

combined in nearly equal proportions, producing a moderate explosive under control, was the starting point of a new era in smokeless powder. Cordite has proved itself to be very safe to manufacture in its later stages, *i.e.*, after incorporation. The small-arm magazine rifle undoubtedly suffers in the bore from the great heat evolved and the high velocity imparted to the projectile, but this difficulty has been almost overcome by the use of a suitable wad.

The Director-General said: "With regard to the erosion we do not know much yet, but that is a matter of course that has still to be proved by actual experiment."

The damaging effects of the Lee-Metford bullet are graphically related by Vet.-Surgeon Capt. F. Smith in a paper read before the Royal United Service Institution, describing the experiments which he conducted against the bones of horses at ranges from 50 to 1000 yards. "The results of these experiments were astonishing; the damage done to bones and joints was such as was never anticipated, and it was seen that, so far as the diameter of the bullet was concerned, it might safely be calculated to inflict a maximum of damage on vital parts of the body, and demonstrated the intense destruction which a small bullet was capable of inflicting on the dense tissues of the body, such as bones and joints. The outcome of these experiments was the adoption of the Lee-Metford bullet as we now know it."

Some firing experiments were lately made on Beaufort Plains range with Martini ammunition loaded with S.R. or smokeless rifle, a granulated slaty yellow smokeless powder, manufactured by the Smokeless Powder Company of England, resulting in its favor by an average of 15 points per man over the ordinary black powder, and the recoil of the Martini-Henry, it appears, was materially reduced. But a firing trial on the rifle range is not alone sufficient to decide the merits of any explosive, and as cordite has been adopted in the Imperial service after most searching investigations in all points by H.I.M. Ordnance Committee, by such eminent experienced men as Sir Frederick Abel and Dr. Anderson, the Director-General, their experience should have considerable weight in this important question of the composition of the charge for the '303 cartridge now about to be introduced into the Canadian service.

Coxey's army of tramps are still on the march for Washington, from many points of the compass. The number that will reach there even Coxey admits to be quite uncertain; but he thinks there ought to be from 300,000 to 500,000 around the capital by the 1st of May. If a reported interview with the chief of the tramps be correctly given, he predicts that "some spark will start a fire that will be worse than any prairie conflagration ever known." This may be, but we doubt much that Coxey's army will ever reach one-fourth the number mentioned above. Already various divisions of the army in the west are coming into conflict with the U. S. troops. It is impossible to believe that the Washington Government will allow these marauders to get the upper hand or to assume dictatorial powers.

MILITIA REPORT.

SHARP CRITICISM BY MAJOR-GEN. HERBERT.

OTTAWA, April 19.—The annual report of the Minister of Militia and Defence, which was brought down to-day, has been received with much more than the usual interest. This is because of the report of the Major-General commanding, which it contains.

Major-General Herbert's report is of course the first turned out. At the outset he writes:—"Both the cavalry and infantry of the permanent force are far below the standard of efficiency which has been attained by the artillery. This is due entirely to the fact that the officers appointed to raise and organize these forces, unlike the Imperial officers who laid the foundations of the Royal Canadian Artillery, had not the accurate knowledge and practical experience of military administration which is indispensable to those entrusted with command. Neither had they the assistance of carefully trained and selected non-commissioned officers. They have therefore been obliged to feel their way where they should have seen it clearly, and to learn bit by bit that with which they should have been familiar by constant habit. They deserve, however, none the less, credit for the measure of success which has attended their efforts. Since the withdrawal of the Imperial troops there has existed in Canada nothing that could serve as a model or standard of military organization and efficiency for the guidance of the militia. I have endeavoured, therefore, by means of improved organization and distribution of the small permanent force at my disposal, to remedy to a certain extent this deficiency. With this object several changes have been made during the past year."

The Officers.

After reciting the changes made and drawing attention to the lack of professional attainments in the officers of the Canadian permanent force, the Major-General goes on to remark that the number of men enlisted has been insufficient to make good the waste arising from various causes, and points out that it must be observed that no special measures have been taken to make known to the public the advantages which are offered by the permanent service, and that he has found it necessary to check the uncontrolled readmission of men into the ranks from which they had already been discharged.

