

take place at some stated place in each township, to which every member should be compelled to repair on certain days, named by the Inspector himself. The object of this inspection would, of course, be to see that the rifles were kept in a proper condition. Should any member of a club present his weapon in a state calculated to prove prejudicial to its efficiency, a fine should be imposed, the amount of such fine depending on the degree of injury sustained by the weapon; for a second offence, it might be so ordered that he should forfeit it altogether.

2. It would be his duty to show the captains of the different clubs how the rifles are to be properly cleaned and kept clean, and, generally, how to keep them in an efficient condition. Upon the captains would devolve the duty of conveying the information thus obtained to the individual members of their respective clubs.

3. It would be his duty to instruct the captains in the general principles of rifle practice—expound to them the laws which must be observed to insure good shooting—acquaint them with the different methods of firing, and give them all such information on the subject as might, when imparted to the men, be of service to them on the field.

4. It would be his duty to visit every school section that had organized a club, and select a proper spot for practicing, and mark the different distances at which the shooting should take place.

5. It would be his duty to instruct the captains of the different clubs in digging rifle pits, constructing barricades of fences and of such materials, which are ever at hand in a wooded country; and generally in all such matters and things as might prove of advantage to them if suddenly called out on outpost duty.

6. It would be his duty, as far as in his power, to be present at and superintend the more general practicing in the different sections.

7. And, finally, it would be his duty to attend on all field days, when there were competitions for prizes, and act as general manager and umpire on those occasions.

This, then gentlemen is, in a few plain words, a brief general outline of the scheme which I came here to-night to propose. I am aware it is imperfect and open to many objections, still I cannot but flatter myself that it possesses elements which, if wrought out and adopted, would prove of essential service to the country in the event of war.

It will be seen that it could in no wise interfere with the present volunteer movement. On the contrary, it would rather give an impetus to that movement, by rendering the people familiar with the use of arms, and thus, to a certain extent, inspiring them with a martial spirit. Men who have made themselves proficient in the use of any weapon are ever prone to seek those positions where such proficiency is more likely to be called into requisition. It would indeed be fatal to the scheme if in anyway it would tend to damp that laudable ardor which now impels many of our young men to join Volunteer Companies, and subject themselves to all the laborious minutiae of drill, and stand ready at the call of duty to sacrifice their interests and imperil their lives for the safety of their country. This ardor we must stimulate by every means which lies in our power, for we cannot over estimate the value of the thoroughly trained, disciplined soldier. On the other hand, if the services which he is capable of rendering cannot be over-rated, I think it is very easy to under-rate those which, on an emergency, might be rendered by men who had simply made themselves proficient in the use of the rifle. Moreover, if our Volunteer Companies are to be effective this proficiency must be attained by the individuals of those companies. Men may spend half a life-time in drilling and in performing evolutions on the field, still if they cannot handle the rifle skillfully, cannot send with something like the certainty of fate the bullet on its deadly mission, they will cut but a sorry figure even before a ragged Fenian rabble, who have acquired this art. We have had one example of this already, and I trust in God that it will be the last.—The disasters which attended the late skirmish at Ridgeway resulted, I verily believe, neither from incompetency of the officers, nor from want of pluck in the men, but simply from a consciousness on the part of most of them, that they did not know how to handle effectively the weapon they had in their hands. On the investigation of their commander's conduct on that occasion, it came out in evidence that numbers of those engaged had never before fired anything but blank cartridge, while others had not even so much as snapped a cap! Under such circumstances what could be expected but want of confidence, wavering, and ultimately confusion and retreat. Depend upon it, gentlemen, had the men, by previous practice been