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COMMENT AND CRITICISM.

"After a storm comes a calm"—since the exciting news of last week's fighting at Batoche, followed by the announcement of Riel's capture, we have heard little of interest, and in fact little of any kind, from our actual service contingent, with the one exception of Poundmaker seeking terms of surrender. General Middleton's column has reached Prince Albert, and the 7th Fusiliers and two more companies of the Midland battalion have reached Clarke's Crossing and gone into camp there. Col. Otter has sent a strong escort to bring in fresh supplies, but no change has occurred in the strength of his detachment. Nothing definite has been heard from General Strange since he left Edmonton. He has under his command, stretching from Edmonton presumably to Fort Pitt, 77 police, 88 scouts and 475 infantry. There are besides 90 volunteers at Edmonton, but unless the General brought them arms they were very poorly provided. The M. G. A. reached Winnipeg on the 20th and went into garrison there; while the last three battalions called out have gone into camp near their respective headquarters—the 32nd at Southampton, the 1st P.W.R. on the Montreal Exhibition Grounds, and the N.B. Provisional Battalion, to their intense disappointment, at Sussex.

We must confess to a feeling of agreeable surprise as well as thankfulness at the news of Poundmaker's action in sending in to Bat-

tleford the captured teamsters and asking for terms of surrender. We feared that the fight with Col. Otter's force would have made him more confident of ultimate success as well as desirous of revenge for the loss he then sustained, and the fact that it has had a different effect means one of two things—either that he imagines that there is more to be gained by submission, or that he does not desire a repetition of the treatment he received from Col. Otter's flying column. If the report be true that General Middleton's answer was "unconditional surrender or immediate action," we prophesy that Poundmaker's chances of gain by submission will be cut short by a hempen halter; but in any case the fact of his asking for terms is a most happy augury of the early complete submission of the Indian tribes. It is but two months to-day since the Duck Lake fight occurred, and a serious insurrection has been in the interval entirely subdued. Under the circumstances we feel that we are entitled to the praise given us by an American paper and reprinted in this issue.

The correspondent of the *London Daily Telegraph* who accompanied the British advance towards Khartoum makes grave charges regarding the quality of the bayonets and Martini cartridges used by the troops; though it is but fair to premise that these were denied in the House of Commons. He says the triangular bayonet oftentimes bent and twisted, but on the whole stood the test better than the sword bayonet, though inferior to that weapon in two respects. The wound it makes is slight, so that a fanatical savage requires several thrusts before he can be prevented from running amuck among civilized troops; in the second place when thrust violently it goes too far and there is great difficulty in freeing it. At Tamai a stalwart soldier hooked his opponent in such a manner that he had to drag the body twenty yards, as he was retreating, before liberating his weapon. The correspondent reports seeing blue-jackets' cutlass-sword-bayonets bend into semi-circles and remain in that shape, while many a soldier at Abou Klea saw with dismay his sword-bayonet rendered useless when there was no chance to load his rifle, and after the battle strong men might have been seen straightening their bayonets across the knee or under foot.

Respecting the jamming of Martini cartridges (*Forest and Stream* was mistaken in the article in last week's issue in attributing this difficulty to those of the new weapon, which has not yet been issued) he states that the scenes at Abou Klea are not likely to be effaced from the memories of those who witnessed them. When the Arabs charged the square the left face, upon which the rush came, poured in a comparatively ineffective fire, and it was found that twenty to thirty per cent. of the rifles were jammed. The improved mode of freeing the block from a jammed cartridge was to endeavour to throw the lever up and down smartly two or three times. If that plan did not work, then there was nothing for it but to hit the lever a sharp blow with a stick or stone or use the ramrod to eject the empty case or shell. Amid the hubbub and excitement of the conflict there were officers who went about with sticks, with which, taking the jammed rifles from the men's hands, they