

Our Army's Light Guns

By CAPT. M. M. CORPENING

In the Field It Is Equipped for All Purposes

AN ARMY going into the field today is equipped with weapons for every possible purpose, yet these weapons, as of yore, still are divided roughly into two general classifications, the artillery pieces, which are mounted on carriages, and the hand weapons, carried for the most part by the soldiers.

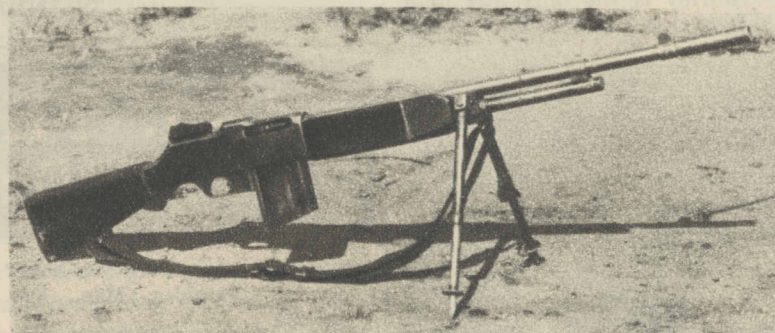
Modern warfare has become so specialized and scientific that the types of weapons no longer are few, but numerous. The hand weapons, for example, consist of the pistol, the rifle, the semi-automatic rifle, the sub-machine gun, the automatic rifle, and the light and heavy machine gun. All of the light weapons, or hand guns, of course, are standardized, and they range, as aforementioned, from the pistol to the heavy machine gun. The heaviest machine gun of the American army takes a cartridge of .50 caliber (one-half inch in diameter). A great deal of experimenting has been done by the ordnance department and by manufacturers to develop a still larger machine gun, but to date little progress has been made, the main difficulty encountered being the terrific heat developed in the machine fire of cartridges larger than .50 caliber.

The lightest of the hand weapons of the American army is the .45 caliber Colt automatic pistol, which weighs 2 pounds 13 ounces fully loaded. The term automatic does not exactly describe this weapon. It is, more accurately, a semi-automatic or self-loading pistol. It fires one shot for each squeeze of the trigger. The magazine, which holds seven cartridges, is fitted into the handle or grip of the pistol. An eighth cartridge may be inserted directly into the firing chamber. The weapon must be cocked for the first shot. After that the recoil of the firing ejects the empty cartridge case, throws a new cartridge into the chamber, and cocks the weapon.



(Acme photo.)

Top—the new Garand semi-automatic rifle with bolt open to receive eight-cartridge clip. Bottom—model 1903 Springfield, showing clip and manually operated bolt.



The Browning automatic rifle, caliber .30, with support and butt plate.

This weapon was first adopted with a .38 caliber, but when bullets of this size failed to stop charging men the .45 was substituted.

The Colt pistol is accurate at short ranges, and its bullets, which bear jackets of hard metal and weigh 230 grains each, strike with tremendous force.

The Springfield service rifle of .30 caliber, a hand-operated weapon of the bolt action repeater type, is being replaced by

the new semi-automatic rifle designed by John C. Garand, an employé of the army, some thirty years after automatic rifles had become common in civilian use. The Garand rifle is self-loading, once the magazine or clip is inserted and the weapon is cocked. Gas pressure developed by the firing of the rifle is utilized to eject the empty shell and reload and recock the gun. The clip of the Garand rifle holds eight cartridges. As many as twelve clips can be fired in a minute by an expert. The rifle

weighs a little more than 9 pounds, as against a weight of 8 pounds 8 ounces for the Springfield service rifle.

All infantry and cavalry troops eventually are expected to be equipped with the Garand rifle, but production to date has lagged. Despite the great advantages of the weapon, the government is said to have only 15,000 of them.

Before these rifles can be turned out in volume it will be necessary to provide 2,345 gauges, 1,766 fixtures, 1,386 special tools, and 79 punches and dies, a complicated process for a military rifle. Maj. Gen. Charles M. Wesson, chief of ordnance, appearing not long ago before a subcommittee of the house appropriations committee in support of further appropriations, said:

"We are making these rifles at the rate of 40 a day, and we dare not make them faster because if we do we will run out of production before we get money for additional rifles, and that would mean disruption of the organization."

