

is equal to 15 in. or 16 in. of armour, and we may calculate that an 80 ton gun will penetrate 24 in., unless the cunning device of the Inflexible breaks up the shell outside the second plate. In such warfare as we are now contemplating the first hit may prove momentous. If an entering projectile, in addition to its own explosion, were to fire one of those huge cartridges of which we have spoken, the effect between decks would be tremendous. The mere smoke would be a serious matter—far more so than in one of Nelson's ships with its many ports and free ventilation. For humanity's sake we can only hope that these preparations for war will secure the continuance of peace.—*London Standard.*

ANNUAL DRILL.

The Minister of Militia stated in the House of Commons on Monday, in reply to a question put by Mr. Stephenson, that it was the intention of the Government to reduce the strength of the Volunteer Force and that it was more than probable that the residue would go into camp during the present year. We are not yet aware of the nature of the Government Militia Scheme and consequently cannot form any idea of the number of men who will be required to drill during the present year. A reduction of the present nominal strength of the Volunteer Force is a step in the right direction. In anticipation of going into camp, officers in this vicinity are commencing the annual filling up of their ranks. We have reason to believe that it is the intention of the Government to increase the pay of the men, which would reduce a better class of recruits to join the ranks. Officers of corps, especially infantry corps, should be more particular regarding the class of men they take into their ranks. No encouragement should be given to drunken loafers, and imbecile old men to connect themselves with a battalion simply for the purpose of filling up the ranks during the time spent in camp. The Volunteer Force should be made as attractive as possible to all classes of our young men, but nothing can justify an officer in enrolling on his company list every incapable character who may present himself as a recruit. Active, intelligent young men are the most needed. To such the duties of camp life will prove a pleasure and a pleasant change from the monotony of every day occupation. In view of a camp being formed here at an early day, the officers should, we take the liberty of suggesting to those in authority, be instructed to "read up" their drill, so as to be the better prepared to instruct their men. It is a too notorious fact that a very large proportion of the officers of the Force are sadly deficient in this respect. Some of them may have never opened a drill book since they left the Military School, and the consequence is that they are not "posted" in the changes which are frequently made, and they even forget what they did learn. There is some excuse for the rank and file being ignorant, but none can be urged in defence of officers. Obsolete words of command are still to be heard used by officers who certainly should know better, which proves that they are not acquainted with the changes. It is a humiliating spectacle to see officers displaying ignorance of drill in the presence of their men, which cannot increase the confidence they should have in each other. Our remarks apply to the Force in general and not to any corps in particular. Facts are stubborn

things, and if these defects were candidly exposed by the press of the country in general we are disposed to think an improvement would be the result. We hope that if our local corps is called out to perform its annual drill in camp, its ranks may be filled with a creditable class of men and that employers will allow every facility to enable those in their employment connected therewith to obey the call of their officers.—*Chronicle and News* May 15th.

CREEDMOOR.

THE COMING CONTEST.

The *New York Times* of Saturday says:

"The prospect of the coming match with the Irish team who won the Elcho Shield at Wimbledon last year, has put our National Rifle Association, or, to be more precise, its subordinate element, the Amateur Rifle Club, on its mettle, and, accordingly, they are preparing for vigorous practice in anticipation of the contest. That this is a wise precaution cannot be doubted, for the Irish eight (assuming that nothing will interfere to prevent their crack shots coming forward) are good marksmen; their Wimbledon prestige must, if possible be sustained, and their practice on their ranges at Dollymount, near Dublin, is usually of a very assiduous and thorough kind. The efforts of the Amateur Rifle Club will, therefore, be directed toward getting together the best marksmen, who shall have abundant practice, and how, when the time comes, (not sooner than the 15th September, or later than the 15th October,) shall be in proper form to meet their Irish competitors. The Irish team are the challengers, and the programme which they proposed for the acceptance of the riflemen of America has been agreed to on behalf of the latter by the Amateur Rifle Club, with the exception of one of them, fixing the minimum numbers of competitors. This the challengers desired to fix at four, but the Rifle Club think that six ought to be substituted. The terms of the match, as amended, would thus read as follows:

"Team—Each team to consist of not more than eight or less than six men, at the option of the Irish, whose decision will be announced on their arrival at New York. The American team to be composed exclusively of riflemen born in the United States. The Irish team to consist of men qualified to shoot in the Irish eight at Wimbledon.

