

Militia and Defence.

APPENDIX No. 3

TO

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY MINISTER

OF

MILITIA AND DEFENCE.

GOVERNMENT CARTRIDGE AND SHELL FACTORY, QUEBEC,

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1896.

SIR,—I have the honour to report on the operations of the Government cartridge and shell factory, for the year 1896, as follows:—

Our manufacturing operations have been confined to '303" cordite ball cartridge, as well as common and shrapnel shells for 9 Pr. R.M.L. guns, and tin obturating cups for R.B.L. guns.

CARTRIDGE FACTORY.

The plant used for the manufacture of Martini-Henry ammunition has been overhauled and put in good order in case it should be necessary to turn out this kind of ammunition. The machines belonging to this plant which could be converted for the manufacture of '303" cartridges, have been altered accordingly and are now in operation together with the new machinery specially purchased for this purpose.

During the time I was away on duty in England, I received instructions to obtain information concerning the relative advantages of cordite and other smokeless explosives offered for sale. I was enabled through the kindness of the High Commissioner in London to have access to the War Office documents relating to exhaustive and costly experiments carried out by the Imperial and Indian governments, thereby saving a considerable amount of time and money, for with the limited means and facilities at our disposal here, it would have been impossible to obtain the valuable information therein contained. The superintendent of the Royal Laboratory, Woolwich, was at the same time good enough to allow me to make use of the proof range and instruments in the Royal Arsenal for the purpose of making some additional experiments. I had the honour to submit to you a report on the above on the 26th February, 1896, resulting in the definite adoption of cordite for use with our small arms of '303" calibre.

The cordite now in use here is manufactured at the Royal Gunpowder Factory, Waltham Abbey, England, and has so far given satisfactory ballistic results. As a large number of small-arms of '303" calibre have been purchased for the re-arming of the militia, and as the accuracy of these arms is as yet comparatively little known here, a few diagrams of proof of ammunition manufactured in this establishment are attached to this report. These diagrams have been selected from proofs made, to cover as long a period of time as possible from beginning of manufacture to date of writing, and may be taken as representing the average performance of the new weapons. A comparison of these diagrams with the ones published in the annual report for 1885 for Snider and Martini-Henry ammunition, will show at a glance