

GENERAL CAMPBELL'S MUSTER.

By REV. W. O. RAYMOND, M. A.

In the Canadian Archives for the year 1884, published at Ottawa, there appeared for the first time in print, an exceedingly interesting report on Nova Scotia, by Lieut.-Col. Robert Morse, of the Royal Engineers. The report was compiled in 1784, by order of Sir Guy Carleton, as we learn from its rather elaborate title:

"A General Description of the Province of Nova Scotia, and a Report of the present State of the Defences, with Observations leading to the further Growth and Security of this Colony, done by Lieutenant Colonel Morse, Chief Engineer in America, upon a Tour of the Province in the Autumn of the year 1783 and the Summer, 1784, under the Orders and Instructions of His Excellency, Sir Guy Carleton, General and Commander-in-chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America, given at Head Quarters at New York the 28th Day of July, 1783."

In his report, Col. Morse estimated the number of inhabitants in Nova Scotia (including New Brunswick) at 42,747. Probably this estimate is too small, for it takes no account of the native Indians and reckons the number of Acadian families at only one hundred, which undoubtedly is a long way under the mark. Colonel Morse, however, claimed to be able to give with precision the number of new inhabitants, viz.: the disbanded troops and Loyalists, the whole having been mustered in the summer of 1784, in order to ascertain the number entitled to the Royal bounty of provisions. In his report he includes an abstract of the number of the new inhabitants, compiled from the returns of the muster-masters, and the publication of these figures, in connection with his report, in the Canadian Archives for 1884, has led several of our local historians to designate the muster as "Morse's Muster."¹ This is an error to be regretted and one that should not be perpetuated. Colonel Morse himself says nothing in his report to lead to the inference that the muster was made under his direction;

¹ Among those who have inadvertently fallen into this error may be mentioned the compiler of the Canadian Archives, who in the Volume for 1894, p. 412, speaks of "The Muster by Morse in the summer of 1784." Henry Youle Hind makes the same mistake in his History of King's College, Windsor, p. 13. I have myself in several newspaper articles help to propagate the error.—W. O. R.