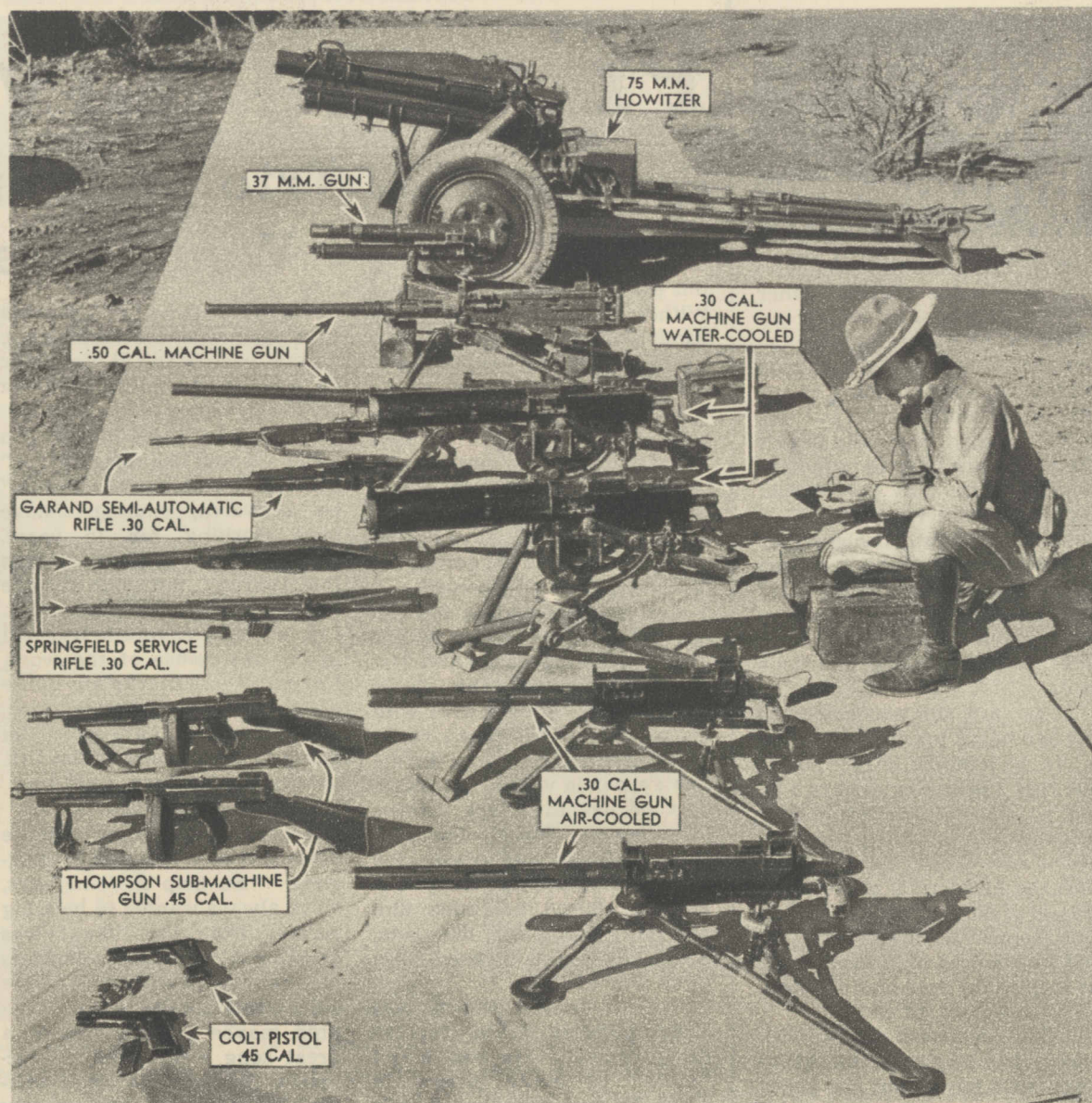
Since then production has been stepped up to 300 a week.

If a generation late in arriving, it is agreed that it is an excellent weapon.

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The Thompson submachine gun, a weapon of the mechanized cavalry, is the Tommy gun of police departments and gangland gunmen. It weighs 11 pounds and can be operated as a full automatic weapon. The largest magazine of the gun is of the drum type and holds 100 cartridges. Rate of fire is as high as 375 shots a minute.

The Browning automatic rifle weighing only 20 pounds is the smallest of the American army's .30 caliber weapons that delivers true rapid fire. It is mounted upon an inverted V support that acts as a rest for the barrel



(Wide World photo.)

