

How foolish we all are to be sure, when in our lucid moments we stop to reflect on these things. There may possibly be yet people who will maintain that the government cartridge factory is responsible for the above 1,024 misses. But the men who fired were candid enough to think otherwise. This system of ours carries with it the same horrible story if we look at the sword of the cavalry or the bayonet of the infantry. What becomes most astounding is the fact that no one thinks anything of the tale told by the score sheet of "duck eggs." From the C.O. down we all laugh at the affair as rather a good joke. But the man who breaks the line of a march past one quarter of an inch is a culprit of the most dangerous type, and a useless soldier. A man may never strike the six feet square of iron for years, nor care to do so, but still his promotion as an instructor goes on until he reaches the highest grade among the non-com. officers, but the ignorant wretch who fails in his examination to properly define—"what is the angle of departure?" "describe the angle of incidence?"—is looked upon as an impossible warrior in any capacity. I here must agree with the GAZETTE, which questions the statement of the major-general that any man with a quick hand and eye can pick up nearly as quickly as the artificially trained shot, as he terms it. The GAZETTE is right and the idea of the major-general, with all due respect to him, is about as correct as would be his theory applied to a man with a quick nerve, eye and leg, trying his first waltz with some artificially trained old stager. Apply it to anything else, "cricket," "base ball" or "racquets," and all will tell the same tale, the old hand will walk round the quickest eye and hand in the world till he has had sufficient practice to bring his accomplishments under control. Another warning I must humbly ask you to swallow, don't let your friends run off to the other extreme, about firing at "moving objects," it is not at all necessary, be satisfied up to 500 yards at the farthest to hit a stationary object. As far as moving objects in the North-west, at least, were concerned, we saw little of them, except our own men, because the rebels did not run much, and when they did we never saw them except in isolated cases. Let us train our men to fire at an object and a good solid one too, and if they can't get a sure pot shot keep the cartridge till they can. Our universal custom up west with the enemy, as expressed by most of the officers at the supreme moment was "Give it to 'em, boys. Give 'em h——. Let them have it" was most demoralizing to every one, and lowered us in the eyes of our foes far more than anyone can judge.

On this principle the faintest sight of a rebel or a fluttering blanket was the signal for a useless expenditure of barrels of ammunition. Whereas if these same men had been used to shooting and handling their weapons with the confident feeling of striking the object they would have known when it was impossible to make effective practice. But, poor fellows, they knew not such sensations, and, therefore, blindly they "Let 'em have it, boys." How different with the Indians. Few and far between came the puffs of smoke from the hostile bluffs, but mark the effect, a white man bit the dust, and a triumphant war whoop proclaimed the fact to the contending forces. In numerous cases I noted the difference in those men who were known good shots and experienced marksmen. They lay quietly waiting, smiling at the painful exhibition around them, they fired when they saw a chance and only then. The others blazed wildly on and then followed the shriek, "more ammunition," "more ammunition." The American officer quoted above goes on to say in his work relating to this subject: "I lay on the skirmish line at Cold Harbor in June, 1864, when infantry and cavalry attacked us for several hours. I knew well that during all that time I could not get rid of more than 20 shots aimed at anything certain, bullets were flying about but they were fired at random. A knot of cool hands lay on the ground near me, each by his little pile of rails, and a shot about once in a minute with a long steady aim at the puffs of the enemy's smoke was all that we could manage conscientiously. At the same time terrible firing was going on at our right, as if a corps of infantry were engaged, and then the first thing we knew were men falling back there 'out of ammunition.' He says again: "If a prize were offered to the man who should maintain his post in the skirmish line and bring out the largest number of cartridges the system would kill more enemies and be twice as much dreaded as under the random style of fighting."

How true are these maxims which will be fulfilled when we take the matter properly in hand and impress upon men the object of never shooting except to hit and affording them time and ammunition to carry it out.

NOODLE.

The Victoria *Warder* appeals to the citizens of Lindsay not to let their local band fall through for want of funds. A new bandmaster must be got; and it is suggested that the council should allow something towards his salary, and that the balance be raised by subscriptions. We wish the effort success.

