

unaccountable, for the Warrant received the royal assent so long ago as on the 1st of April last, and it is difficult to understand why its provisions should not at once have been advertised. No alteration can properly be made in a document of the kind after it has been signed by the Queen, and the delay that has occurred can only be attributable to that official lethargy which has been the characteristic feature of Mr. Gathorne Hardy's administration of military affairs. It cannot, moreover, be urged that the conditions of the new system were well understood in consequence of the Secretary of State for War having detailed them at great length in his speech in the House of Commons on moving the annual Army Estimates. Mr. Hardy certainly spoke for a considerable time, and amongst other topics, "increased pay and deferred pay" had a place in his speech; but the present War Minister is, unfortunately, not a master of the technicalities of his business, and when he descends to the details of the measures he proposes, he is by no means easy to understand. In fact, we suspect he sometimes labours under the disadvantage of himself not clearly comprehending his subject, and it is not, therefore, very surprising that his explanations are not always perfectly lucid. At the same time, however, Mr. Hardy is undoubtedly a Minister of good intentions, and the increase of pay to the Army is a measure alike politic and liberal. Of the policy of increasing the soldiers' pay the Royal Warrant plainly speaks. "It has been found necessary," the preamble states, "to take into consideration the best means of improving the condition of the non-commissioned officers and men of the Army, and it has been represented that this end may be best attained by the provisions of the new warrant." It would, perhaps, have been more to the point if it had been frankly avowed that the purpose in view in bettering the soldier's position was not due to the interest felt in the men already in the Army, but in order to attract a class of the community to enlist which at present holds itself aloof from the Service. That the increase of pay, and the system of deferred pay, which the new measure inaugurates, will have a beneficial effect upon recruiting cannot be doubted, and it is to be hoped that the new measure will remove the difficulty which at present exists of supplying the vacancies in our already too much reduced establishment. Certain it is that the ordinary means and devices of the recruiting authorities have failed to secure a sufficient supply of men, and it can only be by assistance such as that which increased pay and improved prospects offer, that the Army can be kept up in an efficient state.

The most important influence, however, which the deferred pay system is likely to exert, is the lessening of the amount of desertion, the crime of desertion has of late years increased in the Service to an enormous extent, and notwithstanding the vigorous action of the authorities towards its suppression, it has gained ground. Deserters are indeed so numerous, that latterly it has been thought necessary to suppress as far as possible the statistics of the losses to the Service by this means, and even the persistent inquiries of Members of the House of Commons have failed to elicit from Mr. Hardy more than general statements and assurances. The matter, however, has not been considered in Parliament. After the difficulty of attracting men into the Army, that of keeping them in it when they have enlisted, has been the problem which Mr. Hardy has set himself to solve. And the invention of the deferred pay system is an

earnest of the Minister's anxiety to prevent men from deserting, by making it better worth their while to remain with the colours for the period for which they may have engaged themselves to serve. The deferred pay, although properly part of the wages which a soldier is in future to be held to receive, is not to be given over to him until the date for his discharge shall have arrived. It will thus happen that every man in the Army will have a balance accumulating to his credit, which will amount to no inconsiderable sum at the date of his discharge. This balance the act of desertion will of course forfeit, and therefore for the future every man who breaks his engagement with the State will inflict upon himself, in addition to the other penalties which the law provides, a pecuniary fine. It may be scarcely creditable to the Army that the admittedly best means of preventing desertion should be by obliging soldiers to place a certain amount of their earnings in the hands of the authorities, and later, no doubt, when the novelty of the deferred pay system has worn off, the Army will come to regard the extra twopence as a portion of their daily rate, which should not in justice be even temporarily withheld from them. For the present, however, no such complaint can be made. The additional pay is a clear gift, and therefore the authorities are in the position to bestow it upon their own Service, and with what reservations they choose to impose. In the meantime, however, it cannot be doubted that it will do much towards effecting the double purpose Mr. Hardy has in view. It will attract into the Service a better class of men than hitherto have offered themselves, and when once enlisted, it will retain the men, who, the longer they serve, the more they will have to lose by the act of desertion. The Warrant lays down that desertion shall entail a forfeiture of the amount of deferred pay a soldier may have to his credit, but it also provides for even desertion being a condonable offence, and power is vested in the Commander-in-Chief of giving back the sum which a soldier may have by his misbehaviour forfeited. This power should be, and doubtless will be, exercised with great discretion. Desertion is an offence which requires repression with a strong hand, and the men of the Army should be made to understand that they do injury to themselves as well as to their country by breaking the engagement into which they have solemnly entered. The fact of leaving their savings behind them may necessarily deter many from deserting, and if this motive of loyalty to the Service is not a high one, it must be accepted as possessing the recommendation of proving efficacious. On the other hand, it must be remembered that it is only the worst class of soldiers who desert, and that with these the most direct way to convert them from their evil ways is by making it pay them better to behave themselves.

