

Mars," suited to the purposes of a national military training ground and shooting ranges. He concluded by moving the adoption of the report, which was taken as read. The motion was seconded by Sir Henry Fletcher, Vice-Chairman of the council.

Captain BARNETT (22nd Middlesex R.V.) expressed the opinion that it would be necessary to increase the attractiveness of the meetings of the association. The new recruit prizes were admirable, but he thought the council should go further, and appeal to a larger constituency. He advocated the opening of the present "Volunteer competitions" to the members of all Her Majesty's armed forces. The proposal had been negatived formerly on account of the want of accommodation at Wimbledon, but this objection would not now hold good, and he was quite sure that the Volunteers would welcome their comrades of the regular services as competitors with them for the Queen's and other similar prizes.

Quartermaster GRATWICKE, who was received with applause, said he was sure all would feel grateful to the council for the devotion with which they had applied themselves to the interests of the association in connection with the change from its old home at Wimbledon to its new home at Bisley. As greater accommodation would be at their disposal, it seemed to him that the time had arrived when the council might make the meeting more attractive and less expensive, because less lengthy, to the great body of the competitors. Careful examination should be made of the various competitions, and those which did not pay should be dealt with accordingly. The match-rifle contests, in which a purely fancy weapon was employed, had long entailed an annual loss on the association. Instead of contributing, as did the general contributions, a large surplus to the fund of the association, these small-bore competitions always showed a balance on the wrong side. He did not think this condition of things should be continued. The match-rifle was rapidly becoming the relic of a bygone age, and should be laid up as a curiosity for the admiration of future generations. His first suggestion would be the relegation of the match-rifle to the second week of the meeting, and the greater encouragement during the first week of shooting with the Martini-Henry at 700 and 800 yards. The small-bore riflemen were few in number—about 70—and occasionally, when watching their performances, he had been reminded of the "old man of the sea," who had brought down to the present time the weaknesses of his youth, crystallized with the crotchets of advancing age. The match-rifle shootists no doubt used a fearful and a wonderful gun. The appendages were so numerous that an attendant must be employed to bring them to the firing point. When the match-rifle had had attached to it a multitude of devices, and when the owner was finally ready to place the cartridge in his weapon, yet then a variety of performances had to be gone through, and an enormous amount of time devoted to winding up the gun for business, the result not unfrequently being that a wind allowance was screwed on from the right when the performer intended it should be from the left; or, if other things were satisfactorily arranged, the shot was, perhaps, sent into target No 6, when in reality it should have gone to No. 1 or No. 12, a long distance away. He did not think this merely pretty play should be continued at a loss to the association. His second suggestion would be the abolition of the bi-diurnal competitions, which were now open throughout the whole meeting, and their replacement by competitions which should be opened and closed on the same day, and which should be shot at the same distance as that at which the great general competition of the day was being fired. Such daily competitions for £50 worth of prizes at a 5s. entrance fee, would command popularity, and give much greater satisfaction to the competitors, and greater profit to the association than now resulted from the present bi-diurnals, which simply provided prizes for the man with the longest pocket, who could make the greatest number of entries. The third proposal would be the inclusion of all the Grand Aggregate and general Volunteer competitions, including the final stage of the Queen's, and the great Volunteer team contests in the first week of the meeting. He thought this proposition would commend itself to all. It must be remembered that with the majority of volunteers their time was not their own, and to many time meant money. The only other point to which he wished to allude was the proposal to admit veterans who had attained the age of 50, and who had served 21 years in the force. He strongly supported this proposal. If the veterans could hold their own against the younger men so much the more would it be to their honour, and there was not a single effective volunteer who would grudge the veteran all the distinction his courage and pluck might bring him.

Mr. C. F. LOWE (Queen's Westminster) was rejoiced to find that the chairman, from what he had said about the "back position," agreed that the true policy of the association should be to lead military opinion and not to follow it. He found that paper targets would not do with the new rifle. The bullet hole made was so small that it might be often unperceived by the marker. He would, therefore, draw the serious attention of the council to the desirability of reverting to the use of iron

targets as Bisley. After some remarks in favour of the permission to use orthoptics, which, he said, did not really differ from spectacles, he went on to say that he could not agree with Mr. Gratwicke in wishing to see the match rifle disused at the N. R. A. meetings. It had done good service in the past; and the science and skill brought to bear upon it had resulted in the production of the new military rifle, and he thought they all owed a debt of gratitude to those who had brought the match rifle and its use to such perfection. Of course the competitor it should be so arranged as not to involve pecuniary loss to the association; but subject to this, he would be glad to see room made at Bisley for all kinds of rifles and revolvers, and he hoped that no narrow or "parochial" view would ever be taken of the functions of the association.

