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Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered
Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41
Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK

Royal United Services Institution. Journal

Publication details, including
instructions for authors and
subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rusi19>

Our Reserve Forces

Lieutenant-Colonel Malet & Sir
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Published online: 11 Sep 2009.

To cite this article: Lieutenant-Colonel Malet & Sir Alexander
Malet Grenadier Guards Bart., K.C.B. (1869) Our Reserve Forces,
Royal United Services Institution. Journal, 13:54, 160-180, DOI:
[10.1080/03071846909424319](https://doi.org/10.1080/03071846909424319)

To link to this article: [http://
dx.doi.org/10.1080/03071846909424319](http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03071846909424319)

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Evening Meeting.

Monday, March 22nd, 1869.

MAJOR-GENERAL THE HON. JAMES LINDSAY, Inspector-General
of Reserve Forces, in the Chair.

NAMES of MEMBERS who joined the Institution between the 15th and 22nd
March, 1869.

LIFE.

Wilson, A. K., Lieut. R.N. 97.

ANNUAL.

Roberts, H. B., Major Royal Marine Artillery. 17.	Montgomery, W. E., Lieut. Scots Fusil. Guards. 17.
Hamilton, C. E., Lieut.-Colonel 80th Lancashire Rifle Vols. 17.	Teschemaker, T. R., Major (h.p.) R.A. 17.
Campbell, F. Lorn, Lieut. Scots Fusil. Guards. 17.	Fitz-Gerald, J. P., Lieut. North Cork Rifles Militia. 17.
Kennedy, A. F., Comdr. R.N. 17.	

OUR RESERVE FORCES.

A paper prepared by Lieutenant-Colonel MALET, Grenadier Guards;
and read by SIR ALEXANDER MALET, Bart., K.C.B.

The CHAIRMAN: I have now the pleasing duty of introducing to the meeting Sir Alexander Malet, who is kind enough to read a paper prepared by his son, Lieutenant-Colonel Malet, on "Our Reserve Forces," which, being a subject at the present moment engaging a great amount of public attention, and also a subject to be almost immediately brought before Parliament, when they go into the next Army estimates, I am sure will be received here with all that attention which it deserves, and to which the ability of its author fairly entitles it.

Sir ALEXANDER MALET: The Chairman and meeting will perhaps permit me to explain in a very few words how I am here, civilian as

I am, as a reader of a military paper. My son, who prepared it, was abroad at the time when I gave notice to read it at a meeting of the Society of Arts, where, as you are aware, the subject of our Army reformation or re-organization has been brought forward by Mr. Henry Cole; but the matter brought forward was of such length that I did not find room for reading the paper, and I thought it would be more properly read at a meeting of the members of this Institution, where it would also be more likely to be appreciated. I have, however, only one difficulty, viz., that, though the father of the gentleman who wrote the paper, I am not the father of the writing, and that probably I should be unequal to defend the thesis; but as my son has returned, and is, I am happy to say, now present, I have no doubt that, if it is attacked, he will be able to fight his own battle and defend his own positions. I will now, with your permission, read the paper.

AN English gentleman was once asked by a foreign Staff-officer, "How many transports do you suppose it would require to convey an invading army to your shores?" Our countryman replied, with perfect candour, "I do not know, but would undertake to send home the survivors in one." Most of us fondly cling to the above condensed estimate of the ultimate fate of an invader, but some impatient spirits would like to see a fair prospect of such a satisfactory result being achieved, say in a fortnight's time, after the landing of the enemy—and these dissatisfied people assert that, as we have in round numbers about three hundred thousand Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers in this island—a force certain to double itself on the least symptom of real danger—it is a pity that there should be a chance of a campaign on our territories being extended over a period of three or four months for want of a little timely organization on our part.

Those who advocate the adoption of a grand military system for our reserve forces, are begging no question in assuming that an invasion of England is possible. The existence of the Volunteers proves that the nation at large believes that a certain combination of events might lead to this result. The Volunteers are well aware of their own shortcomings, and demand a proper organization at the hands of Government; but as yet we have heard of no plan emanating from the War Office calculated to give cohesion and efficiency to the heterogeneous elements which we dignify with the name of the "Reserve Army" of Great Britain.

Given, a war declared between England and a continental power, France, for instance, after a sudden and brief dispute—France, with over 1,200,000 well-equipped soldiers, has really an *embarras de choix* for our annoyance. Mistress of the maritime base, "Marseilles, Toulon," she lands a *corps d'armée* in Egypt, and cuts off our communications with India, before we can so much as re-inforce the Malta garrison. Her cruisers land stores, arms, and possibly men to foment disaffection in Ireland. We awake to learn that the population of Lower Canada have not yet forgotten that they are of French origin, and at the same time we find ourselves threatened in the very heart of our empire. Let such a power have but one European ally, and

this danger is magnified to an indefinite extent. Should we fail to take the initiative in the occupation of Belgium, she and her ally will make short work of gobbling up the little territory, while a third power comforts herself with Holland, and we shall have the satisfaction of seeing Antwerp and the Scheldt included in the hostile base of operations against our shores. Ireland would require plenty of troops; all our colonial garrisons would be screaming for reinforcements. If we could throw 30,000 men into Belgium, it would be a severe strain upon our resources.

Let us, then, consider what, under present circumstances, would be our method for utilizing the reserves of Yeomanry, Volunteers, and Militia. As usual, we should begin by robbing Peter to pay Paul. All or nearly all our Militia would be at once embodied, and as soon as each battalion had attained a respectable degree of efficiency, it would be broken up and its Officers disheartened by seeing all their best men drafted into the line. Last year we were promised by the Minister at War a Reserve for the Regular Army of 30,000 men, to serve in war under the same conditions as the line. If we had them they would for a time stave off the depletion of the Militia; but where they are, no one knows. Of course there would be a vast deal of drumming and fifing among the Volunteers; "each Yeoman would draw his battle blade," and the ranks of every corps would be filled to overflowing—in three weeks we should have at least 400,000 men under arms, but how organized? how commanded?

Shall we see each Lord Lieutenant like a baron of old leading his contingent to the war? Will Dorset follow Lord Shaftesbury? and Lancashire cry "Sefton to the rescue!"? What will be the destination of all those picturesque little detachments of light-horse Volunteers who appear by twenties and thirties, in various uniforms, at all Volunteer reviews? There are about 1,300 of them in all, but how are they to be united? Where are the knapsacks and Snider rifles for the infantry?—the horses, waggons, and rifled guns for the artillery? Will the Yeomen be brigaded according to modern theories, or will they act every regiment for its own county in independent glory? Where are the magazines for such an army as might be required to take the field? Where is its train? What system will be followed in supplying the troops with their first and second reserves of ammunition? Is there any field hospital corps? And last, not least, what is to be the administration of this great mass of men? Where is its staff? Will it be formed into corps, divisions, and brigades? Where are the various departments? To all these queries, echo answers alternately "How!" and "Where!"

Does any sane man in England believe that these matters could be put on a proper footing in a few weeks or perhaps days amid the confusion and anxiety of apprehended invasion? The resources of Woolwich—our one great military arsenal—would no more than suffice to supply the needs of the Regular Army, and our garrisons spread over the surface of the earth. As for the staff and administration, it is sheer imbecility to suppose that a system will rise out of chaos at our need. Yet we put off, and hesitate, when a little forethought, and a

moderate expenditure, would insure us against the possibility of a disgraceful disaster.*

No one who will honestly contemplate the necessities of modern war, can doubt that what the country really requires, is a complete reform of our existing military institutions. So far as it goes, the Regular Army of Great Britain is one of the best—if not the best—in the world. Those who believe that all improvements are comprised in doing away with the purchase system, do not know where to begin or where to end. It is certain that an Army, including Reserves, of 800,000 or 900,000 men, such as we ought to possess, cannot be officered on that system; but till we have something better, it may be as well to leave untouched the old-fashioned machinery which for more than two centuries has given us a corps of Officers good and sufficient for their work. Grant that our leaders did not display extraordinary generalship in the Crimea, yet our cruel disasters were the result of one simple cause—we had no Reserves. *Without a conscription we never shall have Reserves properly called*; but reforms, and, above all, military reforms, make but slow progress in a country like ours, which has been so long without enduring the miseries of war.

