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451

an attack will be, once for all, out of the question. Apart from the security, which would thereby be afforded to our Mediterranean position, this would be a great boon to the world at large, for an upheaval in Morocco might easily set Europe by the ears and would almost certainly let loose a great wave of religious fanaticism all over Africa. The menace of Snussi may easily have been exaggerated, but it remains like a great shadow overhanging the horizon and it typifies a possibility, which died several centuries ago at Vienna but might at any hour burst into life anew.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE WAR.

V.—ARMS AND EQUIPMENT.

IT is somewhat curious that despite the folios that have been written during recent years in censure of our Service rifle, the Lee-Metford, and its ammunition and also of our soldiers' shooting powers, the logical outcome—inferior shooting to that of our enemy—should have so little affected the course of the campaign. In fact, that which before the war was held to be one of the greatest difficulties we had to face has proved of small account in comparison with several others dealt with in these articles.

As regards the shooting powers of our men, although it would be absurd to pretend that they are as good as they ought to be or that they cannot and will not be improved, the consensus of opinion of most competent judges is that they have been very fair throughout the campaign. That they have improved every month owing to the amount of field practice afforded, especially to the troops in Natal, is admitted by all. This probably accounts for much of the bad shooting of the Boers which correspondents say was at times so remarkable during the advance on Ladysmith. Nothing causes worse shooting than being well shot at and this appears recently to have been the privilege of our enemies. The general experiences of the war, based on the fighting in Natal, about Colesberg and on the road to Kimberley, all point to the correctness of the forecast of last summer, that the shooting of the Boers would—as a whole—be found to have greatly fallen off since 1881. The reasons assigned for this were twofold, namely, the extinction of game in many districts and the approximation of many of the Boers to the larger towns where there were attractions other than the chase.

Very notable instances of the bad shooting of the Boers were afforded at Gatacre's reverse near Stormberg and more recently in the storming of Vaal Kranz by Lyttelton's brigade. That on many other occasions the fire was exceptionally deadly may be accounted for by the fact that commandos from certain districts were known to be more expert in rifle-shooting than were those from others. Prisoners often expatiated on the severity of the British rifle fire; even on occasions such as at the Modder when our own troops were checked for hours by the accuracy of the Boer bullets and imagined in consequence that their fire was ineffective. Nothing puts soldiers more out of heart than to be told that they have done little execution amongst the enemy's ranks after a heavy expenditure of ammunition and severe losses on their own part. But the wretchedly played-out Boer stratagem of "2 killed and 5 wounded" rapidly ceased to have any effect on our men and more especially after they had been concerned in the funeral obsequies of a goodly number of the foe. A Boer "casualty list" of their losses at Belmont which was taken after the Graspan fight contained the full names &c. of 19 killed and 94 wounded, and these were from the Boshof and Jacobsdal commandos alone. The published figures of the Boer losses on this occasion as usual could be reckoned up on the fingers of one hand. Since a considerably greater number than that given in the list referred to above were interred by our men, we are forced to the conclusion that the full-blooded burgher alone is considered worthy to figure in the Boer war-game books, mere German or French mercenaries or rebel British

colonists being presumably put down as "various" and not worthy of further mention.

All the world now knows that our soldiers were sent into action armed with what some experts describe as "the worst military rifle in Europe," and, to be honest, it undoubtedly possesses certain defects. It is therefore consolatory to know that that extraordinary production—the British private soldier—with that supreme confidence in himself, his officers and his comrades, which causes such vexation and perplexity to his foes—consistently ignored these defects. Of the numerous alleged shortcomings of our rifle, one and one only forced itself prominently on one's notice and that was the inferiority of our single-cartridge loading system to that of the "clip" five-cartridge loading system of the so-called "Spanish" Mauser with which the majority of our foes were armed. It may be as well to mention here that the ordinary German Mauser (pattern 1888) is a .311 bore, whereas the German Mauser used by the Boers is the improved weapon adopted by the Spanish army whose bore is only .276, ours being .303. Our rifle carries ten cartridges in the magazine which on their being expended has to be refilled by cartridges pressed in one at a time—a difficult process for a man lying flat, especially when under slight cover and exposed to a heavy fire. From this it is not hard to realise that our men in action with the magazine emptied were handicapped severely in having to go through the motions of loading between each shot, whereas their enemy had to do this only after every five shots. That many of our men lost their lives through unintentionally disclosing their whereabouts whilst engaged in this constant reloading is only too probable. Also that the enemy were enabled to keep up a far more sustained and rapid fire is certain, for our experts declare that a man thus loading five cartridges at a time can fire some three or four times as rapidly as one with a single-loading weapon. In other words on an emergency a Boer can load and fire about thirty shots in the same time that one of our men takes to loose off ten.

