

Government has hitherto prevailed in keeping up an absolutely essential precaution.

In the case of the foreign order, these regulations were dispensed with. There was no waiting for Government drawings, no testing of rough material, no standard pattern as an ultimate criterion. Mr. Brodrick's advisers forgot to tell him that English producers were thus handicapped to the extent of 50 per cent. of the time of manufacture; but experience with the German material has shown that a rigid inspection can by no means be neglected with impunity.

In turning from the differences of the conditions under which the English and German equipments were supplied to the actual differences between the equipments themselves, we shall venture to give some very short descriptions, accompanied by outline sketches.

Of the guns themselves we have little to say, because the question of the moment is the rapidity of manufacture, and it is the carriage and not the gun that is the measure or determining factor in the date of delivery.

The English carriage is a characteristically "Government" design; sound and serviceable, simple in general arrangement, but complicated and expensive in detail. Ideas of economy are foreign, and often distasteful, to Government factories, and heads of departments are disposed to give contractors a monopoly of the "healthy spirit of competition" of which so much is heard. It is probable that no one who had his living to make would design the English service carriage, for the simple reason that any price he could hope to get for it would be swallowed up in the cost of manufacture. At the same time we are far from wishing to make cheapness the sole, or even the chief, criterion. Economy is apt to become a fetish, and the gentlemanly high-backed extravagance of the Royal Arsenal may, after all, serve as a wholesome corrective to that parsimony which results in ineffectiveness. The present carriage is no doubt needlessly expensive in some points, but in admitting this, and that it is a little heavy, we have