"Altogether, the War Department may fairly congratulate themselves that they did not allow the Stowmarket catastrophe to lead them to abandon a material which is eminently suitable for military purposes, and daily gives fresh proofs of its economical and efficient character."—*Broad Arrow.*

LORD ELCHO ON MOUNTED RIFLEMEN

The question of the proper training of mounted riflemen was treated by Colonel Wood, V.C., in his recent lecture, with special application to the regular army, in which he sought to have a small contigent of the new arm formed at once on the model he proposed. But it was well understood that his remarks applied with even greater force to the auxiliaries, and especially to those so called Yeomanry cavalry regiments which are the heritage of a bygone age, useful rather in an historical point of view as monuments of feudalism than for any practical purpose in their present gaudy and wholly unserviceable shape. This does not appear, however, to have been the application made of Colonel Wood's study by the chairman, Lord Elcho, was followed up the discussion by a correspondence, since published as a pamplet, in which he advocates the making a great part of our cavalry—the Hussars at least—more or less mounted riflemen, armed with a light long ranging, breech loading rifle, and trained to act on occasion as infantry skirmishers. In a letter to the Duke of Cambrdge, which heads the correspondence, his lordship not only offers his suggestion, but anticipates and replies to the objections which he knows may be raised to it, and more especially to that important one that "as cavalry they would learn to trust to their rifle and not to their sword." We need not follow his arguments here. That on which he evidently relies is the existence of the admirable little corps, or rather troop, of Hants Volunteer Horse, commanded by Colonel Bower, who manage to carry their rifles on the saddle without difficulty by the aid of the contrivance known as the Namaqua bucket, and yet says truly enough, cavalry armed only with the carbine would be no match at a long range for such a force; and he proceeds to argue that the present dismounted drill might be easily modified, and the improved weapon carried as described, without hindering the efficiency of the force as all theory is against this view; and the argument he attacks rests not only on physical causes, but on that moral element which organisers cannot overlook without failure. In short, he seems to us to leave this old question of the possibility of making cavalry infantry at will pretty much where he found it. Some sharp correspondence seems to have followed on this letter to the Commander-in-Chief; and a special inspection took place of Colonel Bower's volunteers, to the details of whose practice the Horse Guards raise certain objections, though, it is added, either as a compliment or in irony, that the "field marshal has no desire to interfere or make any change in the system or equipment." This, if sincerely meant, was by way of balance probably to the desire implied that no change at all should be made in our present cavalry system in the direction Lord Elcho suggests. Possibly enough, the military authorities at Pall Mall are rather sore at an obvious shortcoming being indicated by a civilian. Indeed, his lordship, though apologising with much humility for intruding into the professional arena, hardly took the best way to conciliate them when, in arguing for his position, he pointed ever so lightly to that obvious blunder of our most recent cavalry regulations which still shows the possibility of the silly practice of skirmishing with the carbine on horseback: "than which," as he most justly observes, "a more wasteful expenditure of ammunition cannot be conceived, it being a relic of the days of inaccurate firearms, when the best chance of hitting an enemy was not to aim at him." The truer such a remark, the more certain it is to wound those whose obstinacy is answerable for the maintenance of the folly.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

TRIAL OF THE DEVASTATION.

At length the *Devastation* has made an exceeding good and satisfactory trial, meeting off the rough headlands which project into the Atlantic from the coast of Berehaven with a strength of wind from 7 to 8—moderate gale force—and with seas having a maximum height of twenty three feet, but somewhat deficient in length. The *Devastation* had never previously met with so much wind or sea since she has been afloat, and the very creditable way in which she came out of the day's trial comparatively with the ship accompanying her, the *Agincourt*, the flagship of Rear-Admiral Hornby—a ship whose sea going qualifications are known and admitted to be of the best character as an ironclad—would appear to fully confirm opinions which have been previously given in the columns of the *Times* upon the monitor's stability and seaworthiness.

