

## ATHLETIC

## Sports and Pastimes

I have been much surprised to learn that exception has been taken to the introduction of a department in the CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE devoted to the interests of sports and pastimes. It is encouraging, however, to find that this opinion is not held by all interested in our force, and the kind letter received by the Editor from one of the best posted and most competent judges of the condition and requirements of our force is most opportune.

It would, however, be a great satisfaction to receive a more general expression of opinion from the readers of the GAZETTE as to their opinion of the utility or otherwise of this addition to its repertoire, and I would earnestly ask from everyone who may read this column a free and candid expression of his opinion as to the advisability of continuing it in connection with the GAZETTE.

My idea is, that as long as two-thirds of the force is only called upon to drill every second or third year, and then only instructed for a space of time barely sufficient to ground them in the merest rudiments of drill and duties, it is out of the question to expect to be able to interest them in matters of general military concern or in the permanent improvement of themselves as soldiers, and it is very desirable if not necessary that some bond of union should be found which may be the means of drawing them together more than their duties call for.

Last week my columns were principally devoted to the consideration of amusements which at this season of the year are usually considered dead issues, but which this year were forced upon my attention by the unusually unkind behaviour of Jack Frost, who was acting in a most reprehensible manner throughout the Dominion. It is a matter worthy of record that up to 1st January, 1892, neither in Montreal, Quebec, Ottawa, or the Maritime Provinces (some parts of which expect good winter weather by Christmas) could curlers, skaters, snowshoers or tobogganers indulge in any of their cherished sports.

A very sudden change, however, set in early in the new year, and it had not advanced far before all our winter sports were in full swing, and we may now with tolerable certainty count upon three months of good healthy enjoyment.

The advent of cold weather must have been a great relief to many an anxious mind in Toronto, where preparations were being made for the international bonspiel with curlers from the United States. It

does not require much ice on the wooden floors of the Toronto rinks to make good curling, and in a very short time everything was in readiness for the interesting event, which passed off in the usual successful manner in which affairs handled by that well managed organization, the Ontario Branch Royal Caledonian Curling Club, are accustomed to proceed. It was unfortunate, however, that the representation from our American cousins was not stronger in numbers.

The season for hockey can hardly be said to have commenced, and yet one of the most interesting events for hockey players which has occurred for four years past has already taken place. The championship of Canada, which it has appeared to be almost an impossibility to take from the Montreal Amateur Athletic Club, has been won by the Ottawa Amateur Athletic Club.

Such an accomplishment reflects no little credit upon the Senators, and it does not seem at all improbable that after having been able to beat the strongest team in Canada on their own ice, they may be able to hold the coveted title when meeting opponents at the Capital.

I understand that the members of the O.A.A.A. Hockey Club were the strongest adherents of the challenge system being maintained by the league, instead of adopting a schedule. They have very soon reaped the reward of their efforts, and unless the result of this match is to warrant us in assuming them to have been possessed of the wisdom of the serpent, they must certainly be credited with having had very great luck.

I have seen announcements lately by gun clubs in Toronto of two large live pigeon shoots, and records of the number of birds killed run up into the hundreds.

I do not think I can fairly be accused of being old womanish, and I have never yet felt any qualms of conscience about killing bird or beast in a fair sporting manner. I do most thoroughly detest, however, what cannot be designated anything else than downright butchery, and I cannot conceive how anyone can call it sport to shoot a pigeon from a trap. There is as much sport about it as there is about Armour's butcher shooting the steers for the slaughter house, as he walks along above the pens in which they are enclosed, and delivers his snow into their foreheads as they look up at him.

I could understand how excuses might be made for the destruction of these poor helpless little birds before the introduction of clay pigeons, but these have now been brought to such a state of perfection that it is the merest hypocrisy to try to pretend they will not answer all the necessities of the case.

The strongest gun club in the Dominion satisfies itself with the clay, and does not find the work of its members suffer.

Surely then clubs of lighter calibre might be contented with what is good enough for the best.

## CURLING.

I stated a short time ago that I was informed curling interests were at a very low ebb in the Maritime Provinces, owing to the business depression. I have since been told that any apparent depression is confined to Nova Scotia, as in New Brunswick the game flourishes as of yore.

It is also said that the reason for this decrease in the votaries of the game is not so much business depression, as the fact that the older members of clubs do not encourage younger blood to take an interest in the amusement.

I am informed that it is owing to this mistaken line of action that the Halifax Curling Club property was advertised for sale for overdue taxes. Young men were not encouraged to join, and the club fell into the hands of fossils. Result—ary rot.

The first curling match of the season took place at the Fredericton, N.B., Curling Rink on New Year's Day—morning and afternoon—when the President vs. Vice-President match was played, four rinks a side, resulting in a win for the President by 11 shots.

The sides were:

PRESIDENT'S.		VICE-PRESIDENT'S.	
	Points.		Points.
E. H. Allen, skip	5	T. G. Loggie, skip	10
A. F. Street,	14	J. S. Neill,	8
R. S. Barker,	15	J. A. MacPherson,	6
H. C. Ruiter,	11	J. H. Hawthorn,	10
	45		34

In St. John, the members of the St. Andrew's Curling Club were unfortunate enough not to have ice suitable for playing on New Year's Day. Their rivals, the Thistles, however, were in better luck, and the annual match, President vs. Vice-President, took place, 5 rinks a side, resulting in a decided win for the Vice-President.

PRESIDENT.		VICE-PRESIDENT.	
	Points.		Points.
H. Duffell, Jr., skip	4	S. W. Milligan, skip	24
Jno. H. Thompson,	14	A. Malcolm,	17
Jas. Kennedy,	17	Jas. Malcolm,	11
I. Knox,	15	R. A. Courtney,	22
W. O. Raymond,	7	D. R. Willett,	28
	57		103

I am glad to see the Thistle Curling Club, of Carillon, organized again, and trust they may have a most successful season.

They played their first match of the