in the public mind respecting the relation of the national guard to the federal government; a confusion which certainly extends to the daily press and apparently to some officials of high positions both in the state and in the National Government.

Long before Christ, in the Hebrew commonwealth, a militia was organized in the various tribes. The Hebrew nation had no standing army, in its earlier history, but if any tribe was attacked, the militia of any one or all of the other tribes might be called in to service for their common defense.

From England our fathers borrowed this militia idea, as not improbably the English had borrowed it from the Hebrews. The makers of the constitution certainly had to confront the same problem which perplexed the statesmen of Hebrew and of English history.

The Congress shall have power: To provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions.

To provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the states respectively the appointment of officers and the authority of training the militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress.

The reader will observe three important elements in these provisions: 1. Unity of organization and uniformity of tactics are secured by authorizing Congress to determine the nature of the organization, arming and drill.

2. Peril of centralized supremacy is avoided by reserving to the states the right to appoint the officers and the authority to train the militia.

3. And by giving to the federal government authority to call out the militia thus offered only for purposes of defense.

Another provision authorizes congress "to raise and support armies," but only by appropriations lasting for two years. It can therefore carry on an aggressive war only by volunteers or by soldiers hired for the purpose. And no congress can commit the people of the United States to the maintenance of a standing army for more than two years.

Under this provision of the Constitution, congress enacted in 1792 a military law providing money for the purchase of equipments for the militia; the appropriation has since been increased, but we believe is at this date only \$600,000 a year for the entire militia force of the state. It is also authorized the government to call the militia into active service in case of emergency for a term not exceeding nine months. It was under this law that Abraham Lincoln issued his first call for 75,000 volunteers. One other historic fact should be mentioned. In 1824 on the visit of Lafayette to this country, certain of the militia of the state of New York organized themselves into a regiment and took the name of the national guard, a name since adopted by similar military organizations in other states of the union, but persistently refused by Massachusetts, which calls its trained militia "Massachusetts Volunteer Militia."

The word "national" should not be understood as expressing any control by the national government over the state militia.

The present military forces in the United States then are: First, a standing army, paid, organized and officered by the federal government. It now numbers 61,000 men. Second, the organized militia—purely volunteer organizations, as much so as a club or a church; composed of men who are part of the militia, and who have united in regiments, partly for social, partly for military purposes, under officers of their own selection. Third, the militia, an organized body consisting of all men capable of bearing arms in the several states, except certain classes exempt by law. This includes fully four times the strength of the organized militia in men who have received a training and been discharged from militia regiments. This militia which includes the national guard, belongs to the state, not to the nation, and under our present laws, can be called into service by the nation only for a nine months term, only for defensive warfare, and only under their own state officers.

When war was declared against Spain, congress authorized the creation of a volunteer federal army of 125,000 men, under federal officers, for a federal campaign. The president issued a call for volunteers for this army, for a two years' term of service. He had no constitutional right to require the service of the national guard nor of any particular individual of the militia of which these guards are composed; no more right than to require the services of the militia in the membership of the various union league clubs. Nor did he do so. He recommended that members of the national guard who wanted to enlist be given the preference; that is, if more volunteers responded than were wanted, the fact that a volunteer was a member of the national guard was to count in his favor. That was right and wise; for such volunteers should have the advantage of military discipline and training, and could help to impart that discipline and training to others.

But members of the national guard were under no other obligation, legal or moral, to volunteer than such as might be deduced from the fact that they possessed some moderate military qualifications. The fact that a man has pledged himself to serve for nine months under state officers in a defensive war, puts him under no color of obligation to serve for two years under federal officers in an aggressive war. The national guards are trained state militia officered by state appointees, and organized for the defense of the state, though they may be called on by the president to go to the aid of other states, or under certain limitations, the nation in time of peril.

The attempt by certain critics, to convert them by the stroke of a pen into a federal army, under federal officers, for federal service, in an aggressive campaign of invasion, can be attributed only to ignorance of constitutional provisions or to impatience of the limitations which those provisions impose. The attempt to coerce any man to enlist in the federal army for aggressive warfare simply because he has enlisted in the state guard for defensive warfare is both irrational and immoral. They who have been clear-sighted enough to see this and brave enough to resist the attempt are entitled to the thanks of the American people.