Sir HENRY HALFORD said that the orthoptic sight was not convenient for military use, because the shooter, when looking through it, could see nothing but the mark he aimed at.

Sergeant FULTON, G.M. (Queen's Westminster), went at some length into the defence of the use of orthoptics as adjuncts to military rifles. He said that it was a mistake to suppose that these sights were chiefly used by elderly men. On the contrary, they were used mainly by young men with long sight, who found that the back sight was always "blurred," and who were, from the very fact of their having long sight, the most useful soldiers. If the orthoptics were used in the form of spectacles, the left eye should never be blocked up, as was sometimes done. The shooter soon learned to take aim with both eyes open, and even if he did not, he (Sergt. Fulton) had proved by actual experiment that, looking through an orthoptic sight of the ordinary size of aperture, he could command a front of vision of about 30 or 35 yards when aiming at 200 yards, and of about 100 yards when aiming at 600 yards. And the orthoptic sight, if used in the form of an eye-glass fixed to the cap, could be adjusted with the greatest rapidity, and was most useful in field-firing. In fact there was much more to be said for orthoptics from the military point of view than for verniers, barrel-coolers, &c., which were now permitted, and the use of which, indeed he should be sorry to see prohibited.

Major BIRD (South Middlesex) said that the second week in July, in which the N.R.A. meetings were held, was a very inconvenient time for many business men in London, and asked whether the date could not be changed to the third or fourth week, or better still, to the first week in July.

Sir H. HALFORD proposed, and Colonel Burt seconded the re-election of H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge as President of the association. The motion having been carried, Lord WEMYSS moved the re-election of the Vice-Presidents and the confirmation of the election which had been made by the council of Col. Stanley Bird and Capt. E. St. John Mildmay. In doing so he paid a high tribute to Capt. Mildmay for the very great services he had rendered to the association as its Secretary for thirty years. No man could have worked harder or more indefatigably than he (Capt. Mildmay) had done, and it should be remembered that the selection of Wimbledon Common as the site of the meetings had been entirely due to him. Capt. Mellish (4th V.B. Sherwood Foresters) proposed, and Col. Despard (3rd V.B. Royal West Kent) seconded the re-election of the nine out-going members of council, viz., Brigadier General the Right Hon. J. H. A. Macdonald, Col. Marsden, Col. Viscount Bury, Brig-Gen. Lord Wantage, Col. Wilson, Col. Sir. M. M'Murdo, the Earl of Lathom, Major-Gen. Philip Smith, and Major Earl Waldegrave, and the confirmation of the election by the council of Lieut.-Gen. Sir Evelyn Wood and Mr. J. A. Doyle. Colonel Haddan (4th V.B. Royal West Surrey) proposed the re-election of Mr. John Gane as auditor of the association.

The following petition was laid on the table and was signed after the meeting by most, if not all, of the members present:—

*"To the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of London:* The members of the National Rifle Association, in view of the great expense connected with the preparation of their new ground, beg leave respectfully to petition your Lordship to preside at a public meeting to provide funds for efficiently carrying out the objects of the association, viz: 'To give permanence to Volunteer corps and to encourage rifle shooting throughout the Queen's Dominions.'

That the Right Honourable J. H. A. Macdonald, Colonel commandant of the Queen's Edinburgh Rifles, Brigadier of the Fourth Volunteer Infantry Brigade, and Lord Justice Clerk of Scotland, is a many-sided man is pretty well known. He now, however, appears in a character altogether outside the spheres of either his military or judicial attributes. The high compliment has been paid to his polyhedral capabilities by the International Rugby Football Board, of appointing him arbitrator in the dispute in connection with the game, recently stirring to its deepest depths the hearts and souls of its votaries in the United Kingdom.