The supply of ammunition in the field has ever been one of the great difficulties when troops are committed to action. There have been numerous cases recently where our soldiers have run short of ammunition and in every action men have been shot whilst endeavouring to bring up a further supply to the fighting line. This evil can be materially lessened by every soldier being made to carry a larger number of rounds, but here we are again at a disadvantage since 120 rounds of Lee-Metford ammunition weigh $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. as against the $6\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. of the same number of Mauser cartridges. The import of this is best understood when one reflects that given an equal *weight* of ammunition say $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. in each case, after exchanging shot for shot the Boer would have still some twenty rounds to fire when the Briton had clean run out of ammunition. Yet another disadvantage to the British was the inconvenient method of carrying their cartridges in awkwardly constructed pouches bulging out on their hips. When a man lies down it is difficult to get the cartridges out of the pouches beneath him and the process of loading from them is neither easy nor rapid. In consequence our men frequently took out a dozen or more and laid them beside them where they could be easily got at. With a sudden order to advance these small depôts were frequently forgotten and valuable ammunition thus wasted. Or again, upon an advance being made, the pouch was commonly left open and rounds lost during a scramble over rough ground and especially when a man, at the end of a rush, flung himself down behind some temporary shelter. On the latter occasions cartridges were seen to fly out in every direction. It is hardly to be wondered at that the *vérd* in places was found strewn with our ammunition due to this cause. A very important advantage afforded by the clip full of cartridges when loading is the superior grip it affords to the fingers of a man compared to that of a single cartridge. The importance of this is known to every officer who has been in action and watched the at times frantic efforts of the soldier to keep his eye on the enemy and at the same time insert a cartridge into the breech of his rifle. Scores of cartridges are dropped in this manner, the soldier never stopping to pick up a

fallen round but again diving into his clumsy pouch to extract another cartridge with which the fumbling process is repeated.

The ordinary Boer method of carrying cartridges, as is well known, is in a bandolier, either fitted for single cartridges or in the case of the Mauser to hold clips of five. The former system has been widely adopted already by our troops since its advantages are incontestable. But the palm for quick-loading and the perfection of a cartridge-carrier must be awarded to the waistcoats which were in use by the better class of Boers. These are made of khaki and supplied with twenty-four pockets in several rows, closely touching one another and each containing a clip full of five Mauser cartridges. This waistcoat has only to be seen for its advantages to be instantly appreciated. The weight is evenly distributed, the cartridges are easily got at and not liable to be lost and lastly the whole surface of closely packed cartridges forms a protective shield over the heart and lungs by no means to be despised, for although not proof against a direct hit it would probably turn many a bullet striking at an angle.

From the preceding it will readily be gathered that not only in their arms and ammunition but also in their fighting equipment, the Boer farmers of the two States are in certain respects better found than our soldiers. This makes it the more refreshing to place on record that much as these obvious disadvantages may vex those who naturally expect the British soldier to have the best weapon and the best equipment in the world, the individual most concerned—namely the British soldier himself—cheerfully ignores these and many other drawbacks. He utterly disregards the painful fact that experts declare his rifle to have "eight serious defects" as well as that together with 120 rounds it weighs nearly two pounds more than the rifle and ammunition of the man he is trying to kill. True it is that the easier and more rapid method of loading the Boer's rifle at times annoys him, since he feels himself placed thereby at a temporary disadvantage, but somehow he manages to do his job and do it well, and he is as little moved at being told that he has "the worst military rifle in Europe" as he would be were he to realise that his weapon costs the British taxpayer half as much again as a Mauser! GREY SCOUT.

THE PROBLEM OF EASTER.

