

the gun on its wheels with great facility. When put upon wheels the tripod is not removed, but two of the legs are turned backwards and lie close beside the trail, which forms the third leg.

A three inch field piece is on its way from England, with which we hope to see some good practice made.

A New Gun Sleigh.

WE have been shown photographs of an adaptation, by Captain C. W. Drury, A Battery, Regt. C. A., of the old Woolwich gun sleighs to suit the modern field guns, which appears to answer excellently. The sleighs have been in store since the time usually designated as "the year one," having been found anything but a success in the way they were previously used, that is with a single sleigh carrying the gun only, necessitating special equipment, and preventing the whole detachment or reasonable supplies of ammunition from being carried.

The new sleigh is made up of two old pattern sleighs. One carries the gun and carriage for summer use; the other the limber; the two, when limbered up, forming a "bob sleigh," which, as is well known, will travel on winter roads better than any other pattern of sleigh. The conversion of the old sleigh is as follows: The brackets which supported the gun are removed and separated sufficiently to take the axle-tree arms in the trunnion holes. This necessitates new transoms, as the old ones are not long enough; the track of the runners remaining the same. The point of support of the axles is the same height as the nave of the wheels, so that there is no undue strain on the trail when the gun is fired. The gun is unlimbered and limbered up, and the trail lowered to the ground as in the summer; the horses are placed in the limber shafts, the point of draught being from swingle trees on the sleigh, instead of the splinter bar, which is too high for winter draught; everything else remaining as in summer—the same equipment, same drill, every gunner in the same place—in fact, the runners simply taking the place of the wheels.

At no time in winter would it be advisable to leave headquarters for a march without summer equipment, as travelling—especially in January—is very uncertain, runners and wheels being required alternately. While the new arrangement allows of rapid and convenient change, the old Woolwich system would be entirely at a deadlock when bare ground was reached.

The Department of Militia and Defence and the Military Force of Canada.

UP to the time of Confederation, the British Government, which then held all the fortifications, barracks, naval and military reserve lands, &c., maintained detachments of Imperial troops in each of the provinces, and every province had a more or less efficient volunteer militia as auxiliary thereto.

Her Majesty's Government, however, which never ceases to urge upon all colonial branches of the empire the adoption of every practicable measure of self-defence, and had indeed favored the union of the provinces especially for the facilities thereby offered for their mutual protection, now offered every assistance, by the loaning of Imperial officers and otherwise, towards the organization of the military power of confederated Canada, and in 1869 commenced the gradual evacuation, which resulted in the withdrawal, within two years, of the whole of the regular troops from the new Dominion, except from Halifax, and in the transfer to the Government of Canada of all military and naval properties, fortifications, barracks, &c., except those on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, where certain reserve lands were retained. These have recently been also given up by the war office and the admiralty, so that to-day the only occupation by Imperial forces in Canada consists of the garrison and naval establishment at Halifax, N.S., and the naval establishment at Victoria, B.C.

Canada was not slow in accepting the responsibility of organizing a military system. To the late Sir George Cartier is due the "Militia and Defence Act of 1868," which has formed the basis of an organization since very largely developed, but on practically identical lines, and which has been reproduced in all its main features by the amended and consolidated Act of 1883, introduced by the present Minister of Militia and Defence, Sir Adolphe Caron.

The military system of Canada consists, in brief, of:—

I.—A permanent departmental or administrative organization, a branch of the civil government of the Dominion.

II.—A permanent military staff at headquarters, and in each of the twelve military districts into which Canada is divided.

III.—A small number of permanent corps, the members of which enlist for three years' continuous service under pay, and which, while doing garrison duty and available at a moment's notice for field service, form at the same time schools of military instruction, to which officers

and non-commissioned officers of the volunteer service can attach themselves for courses of study and training, under pay, to qualify them for militia commissions. These instructional facilities are in addition to those afforded by the Royal Military College of Canada, with its highly organized staff, and body of gentlemen cadets undergoing a four years' course.

IV.—The active militia, consisting, in round numbers, of 37,000 volunteers, citizen soldiers in the truest sense, armed and equipped by Government, but paid only for the short periods of annual drill required by the regulations, or when called out by the Crown for the defence of the country from invasion or for the suppression of rebellion, or when ordered out upon written requisition of magistrates (to which they are likewise liable at all times) in aid of the civil power.

The law provides for the maintenance of a due strength of active militia by ballot, when necessary; but so high has proved the military spirit of the people that the department has always had applications for permission for the organization of volunteer corps, much in excess of the quota for the proper equipment and training of which the resources of the department would provide.

V.—The reserve militia, consisting, as the statute declares, of "the whole of the men who are not serving in the active militia," between the ages of 18 and 60, with a few clearly defined exemptions; it comprises therefore the entire able-bodied male population, liable to military service upon emergency, but neither mustered, armed nor drilled. The strength of the reserve, according to former enrolments, and the present statistics of the census branch, Department of Agriculture, would now be about 1,000,000 men, whom the law divides into four classes, according to their age and the strength of family claims upon them for support.

The administrative duties of the Department of Militia and Defence may be briefly classified as dealing with:—

(a.) Fortifications, armaments and ammunition, and other matters connected with the defences; and the proper organization of the militia of Canada, for the protection of this portion of the empire against foreign attack.

(b.) The maintenance of the militia in equal readiness for action in aid of the civil power, for the internal peace of the country and the supremacy of the Crown.

(c.) The various matters requisite for keeping up the efficiency of the force maintained for both of the above purposes; clothing and equipment, training, pay, &c.

THE MINISTER OF MILITIA AND DEFENCE

is charged, under the statute, with the responsible administration of all militia affairs, under the Governor-General in Council. His department, the great and ever-increasing importance of which to the protection and security of the country is now generally recognized, is composed as follows:—

THE DEPUTY MINISTER

is the permanent official head, under the Minister, of the department.

His office staff consists of a chief clerk, a register clerk, and three corresponding clerks.

The work of this office has steadily increased from the organization of the department down to the present time. The system of registration and index of correspondence here used, it may be observed, met with the marked approval of the members of the Civil Service Commission of 1880, the chairman of which was furnished, at his request, with a memorandum upon it.

The deputy minister, by the minister's authority, has the approval of all financial matters and claims within departmental jurisdiction, and the communication of all departmental decisions upon matters submitted by the general officer commanding and the respective officers of the store and pay branches, the architect of the engineer branch and the superintendent of the cartridge factory.

In this office are also drawn up the reports to council, and resumés of important cases from time to time under consideration, in addition to the usual correspondence with officers of the department and military branch and the public, upon matters such as pay, transport and subsistence, contracts for supplies, claims for compensation in cases of wounds or injuries received on militia service; the pensions of veterans of 1812 are paid from this office; the annual departmental report to Parliament is here compiled and printed, as was also the special report upon the suppression of the North-West rebellion.

THE STORE BRANCH.

The director of stores and keeper of militia properties is responsible for all militia stores, clothing, munitions of war and militia properties entrusted to his charge. The staff of the store branch of the department consisted, when first organized, of the director of stores (a chief clerk in the Civil Service) and three clerks. At present the director is assisted by five clerks, that number being one short of the establishment now authorized.