

# THE CANADIAN MILITIA GAZETTE

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## COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

Yesterday Louis Riel was hanged at Regina, in compliance with the sentence of the court of justice which found him guilty of high treason. To those who know the deplorable results of the insurrection, which, without his presence would certainly not have broken out, his fate will seem but a just consequence of his actions, and at least the troops who took part in the suppression of the insurrection will feel it meet that, sane or crank, he is now beyond the possibility of doing any further harm to our promising North-west. A great deal may be forgiven to the man who is incited by patriotism, but when he rises in armed resistance to constituted authority and brings down all the horrors of war on his country he forfeits, no matter how great or how real his provocations may have been, all claim to the sympathy of his fellow citizens.

During the past week the difficulty between British India and Burmah has come to a head, war has been declared, and the advance on Mandalay has already begun under Lieut.-General Dalrymple Prendergast. While we cannot but deplore the necessity that throws another savage war upon the hands of the mother country, and one that seems likely to give little satisfaction and less profit, it seems impossible in this case to have avoided it. The conduct of the Burmese King has

been for years of the most tyrannous and revolting character, and the peace and prosperity of the whole of eastern India urgently demanded a repression of his high-handed and most barbarous actions.

We are glad to hear a good word for the Snider from England. In the volunteer column of the *Weekly Despatch* a correspondent says: "I cannot go along with the Royal Naval Artilleryman who writes under the initials 'T. M.,' and speaks very disparagingly of his 'old Snider blunderbuss.' If I am not very much mistaken the weapon he names in this way is the naval five-grooved Snider, which most shooting men regard as being quite as good a weapon at 500 yards as the Martini-Henry, and many of them would be glad to do their shooting with it." This is also the experience of many Canadian shots, who think its chief fault for service is its comparative slowness in loading, while on the other hand the greater distance apart of the sights and the absence of recoil are decided advantages. For such warfare as Canada is likely to engage in 500 yards is a greater range than is required for effective shooting.

Our reference last week to reloadable shells brought out letters on the subject which show that the question has already attracted attention; but that is not enough. If our paper is to do any good it must incite to action, and what the force wants for next season is cheaper ammunition, reliable ammunition, and more of it, and increased facilities for learning rifle shooting. It is not for the men to decide how the cheaper ammunition is to be obtained; let the authorities attend to that. Our correspondents, Capt. Perley and "Ramrod," show that the coiled shell is in many respects superior to the solid case—all the better, its first cost being also less. By all means let us have a reloader in every armory and try the coiled shell.

In "Misty" we have struck a good, old-fashioned, conservative soldier who would not have a single part of our present uniform changed on any account, if only for the associations connected with it; but we must confess to the awful heterodoxy of considerable sympathy with his misguided friend, and to a feeling that something ought to be done before another active campaign to equip our forces in a good serviceable *working* dress. "Misty's" friend is not speaking theoretically, he is moved by the depth of feeling born of practical experience, and his words should carry weight.

Apropos of uniform, who has a good suggestion to make respecting a uniform headdress for our winter climate? The sealskin wedge is open to objections; it is heavy and somewhat expensive when men have to pay for it out of their annual drill money, and it will not come down well over the head and neck in a blizzard. A long time ago we whispered the word "tuque," and now we feel emboldened to say it a little louder. Our snowshoe clubs, which are eminently practical, invariably use them, and look well in them, and if the colors were well chosen the effect when a number of men were together would not be unbecoming.