Weapons used by the new streamlined 1st cavalry division at Fort Bliss, El Paso, Tex.

of the gun near the muzzle and increases the accuracy of fire. The gun fires the same cartridges as the Garand rifle, and the rate of fire is 400 shots a minute.

This weapon kills at 2,000 yards, although inaccurate at that distance. The advantage of the weapon is its lightness and the noise it makes.

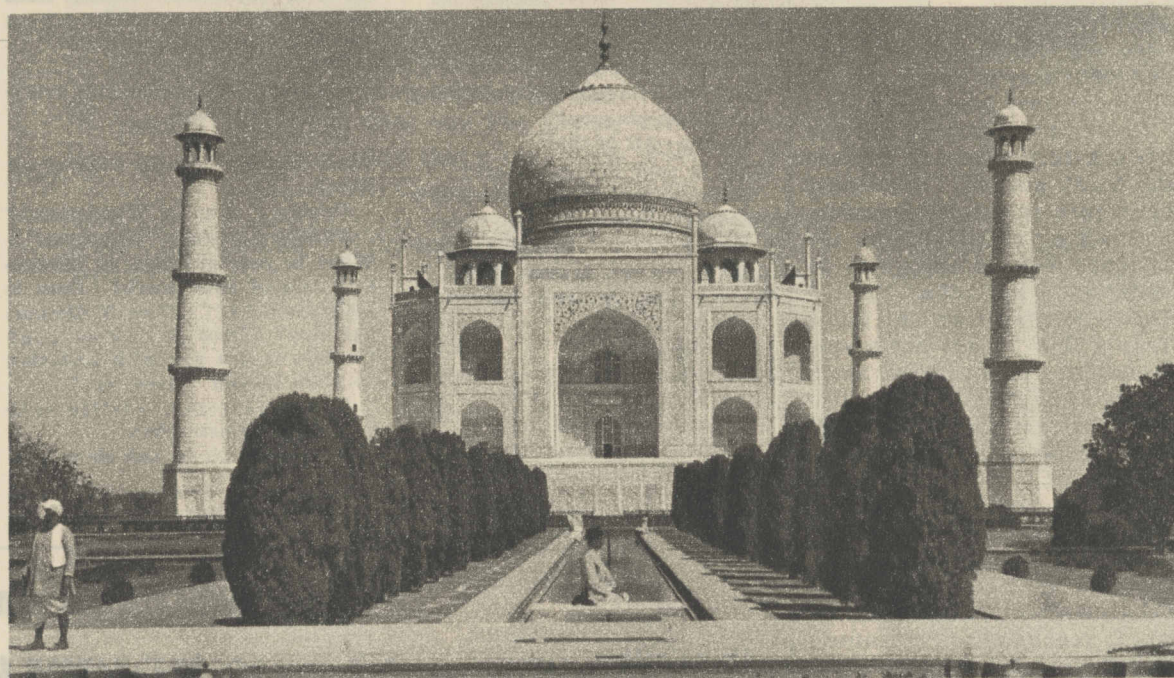
The 55-pound machine gun of .30 caliber fires 500 shots a minute. This weapon uses fabric belts about two inches wide for loading. Loops hold the unfired cartridges. Because of its weight and its sturdy tripod

mounting, the 55-pound machine gun is extremely accurate.

The .30 caliber heavy machine gun of our army weighs 82½ pounds and fires at the rate of 500 shots a minute. It is water-cooled instead of air-cooled, the water jacket around its barrel permitting long continuous fire. Because of its rugged build and ability to maintain steady fire over longer periods than the lighter guns, it is the most effective weapon in the .30 caliber class. Guns of this description made machine gun nests feared during the World war.

Largest of the present-day

American machine guns are the .50 caliber weapons that weigh, without their mountings, 150 pounds. These weapons, which fire at the rate of 375 shots a minute, are provided with two different types of mountings. One, weighing 395 pounds, sets the gun up as an anti-aircraft arm. The other type, weighing 125 pounds, equips the gun as a defense weapon against tanks. It is both air and water cooled. The terrible wounds it will inflict should make it an even more effective weapon against infantry than the .30 caliber weapons.



(Associated Press photo.)

The Taj Mahal, a symbol of India's glamorous riches.