Sooner or later, the nation will demand a conscription carrying with it a short time of service in the ranks and successive grades in a first and second reserve.

All men of the military age are morally as much bound to serve the State in war, as to obey its laws; but to serve it efficiently they must have learnt discipline and the use of arms, not as Volunteers only, but, as on the Continent, in the ranks. An English Volunteer is at least as much of a military monster as a Field Officer who has purchased his commission.

Pending the time when reason or misfortune shall have roused the nation to a sense of its shortcomings, let us consider the best that can be done with what we are pleased to style our "Reserve forces."

The existing military districts with head-quarters at London, Manchester, Dover, Portsmouth, Devonport, Colchester, Woolwich, Chatham, and Edinburgh, were constituted with a view to requirements totally different from those which have sprung up with the formation of Volunteer corps.

As Woolwich and Chatham are the nurseries of the two scientific services of artillery and engineers, they ought each to remain under the immediate command of a general Officer charged with the administration of his peculiar branch of the service, but subordinate to and included in the first corps of the Southern Army, as presently to be specified.

Let us suppose the remaining seven districts as abrogated or reformed, and in their place, the island of Great Britain divided into three grand military departments, each of these divisions into two sub-departments, and each sub-department, as area, population, and geo-

* Those who doubt the necessity of previous organization are invited to study the unhappy campaign of the 8th Federal Corps, under Prince Alexander of Hesse, in 1866.

graphical position may require, into districts and sub-districts, without reference to county boundaries.

We presume that the regular troops quartered in each sub-department would be *pro tem.* under the command of its military chiefs in the same way as they are at present under the generals of the various districts within which they may be stationed. The only administrative difference between them and the Reserve troops would be that they are always under arms, and not being localized, they may in time of peace be transferred from one quarter to another as at present. They and the various Reserve corps resident in each department compose an Army, comprising two *corps d'armée*, each with fixed head-quarters and separate administration, responsible in time of peace to the War Office for the efficiency of the *personnel* and *matériel* under its charge, and capable of development at any moment into the working staff of an Army in the field. The first and second sub-departments of each grand department represent territorially the first and second corps of each grand Army—districts and sub-districts, the divisions and brigades of reserve corps respectively. This further division into districts and sub-districts has no reference to regular troops, because, as before said, they are not and cannot be localized. It is not necessary that the different *corps d'armée* should be of equal strength, but it is of the highest importance that the great principles which ought to govern the relative proportions of the various arms should be laid down and regulated by Government.

At present we shall find in one county a glut of artillery and a scarcity of riflemen, or plenty of infantry and no artillery; in some parts of the country there are several squadrons of yeomanry, in others, none at all; and so on *ad infinitum*. All these disparities are false distributions of power, and should be promptly reformed by superior authority. The Volunteers are perfectly ready to conform to the dictates of an intelligent administration.

The proposed territorial divisions would then be as follows:—Army of the south, first sub-department, first corps, head-quarters London: counties of Kent, Essex, Hertfordshire, Buckingham, Oxon, Berkshire, Middlesex, Surrey, Sussex, Hampshire, and Isle of Wight. Second sub-department, second corps, head-quarters Bath: counties of Wiltshire, Gloucester, Monmouth, Glamorgan, Carmarthen, Hereford, Pembroke, Brecon, Dorset, Worcester, Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall. Midland army, first sub-department, first corps, head-quarters Cambridge: counties of Suffolk, Norfolk, Lincoln, Cambridge, Nottingham, Northampton, Leicester, Rutland, and Warwick. Second sub-department, second corps, head-quarters, Shrewsbury: counties of Derby, Cheshire, Flint, Denbigh, Carnarvon, Anglesea, Stafford, Salop, Montgomery, Merioneth, Radnor, Cardigan. Army of the north, first sub-department, first corps, head-quarters, Edinburgh: the Kingdom of Scotland and islands. Second sub-department, second corps, head-quarters York: counties of Northumberland, Durham, York, Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancashire, Isle of Man.

The subdivision of these departments into districts and sub-districts, with divisional and brigade head-quarters *for the reserves*, can only be

made after careful consideration of the geography, population, and strategical conditions of the country, and does not come within the scope of a paper, which seeks only to arrive at certain general principles. It is sufficient to say that they must be selected with an eye to the concentration of men and the distribution of the material of war; and the head-quarters should be, as a rule, at the junction of two or more lines of railway. In the second sub-department of the southern army, such places as Carmarthen, Swansea, Launceston, Bodmin, Bristol, Exeter, Gloucester, Sherborne, Stroud, Wimborne, Warminster, Salisbury, Swindon, and others, seem designated by their position as points of *rendezvous* for the various corps preparatory to their union as an army. Should experience prove them to be so adapted, they would become brigade and divisional head-quarters, and the military capitals of districts and sub-districts.

On the danger of war becoming imminent, each of the three grand armies will receive a Commander-in-Chief and Staff, chosen by the Minister at War. The staff of the six sub-departments will be of limited numbers in time of peace, but permanent and most carefully selected, as on their industry and intelligence will depend the efficiency of the various divisions for war.

Each of these six head-quarter staffs will consist of a Lieutenant or Major-General of the regular Army, as Commandant, one Aide-de-Camp, an Assistant Adjutant-General and his Deputy, an Assistant-Quarter-master-General and his Deputy, a Colonel on the Staff as Chief of Artillery, a Principal Medical Officer, and at least one Staff-Surgeon, charged with the organization of the medical department of the Corps, an Officer of the Commissariat, with a due proportion of clerks, and one or two experienced officers of the military train, to form from the local resources of the country the germ of a sufficient Army Supply train.*

The brigade and divisional commands of reserve troops would be held, as in the Army, for five years; in time of peace carrying half pay. They should be bestowed, by selection of the War Office, on Officers resident in or connected with the district in which their commands are situated, who have served in the regular Army.† Their Staff should be in abeyance in time of peace; and appointed by the Corps Commander, subject to the approval of the War Office, on the first symptom of approaching hostilities.

It has been said above that no inconvenience is likely to arise from an inequality in the size of the various corps, but the importance of fixing the proportion of the various arms each to each cannot be overrated. These proportions, according to received authorities, appear to be about as follows in an Army of 51,000 men, viz.: 52 battalions = 35,000 men, 42 squadrons = 6,500 men, 24 batteries, 5 of which ought to be horse artillery = 144 guns = 4,000 men; engineers 1,500 men; add staff, waggon train, hospital corps, telegraph department, &c. =

* To this estimate must be added, of course, the necessary divisional and brigade staff of any regular troops quartered in the department, as at Aldershot, Colchester, Dover, &c.

† These General Officers would replace the existing Inspectors of Volunteers.

4,000 men, and we have a grand total of 51,000 of all arms in this estimate. The waggon train will be a small one, as a great part of the Army stores will be moved by rail. Now we have in England and Wales 94 battalions of Militia, in Scotland 11, and of Rifle Volunteers in England and Wales 150 battalions, in Scotland there are 46, giving 301 battalions as against 138 squadrons, assuming each regiment of Yeomanry to consist of three squadrons. As for the Artillery, it is extremely difficult with the data at my disposal to arrive at any result. Of Militia Artillery we have about 94 batteries, all fit for garrison duties only, at least they neither have nor have ever had field-pieces. Of Artillery Volunteers we appear to possess about 350 batteries in England, Wales, and Scotland; that is on the assumption that each Captain in the Volunteer Artillery list represents a battery commander; but of these corps only a very small proportion are trained or provided with field-guns—none of them, to my knowledge, are in possession of rifled pieces. No force, however, is so difficult to improvise as an efficient field artillery. Of Engineers we have 62 companies, in what state of efficiency it is impossible for me to say; of military train and hospital corps—so requisite for the welfare of an Army in campaign—we have among the Volunteers no vestige.

