

FUR CAPS.

When A. & B. Batteries R.C.A. were organized in November, 1871, the pattern of winter uniform worn by the men and officers of the Imperial Royal Artillery was adopted without modifications whatever. The fur cap was of turban shape without peak, higher behind than in front, and sloping slightly backwards like the French képi; it was made of black Persian lamb for the officers; on a round cloth patch on top was a gold lace design similar to that on the present forage caps—in front was an embroidered grenade; the caps of the non-commissioned officers were of Astracan fur; those of the gunners of black sealskin;—all were decorated with a grenade and a plain woollen button on top.

Major General (then Lt.-Col.) T. B. Strange, in the year 1875, or thereabouts, considering this form of cap not specially serviceable nor ornamental, designed the present wedge, or rather its prototype, for the first issue was made to resemble greatly a grenadier's bearskin cap, particularly when seen sideways. This feature was especially noticeable in the officers' caps, which were of shaggy black lynx skin, the long fur well combed down over the eyes and over the nape of the neck. With a scarlet bushy bag worn on the right side it certainly imparted to the wearer a martial appearance. The men's caps were of sealskin dyed black. On the whole, this cap was a decided improvement on the old one in usefulness, comfort and appearance; it could be pulled down over the ears and forehead—thus in a measure protecting the eyes from driving snow or vivid sunlight, so trying in February and March.

Within the last ten or twelve years a gradual evolution has been in progress—the men's caps, tall enough already, have become more so,—I may say absurdly so, and it has in consequence become a matter of necessity, tolerated throughout the permanent corps, to fold in the top of the cap, bag and all. This fold, when neatly made, gives the cap a jaunty appearance, and the custom deserves approval. But why build the caps so tall? no object is gained except in additional cost, and that interests the contractor only.

This pattern of winter military headgear appears to have struck the fancy of the War Official, whose duty it is to select, for it has become the universal pattern for all corps who are supplied with winter clothing. The N. W. Mounted Police wear a cap cut on the same lines, I am told. Now, does it possess such superior points,—is it such a paragon of perfection as to have caused the