(Continued from page one.) India? For a jumping-off place in history nothing is more convenient than the price of pepper in England in 1600. Dutch merchants had a monopoly of the trade then with the Spice Islands. They were aggressive merchants, but they overstepped their market when they started charging eight shillings instead of the customary three for their commodity.

British temperatures went up about this. A company was formed, the East India company, and chartered by Queen Elizabeth. It wasn't long before British ships were carrying pepper and muslin and all the products of the glorious east to the home folks, and with great profit.

Little by little this company expanded. It became the greatest corporation on earth and took on politics as a major activity.

A throne in an Indian state would become vacant. The succession would be disputed. The company would choose a candidate, furnish him with troops and cannon, and finance him. When he won his place the company would get its rewards out of the state revenues.

This corporation developed its own generals. Perhaps the ablest of these was Clive. He led 900 Britishers and 2,000 Sepoys (native troops) against a Mohammedan host of 50,000 in

1757 and defeated them handsomely at Plassey, in Bengal. This victory is now commonly referred to as the beginning of the British empire in the east.

The era that followed was one of frank exploitation by individuals and the corporation. England in those days was not squeamish, but the looting of India became a public scandal.

There was little immediate reform, however. The formula for making the East India company pay even more spectacularly had been found. The French, sole European rivals, had been driven out of India, and the company armies little by little absorbed most of the Indian territory—and collected their revenues.

A fat land, India, under the circumstances. The east glittered with the jewels of maharanes. It yielded chests of gold and silver. It was spectacular. Behold the Taj Mahal, the sacred cows, the troops of elephants, the nautch girls, the burning ghats! It was magnificent. It was empire.

The crown began to see that it had made a mistake in letting the company attain the status almost of a sovereign nation.

The first tentative step toward bringing India under direct control of the British government was taken in 1774, when Warren Hastings, the company's governor, was made governor gen-

eral by the crown and given a council of advisers appointed by parliament. But the company still ran India as its property, waging wars and seizing what it could, until 1858.

In that year parliament passed a law transferring all administrative functions from the corporation to the crown. The company's army of 24,000 Europeans was amalgamated with the royal army and the Indian navy was abolished. The governor general became a viceroy. India was a possession of Great Britain itself, and in 1876 Queen Victoria was made its empress. Its real government is in London.

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India is a vast land, two-thirds as large as the United States, and has a population (including Burma) of 353,000,000.

How were a few thousand Britishers able to bend such a population to the yoke; how have a few tens of thousands been able in recent years to keep the teeming millions in check?

Division and dissension furnish the answers. India is a hodge-podge of many peoples who speak 147 different languages. There are two huge and seemingly irreconcilable religious groups—240,000,000 Hindus and 78,000,000 Moslems. Five other religions have a total

British Sun Sets on Rumbling India!

of more than 30,000,000 adherents.

India has a diversity of governments. Britain rules provinces with a population of 290,000,000 directly, as overlord. Besides, there are nearly 600 native states, nominally ruled by native princes, and these states have 63,000,000 people. Some of them are huge affairs, some have a handful of population.

Strife among the states, invasion from without, have made much of India's history for centuries. The tough hill men from the north, the warlike Mohammedans from the west, made incursions into the fertile river valleys long before the East India company's time. Sometimes they conquered and were absorbed.

The company armies did not, as a rule, fight unaided. They simply sided with one group of native Indians and furnished the balance of power. To this governmental broth was added the tradition of caste, always an important factor in the Hindu religion.

Caste is a word describing the division of society into classes. Broadly, there are four main Hindu castes. The Brahmin is the teaching and priestly class. The Kshatriya is the warrior class. The Vaisya is the farming, merchant, and money-lending group. The Sudra is the level that serves the other three "twice-born" classes.

Besides the castes there are a large number of persons beyond the caste citadels. It has been estimated there are 40,000,000 of them, known as outcastes, condemned by unbreakable taboos to the most menial tasks and the lowest living standards in India. To a high-class Hindu pollution may come if even the shadow of one of these "untouchables" falls upon him.

The British, it is not difficult to see, have had three advantages in their overlordship. Governmentally they are unified; religion plays a smaller part in their thinking than the Indians', and they are all of one caste. If this is overstatement, phrase it another way: They do not quarrel openly among themselves about government and religion,

and they subordinate class ideas to the task in hand—the holding of India in thrall.

Thru all modern British writing and talking about India a consistent theme runs. It is: "We want the people of India to be self-governing on the democratic model. But they are not ready yet."