The new Warrant should indeed bear good and abundant fruit. It does justice to the men actually in the Service, as it provides in a reasonable and liberal way for the recruits of the future. To the increased scale of remuneration to the non-commissioned ranks we have not in this place alluded, because it is a matter very distinct from that portion of the Warrant which deals with the recruit and private soldier. It would indeed have been better perhaps if the Warrant had been put into two, and that two separate documents should have been framed, one dealing with increased pay, and the other with deferred pay. At the same time, it must be admitted that the new regulations have been laid down with great clearness,

and no bad results are likely to follow from the amalgamation in one Warrant of two measures which in reality are distinct and independent of each other. Mr. Hardy gained no little credit for his new measure when he announced it two months back. The system, however, was not explained with sufficient lucidity to command unqualified support. Now, however, the Warrant giving effect to Mr. Hardy's intention is before us, it is impossible to come to any other conclusion than that the present War Minister has effected a valuable and most wholesome reform, and that he seems to be adopting at length the liberal and enlightened policy the practice of which placed Lord Cardwell in the first rank of the statesmen of his day.—*Broad Arrow.*

### The Proposed Torpedo Corps.

While Congress is endeavoring to reduce the number of fighting men in our land service, it should not be forgotten that the enlistment and organization of the Torpedo Corps recommended by the Chief Engineers will increase the army by 500 men. This force is equivalent to a regiment on the present peace footing, and must have its Colonel, field officers, and regimental commissioned and non-commissioned staff. This intended augmentation of the army by the small number of 500 men, simple as it looks on its face, is but the entering point of a Macedonian wedge that, once firmly set, becomes irresistible by its constantly increasing numbers. It can hardly be expected that this corps would long retain the primitive formation of a regiment. A bureau would soon be established at Washington—where there are already too many—and at its head a chief, having the rank of Brigadier-General, with an indefinitely extended line of aiguilleted staff officers and countless sub-depots of household troops quartered at the fortified points from Maine to Alaska.

The influence of the Engineer Corps, mainly derived from its intimate connection with harbor and river improvements and the disbursing of large sums of money therefor, is sufficiently potent now among members of Congress. What would that influence become when strengthened by another bureau, more staff officers, more money to spend, and a line of retainers and employees limited in length only by the extent of our almost boundless coast? Then fancy the interminable legislation, year after year, to reorganize and "reduce" this corps until its proportions should equal those of the present Quartermaster's Department.

Thoughtful men who have observed the effects of special and class legislation, and who make shrewd guesses at the processes by which it is effected at Washington by the men or classes most to be benefitted thereby, may well pause to reflect before introducing another vicious, because purely selfish, element into the executive branch of our Government.

But are we to have no torpedoes and no torpedo system—no skilled men to operate the one and perfect the other? The answer is, that corps exists already, only under another name. There are in the service of the Government five regiments of artillery, aggregating 2,500 men. These men, with the exception of five small companies equipped as light artillery, and are mainly employed in garrisoning the sea coast fortifications, where they are being educated as artilleryists to work the heavy ordnance that commands the neighbouring channels. The fortifications so garrisoned are the points at which torpedoes should be stored, from which they must necessarily be most gener-