Assuming that the above proportions for the various arms in a body of 50,000 men are approximately correct, it is obvious that the duty of Government would be to prune the exuberance of certain arms in some parts of the country, and to foster their development in others. If a working Army is ever to be formed, the field batteries will require the most careful and anxious supervision: the men should receive an increased capitation grant, and be assembled for training for two months in each year.

Here I am met by the allegation that it is impossible for Volunteers to acquire such a cohesion and knowledge of their duties as to become an efficient field artillery. My reply is that 400,000 reserve troops must have a due proportion of artillery; that the regular establishment is totally inadequate to meet such a demand; and that the nation which encourages the services of these men is bound to arm and instruct them efficiently. Supposing the three grand Armies to be mobilized, and to consist of 100,000 men each, their proportion of artillery is 900 guns; how much can Woolwich do towards supplying this number horsed and manned? We cannot blow hot and cold; either the Volunteers are useless, and had better be disbanded, or they are necessary to the national safety: if the latter, we are bound to place them, as regards armament, on a footing with regular troops.

I admit that a Volunteer artillery will be greatly inferior to that of the regular Army, but it will be better than none at all: and a little liberality, a certain allowance of instructors, and horses, say for two guns, and their proportion of waggons per battery allowed to be hired during two of the summer months at the expense of the country, would do wonders towards improving the force.

At least half of the existing force of artillery would be required for coast and garrison batteries: the remainder ought as soon as

possible to be supplied with muzzle-loading rifled guns; each battery so supplied ought, if possible, to be kept in a barrack or Government store; but the battery Commander should be held responsible for the serviceable condition of his guns and harness. Evidently in assuring the due distribution and harmonious working of a reserve *Corps d'armée*, its Staff Officers will have a fine field for the display of their energy and talent. The Staff college, or a succursal thereof, should be open to Officers of Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, under the same conditions as to Officers of the Army. As the troops of the Reserve must of necessity be in some respects inferior to regular soldiers, it is the more essential that their leaders should be well grounded in military science.

Each corps should have its permanent *dépôt* established in the vicinity of its head-quarters: here should be kept its pontoon train, engineers' park, camp equipage, hospital implements, field-guns and small-arm ammunition, and, above all, a certain quantity of waggons and harness under proper charge, as a nucleus for the material of a military train, to be supplemented by taking the country carts on requisition when necessary.

All commissions should emanate from the Crown.

The ill-defined and useless jurisdiction of the Lords Lieutenants in local military matters should cease.

Uniformity of dress among the Volunteers should be inculcated; and by degrees, and with a due regard to sparing the men useless expense, insisted upon.

For administrative purposes the various scattered companies of Volunteers should be known only as companies A, B, C, D, of such and such a battalion, and battalions numbered in each grand Army, as for instance, company B, 12th battalion southern Army. As the Militia and Yeomanry probably cling with some prejudice to their territorial designation, it may be good policy to permit their retention.

Every battery, cavalry regiment, and battalion must be inspected twice a year by the corps Commander.

All waggoners and carters should be encouraged to join a Volunteer waggon corps.

Every volunteer should be served out with a knapsack, water-bottle, and havresack; he should be in possession of a great coat, and be made to parade in heavy marching order once a month. All the infantry should be supplied with breech-loading rifles. Every horse in every parish should be borne on a register, corrected half-yearly, and furnished by the district tax-gatherers to the corps head-quarters. The same regulations apply to all carts and waggons.

Each battery, battalion, and squadron should have its brigade or divisional rendezvous permanently assigned, and should proceed thither on receiving the route after the mobilization of the corps has been decided on.

Now taking the second corps of the southern Army, and supposing it to be organized on the principles which I have so briefly and imperfectly sketched, let us observe the process of mobilization, and endeavour to arrive at a conclusion as to the amount of time requisite

for having the whole mass of troops assembled by divisions, and ready to move on any given point.

On Saturday, May 31st, Her Majesty in Council decides on mobilizing the southern Army. Lieutenant-General A. B. is appointed to the command: he fixes his head-quarters in London, and occupies himself with the formation of his staff. The War Office sends down an increase of staff sufficient to each corps Commander. At mid-day, on Sunday, June the 1st, the necessary warrants and instructions are in the hands of Major-General Y. Z., commanding the second corps: he at once telegraphs to all brigade and divisional Commanders to proceed to their respective head-quarters; also orders all brigade and divisional Staff-Officers, who have been already selected, on the first apprehension of hostilities, to join their immediate chiefs. By midnight on Monday the 2nd, all are at their posts. Traffic is suspended on the railways, except under the special permission of the Quartermaster-General. The Yeomanry are united by squadrons, the Infantry by battalions, the field artillery by batteries at sundown on Tuesday. On Wednesday, the Captains of field batteries, and Officers of the train and commissariat, duly furnished with requisitions, proceed to lay hands on all waggons and horses necessary to complete the equipment of their several departments.

As fast as the train is organized, the waggons are directed in due proportion upon the divisional points of concentration. Strong fatigue-parties are told off to every railway junction to assist in loading and unloading stores.

A Provost-Marshal is appointed, with deputies to each division.

By the time the necessary distribution and accumulation of supplies is effected, and the battery and train-horses got into something like working order, it is Monday the 8th: on that night Major-General Y. Z., having received satisfactory reports from all sides, orders the concentration by divisions or brigades to begin; for this and the formation of the various camps or cantonments we allow till Thursday. Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday are devoted by the corps Commander to a personal visit to each division and brigade; and on Tuesday the 16th, he telegraphs to General Sir A. B. that his corps is échelonné in divisions, fully supplied with all requisites, and ready to move as may be directed.

This is no exaggerated picture of what may be done in a country of such vast resources as Great Britain, permeated by railways in every direction: supposing the system to be applied simultaneously to each corps, we have in sixteen days 300,000 men ready to take the field.

The advantages claimed for this plan are—Firstly, that it leaves the regular troops disposable for foreign service; and as in war the best system of defence is one which combines itself with offensive operations, the benefit is obvious. Secondly, it lies at the option of the Crown to mobilize only one or two corps, or only certain divisions or regiments in each department, as may be deemed best, without impairing the working efficiency of the remainder. Thirdly, that the expense of keeping up a permanent nucleus of staff and war material

for each corps will be more than repaid to the country in the sense of security engendered by our being in a measure prepared for the extremities of war. Lastly, that the proposed territorial division of the island is an inexpensive alteration rather than an expansion of our present administrative system.

The CHAIRMAN: After having heard so admirably read and so well expressed a paper, I trust we shall have a good discussion on the merits of the proposals which you have now placed before you. We shall be happy to hear any gentlemen who may be pleased to make any remarks upon that subject.

