

A Word in Season on an Important Subject.

To the Editor of the New-York Times:

The only way in which our country can be saved is by the removal of inefficient, and the appointment of efficient men to positions of responsibility. This process will go on with rapidity proportionate to the public outcry and demand, expressed through the free Press. Let every man do what he can to hasten and facilitate it, by ruthlessly exposing every appearance of bad management, incompetency and inefficiency.

As I go to and from my business I have, for a month past, been passing the rendezvous of the Seventh Regiment Volunteers. The first time I saw a battalion of this regiment marching together I was much struck with their appearance. I had seen no troops before, and I have seen none since, in which there was the same indescribable aspect of discipline. The men were not in uniform, but very poorly dressed,—in many cases with flip-flap shoes. The business-like air with which they marched rapidly through the deep mud of the Third-avenue was the more remarkable. My curiosity was sufficiently excited to visit them at their quarters, and I gained this information:

That the regiment was the first formed regiment of volunteers in the State; that, with one or two exceptions, every officer in the regiment (twenty-five at least) had been officers of European armies, in which their rank had been considerably higher than that they now held. A Captain had been an Austrian Lieutenant-Colonel, a Lieutenant had been a British Captain, and so on. And in the ranks, six out of eight of the men had seen service and been under fire, not a few of them as officers.

I visited the quarters of the regiment again to-day, and what was my surprise to find that it was not yet half uniformed, and was entirely unarmed. I was told that the uniforms were made by contract in the city for the regiment, but that after being made they were sent to Albany for inspection, after going through which ceremony, they were, in process of time, returned to some officer in New-York, and finally, within a few days, came to the regimental officers. On the cases being opened, they were found to be without buttons. Buttons having been procured and sewed on, the clothing was found to be still quite unfit for use, and twenty tailors found in the regiment were set to work ripping, recutting and remaking it.

I only learned this in answer to inquiries. There seems the best spirit in the Regiment. It is considered one of the hardships of war to be expected, after a long period of peace, that the patience of soldiers should be severely tried by the ignorance and incompetence of place-keepers.

But this sort of thing must not go on. Whatever discipline requires of soldiers, the public must make it known that contractors and officials are not safe who are responsible for abuses of this kind. Speaking of contractors, who will own to having made the clothing of the Scott Life Guard? It is no clothing; it is an assortment of bags which a convict chain-gang might rebel against wearing. Who accepts such clothing, or apology for clothing, in behalf of the State or the nation—in behalf of the people and tax-payers? Whoever it is, they will have an account to settle one of these days, which will not be forgotten because an emergency at present demands haste. The emergency neither demands nor will it excuse incompetency, inefficiency and neglect of duty. Those who fight our battles must expect to bear much privation, but woe to those who deprive them needlessly of that which is necessary to their health, strength and spirit.

I am told that there are large quantities of arms in the arsenals of the city, not in use. Is this so? Why has this Seventh Volunteer Regiment been obliged to lose a month, in drilling its men in the new Hardee's manual for want of arms? The only arms they have as yet are a few old muskets bought by the officers themselves. The men have not yet been supplied with shoes, and still march flip-flop. Why? Whose business is all this, and why is it neglected or so carelessly attended to?

I am a layman, ignorant in such matters, and may have been misinformed. If so, I wish you could set me right, for I do but give voice to what is very generally thought, and kept quiet, from, as I think, a mistaken view of proper policy at such a time as this.

Is not the enormous business done just now, by the State, in contracts for army supplies, kept a little too shady? At all events, where contractors are doing their work in a spirit accordant with the public spirit of the time, let us know them, and hail them as our best benefactors, and as to those that cheat us now, let us not let them off, as we usually do.

HOME GUARD.