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'Stopping power' of bullets.

It is widely held by the Army that the .45 inch revolver bullet will 'stop' a man, even if it only inflicts a minor wound, whereas the .38 inch pistol bullet, or the .303 inch rifle bullet will not. The .45 bullet is not supposed to be more lethal, but simply to cause an advancing man to fall, stumble, drop his weapon and so on.

The only obvious physical basis for this effect is the imparting of the bullet's momentum to the man. The high velocity .303 inch will often penetrate clean through the body, imparting little of its momentum. The .45 bullet may be stopped.

But suppose the .45 bullet, weighing .6 ounces was travelling at as much as 1000 fps, and imparted all its momentum to a 150 lbs man, it could only produce in him a backward velocity of .25 fps. This can hardly account for the effect.

We should be glad to hear views on this subject. It may be quite fallacious, but is often brought forward, and might merit investigation.

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WS.

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