

The military members have been prominent in both "houses" of Parliament this session. In the Senate, the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne was moved by Major Boulton; and in the Commons a military member, Lieut.-Col. Prior, was seconder. Though these gentlemen did not mention the fact, the speech was a disappointment in military circles, in that it contained not one word concerning a pension bill, nor the likewise expected establishment of militia in the North-West. But the Minister may be keeping these back for a pleasant surprise. Strength is added to this belief from the fact that his bill of last session relating to calling out in aid of the civil power, and which was withdrawn because time did not permit of its passage, is not referred to in the speech, while the natural assumption is that it will be re-introduced.

For the benefit of those who declaim against officers participating in rifle competitions we quote this paragraph from the *Volunteer Record*: "When distributing the prizes won at the Edinburgh New Year's Day Wappenschaw, Colonel Menzies, of the Queen's Brigade, dwelt on the importance of volunteer officers learning the art of rifle shooting. They only needed to know, he said, the pleasures of the art, to take a lively interest in it. He thought if they had more shooting officers they would have more shooting sergeants, and if they had more shooting sergeants they would have more shooting members in the ranks. In reference to the idiotic parrot cry that shooting men do not attend drill, Colonel Menzies said he had all along combatted that idea, and moreover asserted that he considered the shooting men in the Queen's Brigade were its back-bone. By Colonel Menzies' last remark, we are reminded of the assertion of a thirty years volunteer, lately retired—which by the way we heartily endorse—that volunteers are the *elite* of men, and shooting men the *elite* of volunteers."

Other considerations should no doubt enter into the calculation, but speaking purely in the interests of rifle shooting, it would be a good thing were the Creedmoor team suggestion made by our correspondent "Buckshot," put into effect. There would certainly be very eager competition for the honour of a place on such a team, and a strong all Canadian combination could be got up. The difficulty about shooting a match with United States marksmen would be that their methods and weapons are so different to ours, their sighting and wind gauging appliances for instance being such as to give them many points the advantage. This superiority arises from the fact that in the United States the riflemen eagerly adopt any new thing that promises to make greater the possibilities for accurate shooting; whilst in Canada we adhere to the English idea of giving a soldier a plain rifle and making him accommodate himself to it. In peace, he does this by the aid of an extensive kit. In war, he will have to do the best he can without his kit. The American rifleman's paraphernalia is permanently attached to his rifle, which fact enables him to make this boast, which we see in the last number of the *Chicago Guardsman*: "The appendages considered necessary by an American rifleman cost sixty-six cents; the shooting kit of the representative of the other nationality costs from \$29.17 to \$39.87." The latter figures the *Guardsman* takes from the advertisement, appearing in the MILITIA GAZETTE, of a dealer who of course makes the shooting man's ideal kit as complete as possible, with the idea of profit on the sales. But dismissing the above comparison as absurd, our riflemen with their sight protectors, barrel cleaners, barrel coolers, paints, sight elevators, etc., will envy their American cousins, who according to the *Guardsman* have only to add to their rifle and cartridge belt and ammunition, an outfit purchased for sixty-six cents and made up of a headless shell extractor, a wooden wiping rod, bit of rag with which to wipe the bore, a screw driver and a score book.

## Correspondence.

[This paper does not necessarily share the views expressed in correspondence published in its columns, the use of which is freely granted to writers on topics of interest to the Militia.]

### THE PROPOSED TEAM FOR CREEDMOOR—THE D.R.A. MEETING TIME.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE,—I notice that there is to be a great competition at Creedmoor about the first week in September. If not mistaken I think the meeting there will be during the same week that our Dominion matches are held. I think also that as a valuable trophy will be shot for on the national range of our American cousins, it would be a grand idea to send a team down to try conclusions with them for the prize. I feel certain that there would be no difficulty in getting twelve of our best Martini shots to volunteer, or some arrangement might be arrived at by which the team could win their place during the D.R.A. meeting, provided that the authorities arrange to have the Dominion matches held a week earlier than usual, and this is the reason that I write now. The meeting for fixing date of matches is held in Ottawa early in February, and it is to be hoped that this question will come before them then. There are other reasons why the Dominion rifle meeting should be held earlier, chief among them being that the weather in unreliable Ontario is liable to sudden changes, which is both uncomfortable for the body and bad for scores (except such as "Old School" desires). It is also a little late for business men and young fellows who shoot during their annual holidays. It is also too late for competitors from a long distance. I have not the least doubt that the council of the D.R.A. do their very best for the greatest number when they know what the "very best" is, but unless someone writes or speaks about these things "the very best" for the greatest number becomes the very best for the few. I trust these few ideas may open the way to a fuller discussion on the question, and that we may be enabled to send a first class team to Creedmoor next September.

BUCKSHOT.

Winnipeg, 21st January, 1890.

### The Selection of the "Wimbledon" Team.

EDITOR MILITIA GAZETTE,—I do not suppose that anyone will contend that the present mode of selecting the Wimbledon team (I still use the word "Wimbledor," as, so far, there has been no substitute for it, in speaking of our team, though the place itself shall know us no more) is one that will give the best results.

That the men who go to represent Canada with the Martini should be selected by their performances in competitions in which the Snider is principally used, on the face of it, does certainly look very absurd, and would strike anyone not aware of the difficulties to be contended with in this matter as if the Council of the D. R. A. were trying their very best "how not to do it."

The difficulties to be met are: 1st, that the militia of Canada are still armed with the Snider, and therefore the matches in the D. R. A. are arranged chiefly for that rifle; 2nd, the time required for an exhaustive test with the Martini alone, in addition to that already necessary (nearly a week) for the D.R.A. competition, might prevent many of our best shots taking part. It has been found in the interests of the riflemen, a saving of time and money to them, to make the matches and the Wimbledon team competition run concurrently. So long as the Snider was the arm of the Home Volunteers, I do not think a better plan could have been devised; but as circumstances have so greatly changed in England, I think we are called upon to make an effort to meet those changes as best we can, and not be content to continue a *Laissez faire* policy. To use one of the common expressions of to-day, we must keep up with the procession. In the existing plan there is room for improvement, and even if the Council, in dealing with this matter, which they will be called upon to do very soon now, cannot see their way to adopting some such mode of selection as I shall suggest further on, I trust they will see the advisability of making the change which I now advocate.

The team is now confined to the sixty competitors in the Governor-General's match. No matter how many men there may be with the same number of points for the last place or places in the "sixty" only a number corresponding to the number of places, those who are fortunate enough to win them on the shoot off, have a chance for the team. Why should this be? The Wimbledon Team is not a prize to be shot for. The team is sent to compete with our brother volunteers of the Mother Country, and everything that can be done should be done to make it as strong a Martini team as possible. As it is now, just when the shooting that is a test of a man's fitness for a place on the team has to be done, thirty or forty men (I think I am quite within the mark when I consider there are that number within four or five points of the "sixty"), some of whom by brilliant scores would, in all probability, secure places on the team, are shut out from the chance, and the team correspondingly weakened.