From the time of the *Devastation's* return to Berehaven anchorage on Tuesday evening last week until Sunday evening the wind had held light from north-north west, with an occasional fly out to west or west south west for a few hours. On Sunday evening, however, a heavy blow suddenly set in, after a day's heavy rain, and increased to a strong gale towards midnight. Second anchors were let go by the *Agincourt*, the *Devastation*, and the *Sultan*, but by seven o'clock the following morning (Monday, the 15th) the *Agincourt* and the *Devastation* were weighing theirs again, again, to give the monitor a day's trial, the *Sultan* remaining at the anchorage. Rear-Admiral Hornby, accompanied by Flag Lieutenant Bruce, embarked on board the *Devastation* before eight a. m., and the two ships were soon afterwards clear of Berehaven, and steaming out to sea, on a course parallel with the land, for Dursey Head and the Calf Rock Lighthouse. Between Berehaven and Dursey Head the wind was found strong, with a higher sea than was found in the same position by the *Devastation* and the *Sultan* on the previous Tuesday, but there was not as yet nearly so high or long a run of the sea as had been anticipated as the results of the very strong wind during the night. The rate of steaming started with from Berehaven would have given the ships about eight knots in smooth water, but, steaming now, as they were, with the sea breaking a point or two on their starboard bows, the log showed their speed to be reduced by the sea to about six and a half knots, the two pitching very heavily at times, but the *Devastation* certainly pitching less now than she did in the more broken and irregular seas on Tuesday, although she was now contending with much greater seas and with a very much stronger wind. At about 11 30 a.m, when Dursey Head was abeam on the starboard hand, the *Devastation* made the heaviest pitch she had yet made since leaving her anchorage, making 6 degrees a. each end, or 12 degrees from "out to out." She took a great quantity of water on board as a matter of necessity, but it ran off and overboard again nearly as quickly as it came on. The *Agincourt* was pitching not a whit less than the *Devastation*—in fact she now and then appeared to excel the *Devastation* in her performances in this respect. After passing Dursey Head and the Calf Lighthouse the speed of the ships was kept up at about the same rate, but to do this the speed of their engines had to be increased, the *Devastation's* being advanced from 45 to 51 revolutions per minute: but some time afterwards the speed of the engines was reduced again, this time to 40 per minute, to observe the action of the vessel in meeting the seas at the two rates of speed. At the lower rate, of course the *Devastation* moved along more easily, the wind and the sea being kept about three or four points on the starboard bow. This position of the sea and the wind to the *Devastation's* bows when she may have to steam against a sea is undoubtedly her best point, but the same may be said of all ironclads. The ships were afterwards gradually edged off the wind, observations being taken of their action, until she was brought dead on to the broadside, when the engines were stopped and the ships kept lying in the trough of the sea for some time, to ascertain the amount of roll which could be got out of them, the estimate maximum height of the waves observed during the time being 23ft. These observations were taken on deck by battens, and were quite independent of the diagrams being made below by Mr. Froude's automatic apparatus.

At 2 p. m., with the engines stopped and the sea breaking dead on the starboard broadside, the *Agincourt's* signalled return was—rolls per minute, nine in number; maximum roll from out to out, 17 deg.; mean of all rolls from out to out, 4 deg.

Devastation, 2 p. m.—Rolls per minute, 9·2 in number; maximum roll from out to out, 14·74 deg.; mean of rolls from out to out, 4·5 deg.

The next observations of the two ships were taken with the engines driving them ahead again, when the results were found—

Agincourt.—Rolls per minute, 9·5 in number; maximum roll from out to out, 11·5.; mean of rolls from out to out, 6·5 deg.

Devastation.—Rolls per minute, 9·2 in number; maximum roll from out to out, 14·74 deg.; mean of roll, out to out, 3·2 deg.

Shortly afterwards the course of the two ships was altered for the land and their return to Bantry Bay, bringing the wind and sea four points abaft the port beam, and observations with the batten indexes were again taken to get the roll of the ships in going before the sea, or nearly so. The results were as follows:—

Agincourt.—Roll per minute, eight in number, maximum roll from out to out, 19 deg.; mean of rolls from out to out, 11·4 deg.

Devastation.—Rolls per minute, 9·2 in number; maximum roll from out to out, 13·75 deg.; mean of rolls from out to out, 4·1 deg.

In steaming in for Bantry Bay both ships gave an occasional rolls of quite an exceptional character. Those of the *Agincourt* were not signalled, but three made at different times by the *Devastation* reached 2 50 deg., 25 deg., and 26·75 deg., from, out to out or through the entire swing.

The maximum length of the waves may be taken at 3000ft. On board the *Devastation* their maximum height was estimated at 24ft., but on board the *Agincourt* they were estimated at 27ft.