Colonel ALCOCK, Commandant Rl. East Middlesex Militia: Mr. Chairman—As you have invited discussion, I will venture to say a few words, although as I know the author is ready to fight his own battle and to defend his own positions, it is perhaps rather a hazardous thing to do. I attended to the excellent paper which has just been read; the points which attracted my attention I take the liberty of noticing merely as subject for discussion, namely, those of the necessity for forming *corps d'armée*, and the necessity for conscription to supply them with men. With respect to the advantage of *corps d'armée*, there can be no doubt whatever that Colonel Lecomte, in his excellent historical work, which is in our library, gives his decision in favour of them. He says in the time of peace it is the most rational organization, although in time of war it does not give absolute superiority, inasmuch as in the last campaign the only *corps d'armée* improvised and mixed, was that of General Falkenstein, and this effected some of the most dashing exploits of the war. With respect to the conscription, that is rather a larger subject, because everybody knows that the Continental powers have 5,500,000 men, either actually under arms, or ready to be put under arms, and all those nations have their different peculiarities, characteristics, and military ability of different kinds. Well, of course, the effect of that organization is that the preparation for war is more expensive than war itself, and although it may not seem quite clear at first, upon consideration it will be evident that as the preparation is continuous, and the war itself may be brief, the preparation for the war is actually more expensive than the war itself; and as our system is a defensive and not an aggressive system, it follows that our system being continuous, must not be expensive. I think that is quite clear; but the advice given to us by Mr. Cole in his lecture, I have reason to suspect was rather too favourable with respect to Switzerland. As far as I recollect, he stated that it came to 10s. a man. Since that I have received a letter from Switzerland, in which I find far from that being the case, that the population of Switzerland is 2,000,000, and that it has a militia of 200,000, costing the country £355,525, or about £1 14s. per man, or 2s. per head of the population.* I take the liberty of mentioning that, because as all these matters turn on economy, it will be giving rather a false idea to suppose that even the Swiss can do what Mr. Cole believes to be the fact. He assumes that with this inexpensive arrangement they have always been able to hold their own, but my belief is (those who are acquainted with history know better than myself) that there are several instances—1799, I think, 1803 and 1815, perhaps, when they did not altogether hold their own. However, returning to the subject of conscription, or a modification of conscription, for of course our means of defence or preparation for defence must be based upon our customs, our antecedents, and our national character; therefore, instead of conscription, if I might mention the ballot, I think I could show that the ballot might be introduced without being either oppressive or inconvenient in any manner whatever. It is generally supposed that the ballot is of the same nature as a conscription in which the person drawn is to give his services. Now it so happens that the arrangement that took place when the ballot was in force, and which I believe is legal by the Act of George III, was that militia clubs were formed. They were called militia clubs, and were formed of a certain number of men who were liable to be drawn by the ballot—say ten men.

* I am informed, besides this, that Switzerland has contracted a loan of £480,000 for the transformation of its rifles on the Peabody system.—T. St. L. A.

The calculation was that one of these would be drawn every five years. Well, these men subscribed, according to the rate a substitute would cost, perhaps, a shilling a head every week, till the required sum was in the club. At present it would probably be 3d. a week per head. The effect of that was, that the club of these ten men having subscribed the sum, say 1s. a week for 13 weeks, would make £6 10s. altogether, and having raised that sum, the price of a substitute if one of the men is drawn, they put the money to the stock purse of the regiment; the regiment goes on always recruiting, as it did before; there is nobody distressed. The thing is extremely simple if its working is understood, because it only amounts to a tax upon those men who do not actually serve, and the class of men who are taken and paid for according to the price of labour in the labour-market—those are the very men whom it is valuable to get, because they are men who go ultimately to the Army, and finally are ready for foreign service. That is exactly the thing which we do require. My own idea is—perhaps I may be wrong—that it would be exceedingly easy to introduce a ballot by degrees. Inasmuch as all the militia regiments have an excellent staff, adjutants and everything ready, there is no difficulty in it whatever, whereas at present not only you do not accommodate the time of service to the requirements of the labourer, but you actually draw the line so hard that you cannot have in a militia regiment any single man who cannot give 28 consecutive days to training, and therefore you actually exclude the very man that you want. Every man in a militia regiment who has been trained, and who from his good character gets a situation, will purchase his discharge, or leave the regiment. Now that man ought to have been retained. It is self-evident that having drilled the man, he being valuable, you should retain him, although he cannot give the 28 consecutive days' training which is required by law as it at present stands. I do not like to venture farther upon the subject, for fear of raising, perhaps, some hostile objection to my views, but I think it is a very fit subject to be discussed in this Institution; seeing the colossal preparations for attack that are made by other countries, it is quite right that in this Institution we should discuss what would be adequate and proportionate means for the defence of our own.

Sir Harry VERNEX, Bart., M.P. : Mr. Chairman—I came to-night in the hope of hearing many Officers who have considered the subject, and are much more qualified to address the meeting than I am. I hope to hear their opinions upon this, which is certainly one of the most important subjects that can invite the attention of military men. I am very anxious that those who take up this subject should really consider what we shall probably be exposed to in case of war. Now the paper we have listened to supposes that we are engaged in war with France, and that an enemy would be sent to our shores, who might, perhaps, effect a landing. Colonel Malet referred to the old English gentleman, who thought one ship would be able to carry back those who might survive such an undertaking. My belief is, in case we were engaged in war, we should be very suddenly exposed to invasion, not on one point, but on several. I should think nothing would be more easy than to collect three or four armies in France, each of which would be perfectly ready to attempt to make a descent upon this country, and I believe also they would not be at all terrified by the apprehension that one small ship would take the survivors back. As it would be easy to collect such Armies, it would be very unwise to look at this subject without considering the real danger that we may have to meet. I am quite sure that is what we all do desire to contemplate. I think the danger would be nothing less than that, that we should be exposed to attack, not from the ports of France alone, but also possibly from the ports of America and other countries, for we must contemplate the possibility, not of being engaged in war with one foreign power, but with several. The prize of this country is something so enormous, the booty to be obtained here is so much greater than that of all the rest of the world put together, that we must not suppose if we were engaged suddenly in war, it would be only one country that would endeavour to effect a landing on our shores, but my firm belief is, that very likely we should be attacked by two or three countries. We must always recollect the changes that have taken place within the last few years. Iron ships are now possessed by Prussia, by Denmark, as well as by France, America, and Russia. These powers are in the possession of iron ships that are perfectly able to

cross the seas, and notwithstanding all the gallantry and skill of our sailors, who shall say that in dark weather, supposing there were several fleets endeavouring to reach the coast of England, one or two of those fleets might not be able to land two or three armies of, say, 20,000 or 30,000 men upon our shores? My belief is, notwithstanding the utmost gallantry and skill of our sailors, that is the sort of danger we ought to be prepared to meet. Now I cannot help doubting one proposal of the gallant Officer who wrote that paper, and that is, to divide our country by red lines in the way he has done, instead of localizing it more into our counties. I dare say he has had some very good reason for proposing that, but I have always thought that forces being connected with different counties, and also regiments connected with those counties, would the better assist each other, and would materially tend to the force and efficiency of the Army. I quite concur with him in the sentiment that the nation which called forth Volunteers is bound to instruct and arm them efficiently. There can be no truer sentiment than that, and it is one we ought to endeavour to impress upon our Government. Now I know that when an invasion was formerly apprehended, all these things were perfectly and efficiently attended to, because I have in my own possession all the proposals that were made in the early part of this century, and I know every line of hills which was to be defended, was fixed upon; that the county magistrates and all parties concerned were perfectly prepared; that every detail was settled where corps were to meet, where they were to be brigaded, where ammunition was to be sent to, and in short, every precaution was taken—I have it all in the handwriting of the Officers in charge of it—to resist invasion. I recollect at that time, some 40 or 50 years ago, an old man called upon the Adjutant-General one day at the Horse Guards. He came into the office and said, "Sir, I have got eighty waggons, each with eight horses, and carters to look after them, and I beg to place them at the disposal of the Government, to be sent at any moment to any place the Government may think right." He said "My name is Russell." He was the owner of "Russell's flying vans," and some of my contemporaries may recollect that on the Great Western road we used to see Russell's flying vans, with eight horses each, going to Exeter and to Plymouth, forty or fifty years ago. There is one subject to which, when considering the importance of our Reserve Forces as a means of defending our country, we ought not to shut our eyes, and that is the very great importance of having our railways upon one gauge. I do think with reference to the defence of our country, there is not anything more important than that. I recollect Sir Willoughby Gordon giving evidence upon that subject. He was asked what was the objection to the two gauges, and he stated that the inconvenience would be about the same as that of a ferry; that the inconvenience of moving from one gauge to another was as great as it would be to cross a river by a ferry. I think I heard a word about "short service" in the paper read to us. Now it is my firm belief, if the infantry of our Army were enlisted for a short service, instead of a long one, we should get a very superior class of men, and that among them we should find those who at the end of their service would be willing and desirous to be enlisted into our reserve, and so would form the most efficient reserve we possibly could have. That subject will shortly be brought before Parliament, and I sincerely trust it will receive the attention it merits. But I should very much like to hear the opinions of some military men here, whether an infantry soldier could not be rendered efficient in 4 or 5 years, considering that he probably would be a very superior man to what he is now, for I suspect that almost in every family in England you would find young fellows who would like very much indeed to enlist in the Army, if they could serve four or five years, instead of eight or ten, and if you had a more intelligent class of men, surely you would have time enough to make them good soldiers in so short a time as that. It has always appeared to me that a man could be made a good soldier in a period of that nature. Then I own there is another point I should like to see introduced into our "Reserve forces." I should like to see them brigaded for a much longer time than they are now. I cannot conceive that the short period for which our militia are called out can really make them efficient soldiers. It may be very well for a march past, or for a review, but to perform the duties of soldiers in the field, they ought to be out for a very much longer period, and that if they could be brigaded together long enough to receive

