

strength of 260 horses, and that the deductions for transport and casualties left the strength of each regiment at 170 mounted men, or of a brigade of cavalry at 500, being about two thirds the number of a single Prussian regiment. We believe it is true that from 35 to 40 horses are deducted from each cavalry regiment for transport (except the Household Cavalry. We have heard, indeed, that in one Light Dragoon regiment (10th Hussars) they had no horses heavy enough for the waggons, and they gave £50 a piece for 20 horses, in order to supply their contingent for the duty. Without asking where the £10 over the Cavalry price (£40) came from, it is surely a wrong system to take cavalry horses for this service. Their muscles are all trained to carry a load (about 17 stone), and if another set of muscles, which have to draw a weight, are called into play, their backs are not strong enough for it. Each waggon weighs about 17 cwt., which is too much for a small blood horse, like those of the 10th Hussars. The proper course would have been to provide them with draught transport horses, to be driven by the dismounted men, so that the strength of the troop might not be weakened."

No stronger argument could be adduced than that furnished by our contemporary against the practice of placing the commissariat of an army under civilian control, or allowing the interference of the civil element in any way except as primary contractors or sellers of the necessary articles of supply.

The most important element in warfare is its cost, and the first item in that is the supply of food and material outside the munitions of war proper, because it is that consideration and no other that limits the force employed, and as a consequence, the operations.

Now under the system of modern warfare, in all the requirements demanded from the aspirant for command this question of *Logistics* is the one least considered and about which least is known, the practice being to exclude the fighting soldier from all participation in its workings and to use him as a machine for a single object.

As can be easily seen the loss is considerably greater than the gain, the whole operations of an army frequently depending on some dull and respectable clerk in the commissariat department whose ideas are bounded by the walls of his office and his knowledge of operations by *red tape*.

In February last Mr. DE FONBLANQUE delivered a lecture before the *United Service Institution*, on the *Control Service* which has created some discussion in military circles at home, and as it bears directly on the question of *Commissariat* in all its branches, in which we are interested, it will be as well to consider the able analysis of the lecture made by a correspondent of the *Broad Arrow* of 7th Sept.

It should be premised that the lecturer is or was Deputy Controller, and the correspondent asserts that he proves the following facts relative to the system:

1st. That the members of the administrative branch of Control at home, have not

yet been permitted to exercise their natural functions as Controllers, and of course their abilities in that capacity have not as yet been tried.

2nd. That the body of junior clerks forming the present Control Department, of whom, according to his own account, there are upwards of from four to five hundred, are with the exception of those of one particular branch (that to which he himself belonged of course) from circumscribed knowledge, unfitted for the office of Controller.

3rd. That even this exceptionally gifted one (the Commissariat) is less gifted for Control, than would be combatant officers who have heretofore performed the duties of quartermaster-general.

4th. That Controllers, as a general rule, are unfitted for the custody or control of warlike stores.

It would appear from the lecture that the first effort of the lecturer to perform administrative functions, ended in securing him a rebuke from the War Office, for acting on his judgment, and acting rightly in a case not provided for in the "Regulations."

The complications of the system is graphically portrayed by the hosts of junior clerks, and the question may be naturally asked as to what they can find to do.

It is admitted that the two principal branches of Control, the administration of warlike Stores, and the actual supply of the troops in the field, would be better confided to the Quarter master general's department, and it is evident from the lecture that the whole would be better managed by combatant officers.

The lecturer admits that the department as organised at present, is unfit for administering the affairs connected with ordnance or warlike stores. These properly belong to the artillery, and, if rumor is correct, Mr. DE FONBLANQUE was the most active agitator for the destruction of the old Ordnance Department, the powerful newspaper advocate for a new order of things, and a total failure when success enabled him to assume duties which previous education or training totally disqualified him for in the administration of the affairs of the Department to which he succeeded.

It is very evident that the more such questions as this connected with military administration comes to be investigated, that the evil of employing civil assistance will be more clearly demonstrated. The Financial Department alone should be under civil control, and there is nothing to prevent a knowledge of the whole science of *Logistics* being made a subject of practical study by every regimental officer.

The cost alone of the civil administration of the British Army would more than cover the expense of double the number of effective Militia and Volunteer soldiers.

ADVICES from Manitoba state that the band of Indians who recently received their annuities, have returned to Winnipeg with a big budget of demands upon the Indian Commissioner. Amongst other things they

demand the establishment of English schools amongst them: also that they shall be provided with cattle, pigs, sheep and poultry, and a person who shall teach them the uses and care of these animals. They also require houses for themselves, and say that they cannot send their children to school without clothing, they look for the government to cloth their children until such time as they raise wool enough to manufacture it for themselves."

We are inclined to think that throughout the whole transaction, the Indians have shown themselves far more practical in their ideas than our own people.

The actual problem to be solved is the question of civilization, and they have proposed the manner in which it should be effected, which is the true way.

If we deprive them of means of subsistence by taking away their hunting grounds, we are bound to furnish equivalents, and they should have what they demand, as they are good, loyal, and can be made orderly as well as useful subjects,

The Special Committee on Gun-cotton have printed their report in continuation of their preliminary report, dated December 13th, 1871. In the present document they report the results of the experiments carried out by them near Hastings, and the conclusions they have arrived at relative to the transport and storage of gun-cotton. The following are the points they hold to be established by their experiments, and it will be seen that they are of the greatest practical importance:—

"1st. As gun-cotton is not materially, if at all, injured by being kept in a damp state, and as the operation of drying can be easily carried out, it is unnecessary to store gun-cotton in the dry state, and the committee think it should not be stored dry, in large quantities than are required for the current wants of the Service.

"2nd. The present pattern box is objectionable for packing dry gun-cotton; its strength is an element of danger, in the event of the accidental ignition of a store of gun-cotton packed in such boxes; and it is unnecessarily strong for transport.

"3rd. In a store of any construction, the ignition of large quantities of dry gun-cotton packed in strong boxes, will be followed by violent explosion; but in light-made boxes, or in boxes designed specially to facilitate the escape of the heated gas before it has reached the exploding point, and in magazines lightly constructed, ignition will probably not be followed by explosion; but the committee are of opinion that the experiments recorded do not afford a sufficient guarantee that ignition will not be followed by explosion if the quantity, however stored, be very large, or the building be exceptionally strong.

"4th. Taking these points into consideration, the committee think that dry gun-cotton, wherever stored, and in whatever quantity, should be treated as an explosive, and that the precautions now observed with explosives generally, as regards locality and description of building, should apply also to gun-cotton.

"5th. Gun-cotton in the wet state being perfectly unflammable, no special regulations are necessary for its transport; in the case of dry gun-cotton, which under ordinary conditions is non-explosive, but readily inflammable, the committee are of opinion