The Efficient Force

In discussing the general condition of the active militia, Major-General Herbert points out that provision is made for 28 710 infantry of all ranks, divided as follows:—Officers, 2564; non-commissioned officers, 3628; bandsmen and buglers, 2562; privates, 19 856. The total number of rifles which under the most favourable circumstances could be placed in line would thus be only 69 per cent. of the total number of men. A comparison between Canadian and English militia shows that in Canada the number of officers to privates (combatant) is one to eight, while in England it is only one to thirty-two. The proportion of non-commissioned officers to privates (combatant) is one to five, while in England it is one to ten. After stating the proportions Major-General Herbert writes:—"A deduction of 25 per cent. can be made from the numbers authorized for rural battalions of militia, and this deficit exists entirely in the rank of the privates, since the commanding officers always permit the non-commissioned ranks to be filled up regardless of considerations as to fitness or qualification. A further deduction of 25 per cent. can be made for men withdrawn from the ranks for various reasons, and who, while they draw pay, do not undergo any training as infantry soldiers. Thus, the possible 19 856 privates allowed by the establishment is quickly reduced below 10,000, which represents the maximum total strength of infantry that would receive elementary instruction in drill if the whole force was called out.

Suggested Remedies.

"This condition can only be remedied: 1st. By a firm refusal to authorize the formation of new units. 2nd. By raising the establishment of existing efficient units to a strength consistent with military requirements. 3rd. By the disbanding of inefficient units. By these means a consolidation of the force will be effected. There will be fewer persons occupying commissioned and non-commissioned appointments, but there will be a larger defensive force, and as there will be a greater number of men in the ranks, there will be a more extensive field for the selection of suitable and qualified men for the superior grades. It will, moreover, enable a clerk to be put upon the issue of those allowances for which at present the country receives no real value."

The Major-General closes his report upon the general condition of the militia as follows:—"I cannot close this report without expressing my appreciation of the excellent material that exists in this country for the formation of a military force. There are men of all ranks in the militia whose earnestness and zeal are beyond all praise, who are actuated by a high sense of duty, and whom any officer must feel proud to command."

PRESENTATION.

In commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the establishment of the Military School in St. Johns, and to mark the good feeling that has always existed between the barracks and the town, a double presentation was made to the Company on behalf of a number of citizens of St. Johns on Thursday of last week. The presentation took the form of an elegant cabinet of forks, knives, spoons, etc., to the officers' mess and a handsome marble clock to the sergeants' mess. The cabinet contained about 200 pieces of the best quadruple electro plate, each article being stamped with the initials "R. R. C. I.," while the artistic oak case in which they were placed contained this inscription:

"Presented to the Officers' Mess of No. 3 Co., R.R.C.I., by friends in St. Johns, April, 1894."

The spoons, knives, forks, etc., are of a remarkably chaste design, as well as the case in which they are enclosed and all reflect credit upon the enterprising firm of Messrs. Simpson, Hall & Miller, Notre-Dame street, Montreal, from whom they were purchased. The clock is a French timepiece of inlaid black marble and bears an inscription similar to that on the cabinet. It is quite a gem in its way and was purchased at the well-known establishment of W. S. Walker, St. James St., Montreal, which is in itself a guarantee of the excellency of the article.

The committee entrusted with the pleasant task of procuring the gifts and making the presentation proceeded by appointment to the barracks on Thursday afternoon of last week and first visiting the cozy and home-like room wherein the sergeants hold social intercourse, tendered the clock on behalf of the subscribers. The ceremony was a very informal one. Mr. Carreau said a few pleasant and encouraging words in French and Mr. Smith spoke briefly in English, and Sergt. Doxtrader, in the absence of Sergt. Maj. Phillips, received and warmly acknowledged the compliment on behalf of his companions in arms. Then the Commandant