some useful military instruction, it would be advantageous—I mean instruction with regard to field fortifications, and things of that sort. Also, with regard to the Staff College, it appears to me that that was a very desirable suggestion, that the Staff College should be open to them, because I believe there are some men who go into the militia who really have military genius and taste for those pursuits, and it is a great pity that they should not have the opportunity of studying just as well as officers of the regular Army.

Captain HOZIER, 3rd Drag. Gds.: Although I have not one-fourth the experience of the gentlemen who have already spoken, I trust I may claim the privilege which is accorded to every new member in every House, to say a few words upon this subject. There are many points in Colonel Malet's paper which must strike everybody. The redistribution of the country into new districts, the formation of divisions, the placing of head-quarters at important railway junctions, are all points which I think must attract universal attention. He speaks of our "Reserve forces," and in those forces he would include the Militia, the Volunteers, and, I presume, the enrolled Pensioners. Now, it appears to me none of these forces are "Reserve forces" in the real sense of the word. They are subsidiary forces, or auxiliary forces. They are forces which can be called out for garrison duty in the United Kingdom, but legally they cannot be called upon to recruit the ranks of the regular Army. They are not forces which can go anywhere and do anything as "Reserve forces" ought to do. They answer in the Prussian and French systems to the Landsturm and the Garde Nationale Mobile. Our "Reserve forces," as was stated in the House of Commons, are 2,000 men Army Reserve, and 3,000 men for Militia Reserve, so that we have 5,000 men to fill up the vacancies in 61 battalions of 560 men each. Now the war strength of these battalions is 1,200 men, so that in fact we should require a force of 50,000 men for the infantry alone, in order to bring them up to a war footing. Then we have no Reserve force for Artillery, no Reserve force for Cavalry, no Reserve force for Engineers; in fact we might almost practically say we have no "Reserve forces" at all. You may say the Yeomanry and the enrolled Pensioners would be excellent troops for the defence of the country, but then they are of no service if you have to go into offensive war, and it appears to me that if the country is deprived of the sword, the shield is of very little use to it. The danger of invasion is not so great as it was in the early part of this century, when the greatest military genius Europe had ever known, was attempting to carry out such an enterprize, but there is this danger to which we are exposed: I believe if a squadron of French or American vessels was able to chase our fleet off the seas, to lay off the Scilly Islands and intercept our commerce, there would be such a panic in England, the funds would fall in London, the dividends would be stopped, and the country would be driven into making peace before the enemy would have landed on our shores. If we want a "Reserve Force," we must have a Reserve force which will be able to defend London if possible at the barriers of Paris, supposing France to be our foe. But we have enemies equally dangerous with France, although France has always been looked upon as the natural invader of this country, and even if we were to repulse that invasion, what good would it be to us if we were not able to pursue the enemy? What good is a battle won if the pursuit is not carried on? And if we could not throw an Army into his country and threaten his capital, what use would our defence be to us? Unless we can do so we shall have no success in war; we shall no longer be feared, and shall have no voice in the affairs of Europe. In order to do this, we must have an efficient "Reserve force" which shall fill up the ranks of the regular Army, and enable us to send a powerful force to Berlin, to Paris, to Constantinople, or to Vienna, as may be necessary. To find such a "Reserve force" I believe is one of the most difficult problems that has ever been put before any military department. In foreign countries there is the conscription, and a man after entering the regular Army is naturally anxious to go into the Reserve. In this country a man goes voluntarily into the regular Army, and if he prefers that to all other professions, he remains in it. The question has been raised by General Peel as to the Militia Reserve. This is a subject on which I have no right to express any opinion, I can only trust that Parliament and the Secretary of State for War will find some way of forming a Reserve which will fill up the regular Army so as to enable us to have a powerful offensive weapon.

Colonel MALET: I and my friend who has just spoken, I think, are perfectly agreed. You recollect that at the commencement of the paper I said our Reserve forces are what we dignify by the name of "Reserve forces," though I do not consider them "Reserve forces" at all. I think there is a bad element which we may have to make the best of at a given moment, but I do not think it is at all the weapon which ought to be in the hands of England, or the sort of thing we require for the defence of this country, because I wish this country to be defended, as it has been hitherto, not at home, but abroad, and I hope that will always be the case. Above all, what I think we require is that the time of service should be shorter in duration than it is at present, first in a regiment of the line, and then in the Reserve. But until reason or misfortune shall convince the country that a great reform is necessary, my only object is, as far as I can, to indicate a method of dealing with our present Reserves, limited and bad as I fear they now are.

Major GORDON IVES: I think Colonel Malet began his paper by saying the conscription is the only way of recruiting the Army and forming a proper Reserve. In this I cannot altogether agree with him, although undoubtedly it would be the best. Failing that, he commences by trying to utilize the forces which at present exist, and the whole of his paper might be taken as pointing out a method of organizing the only kind of force which we can organize under the present system, short of a conscription or ballot. The first gentleman who commented on the paper preferred the ballot to the conscription. I humbly differ from him. The ballot is merely a means by which exemption from service may be purchased by money. The moment you are able to buy off your service in the Army, you make it a question of money, and the moment you make it a question of money, you set class against class. Now a conscription takes all classes. By a conscription you may have every young man in England. You may take so many, and you leave the rest, but at least you make no distinction of class, and you therefore can cause no discontent in one class over another class. The 1,200,000 men whom the French nation now support by the new French Bill is a conscription, and not a ballot, and by that conscription they take in all classes. No man is exempt from serving now in some form in the French Army, and, therefore, all classes being taken in, the whole nation is more or less content. A man who is born a labourer cannot say "I am torn from my family to serve my country because I am poor and unable to defend myself," because his near neighbour, who is wealthy, is in the same boat as himself, and is obliged to serve in the Reserve Army. One gentleman, who has just spoken, has said that the only possible chance of defending England is to be able to send an invading army abroad. No doubt the best defence we could possibly have in England would be 200,000 men such as England now possesses in her regular Army, the finest troops in the world, and a Reserve of 400,000 men to back them of the same calibre—in fact, an Army of 600,000 men ready to take the field at any moment. But those are things the country cannot support. We are now tremendously taxed, and we have not to deal with what we should like to do, but with what we can do. If we could annihilate the whole British system of military service, if we could say, "We will have a system of 200,000 regular troops as they exist now, the finest troops on earth," if we could do that, regardless of all expense, and also have a Reserve of 400,000 men, drawn from the finest young men in England, ready to take their places, we could then immediately on a declaration of war send 100,000 men here, and 100,000 men there, and we could fight the world, as we have done before, and as I have no doubt we should have no great difficulty in doing again. But that would be a greater strain than we could possibly put upon this country; and what we have to consider is not what we would adopt if we could, but what we can adopt under existing circumstances, what the nation will stand, and what the common sense of the people is ready to adopt. What we have to consider is—we have got our country, and we have got to defend it. If it is assumed that it is impossible our country can ever be invaded, why should we trouble ourselves? But we begin our argument by assuming that it can be invaded, and not only can be invaded, but can be invaded by such a force as to endanger the very safety of the country itself; that our arsenals might be taken, and we might find the very heart

