

of the militia with the best rifle, the best field guns and the best equipment in the market, and he will not only earn the lasting gratitude and confidence of the militia, the very *elite* of Canadian citizenship, but he will at some future time, if he does not now, receive the grateful thanks of the whole country.

What kind of a defensible position would Canada have found herself in if that Anglo-French war cloud the other day had developed into actual hostilities? Thoughtful Canadians are beginning to admit that Canada is liable to rely too much on the strong arm which is behind the Dominion and her sister colonies.

Perhaps the most satisfactory feature of the very long speech delivered by the retiring Minister of Militia at the Montreal banquet the other evening was the evidence adduced that at last the members of the government have been hit in a vulnerable spot by the few writers in the press who criticize the government's militia policy. For years the militia has been scurvily treated by the government, and portions of the press has not been slow to keep the public informed of the fact. But somehow or another the criticisms appeared to have about as much effect upon the government as a Snider bullet would have upon the armor of an ironclad. Latterly the press has kept on pegging away in a more systematic and persistent manner, and the *Military Gazette* flatters itself that it has not been backward in the campaign. Well, this had had its effect, and to judge from Mr. Patterson's not too polite remarks concerning the press, the government at last realizes that some attention has to be paid to the critics of its militia policy. The honorable gentleman's remark about his being as impervious to criticism as the hide of a rhinoceros to the sting of a mosquito, was not graceful, and very decidedly unstatesmanlike, but was most satisfactory to the well wishers of the force as showing that the shafts of the critics of the government's militia policy had struck home. If the remaining members of the government feel as badly over the exposures of the bungles of the militia department as the retiring minister

does, we shall soon see something in the way of militia reform. So far so good.

But Mr. Patterson makes a great mistake when he takes the criticisms of the press to heart personally. The force, and critics of the government's militia policy outside of the force, recognized in Mr. Patterson a minister anxious to do his best, and who did it so far as his light went. The press knows perfectly well that the Minister of Militia has to contend with a great deal, and believes that Mr. Patterson contended with opposition manfully. As soon as the other members of the government, and also the members of parliament, become as susceptible to criticism on this point as Mr. Patterson clearly is, we may expect a minister with Mr. Patterson's good intentions to accomplish something worth talking about in the way of improving the militia. But in the meantime, does not the Minister of Militia personally assume the responsibility for the efficiency of the force? Of course he does, and we hope that Mr. Patterson's successor will bear this in mind.

Mr. Patterson's inference that the outbreak of the Northwest Rebellion found the country prepared to suppress it, and his statement that but for this preparedness the campaign might have cost \$12,000,000 instead of \$6,000,000, must have caused a full grown smile to develop on the faces of all who had any practical knowledge of the facts of the case. The very idea of a minister of militia, or anybody else, presuming to declare, even in an after dinner speech, that the force was ready for the campaign of 1885! The men and officers were ready; they always are and always will be, but they were as badly armed as any Chinese levies, as faultily equipped, and without any transport, hospital service or commissariat. Some regiments called out had not a single uniform issued. There was not one properly shod or properly clothed corps sent to the front. The ammunition was bad and the accoutrements so rotten that most of the rounds, and nearly all of the equipment, that the men should have carried had to be transported in teams. When the force returned to Winnipeg, after its

five months' campaign, the uniforms were a combination of rags and sackcloth patches. The Japanese army in China has never faced a more disgracefully equipped force. As to the expense connected with the expedition it could have been kept down at least fifty per cent. had the militia been properly organized and equipped. And the worst of it is that neither organization nor equipment have been improved since 1885.

The only really important utterance in the ex-minister's speech was his statement that the government had decided not to arm the militia with the Martini-Metford. Mr. Patterson's remark that he had not carried out the purchase of Martini-Metfords because he found that the consensus of opinion among the militiamen of Canada was unfavorable to that weapon, is another acceptable indication of the changed state of mind in the government with regard to militia affairs. But why Mr. Patterson's indignation at the protests of the force against the proposed re-armament? If the purchase of the Martini-Metford had not been fully determined upon, why did General Herbert say that it had, and why was his statement allowed to go unchallenged for so long? It does not require an abnormal amount of intelligence to see that the government was only saved from committing the biggest militia bungle on record by the outspoken protests of the very writers of the press whom Mr. Patterson ungratefully designates as "yelping curs." Meantime, the whole question of re-armament goes back to where it was two years ago, and the militia critics are left to congratulate themselves upon their good work and to contemplate the mysteries of ministerial ingratitude and ministerial surrender.

The last E. O. contains the appointment of Lieut.-Col. Turnbull to be "Inspector of Cavalry," in addition to his present duties. As this officer has been on leave for some twelve months, and as there are no instructions issued defining the duty of an "Inspector of Cavalry," it is not likely that he will die from overwork.

A number of officers have been appointed "Deputy Surgeons Gen-