

may well be need of a force such as, without in any way threatening public liberty, or the supremacy of the civil power, shall effectually confine everybody who wants to change the laws or the constitution of society to the use of freedom of speech and a free vote, putting pikes and dynamite out of the question. We do not know why there should be a question between the maintenance of such a force and the maintenance of the militia, while there is money to be lavished on the building of railways through Intercolonial and Lake Superior wilds. But, supposing that question to arise, we should say that the Central Constabulary is a necessity, while the maintenance of the militia on exactly the present scale is not. We know what is said about the social advantages of the militia; nor do we wish to disturb the impression, though on inquiry at the places where the camps are formed you will find a difference of opinion on the subject. In the possibility of war nobody now believes; but were war to come, we suspect the militia, to be a real defence of the country, must be far more highly trained and better provided with officers, and above all with non-commissioned officers, than it is at present. Military history, if its teachings may be trusted by those who have no practical acquaintance with these matters, seems to indicate that a soldier who does not know his trade is little better than any other man in the same condition, and that the difference between a half-trained militia and a mob, when placed on a field of battle, is that it takes about three rounds to reduce the former to the condition of the latter. The march of modern war is swift. In England there are a few crack Volunteer Corps which might perhaps be brought up to a high enough point of efficiency to take their place in the line before the war was over. But most of the corps, if we are not misinformed, are Rifle Clubs, excellent in that way, and highly available, no doubt, for service behind works. The social advantages of a Rifle Club are probably almost as great as those of a fortnight in camp once in every two years.