of our empire, and London itself, taken before we could turn round, and so our very centre paralysed, our pulse stopped before we had time to organize the forces that exist. The paper is therefore directed to the object of organizing the forces that we have thought it necessary to have for the defence of the country. We have our standing Army, we have our Militia, we have our Volunteers, and our Yeomanry. All those forces either mean something or nothing. They are either useless, and an absolutely absurd expenditure, or they are an Army which in case of war might be called upon to defend the country. They are its very life, or they are nothing. A Volunteer is either a man who can be called upon to defend his home and his hearth, or he is an absurdity—he is something ridiculous. Then, what is a Militiaman? What is a Militiaman in the best sense in which you can take him? He is a man who may be called upon to be a soldier, to stand up for life or death for his country. I myself humbly suggest that he is a very inefficient soldier, because he cannot shoot, and, as at present organized, though they are often very well commanded, they are occasionally very badly commanded. However, that is not to the point. We have our Militia, our Volunteers, and our Yeomanry, and those men are the forces which at this moment the country supposes will be able to defend it from any invader. We begin by supposing that an invasion is possible, and an invasion of sufficient strength to take the country, and those are the forces which we have to organize, and Colonel Malet's paper begins by assuming that a conscription, if it were possible, is the best and the only means of really forming an Army with which every man might say, "I am satisfied." As I have already said, I do not agree with him. But a conscription on such a large scale as that, Colonel Malet supposes to be, for the present, impossible, and therefore he goes on to organize the forces as they at present exist. Whether those forces are efficient or inefficient, even in a state of perfect organization, is for the senior Officers of the country to judge, and for the Parliament of the country to judge on the advice of the military advisers of Parliament, whether those forces are sufficient when they are properly organized. But at the present moment everybody in the world knows that they are not properly organized—that they are not organized in the proper manner—that they are not organized at all—that they are simply disconnected masses all over the country without any organization whatever. Take the regular Army itself. War being declared, you would have recruits joining the Army, and supposing a battalion of the regular Army to be 500 men, within a month after the declaration of war that battalion would be raised to 800 men. Now, in the present day of shooting, it would be impossible to teach them to shoot, and when we know the tremendous strain there is in time of war on a single battalion without a proper Reserve, will anybody tell me how it is possible to get recruits who will be able to learn their duty? Because the duty of a soldier in the present day is not merely drilling, but shooting, for that is the essential part of warfare. Moving great masses of men, with decision and with rapidity, and enabling each individual man to shoot straight, are the two things we must never forget. Formerly a man might very soon learn to shoot with his battalion, but now individual shooting is a main element, and therefore I beg to say, simply as a Volunteer, that the Volunteers stand pre-eminent in their shooting, and that subject ought not to be forgotten in the question of the organization of the Army. At present, this force is armed with weapons known to be obsolete. In conclusion, I would simply suggest that in considering the pamphlet we have heard read, we ought not to forget that it does not suggest anything new, but is simply put forward as a means for organizing the force, which has been stated lately by our Secretary of State for War, Mr. Cardwell, to be perfectly satisfactory as a defence of the country, but which at the present moment is utterly disorganized, and Colonel Malet's paper suggests one means for organizing the forces as they at present exist.

Captain COLOMB, R.M.A.: We are very apt, when we talk about the defence of the country, to forget the defence of the Empire. The country can be ruined in two ways; one is by assault, and the other is by investment. The gentleman who has just spoken has alluded to the danger of investment with regard to the Channel, and it is quite sufficient for us to remember that investment is a danger. I repeat what I have before stated, that we should, by an enemy placing a naval

force superior to our own in the Channel, suffer with respect to our commerce at the rate of forty-four and a half millions of money per month. That is a thing which we must pay attention to, but it has nothing to do with the paper before us.

As I take it, the regular troops are for the defence of the Empire; that means for the defence of India, and for the defence of our Colonies, I should say, the indirect defence of our Colonies. Our regular troops are for that purpose, for the Navy is powerless without them. But having provided for that, we must also look to the defence of the citadel of the Empire—the British Islands; and whatever means are devised, or whatever schemes are put forth for rendering the soil of the British Islands secure, deserve the attention of every man interested in the defence of the country, therefore, I should like to make a very few remarks with reference to the paper before us.

First of all, the gentleman who spoke second put a very practical question for the consideration of those present—What we shall be expected to do in case of war?—I only speak with regard to the United Kingdom—and he very properly reminded us that we were liable to attack from several quarters, and of that there can be no question or manner of doubt, for this reason, that a number of small squadrons coming out of European ports are far more likely to elude the vigilance of our Channel fleet than a very large expedition. Therefore, in any scheme for the organization of our forces with the view of resisting invasion, we must bear in mind that not only have we to guard against a determined and violent attack upon some part of the coast, but we must also be prepared to guard against simultaneous assaults on detached points.

With regard to the paper before us, the first thing that struck me was with reference to the French occupation of Egypt. That is a question which is not directly concerned in the defence of the country: it is a question for the defence of the empire, and, therefore, comes very properly under the head of the organization of our regular forces. The colonies "screaming for reinforcements," which no doubt they would do, appears to me also to be more a question concerning our regular forces, because the mere invasion of England would not cause that circumstance to occur; it would be more the result of that other way of ruining the country by partial or complete investment, that is, cutting our lines of communication.

With reference to dividing the districts of England, there is a definite object in view, the power of moving organized masses of troops upon the assailable coast line. I am sure we all must agree that it is very good, for that is, after all, what our "Reserve forces" are for, if they are for anything; it is to assemble in properly organized masses regularly and quickly upon any part of the coast line that may be threatened. With regard to the details of that distribution, of course everybody has their own plan, and, therefore, I disagree with regard to the details; but with regard to the principle, I am sure everybody must agree who has really thought out the subject.

Now, there is one point in the paper which I wish to make a very few remarks about, "that regular troops cannot be localized." I may be permitted to say, as I belong to a "localized service" myself, that I disagree with Colonel Malet. I belong to a service which has its fixed head-quarters, whence its men are sent out to all parts of the globe in detachments numbering from 5 to 200 on short notice, perhaps in a few hours, with a complete organization. They return to their fixed head-quarters, their wives and families keep up their local connection with the place, and in every way, as far as my experience of fifteen years goes, it is an entirely satisfactory process. And I believe it is the true principle to be followed out with regard to Army reform, for this reason, that if you get a short service Army, which we are coming to, and must come to, the local connections of men must be preserved; as soon as a man gets his discharge from the Army he settles down again into civil life, he distributes himself, as it were, and, therefore, the more you can localize the Army, the more sure are you of a man being ready to take up his old place and his old post at the head-quarters of the district to which he belongs. Therefore, I believe "localization" possible, and indeed, Colonel Malet, I think, will remember that, to a certain extent the service to which he belongs is "localized." It has its battalions abroad, and it has its battalions at home,

within a certain district, and, therefore, I must be allowed to express my idea that "localization" of troops is possible, and not only possible, but I believe it to be the true principle which will ultimately be followed out.

There is another point—and a very important one it is—with reference to the distribution of artillery and infantry, and I think Colonel Malet has pointed out what has always struck me as a very—I hardly know exactly how to express it—but as a very grave defect in the "Reserve forces," namely, that you have garrison artillery where you do not want them, and you have infantry where you do not want them. To make this evident, I will just go back to explain what I mean by referring to the question which one of the speakers asked, "What shall we be called upon to do in case of war?" Now, I am only speaking with regard to the defence of England. We should be called upon to hold certain fortified positions, Woolwich, Chatham, Dover, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Pembroke, and so on. Those are immense fortified arsenals, upon which the safety of our fleet depends, and not only that, but the safety of the country, for they may be the basis of operations for our Army. I note the constitution of the "Reserve forces" surrounding these fortified points, and what do I find? I find a small proportion of garrison artillery, and a very large proportion of infantry; in other parts of England, where there are no fortifications at all, I find garrison artillery, and so on. Therefore, that point in the paper is, to my mind, a very important one, and I believe that, with reference to the fixed and fortified points, the true policy is to convert the whole of the surrounding districts into garrison artillery, with their head-quarters at the fortified point.