THE NEW NORTH-WEST PASSAGE.

BY EDMUND CORNWALL LEGH, IN THE "BROAD ARROW."

To a nation like ours, whose commerce extends to every part of the globe, with possessions on nearly every shore, and with our flag flying on every sea, nothing is more important for our peace and security than safe and rapid transport. Yet notwithstanding that this fact is indisputable, we do not seem to attach sufficient weight to it. Let us consider for a moment what this transport is. In the abstract of course the word only means "carrying across," but as used in connection with the empire, it expresses the very keystone of our existence as a leading power. It is by means of transport that we carry on our commerce, in other words, that we make our money; without it what would be the use of our having naval dockyards and store-houses abroad and coaling depots at unproductive places? And were it not for facilities of transport, our army in India, and consequently our taxes, would have to be enormously increased. But are we justified in assuming that our means of rapidly sending troops to India on an emergency is secure? Up to a few months ago there were only two practicable routes open for troops, the long one round the Cape, of nearly forty days, and the comparatively short one of thirty-eight days, via the Suez Canal—the Brindisi route is of course out of the question. . . . No government would, while the canal was reported clear, send any transports out by the Cape, and although their route could be changed on making Gibraltar or even Malta, had it become blocked in the meantime, delay and uncertainty would necessarily be caused by the change. After calling attention to this national danger, it is satisfactory to be able to point out that we have now in our own hands the means of neutralising it. Our ancestors always believed that the nearest way to the east was by the west, and offered large sums for the discovery of such a route. The first attempt to find it was made about 400 years ago by a Portuguese named Corte Real, but the actual discovery was not made until over three centuries afterwards, by Sir John Franklin, and notwithstanding all the money and lives that have been expended in connection with it, *this north-west passage can never be of the slightest practical value.* It has been left to the Canadians of the present day to discover, or rather to create, the true one, and this they have accomplished by the construction of the Canadian Pacific railway. Well may Lord Harrowby, speaking in the House of Lords a short time ago, describe it as "one of the greatest and most marvellous works of our time." The company only received its charter in the spring of 1881, but in the short period which has since elapsed it has itself built no less than 2,140 miles of substantial railway, connecting the Pacific with the Atlantic by a continuous line lying entirely within British territory, and being in the hands of a single company. The importance to the empire of this undertaking cannot be over-rated. Apart from its commercial advantages, and the opening up of an enormous tract of British territory, and the consolidation so to speak of the dominion, it provides a new channel of communication with the east, unhampered by the necessity of entering foreign soil. To make the whole complete, we are asked, now that the railway has become an accomplished fact, to assist in crowning the enterprise, to quote Lord Harrowby again, by granting a subsidy for a certain number of years from the imperial funds to enable the company to construct a line of steamers to run between Vancouver and Japan and China. It is proposed to build them under admiralty supervision, and they are to be readily convertible into armed cruisers or troopships, the necessary guns, fittings, etc., for as many as it may be considered advisable to be able suddenly to utilize, could be stored, a certain number of complete outfits at Vancouver and the remainder at Hong Kong. The craft are to make an average of not less than 14 knots, but to be capable of running 17 to 18 knots, so that the passage from Vancouver to Hong Kong will occupy less than 12 days. Thus it will take:—

	Via C. P. Railway and its Steamers.	Now, via Suez.
England to Yokohama	24 to 26 days	against 43 to 46 days.
" Shanghai	28 " 30	" 39 " 42 "
" Hong Kong	29½ " 31½	" 34 " 37 "
		Brindisi. Cape.
" Calcutta	38 " 40	" 29 " 38 "
" Bombay	41 " 43	" 26 " 37 "

A well-known authority on international law, writing on the complications which may arise in connection with the Suez canal, says:—"England's position with regard to the eastern question has been greatly altered by the opening of the Canadian Pacific railway. . . . A free passage through the canal for our transports is by no means so essential to the defence of the empire as it was a short time ago;" and he points out that on receipt of a telegram from England the 1,500 to 2,000 soldiers stationed at Halifax could immediately proceed by rail across the continent to the Pacific, reaching the city of Vancouver in