

they thought a discovery had been made which would give them greater power over their enemies ; they were unacquainted with its real nature, and never for a moment dreamt to what it would lead. But we have no such excuse. The experience of five hundred years has shown us that those masses, which were once kept in ignorance and serfdom by the help of the buckler and battle-axe, have been able to emancipate themselves by means of the fire-arm. And if the first introduction of gunpowder was the cause of the destruction of the feudal system,—if it has assisted to overthrow, throughout the world, the prejudices and superstitions of ages,—and if it has enabled Great Britain to spread civilization over the most distant portions of the Globe,—surely, while wondering at the extraordinary power which science has evoked from so simple a matter, we ought to endeavor to bring it to a higher state of perfection,—not forgetting, however, that it should be used but in self-defence, and even then reluctantly ; for the greater our power, the greater should be our forbearance.

We must arm our militia with the very best military rifle, and never allow the weapon in their hands to become inferior to that of other States. If anything, however, is to be made of this force, it will be necessary to begin immediately. We should not rest until there is in the possession of every male Canadian capable of bearing arms, one rifle with sett of accoutrements.

But even supposing that a sufficient number of rifles did exist in the country, there is at present a very large proportion of our countrymen who have not the smallest idea how to use them. Unless rifle shooting becomes a permanent institution, unless it is fostered with care and kept continually in exercise, it will certainly prove a delusion ; but, if properly managed, it would in a few years deter any one from attempting the invasion of this country. Either we are very much mistaken in our estimate of ourselves, or we are equal man for man to our neighbours across the line of 45°. At present we are an unarmed, and, for military purposes, an utterly unorganized people. Organization we can