With regard to field artillery, my own impression is, as an artilleryman, that there is no hope of ever having an efficient field artillery of the "Reserve forces," and, therefore, I believe that the true policy of the country is to keep up her field artillery to a strength not merely in proportion to the line of our regular troops, but equal to the line of those regular troops and their reserves, whatever they may be.

With regard to re-numbering and telling off Volunteers by brigades and districts, I know by experience, from having been employed on one or two Volunteer reviews, particularly with regard to the garrison brigades of Volunteer artillery, that there is nothing more prejudicial to system, and there is nothing more likely to give rise to confusion than the defect pointed out in that paper, and that is not having them numbered according to their position in the brigade and division to which they belong.

And having made these remarks I wish to say, I think with reference to the distribution of troops in the United Kingdom, that we are all bound to come back in point of fact to the original question, what will we have to do with our "Reserve forces" as they are, not as they may be, because we may have war before we have time to organize anything else. But, whatever forces we have, we must bear this in mind—we do not know when we may have war, and we must know that these forces are for war and nothing else, and therefore any scheme that can bring before us a practical plan by which the exigencies of war can be met by our war forces deserves consideration, and I am sure a great number of points in the paper which has been read this evening, and which I have mentioned, deserve very serious consideration.

Lieutenant-Colonel LEAHY, R.E.: Much that I had to say upon this subject has been anticipated by Captain Hozier, who has pointed out what our "Reserve forces" should be. I only wish to add that I believe the great defect of our military system has been the system of re-engagement and long service. It was not the original intention and constitution of the British Army that the service of the soldier should be long—in fact we all know that soldiers were only originally enlisted for a campaign. It was only at the beginning of the last century that the field artillery was organized on a permanent footing, and this is the force that requires the longest training, and, as has been most justly observed to-night, the force that ought to be kept up permanently on the largest scale. I believe the true remedy for insufficiency of "Reserves" is that pointed out by Lord Grey before the Recruiting Commission, and I cannot understand why that Commission did not notice the important evidence that he gave before it. He suggested enlistment for a short period of service, with liability to serve afterwards in a "Reserve force." That is the

true principle of a "Reserve force" for supplying the men required to fill up the ranks of the regular Army. This principle also ought to be applied to our Militia—a large proportion of our Militia are now re-engaged men, which is a great mistake. Our great object ought to be to have as many men in the country as possible who have had a military training. I fully concur in what one gentleman stated, that rifle shooting is such an important part of our military instruction that the Volunteers, or any organization which will encourage instruction in shooting as a part of the civilian's education, will tend to increase our military strength. Much has been said in the abuse of Mr. Cole and his "Parliament," but I think there is much force in what he says, namely, "that he would wish to see as large a proportion of the people as possible receive some military training, and he would begin it at school." We know that there are Volunteer corps at some of our public schools which have attained considerable efficiency, and I do not see why the system should not be extended throughout the whole country. If it were so, our military force would probably require a shorter period of training, and taking economy into question, the shorter the time they are under instruction, the better.

I do not believe this country will ever listen to the word "conscription;" we must depend upon a Volunteer Army, however it be raised. Considered economically, the question is this—We have four classes of forces. *First*, the Volunteer, who costs the country a very small sum per annum, not more than a Swiss soldier, about from £1 10s. to £1 14s. a year. The larger number of these we have the better, their moral influence is very great. Then come the Militiamen, who cost perhaps four times as much as the Volunteers—in my mind too much, in consequence of the expensive staff that is kept up for their instruction. I do not at all see why having, as we have, a large proportion of Officers in the regular Army, a certain number of them should not be lent for teaching the Militia. The Militia Staff, consisting of about 5,000 men, costs more than the Militia who are trained—some 70,000 or 80,000. I should like to see less spent on the permanent staff and more on the training. The next force we have is the "Army Reserve" soldier, who costs more than the Militiaman does, and it is a class that ought to be in every way encouraged. Then you come to the regular soldier, who costs about four or five times what the "Army Reserve" soldier costs, and from 20 to 25 times what the Volunteer costs. They ought to be as few and as perfect as possible, looking for support to the men in the "Reserve" force.

The matter may further be looked at from this light. We now enlist from 15,000 to 20,000 recruits a year. If a shorter period of service was instituted, and service for the colonies and India was made a separate engagement, we should only require from 7,000 to 8,000 to keep up the Colonial and Indian Army. Upon examination of the statistics before the Recruiting Commission, it appears to me there are about 12,000 "loafers" in the country who are always glad to enlist as soldiers, and make the Army their profession. Now we have to go beyond that number, and give bounty to induce some 3,000 or 4,000 men in addition to join. If we had separate engagements for colonial service in place of having to give a premium to add to the number of men who are naturally willing to join the Army, we ought to send away some 4,000 or 5,000 of them, and those men would be only too glad to serve in a "Reserve force." I therefore think that short service is the remedy for insufficient Reserves, and I have not the slightest doubt but that it could be carried out without any great disturbance of existing arrangements.

With regard to fixing the districts of the country with reference to railway communication, that is a subject brought before a meeting of this Institution last year. I then recommended a plan, giving the details, on the principle that our military districts ought to be based with reference to our railway communications. In a matter of detail I think Colonel Malet has made one mistake. In his Western District he includes places to which the broad gauge does not extend. I made it a little different, in order to keep the broad gauge lines in one district and the narrow gauge in another, but the principle is right.

Colonel MALET: Lieutenant-Colonel Leahy is probably not aware that the Great Western Railway are now adopting the narrow gauge.

The CHAIRMAN: The two gentlemen who last addressed the meeting are well

entitled to be heard before it, for both these gallant Officers read most useful papers, remarkable for their ability, in this Institution, Captain Colomb this year, and Lieutenant-Colonel Leaby last year. The one is already published in our Journal, the other will shortly be published, and I do not hesitate to say both of them are valuable contributions to the literature of this Society, as well as a general benefit to the country. My hon. and gallant friend, Colonel Malet, may at least be assured of this—that he has produced a paper here to-night which is able in itself and has the merit of having given rise to a most interesting discussion. He has raised the point, though perhaps not going into the whole question, of what should be the defensive resources of the country, both with regard to its internal as well as its external defence, and there are points in it, which this meeting has already recognized by the speeches we have heard, as well worth the consideration of the country.

