

work. If they are not thoroughly capable there are plenty of others who are, or we have been misinformed as to the efficiency of the Royal Military College at Kingston.

The rifle shooting season appears to be fully opened in all parts of the country, and satisfactory reports of good shooting are being daily received from all corners of this broad Dominion. If the pace set at the start of the season is kept up we should see the best shooting at the D. R. A. meeting that has ever been seen at Ottawa. We wish that more attention were paid to shooting under service conditions, minus the return firing from the target, of course.

Route marching is another branch of military work that might well be taken up. It would interest the men and be of great practical value. One of the obvious advantages would be the practical knowledge the militiamen would acquire of the necessity of being properly shod. As it is one average city militia battalion is very faultily shod. The ordinary pavement boot is but a poor foot covering for even a moderately long walk on country roads.

The British militia is to be supplied with proper full dress head-dress by the government. The lead might well be followed in Canada. We believe that a proper representation of the fact would convince the Minister of Militia that it is a piece of sheer meanness to make the city corps buy their own busbies and helmets. As to the country corps they could do much more work in camp were they provided with helmets.

We shou'd like to hear the new Minister's intention with regard to the re-armament and re-equipment of the militia. The Minister must know that the force is armed with an antiquated and discredited rifle, and it is to be hoped that he will be impressed with the fact that no battalion in the country has the equipment for the men to carry their necessaries and ammunition in.

Reading a decision as to the new rifle, what has become of all the government Martini-Henrys which were sent over to England for conversion? While of an enquiring turn of mind, is sufficient attention

being paid to the question of providing suitable ranges for long range rifles?

An editorial in the *United Service Gazette* on the range question has a double interest for us owing to a reference therein to the Martini-Metford. The paragraphs in question read :

"Provision of better range accommodation, there is an increasing conviction, has become a most acute question. Loud as have been the complaints from time to time uttered, very little progress has been comparatively made, though of course it is admitted that something has been done. The importance of the Volunteers being armed with a weapon that will carry the same ammunition and have the same range as the one that is used by the Regular Army is fully recognised, and, therefore, greatly welcomed is the proposal to arm the former force with a new rifle by the conversion of the present rifle into a Martini-Metford by the substitution of the Metford barrel for the present Henry barrel. The unqualified satisfaction that would otherwise be felt at the intended change is greatly discounted by the certainty perceived that long-range rifles cannot be safely used on short rifle ranges, and that therefore the many latter which exist throughout the country will have perforce to be closed. Provision, wherever really required, of an adequate and safe range, both for the Regular and Reserve Forces, is regarded as an absolute and pressing necessity for proper musketry training. What it is asked, would be the use of troops, however well they might manœuvre, if, when they came in face of the enemy, they by their fire could inflict upon him but little loss?"

The same magazine has evidently hope of the CANADIAN MILITARY GAZETTE'S militia reform campaign having some effect for it says :

"From recent indications it is really hoped that there is a fair chance of the Canadian Militia being re-armed and re-equipped with the best rifle, the best field guns, and the best equipment obtainable. For years the Canadian Militia have, it is considered, been scurvily treated by the Government, and portions of the Canadian Press have not been slow to keep the public informed of the fact, but without much result. Latterly, however, the Canadian Military Gazette has taken the lead in a more systematic and persistent campaign, and, it is trusted, with some good effect. Very pertinent is thought to be the question raised as to what kind of a defensible position Canada would have found herself in if the recent small Anglo-French war cloud had developed into actual hostilities. Thoughtful Canadians, it is noted, are beginning to admit that Canada is rather too inclined to rely on the strong arm which is behind the Dominion and her sister Colonies.

None too soon, it is judged, is it for the improvement of the Canadian Militia to

be taken in hand, seeing that the Canadian Military Gazette roundly asserts that neither in organization or equipment has it advanced since 1885, the year of the outbreak of the North-West rebellion. Then the men and officers were ready; they always are and always will be; but the journal in question declares that they were as badly armed as any Chinese levies, as faultily equipped, and without any Transport, Hospital Service, or Commissariat. Some regiments called out had not a single uniform issued. There was not one properly shod or properly clothed corps sent to the front.

The ammunition, it is asserted, was bad, and the accoutrements so rotten that most of the rounds, and nearly all of the equipment, that the men should have carried had to be transported in wag-gons. When the force returned to Winnipeg, after five months' campaign, the uniforms were a combination of rags and sackcloth patches. The Japanese army in China has never faced a more disgracefully equipped force. Such strong language as this, it is thought, could hardly have been used, even allowing for a little possible journalistic exaggeration, without there was some considerable justification.

We beg to assure our esteemed contemporary that it need not make even a little allowance for exaggeration in connection with the MILITARY GAZETTE'S articles on the state of militia. Interest in the service with a bit of Canadian pride perhaps rather prevents us from making things quite as bad as they are. General Sir Fred Middleton or anybody else who was in the North-West will substantiate every word we have printed about the wretched condition of the equipment of the North-West Field Force.

### Riflemen as Soldiers.

Colonel E. C. Farrington, inspector general of rifle practice of Maine, recently addressed the commissioned officers of the Second Regiment of Infantry of his state. The subject of his address was marksmanship; and, in the course of his remarks, he very vividly showed the superiority of riflemen as soldiers. Of this he says:—

"When the Guard came into camp last summer, I was standing on Water street, and one of the best drilled companies in the Guard started toward the grounds, and while I was admiring the splendid marching of the first three sets of fours, I saw the sharpshooters' and marksmen's badges glistening in the sunlight as they proudly moved on, when a young 'kid' on the sidewalk sang out, 'See the fellers in the rear!' I looked down the line, and marching out of step and time came a dozen or more soldiers, not a marksman's button shining, rifles askew, straggling on behind. I felt hurt. Such a splendid exhibition of military discipline marred by the inefficiency of a few men."

The foregoing remarks is additional testimony that good riflemen are the best soldiers.—Army and Navy Journal, N.S.