Why aren't they ready? The British say there are too many illiterates. They assert that without their own calming influence the Moslems and the Hindus would be at each other's throats and that the Indian princes would not stand the loss of their wide powers to any imaginable federation of states. They hold that India could not defend itself from enemies without the borders, nor from anarchy within. They maintain that caste distinctions would be intensified and the hardships of the outcastes made more terrible.

On these points Gandhi and his followers argue pointedly. "Why," they ask, "has the British raj, after 150 years of doing as it pleases in India, left so many millions without learning?"

"We will not be at each other's throats. Once make us independent and we will find a just formula for internal peace. It is true that many princes favor continuation of British rule, because British rule supports them in their exactions."

"India would be able to defend herself if Britain had not

kept nearly all the army officers' jobs for her sons and barred all but a handful of Indians. The rank and file of India's defenders is three-fourths native."

"The influence of caste should be abated. There has been no effort on the part of the British to bring about that abatement. They encourage caste distinction and have set themselves up as a supercaste. Their policy has not changed; it is to divide and rule."

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It is the contention of the Indian Nationalists that they have been promised in the past much more than they have received.

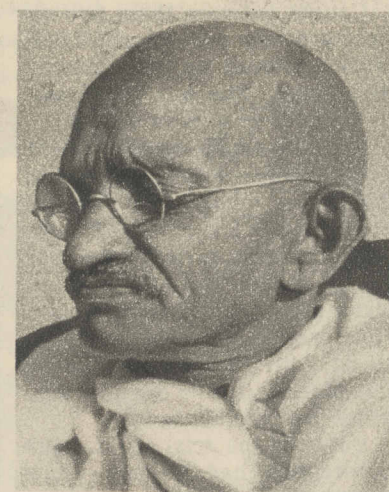
Back in 1919 parliament declared it wished to provide for the "increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in British India as an integral part of the British empire."

In 1929 the viceroy of India announced that "it is implicit . . . that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress . . . is the attainment of dominion status." In 1935 the act was passed which permitted the people of India to elect their provincial legislatures. In the elections more than 33,000,000 votes were cast, the majority for the Congress party or Nationalists.

Gandhi and his associates were dissatisfied with the powers granted these legislators. Gandhi seemingly realized the weaknesses of his own people as well as those of the overlords and set out some years ago to end them.

He gave up his caste (he was born a Vaisya) dramatically. He adopted a child of the untouchable class, and he persuaded Brahmins to sit down to dinner with him and a few street cleaners, who in India are the lowest of the pariahs. These demonstrations told the world that a dent had been made in the caste structure.

It was his argument that India should be self-sufficient, and he urged that every family



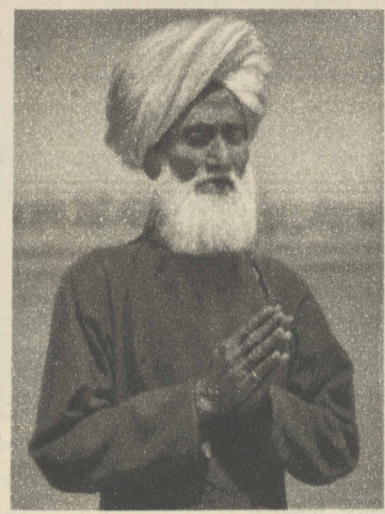
Mohandas K. Gandhi

spin and wear homespun, at the same time boycotting English cloth. The boycott was a success, and the harsh means used by the British to squelch it increased Gandhi's hold on his people. Civil disobedience on a large scale followed.

In 1930 Gandhi led a march to the sea and extracted salt from water, in defiance of the British salt monopoly. For that he went to jail, but was released ten months later. Altogether he has been jailed eight times, each such incident making him more powerful.

When the new European war broke out the viceroy, the marquis of Linlithgow, pledged India's support to Great Britain and France. The Indian Nationalists hastened to make it plain that he did not speak for them and that his reiteration of the usual pious hope that "India may attain its due place among the dominions" meant nothing. They were also miffed by the declaration of Lord Zetland, secretary of state for India, that discussions of India's status would be taken up at the end of the war.

"The viceroy's statement," said Gandhi, "shows that the old policy of divide and rule is to continue. So far as I can see Congress will be no party to it, nor can the India of Congress' conception be a partner with Britain in her war with Hitler. The viceroy's declaration shows that there will be no democracy for India if Britain can prevent it."



Priest of Brahmin class at prayer.