

that the only way in which boots can be properly inspected is to follow them through the various processes of manufacture in the factory. In the case of the Government orders, inspection in the factories took place only in a limited number of cases. The general inspection was done by making a superficial examination of a finished boot. Thus it was impossible to tell what material or workmanship was contained in the interior of the boot, and obviously inspection of this kind was absolutely worthless.

Another thing that made the inspection a farce was the fact that all the Inspectors used the same stamp so that it was impossible to identify the man who had passed defective boots. The Inspector who was dismissed in 1911 had a special stamp bearing the initial letter of his name, and thus his work could be traced in every case. Under the Borden Government no such useful record was desired and the incompetent Inspector could stamp bad boots without any fear of being detected.

In the case of the first order given in August last, 13,926 pairs of boots were delivered at Valcartier without any inspection whatever. This was the case also with the boots purchased months afterwards at Winnipeg and Vancouver. Under all the circumstances, therefore, it is not surprising that so many bad boots were accepted and paid for by the Government.

BOOTS CONDEMNED.

The boots issued to the soldiers in different parts of Canada had not been worn for a month when complaints regarding them began to come in to the Department. These complaints grew in frequency and number and in time became the subject of comment in the public press. An attempt to head off the rising storm of indignation was made by the Minister of Militia when in December last he appointed a Committee composed of Colonel W. Hallick, Theo. Galipeau of Montreal and E. A. Stephens of Ottawa to hold a Departmental inquiry. This Committee did not examine any witnesses under oath, but they expressed a unanimous opinion as to the unfitness of the Gauthier sample-boot, according to which the boots supplied the soldiers were made. That opinion was in these terms:

**"That the boot was of unsuitable shape and make
"and that the leather contained no water-resisting
"medium:**

**"That the heels and soles are unprotected and
"sole-fitting is often poor quality:**

**"That the boot was unsuitable for the soldiers
"and for that particular work for which they were
"provided, because:**

**(a) "The shape is such that the average foot has
"not room for the free movement of the toes and is
"thus not suitable for marching:**