

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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## Comment and Criticism.

A meeting of the citizens of Ottawa was held last night in the City Hall for the purpose of taking steps to have a suitable monument erected over the graves of Osgood and Rogers, who fell at Cut Knife Hill last year. The meeting though small was representative, and thorough unanimity of sentiment prevailed. It was conceded that a handsome monument was desirable and that it was the duty of the citizens to show their appreciation of the loyalty of the volunteers of 1885 by every means in their power, and so encourage a similar spirit of self sacrifice on any similar occasion, should such unfortunately arise in the future. A considerable sum was subscribed on the spot, and an influential committee named to collect subscriptions, so that the erection of a suitable memorial is now only a question of a few months.

ONCE more the Martini-Enfield rifle receives a categorical condemnation; this time from two authorities whom the Government surely will not feel justified in ignoring. From the clearness with which Mr. Lowe presents his case it can easily be discerned by shots, even though they may not have seen the new rifle, that it is not so perfect an arm as it might easily be made, and we hope that for once the war office will be guided by public opinion, and lengthen the stock and increase the bend in it, if they make no other improvement. A work just published in the

United States on wing shooting with a rifle insists that the matter of prime importance is to have the stock so made that the sights will be aligned with the eye by the mere act of throwing the rifle into the shoulder, and the same should hold good with a military rifle; for all hurried shooting is done at short ranges, and as Sir Samuel Baker points out it is impossible to shoot hurriedly with a Martini without shooting high. We believe no man could make such scores with a government Martini at 200 yards as were made at Creedmoor with the American government arms.

WE reproduce to-day the record of the Creedmoor fall meeting, and a consideration of the returns shows a state of affairs very different from anything existing either in Canada or England. First we find magnificent scores made, then we find a very limited number of competitors. As to the scoring, its excellence can be attributed to the perfection of the arms employed, the encouragement given to practice, particularly at 200 yards, by the many clubs, and the fact that in most cases unlimited entries were allowed, but even in the face of all this, the performances of Rabbeth and Klein in making three possibles each at 500 yards in the Governor's match must stagger any Snider marksman. Why the attendance should be so small is somewhat of a puzzle. Is it that the great body of shots is afraid of the few cracks whose names occur again and again at the top of the lists? is it that the government does not sufficiently encourage rifle shooting, like some other governments we know of? or is it that a man must be of independent means to keep up with the times in the matter of firearms? If the Dominion, with her four millions of inhabitants can muster 350 shots to her annual meeting, attracting militiamen alike from the shores of the Atlantic, the Great Lakes and the Pacific, our great republican neighbor should be able to gather together ten times that number for her more important meeting.

LOOKING at the Creedmoor meeting from a military point of view it seems to us that something should be done to make it more representative, and to secure a much larger attendance, and with all the humility befitting the views of a rank outsider we would suggest that the first steps necessary to insure this result would be to exclude from the meeting all special rifles as well as most of the continuous matches, and in many ways to more closely imitate the Wimbledon programme. Of course the objection will at once be raised that if this is done improvements in rifle making will no longer be encouraged. Quite true, but a national military meeting is not the best place to test improvements, while it is emphatically the place to discover what can be done with the weapons put into the hands of the national troops. Make these the standard weapons, without any handicaps, give the National Guard every possible facility to practise with them throughout the year, spread your prize list sufficiently to ensure a fair proportion of the prizes going to encourage the less experienced shots, and then look for an attendance of some thousands at your Creedmoor meetings.