Captain Hosier, I think, hit the nail on the head first when he pointed out the difference that existed between the "Reserve forces" for the defence of the country, and the "Reserve forces" as a supplement to the Army. There are, no doubt, two kinds of "Reserve forces." We have first the Militia "Army Reserve," as they have been called, and secondly the Volunteers. But we most undoubtedly have no "Reserve force" at the present moment by which we can supplement the line in the case of taking the field. It is now settled that every regiment at home is to be of the strength of 560 men. If war was declared those regiments would have to be filled up to at least 900 or 1,000 men, and where are we to get the men to fill them up? That is the question which this country has now to solve; that is the question which the Secretary of State for War is now engaged, and his predecessor was engaged in considering. It is a most difficult question. It is very easy to prepare a paper about the advantage of short service, but when you come to consider the question of how you are to get these 30,000, 40,000, or 50,000 men, to have two "Reserves," namely one "Reserve" to put into the regiments to make them up 900 or 1,000 strong, and another "Reserve" to supply those vacancies which must immediately fall upon regiments after they have taken the field, not only by casualty in action, but by what is much worse than the mortality that occurs in action, namely, sickness in the field; you therefore require not only 30,000 men to put in the Army, but you must have another 30,000 men ready to take their place when the regiments that go out first, fall short of their numbers. With regard to the "Reserve Forces" for the defence of the country, it is perfectly true that there is no organization. These forces have been raised at different times; they rest upon different Acts of Parliament, and at the present moment there is no machinery existing by which these forces can be brought together. The Militia at the present moment cannot be put under the command of General Officers of the districts. The Volunteers you have no power over. They go out when they please, and no authority either from myself as the Chief of the "Reserve Forces," or from the General Officer of the district, can bring them out. Now it will be a grave question by-and-by whether there should not be terms made with them by which upon certain occasions they shall be bound to assemble and place themselves in the hands of the Commanding General Officers of districts. However, at the present moment it is the case that those forces have no cohesion, and the law as it at present stands, will not allow of their being brought together. As to what may be the eventual mode of doing it, I do not know, but I hope in course of time we may find means to so far organize these forces that they may be not only available in time of war, for then they are certainly much more available, because an Order in Council can place them at once under the Mutiny Act, but that we may make preparations for war in a time of peace, by having the power to assemble and to instruct these troops.

Some remarks were made with regard to the Militia. It so happened that, last year, I inspected a great number of regiments of Militia, and I can only say this, I found them in most admirable order. It is perfectly true they did not go far enough. I inspected some regiments that, as far as machinery and drill went, astonished me; but I said to them, "I am very much pleased at what I have seen, but I have not seen as much as I should like. You cannot do this, you cannot do that, and, therefore, I do not consider you have done as much as you ought to do." I trust we shall make a little advance this year. Amongst other things, rifle prac-

tice has been alluded to, and there is no reason why the Militia should not go through a course of rifle practice. It has been unfortunately left in previous years to Commanding Officers to do as they pleased with regard to it. This year we shall get some Sniders into the hands of the Militia, and in another year I hope they will all be armed with that weapon. I fondly expected this year that the whole force of Militia would have been armed with them, and that we should have been able to carry out a regular system of rifle practice with Sniders in their hands. However, that cannot be; but it is essential that Militiamen should be taught to fire, and taught under a regular system, a system as complete in its operation as that of the regular Army; that they should be well looked after, and the results of their practice published in the same way as the records of target practice are published now. I believe we shall be able to accomplish that, and I fully believe that, efficient as that force is as far as it goes, and it is wonderful that they are so efficient, we shall make them still more so than we have already found them.

Now, with regard to the Army service. We must come to this, that if you have a short service, you must say that you will not allow a man to re-engage. It is a difficult thing to say that; it is a difficult thing to say to a man who likes the Army that you won't allow him to go on; and we have not, I believe, ever got to establish such a principle as that: but the fact is, at the present moment—it may astonish some people out of doors—I do not hesitate to declare that the Army is essentially a popular service in the country. There is not only no difficulty whatever in getting men, but they re-engage by wholesale. For instance, men are allowed to re-engage after they have served six years and a half now, and hereafter it will be eight years when we get the twelve years enlistment into operation. The men do not take their discharge, but they re-engage; they re-engage three or four years beforehand for a term of nine years afterwards. The pension, no doubt, is a considerable object. The consequence of that is, that if we had a short service, and allowed re-engagement, the men would not go to the "Reserve," they would stay with their own regiments. Those that like the army would stay with their own regiments, and those who were tired of the Army will not go into the "Reserve." We offer good terms at the present moment. We offer men who have taken their discharge at the end of ten years, and men now serving who are in excess of the English establishment, who have completed six years and a half, to take them for a further three years and a half, and join the first "Army Reserve." Those who have taken their discharge we invite to enter the "Army Reserve," where they will get £4 a year, and only have to come out for twelve days. But they won't take it. Things may alter they say. The soldier, we all know, is a shrewd and a remarkably suspicious man; he is never quite sure what is to be the operation of the next change; and there may be something in that. Possibly, in a year or two they may see the advantage—or their wives may for them—of having £4 a year upon the bare chance of being called upon to take the field in the event of there being a war; and as we know this country will not very easily engage in war, and must be driven into war before it will embark therein, it is evident that the men are almost perfectly safe to get £4 a year for doing very little.

Then, with regard to districts, I cannot exactly express any opinion upon the actual *corps d'armée* districts which I see before me, but there is no doubt whatever the districts of this country will have to be altered. If you take the Northern District you find that it is a gigantic one. I am afraid to say exactly what is the number of troops altogether in the Northern District, but I rather think it is upwards of 100,000, including all branches. It is evidently far beyond the power of any one man to fulfil the duties of that situation if the "Reserve forces" of a district are all to be placed under the command of one General Officer, as ought to be the case. Then, in the Midland counties there are no regular troops, but there are vast numbers of Volunteers; and, as the gallant Officer said just now, there are riflemen where they are not wanted, and artillerymen should be, where they are not. Unfortunately, when that force was first formed, they were allowed to select what they would like to be; nobody seemed at all to regulate how the force was to be distributed, or what their particular duties were; and although, looking at the whole force, the larger quantity of artillery are to be found in maritime counties, yet, at the same

time, artillery is to be found where artillery would never be wanted: at any rate, if they were, they would have to be removed from the counties in which they are now situated.

"Field Artillery Reserve forces" were mentioned. I do not hesitate to express my opinion against "Field Artillery Reserves," and for this reason. We all know in the Royal Artillery that it takes three years to make a good driver. I do not mean to say by that it would take three years to make an ordinary driver—probably you may do it in much less time; but still a good driver is essential for field artillery. The gunner can be taught field artillery drill, to a certain extent, without taking the battery into the field; but the Officer who commands the battery, the non-commissioned officers who are attached to the battery, the driver and the horses—no small element—but, however, the driver in particular cannot be properly trained in the Volunteer or Militia services. Let the guns be prepared; let Woolwich be full of guns; let all the gunners, whether in the Artillery, the Volunteers, or the Militia, be taught field artillery as far as the drill part is concerned; and then we may attach them to the Royal Artillery, and they will be found in a very short time capable of doing the work of gunners in the field; but the drivers are a great branch of the profession who must be taught; and if you are suddenly obliged to take the field, you cannot find drivers as fast as you want them.

The Staff was alluded to, and that is an important point in the organization of our "Reserve forces." I do not go so far as to say "open the Staff College," because I think the class of Officers who belong to the Militia and the Volunteers would not be able to go through what is usually termed the "Staff College course;" but what I should like to see is this: I should like to see a Staff School established at the Staff College; I should like to see regimental schools established in regiments of the line in different parts of the country, not absolutely to force the Volunteer Officers to attend them, because it is hardly possible to expect them to leave their occupations entirely, but at any rate, you should give the opportunity to the Volunteer Officers and Militia Officers to attend these classes, in order to qualify themselves for their position in the Reserve forces. I would do the same thing with the Officers commanding regiments, particularly the Volunteers, because many Officers command regiments in the Volunteers who have no other qualification whatever than their social position. I would even go so far as to say this: I should like to see future Commanding Officers obliged to go to the Staff School in order to obtain a position of command. I would establish such schools at Aldershot and Sandhurst, where they might learn to manage battalions and brigades. If we do organize the force in brigades, which is perfectly possible, not perhaps at the present moment, but by-and-bye, it is essential that they should know how to command, and I cannot see how a man is to command a brigade in the field, who has never commanded a battalion. As a general rule, you will find the troops are massed in the south of England; those are the important points as far as the historical feelings of the country with regard to invasion are concerned. The force is small, but railways give us the power of concentrating our troops wherever they may be wanted.

Having said thus much, I need only say further, that I am sure you will all agree with me in passing a vote of thanks to Colonel Malet for having written this paper, and to Sir Alexander Malet for reading it; and I think that this discussion will be most beneficial to the object Colonel Malet had in view, when he wrote that paper.