Whether our present military system is the best for our future history is a question not here discussed. It certainly is not to be changed by undisciplined popular clamor, without discussion; and considering the long history back of it is not to be changed on the impulse of the moment for the system which has made Europe an armed camp.—The Outlook.

The Italian Crisis

Reports from Italy are so frigidly supervised by the censor that the seriousness of the recent disorders has not been fairly indicated by them. The list of dead and wounded in Milan reads like the roster after a bloody battle. The situation has given the government the greatest alarm; the closing of the universities, the proclamation of martial law, the massing of troops, the killing of hundreds of people, indicate that the country is face to face with a great crisis, and not with a series of bread riots.

The question is often raised of late years as to the outcome of a continual heaping up of public indebtedness. It is likely to be answered in Italy, as it is now being answered in Spain. The country is bankrupt in money, in political character, and in public confidence. The iron of financial oppression has entered into the soul of the people, and it is no exaggeration to say that they are writhing in agony. This is the price which Italy is paying, among other things, for her membership of the Triple Alliance. The wars with Austria in 1859 and 1866 were inevitable, but they laid terrible financial burdens upon Italy. The national debt began to rest heavily upon the productive powers of the people.

The formation of the Triple Alliance into which Italy has entered, brought with it an immense increase of expenditure for military purposes. The army and navy grew apace, and as they grew the burden of supporting them grew also. The expenditures were out of all proportion to the revenue of the country and to its productive power; and the system of taxation by which the extractor was made to meet these heavy burdens was so framed as to add materially to them by placing them on the poorest classes. In the form of indirect taxation Mr. Thomas G. Shearman tells us three-fourths of the financial burden rested upon those classes. They were taxed on every necessary of life, bread and salt and every article of food, clothing and the utensils of industry bore heavy burdens. Whenever any article was carried from place to place it was subjected to a new tax, and readers of the Outlook will remember the outbreaks of violence which the octroi evoked several years ago. The well-to-do, on the other hand,

have been conspicuously exempt from taxation; for although there is a heavy income tax, the rich Italian does not hesitate to avail himself of the corruption of the revenue collectors and evade his just share of the public responsibility. With crushing burdens on their own shoulders, the agricultural laborers, the poor farmers, and the poor classes generally, are maddened by the exemption of the rich from a share in these burdens. The land is in a few hands, and although parts of the country are so rich by nature that three crops a year are the natural yield, a large proportion of the population live on the simplest fruits and Indian corn. Their food is so bad and they are able to obtain it in such insufficient quantities that a new disease has been produced by these conditions. Confidence in the governing classes has disappeared. The speculative fever, which Mr. Marion Crawford has so admirably described in one of his best known novels has eaten into the heart of commercial honesty. Readers of the Outlook have not forgotten its recent report of the results of the prosecution of Signor Crispi for corrupt relations with a well known bank. The ex-premier, the ablest man in Italian public life, was compelled to plead that he had used the money for public purposes.

It is not surprising that in these conditions anarchism and destructive socialism find a ripe soil and have grown rank and savage. Milan, which has been the principal scene of the recent struggle is one of the richest cities in Italy; it has been the seat at the same time of one of the bitterest agitations which the anarchists have yet carried on in Europe. The newspapers which have conducted this agitation, have attacked the wealthier classes with a violence almost without a parallel. Hand in hand with the anarchist now appears the priest, for there is no doubt that the unnatural coalition between the extreme conservatives and the extreme radicals in Italy has for its object, not a reform of the conditions of political and social life in Italy, but the destruction of the present order. The hatred of united Italy by a certain party in the Roman church has been tireless in its endeavor, by intrigue, scheme, and alliance, to overthrow the kingdom. This party has taken advantage of the present disorder to strike hands with anarchists and socialists, and to set in motion a violent agitation in all parts of the country. Many meetings have been held, at which speeches denouncing the upper classes were made; news papers flamed with tirades against the existing social order; priests in many places made their pulpits platforms for harangues against the rich; and there have been many indications of a concerted effort to overthrow the government.

It will be seen, therefore, that the situation in Italy is a very serious one. What makes it more serious is the fact that there does not seem to be any power of moral recuperation left. The history of many centuries shows what Italy might expect if she went back again under the rule of the Roman Catholic hierarchy; certainly she could hope for nothing in the hands of the anarchist. Yet it is hard to believe that a state which has furnished a Cavour and a Garibaldi within the half century has not in it, latent, some powers of recuperation.—The Outlook.

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