"Rifles—Any, not exceeding ten pounds weight; minimum pull of trigger three pounds. The Americans to shoot with rifles of bona fide American manufacture. The Irish to shoot with rifles manufactured by Messrs. John Rigby & Co., of Dublin.

"Sights, Ammunition, Targets, and Marking—To be according to printed regulations in force at Wimbledon, 1873 which are similar to those of the National Rifle Association.

"Ranges—Eight hundred yards, 900 yards and 1,000 yards.

"Number of Shots—Fifteen at each range by each competitor.

"Previous Practice—The Irish team to be allowed the use of the range for practice for at least two days before the match.

"Position—Any, no artificial rest to be used either for the rifle or person of the shooter.

"Mr. Leach, on the part of the Irish team, guarantees to deposit, on his arrival at New York, with the National Rifle Association of America, the sum of £100 sterling, a sum

to be deposited by the American team, and this sum of £200 to be handed over to the Captain for division among the members of the winning team.

"Targets, ranges, and all accessories for carrying out the match to devolve on the Americans. The Americans to choose a Referee to act for their team. Mr. Leach will act in the capacity of Referee for the Irish team, and the two Referees shall mutually select an umpire, to whom, in case of difference of opinion, they shall refer, and whose decision shall be final. The terms of the match to be signed by Geo. W. Wingate, on behalf of the Amateur Rifle Club, and by Arthur Blennerhasset Leach, on behalf of the Irish team. Duplicate copies of this programme to be exchanged, and all necessary arrangements to be completed on or before the 1st day of June, 1874. Should either team fail to make an appearance on the day and hour agreed upon for the match, the team then present may claim the championship and stakes.

"In accepting the challenge the Amateur Rifle Club do not claim that they include among their members the best riflemen of America, but they assume to act as the representatives of the riflemen of the country generally, for the purpose of placing the matter in such a shape as to permit all who prove themselves competent to compete, irrespective of their residence or membership. They therefore request that all native born Americans who are interested in rifle shooting, and who desire to form part of the team which is to represent America in the forthcoming match, will at once commence practising for the purpose, and will, on or before the 1st of July next, forward to Mr. Fred. P. Fairbanks, the Secretary of the Club, a score of fifteen consecutive shots made at each distance named in the programme, in a form furnished for the purpose. Then, sometime during July or August, one match or more will be held at Creedmoor to shoot for places in the team. From the competitors making the best scores upon these occasions the Executive Committee will select a certain number who will shoot against each other until the best shots are definitely ascertained, and these only will be allowed to shoot in the team competing with the Irish visitors. In the match at Wimbledon, at which the latter won the Elcho shield, their average score was 149.37 points out of a possible 150, or 3.32 a shot, but the Amateur Rifle Club are fully satisfied that there are many riflemen in America fully as expert, and they feel quite sanguine as to the result of the match should they be induced to engage in the undertaking. There is, at all events, no doubt entertained that, apart from the National Guard practice, the most interesting feature of the season at Creedmoor will be this international match with the Irish eight."—*N. Y. Times.*

WEAR OF GOLD AND SILVER.—It appears from experiments made in St. Petersburg that, contrary to the opinion generally entertained, gold coin wears away faster than that of silver. Twenty pounds of gold half-imperials, and as much of silver coquecks—coins of about the same size—were put into new barrels, mounted like churns, which were kept turning for four hours continuously. It was then found, on weighing the coins, that the gold ones had lost 61 grammes, the silver ones only 34; but as the number of gold pieces was 28 per cent. less than those of silver, the proportion is of course, greatest to that amount in favour of the latter. The silver also contained more alloy than the gold.