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THE MINISTER OF MILITIA.

The militia force have good reason to be pleased with the outcome of the Cabinet changes. It having been for a long time past generally understood that Sir Adolphe Caron was likely to accept the honourable post of Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec, there has been no little anxiety felt as to who might be the new head of the Department of Militia and Defence. The choice has now fallen upon Lieut.-Col. the Hon. Mackenzie Bowell, a gentleman second to none of his colleagues in executive ability and experience, and possessing a most enviable record as a public man absolutely without reproach. When Sir John Macdonald returned to power in 1878, he chose Mr. Bowell as his Minister of Customs, and this very trying department has since been continuously under the same able head, who has by this long service become the senior member of the Administration. Col. Bowell is 68 years old, and the change he has just made in entering upon the less onerous task of administering the Militia Department should afford him the relaxation demanded by his advancing years. That he may long be spared to enjoy his new command will we are sure be the unanimous wish of the Canadian citizen soldiery and citizens generally. For our own part we are confident that Col. Bowell's progressive and aggressive qualities cannot fail to result in material benefit to the force, if the members themselves show an interest justifying special exertion in their behalf.

A glance at the military record of the new Minister will be timely and interesting. As long ago as 1864, while he was an ensign in the Belleville Rifles, now No. 1 Company of the 49th Battalion, Mr. Bowell saw service on the United States frontier. That was during the American war, and among the thirty companies detailed for duty was the one to which he belonged, commanded by Captain Brown, afterwards member of Parliament for that

district. In the Militia General Orders of December 23rd, 1864, the service is thus outlined: "In calling out for active service this portion of the volunteer force, the Commander-in-Chief desires to express the gratification he has experienced at the numerous offers of service he has received from the Volunteer companies all over the province, as soon as it became known that men were required for permanent duty." The order further says the companies were embodied "with the object of aiding the civil power in its efforts to prevent aggression on the territories of a friendly State on the part of persons enjoying the right of asylum in Her Majesty's dominions, and to preserve, as regards Canada, that complete neutrality with respect to the war now existing in the United States which Her Majesty has enjoined on all her subjects." The duty of all officers commanding detachments, was also "to take special care that the territorial rights of the Government of the United States shall be carefully respected." For four months Ensign Bowell, who had been appointed March 4th, 1858, served with his company at Amherstburg. On the 2nd of June, 1865, he retired temporarily, but was appointed Major of the Battalion on the 22nd of February, 1867. Then, after a further service of five years he was brevetted Lieutenant Colonel, and on the 13th of March, 1874, retired retaining that rank.

Sir Adolphe Caron, upon retiring from the Militia Department after eleven years' service, has taken up the even more important portfolio of Postmaster-General, and while he remains a member of the Government the force can count upon him as a good friend and faithful ally. The period during which he has had charge of the Militia Department has been a very critical one—the most critical, it is to be hoped, through which the Department may be called upon to pass. The North West rebellion demonstrated the importance of the force in a manner which

has resulted in additional attention to the problem of securing the greatest possible efficiency, and one result has been the further development of the school system and the establishment of a Canadian ammunition factory which has become a very important adjunct. The encouragement extended to the League and rifle associations generally has helped to make the best use of the product of that factory. Continuous agitation, feeble, it is true—of the subject of annual drills has brought this requisite so near as almost to be realized; and improvements in several respects have been looked for as the outcome of the critical inspection of the condition of the militia made by General Herbert. If the concessions desired are at all obtainable, they may be looked for as a happy inauguration of the new Minister's term of office.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

Parliament having been called to meet on the 25th February, the annual meeting of the Dominion Rifle Association will, in accordance with the constitution, be held on the third Wednesday following, that is, on the 16th of March. The business transacted at this meeting is usually of a purely formal nature, the administration of the affairs of the Association being left entirely in the hands of the Council—elected half at this meeting and half by the Provincial associations—and of the Executive Committee, elected by the Council. The command of the Bisley team will no doubt be disposed of by being vested as usual in the hands of the Chairman of Council. It is to be hoped that his choice will be an officer who either by personal competition and interest or by the encouragement of shooting in his corps, has shown himself deserving of the honour.

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An expression of opinion on the subject of revolver shooting would be timely at this meeting, for the new regulations adopted