

cause it is a good opportunity: I see in many papers it was rather hinted at that no rifle, however delicate, that might be put into the hands of Canadian militiamen would be serviceable if they were not thoroughly competent to look after it. Many papers speak of 'our boys' as 'strongly intellectual,' and so forth, and of putting rifles into hands that could not look after them, contrasting the rural battalions. Comparisons are odious, and so is comparing Tommy Atkins and the rural militia. I must admit that the English

MR. ATKINS OF TO-DAY

is a very different man from the Tommy Atkins that I and many of you first served with. What with short service, public opinion, and school boards, Private Thomas Atkins is highly intellectual and can understand anything. I will grant you he is a dense, stupid man, while the Canadian militiamen is a natural born genius. The English private serves seven years, during which he is constantly under the supervision of highly trained officers and non-commissioned officers. He is not only trained, but his officers see that after all matters of shooting the rifle is carefully taken care of and cleaned. Take the case of the rural militia genius. During these seven years he comes out for about 24 days, or, giving him the full time, for 36 days and in the meantime what becomes of his rifle? Where is it put? Who looks after it? I want to impress on you that however great the natural genius of a man, there is nothing else but training which will bring his talents to perfection. However ready to seize all points and assist with my recommendation, I had not only to consider the best rifle, but the best suited weapon for the whole force. In my humble opinion all that human wisdom could do was done by the Government in sending an officer of Col. Lake's experience to England, an officer not only of experience, but of knowledge of the needs and weaknesses of the Canadian militia. In sending him to England to discuss with the War Office, the best means of

RE-ARMING THE MILITIA,

I think the Government has acted in your highest interest. Leaving that, I come to this year's training. The Government has been exceedingly good to me in allowing every man to come out for this year's training (applause), and I hope not for this year, but for every year. I am sure all of you militiamen will show your appreciation of this by making this year's training the best year's training ever held. I am pleased to have the opportunity of telling you that the platform of my term of office is musketry, musketry, musketry, everywhere. I do not want by that to have a couple of days snatched for it when the General comes down. I shall judge of the efficiency and proficiency of camps not only in shooting, but in the care of the rifle, and I mean to make my geniuses make something of them-

selves at the end of their twelve days training, not only as to shooting, but as to the care of their rifles. (Applause). I come to the duty which has been given to me of proposing this resolution of thanks to His Excellency, who I know devotes his whole time to the good of the country:

That the thanks of this association be tendered to His Excellency the Governor General for his presence here to-day, and for his liberal contribution of \$500 to last year's prize list." (Applause).

Sir Mackenzie Bowell, who seconded the motion, said: "I had not the pleasure of hearing the full remarks made by Gen. Gascoigne. I have, however, great pleasure in seconding the resolution proposed by the General, and do so with greater pleasure from the personal knowledge I have, not only of the anxiety but constant thought which His Excellency gives to this great question, to draw closer the bonds between this and the Mother Country. The General's practical remarks will meet with the approbation of all who hear him. There may be differences as to what should be done as to camps, drills, shooting, etc., but whatever the differences may be the one idea we all have is to make them as efficient as possible. I hope in the future the efficiency will meet all the demands the General may make. We, as a Government, have many responsibilities, but not any of our energies or any money that may be spent can be better spent than in carrying out the General's practical suggestions. I know that he

HAS A THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE OF HIS DUTIES,

and it requires a man who understands, not only his duties as a soldier, but the genius of the people he is among. We are here a democratic people, and our volunteer force partakes of that character, and they have to be treated in a different manner to those countries where people do not take upon themselves voluntarily the same duties. We are deeply attached to the monarchy, but we are also thoroughly democratic. That fact alone will suggest itself to the General and to anyone who understands that the British subject has the right to think for himself and does so, and expresses himself freely. The Government are found fault with, but I can say that all that can be done for your assistance that our duties and the revenues of the country permit of will be done to aid the militia forces of Canada." (Cheers).

Lieut.-Col. Gibson said he was sure there would be no differences of opinion in regard to this resolution. There was no higher ambition on the part of riflemen at the annual meeting than to be partakers in the Governor-General's bounty. The large cash donation received yearly from His Excellency was divided into three prizes, known as the Governor-General's prizes, and to win one of these, and, if possible, the first,

was the aim of every competitor. The association would be glad if His Excellency would visit them on the common, as well as in that meeting. (Hear, hear.)

The motion was passed by a standing vote, amid applause.

His Excellency, Lord Aberdeen, received a cordial welcome on rising to reply. He said: "I feel very sensible of the extreme kindness with which this proposal has been brought forward and adopted. We have already been reminded that we have a novel feature at this meeting in more ways than one. We welcome a new General and a new Minister of Militia, and we have with us an old friend whom we welcome after a considerable absence. I refer to Sir Charles Tupper, Bart. (Hear, hear.) But with regard to the Governor-General, like the poorer section of the community, he is always with you, and cannot expect to receive or excite the same interest as if he could come in some sense entirely by way of a surprise. I do not refer to any Governor-General in particular, but to the institution. Nevertheless I consider it a particular pleasure and a duty to be present on such an occasion as this, and with regard to the kind words of the chairman as to attendance at the annual meets, I think no Governor-General's education can be complete till he has had the pleasure of attending such a national event. While Lieut.-Col. Gibson was speaking I was listening with particular attention for any allusion he might make as to the date of the annual gathering, as I look forward to be present at it whether within measurable or immeasurable distance. I must refer, by way of endorsement, to the allusion of Maj.-Gen. Gascoigne, to this association not being a prize-hunting association. I think that opinion will only be confirmed and strengthened the more he sees of this association. Although not a military man, I have been impressed by the large extent to which this association seems to be imbued by patriotic zeal for the increasing and maintaining of the standard of efficiency among the volunteer forces of this Dominion. This is as it ought to be, for if rifle-shooting were to be looked upon as a mere pastime the good of the association might be lost sight of. The General has also been good enough to refer kindly to any personal interest I may have been able to display in the Canadian militia, and I trust I always shall. In everything relating to the militia I have benefitted greatly by the extensive military knowledge of my late secretary, Mr. Arthur Gordon, who took no interest in anything more than in matters connected with the militia forces. I regret that I have lost his services through his return home on account of Mrs. Gordon's ill-health. I have been fortunate in securing the assistance of such an efficient officer as Capt. Sinclair. Being a Scotchman, I can appreciate the chairman's reference to