

OUR SERVICE CONTEMPORARIES.

According to the "Times," the secret of the new Russian projectile which was recently tried and found so successful in penetrating armour-plates is said to have been discovered by a firm in Sheffield, who have offered to supply the Government with shells similar to those used in Russia.

Before leaving England the Czarevitch presented Staff-Captain Goldsmith, of the "Alberta," with a silver cigarette-case bearing the Russian Imperial monogram set in brilliants and sapphires.

It is always interesting to review the composition of the Queen's Hundred. It was made up of fifty-five representatives of English, thirty-six of Scotch, seven of Colonial (Canada and Channel Islands), and two of the Welsh corps. The 3rd Lanark had nine men in the charmed century, and the Border Rifles five. The arms represented were: Engineers, three; Artillery, two; while the Infantry claimed all the rest, the Cavalry being left out in the cold. We have great admiration for the shooting officer, and have, therefore, pleasure in recording that twelve of those that competed gained badges, which, by the way, they are not permitted to wear by the regulations.

It is often said that the European soldier in India bears the hot season much better than he did formerly, and medical statistics are quoted in proof of this argument. But have not the times changed considerably? We have particulars before us of "hill stations," and from these we find that in the Bengal Presidency alone 14,687 men, 656 women, and 1,354 children, are occupying hill quarters during the present summer. The British soldier in the old days knew nothing of "hill stations." He had to grill on the plains all the year round, and if his health suffered he had simply to grin and bear his sufferings—Army and Navy Gazette.

Some few years ago the French War Office determined to issue separate cooking utensils for each individual soldier when manœuvring or campaigning. After a sufficiently long trial, however, the new system is condemned. It has decided to divide the men into groups, of four, who are to receive collective rations. One man will carry on his knapsack a large saucepan, another a kettle, a third a tin water bottle, and a fourth all the odds and ends that are necessary.

King Humbert, on hearing of the capture of Kassala, at once telegraphed his congratulations to General Baratieri as follows:—"I congratulate you, together with the troops. The success of our arms is a new triumph for civilisation. The possession of Kassala gives back peace to the tribes protected by us, opens the route of the Soudan to the commerce of

our colony, and is a new title of honor to Italy in those lands. All this is due to you and our valorous soldiers. I grasp your hand with affection.—Humbert." The number of flags and banners taken by the Italians was forty-six. Many of the dervishes have since surrendered. They tell a sad story of the miserable condition of their companions. By general consent the campaign has been admirably planned and conducted.

A German paper publishes particulars of the shells discharged by the Germans against the French fortresses in the war of 1870-71. Strasburg heads the list with 202,100, whilst Beifort received 112,500; Paris, 110,300; Thionville, 16,600; Neuf-Busach and Fort Mortier, 11,200; Verdun, 8,900; Soissons, 8,400; Bitche, 7,100; Mézières, 7,000; Toul, 6,700; Montmédy, 6,700; Longy, 6,400; Metz, 4,900. Others follow with 3,000 down to 100. The grand total reaches 521,000 shells.

Renewed efforts are being made in Germany this year to introduce a fish ration for the Army. The experiment is being tried in the regiment of Guards. Similar attempts have failed hitherto in consequence of the difficulties of transport, but technical arrangements have been made by which it is hoped that the supply of fresh fish can be kept up and sent to long distances inland even in the hottest weather. If these prove to be successful, on one or two days a week most regiments will have the benefit of a fish meal. This, it is hoped, will be a popular as well as an economical measure.

It is stated that the military authorities have definitely refused Herr Dowe's cuirass as being worthless for practical purposes. During the trials at Spandau the cuirass was completely pierced by bullets from the German regulation rifle, fired at a distance of 600 mètres. This statement is quite irreconcilable with the alleged results of former tests.

It is interesting to know, on official authority, that in the last twenty years the Australian colonies, including New Zealand, have spent at least three millions sterling on the construction of armaments and fortifications; Cape Colony as much as £47,000; and, further, that the total expenditure of Canada, the Australian colonies, Cape Colony, and Natal on defences during the ten years up to 1892 reached the pretty considerable sum of eleven millions sterling. An annual expenditure of £12,000,000 shows that the colonies are becoming sensible of their own interests, and are being brought to see that they must do something to protect themselves. The more this is impressed upon them the better, for, so far as land defences are concerned, the mother country would have enough to do to guard her own shores and commerce in the event of complications arising.—Army and Navy Gazette.

In a report recently submitted by Capt. E. N. Godwin, 8th Cav., on Alumium horseshoes, that officer says: "The shoes were on Feb. 22 put on a troop horse which weighed about 1,000 lbs. On March 22 the shoes were reset. April 21 one of the hind shoes broke near the toe, and the whole set was removed. During the two months the horse was ridden about 140 miles, not including drills, parades and the ordinary garrison duties. The shoes are much reduced in thickness, of course, but have lasted better than was expected. The front shoes could be used a little longer. The pieces of steel set in the toes of the front shoes added greatly to their wearing qualities. They were worn off at the toes until the pieces of steel were reached and further wear in that direction prevented. The hind shoes, which had not these pieces of steel set in, wore quite thin at the toes, and, as stated, one of them finally broke; the other was broken in taking it off."

The ramming of a derelict by the Atlanta with unexpected damage to the warship has reawakened renewed interest in the question of the value and dangers of ramming. Commander Harrington lectured at the Naval War College last Monday on the place and office of a ram in a fleet. He did not allude to the Atlanta's experience, but Captain Taylor, president of the college, in opening the discussion, said that he had seen a large craft ramming a smaller vessel, as the Atlanta had done. The result was that the ram went under the craft and raised it up, and the extra weight on the bow elevated the ship astern, so that she was practically unmanageable and was easily taken by two small war ships. This experience gave the cue to the discussion, in which several officers took part, and the general opinion was that small craft should not be rammed by large vessels, but attacked with guns, for ramming tactics between large and small craft might result very unexpectedly with most injury to the larger ship.

The Detroit "Evening News," in announcing the reception of orders from the War Department to hold the troops at Fort Wayne in readiness for immediate service, gravely informs us that Asst. U. S. Attorney Wilkins "instructed Major Smith to provide his command with ammunition and not to use a single blank cartridge, if occasion require the use of the troops." This was very thoughtful of Mr. Wilkins, and it is gratifying to know that Major Smith has such competent legal advice at hand. It would certainly be very unfortunate if he should forget his ammunition.—U. S. Army and Navy Gazette.

The hail of bullets which will sweep over the battlefield of the future will have little regard for the Geneva Cross, and the surgeon will undoubtedly perish with the wounded whom he has come to succour. We would substitute for the present system an organisation which would attempt to grapple with the problem of