

the Department. In this way months of time have been wasted and the inferior boot as manufactured in August last, has continued to be supplied to the members of the Second and Third Expeditionary Forces.

Extraordinary and criminal as their conduct must appear to every man not blinded by party prejudice, the Government did not cancel one contract, nor in the face of the evidence in its possession and of the statement made by General Sam Hughes at Calgary and at Edmonton that he would shoot the men who made the bad boots if he could find them, did it make any effort to stop the delivery of the inferior boots, although some of them were delivered as late as the month of March, 1915.

But, this is not by any means the worst feature of the Government's criminal neglect in its treatment of the Canadian soldiers. While Sam Hughes' Chief Adviser on boots has been drawing \$10.00 a day as well as travelling expenses and reasonable living expenses, since the month of January last without making a report or coming to any decision, requisitions for boots have been piling up in the Department without any attempt being made by the Government to procure boots of any kind for the soldiers who were in urgent need of them.

Giving evidence before the Special Committee of the House of Commons, Colonel J. F. Macdonald, the Director of Clothing and Equipment, swore that in the month of April, 1915, there were requisitions at Headquarters in Ottawa for 20,000 pairs of boots, which the Department was not able to fill. No attempt was made to explain or contradict this statement before the Committee or before the House, and thus the Government stands convicted not only of gross incompetence but of the most callous indifference and neglect.

As every man who has been on active service insists that the boot is the most important part of the soldiers' equipment and that the soldier is rendered inefficient by inferior boots just as surely as he would be if supplied with an out-of-date rifle, it needs no argument to illustrate the fact that the Government not only failed at the outset to adopt the most elementary principle that applies to the equipping of an army, but that it has failed to grasp that principle even after the experiences of the last nine months. The sufferers are the brave men who have gone to France and Flanders to defend Canada and the Empire and the beneficiaries are the friends of the present Government, to whom fat contracts were given and who were allowed to equip the men of the Second and Third Expeditionary Forces with boots that had been condemned by General Alderson, Sir George Perley and a host of military authorities.

SOME OF THE GRAFT.

Among the beneficiaries are the Winnipeg middlemen whose rake-off varied from 40 cents to 60 cents per pair on all the boots they sold to the Government. Then there is also Mr. Charles