MANY circumstances have recently tended to re-awaken in an acute form the chronic controversy between the traditional belief of Christendom and the conclusions of the modern intellect. Partly this is the consequence of the gross ecclesiastical scandals of the time. A review of Christian history shows no combination to be more natural and, it must be admitted, more frequent than that between such scandals and a wide unsettlement of religious conviction. There are many persons, the core of every Church, who are little affected by intellectual difficulties, but very sensitive to difficulties of another kind. Let the Christian Church visibly embody the highest ideals of human life, and they will acquiesce in any number of unreconciled contradictions in its formal creed: but let the Church fall below the best moral standards of the time, let some conspicuous demonstrations of political or social turpitude be made by the clergy, and a new strength and plausibility are added to the questionings of hostile criticism, and the spirit of misgiving, tending to positive unbelief, spreads even in orthodox circles. Against doubts which have their origin in legitimate moral repugnance, it is futile to argue. Not reasoning but reformation is the duty of the Church. These reflections force themselves on the mind when the Easter Festival compels universal attention to that article of the Christian creed on which, in the general conviction of believers, the whole of Christianity rests—the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The evidence on which that article is justified must from the nature of the case be twofold. On the one hand, the Resurrection claims to be a fact, and offers, as such, the witness of history: on the other hand, the Resurrection necessarily involves certain spiritual results and certifies

them by subjective experiences to believers. It is with the former only that we are here concerned.

Let us begin by conceding the immense difficulties which surround belief in the physical Resurrection of Christ. They are stated temperately and reverently, but with great force by Professor Gardner in his "Exploratio Evangelica." The inconsistencies of the Gospel narratives, the indirect and unsatisfactory character of the actual testimonies, the crude materialism which plainly colours the Evangelic records—these are familiar to every thoughtful Christian, and have been the commonplaces of hostile criticism for generations. It is easy to make out a destructive case, but when that has been done, the real difficulty survives though in another form. To destroy the traditional Christian belief is, necessarily, to affirm its contradiction. History, which delivers an affirmative testimony so hesitating that it seems presumptuous to build anything thereon, is no less unsatisfying when in the interest of the negative hypothesis she is placed in the witness-box. "It must be allowed"—admits Professor Gardner—"that the Resurrection, when approached from the side of historic criticism, offers as great difficulties as when approached from the side of Christian belief. It is the crux of all restorations of the life of Jesus." In these circumstances, it is difficult to dispute the reasonableness of Professor Sanday's characteristic conclusion, that "it is better to keep substantially the form which a sound tradition has handed down to us even though its contents in some degree pass our comprehension."

There are at least four facts, which hardly admit of dispute, and which are, indeed, generally admitted, which seem fatal to the negative hypothesis.

1. The grave which on Friday evening received the Body of the Crucified was found to be empty on Sunday morning. "The disappearance of the body was certain" wrote Mr. Greg: "In my opinion the empty grave offers us a problem which objective history can never solve" writes Professor Gardner. The more the problem is considered, the more formidable from the negative standpoint it becomes, for an explanation there must have been, and the Resurrection apart, which is excluded by the hypothesis, it could have been only one of two things. Either the grave was violated by the enemies of Christ, or emptied by His friends. The latter is prohibited by the unquestionable astonishment caused by the discovery of the empty tomb among the only persons who can be supposed likely to desire possession of the Master's Body: it is not less decisively prohibited by the unquestionable fact of Christian conviction. The faith of the Resurrection could not have grown out of the miserable secret, however well kept by the Apostolic conspirators, that their central message was false. The former explanation is scarcely less incredible, for the violation of the tomb happened in the neighbourhood of a great city, and at a time of great excitement. It was so manifestly connected with the interest of the Jewish hierarchy that it could not have been either unknown or unregarded. Saul of Tarsus, the leader of the anti-Christian crusade and the confidential officer of the Sanhedrin must have known it, and, having known it, could not within a few years, or even months, have become the protagonist of the Resurrection. It is inconceivable that the disproof of the Apostolic message should have been in the hands of the persecutors of the Apostles, and never used.

2. The burial of Christ has from the first been insisted on. S. Paul, in his famous statement to the Corinthians, includes this fact. Why? If the Christian belief had its origin in the fact of a physical Resurrection, it is easy to see that the circumstance of Christ's burial had direct and considerable importance, but, on any other view, insistence on a perplexing and painful episode seems inexplicable.

3. The emphasis which from the first has been laid on the actual day of the Resurrection points in the same direction. "He hath been raised on the third day," said S. Paul. The religious importance of the first day of the week is very difficult to explain apart from the hypothesis of the Creed. Weizsäcker allows that the reference to that day in the Epistle to the Corinthians most probably indicates that it "had already been adopted in Corinth as that of Divine service." It is a