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THE IMPERIAL YEOMANRY IN 1905.

By Colonel H. LE ROY-LEWIS, D.S.O., Hampshire Carabiniers,
Imperial Yeomanry.

Thursday, 13th April, 1905.

Major-General Sir A. E. TURNER, K.C.B., in the Chair.

THE wisdom of drawing public attention to the Imperial Yeomanry at this particular period of its existence may very properly be doubted. We have been walking along a veritable *via dolorosa* of so-called Army Reform, during which progress it has been possible entirely to recast the conditions of service under which our Yeomanry Forces exist, and this scheme, for which Mr. Brodrick is mainly responsible, though by no means a perfect one, has so far proved on the whole to be successful.¹ During the same period we have seen our Regular Forces thrown into the melting-pot, the Militia threatened with extinction, and the Volunteers destined to be smothered with uninvited kindness. The Yeomanry, however, still continues to exist, and is not at present threatened. We may therefore ask ourselves, who are all of us presumably well-wishers to the Yeomanry, why we should insist upon opening out controversies which had now better be stilled, and by so doing endanger the very existence of the force in which we are interested. Our duty at present would appear to be to preserve a discreet silence.

At the same time, we cannot forget that we are only one unit, and that the smallest, in our great Auxiliary Force Service, and, as we have now apparently reached the parting of the ways which lead on the one side to efficiency and on the other towards military decay, we must ask ourselves how we can best fall into line with any

¹ The progressive decline of the Yeomanry from 1870 to 1900 is best illustrated by the following figures; its revival is also clearly set forth by the figures of 1901 to 1905:—

5 years' average	1870-1874	-	-	-	-	-	13,400
„	1875-1880	-	-	-	-	-	12,000
„	1881-1885	-	-	-	-	-	11,100
„	1886-1890	-	-	-	-	-	10,900
„	1891-1895	-	-	-	-	-	10,200
„	1896-1900	-	-	-	-	-	10,100
1st January	1901	-	-	-	-	-	13,201
„	1902	-	-	-	-	-	21,840
„	1903	-	-	-	-	-	26,372
„	1904	-	-	-	-	-	27,054
„	1905	-	-	-	-	-	26,811

scheme of Army Reform, and by so doing help to secure the general efficiency of the armed forces of the Crown.

To clear the ground for any future discussion, the first question which must be asked is: What is the exact tactical place that we have to fill in the general military scheme, and what function in any plan of defence is likely to be that of the so-called Imperial Yeomanry? This question is not by any means so easy a one to answer as it may appear to be.

When the Yeomanry Force of this country was reorganised in 1901 there were two rival schools ardently striving for mastery at the War Office. One of them favoured the idea of turning Yeomen into cavalry, the other of creating a new and formidable body of mounted infantry. There was a great deal to be said for the ideas of both sides; but our fatal national genius for compromise did not allow us to accept the whole-souled theories of either protagonist, so a *tertium quid gaudens* was adopted, and the Yeoman appeared in a new character—that of a mounted rifleman. The exact inwardness of this change is difficult at first sight to understand, but one of its principal features was to prevent the Yeoman from thinking too much of his knightly traditions—sword, lance, and battle-axe were to be hung up in the ancestral hall; the rifle alone was to be supreme. The rifle, it is true, was to be slightly tempered by a concession to the old Adam in the shape of a bayonet. But within two months of their appearance the bayonets were withdrawn, only, however, to reappear on the scene again some three years later, but on this last occasion not in an aggressive form, as their essential adjuncts, in the shape of frogs and belts, were divorced from the issue of the miniature *arme blanche*. The real object of this halting policy was to discourage the cavalry tradition which for a century or more had been so zealously fostered by our military authorities. Cavalry officers had always acted as Adjutants, cavalry non-commissioned officers had always been Instructors to the Yeomanry, but in the twinkling of an eye—merely by the issue of a bayonet—the whole traditions of the Yeomanry were to be changed. All these attempts paid very little attention to the power of sentiment and of tradition; but besides these considerations, there are some weighty practical objections against the extinction of the cavalry spirit amongst Yeomen. In order to appreciate this more fully, it may be useful to understand what are the duties of mounted men in the field. These appear to be of two kinds:—

1. *Detached Duties*:—

Divided into:—(a) Reconnaissance.
(b) Outpost duties.

2. *Combined Duties*,

with again a twofold division:—(a) Duties on foot:—The attack and defence of positions.
(b) Duties on horseback:—The charge.

Mounted infantry are supposed to be capable of doing 1 (b) Outpost duties, and 2 (a) The attack and defence of positions.

Mounted rifles, if I read the text-books correctly, are intended to perform 1 (a) Reconnaissance, 1 (b) Outpost duties, and 2 (a) The attack and defence of positions; whereas cavalry can perform all four of the above-mentioned duties, the charge 2 (b) being their peculiar and distinguishing attribute.

In my opinion, these fine-drawn distinctions are worthy of the Scholiasts. The rough test of active service will blow to the winds all these purely imaginary subdivisions, and will leave us face to face with a mounted man, who will be expected to undertake all the duties which a mounted man is ever supposed to perform. On active service horse-flesh is expensive and difficult to obtain; units of mounted infantry, mounted rifles, and cavalry are easily broken and mixed up, and it is quite conceivable that an infantry division will start on an adventurous career with nothing but mounted infantry or mounted rifles to cover its front. When this happens, the charge, a prerogative kept by our text-books sacred to cavalry, may often be expected even from mounted infantry.

But, it will be objected, it is quite impossible to expect such partially trained troops as Yeomanry to perform the complicated evolutions of a cavalry division, which may best be seen on some peaceful field-day upon Salisbury Plain. The contention is no doubt quite correct; but it must not be forgotten, in dealing with the sacred subject of the charge, that its pace is supposed to be regulated by the fastest pace of the slowest horse. Now on active service this pace is invariably a walk, and not a fast one at that, so that the thundering charge, six inches knee to knee, becomes an unattainable ideal, and the charge that is actually delivered on such occasions may well be undertaken by the lower grades of mounted troops.

It would be impossible for me to follow out with any great elaboration the thread of this argument, because my paper, which is intended to deal generally with the Imperial Yeomanry, would assume portentous proportions, and would degenerate into an essay on military art. I do not wish to appear to take sides in this discussion as to the exact name by which an Imperial Yeoman should be known, but I should like all the upholders of the extreme "mounted infantry" view to remember that a Regular soldier who joins the mounted infantry is a trained infantry soldier, and that a recruit Yeoman is, in ninety cases out of a hundred, not a trained soldier of any kind.

We have now reached a position in which we may confidently say that we do not exactly know what tactical rôle the Yeomanry will be expected to fill if called upon for active service, and I should like to draw your attention to some facts relating to the past of this force and to its evolution towards the present period of comparative prosperity. In doing this I shall endeavour rather to deal with the broad issues raised by our subject, so as not to lose sight of the general problem in a maze of details, which can have but little interest for the student of the question. The consideration of the evolution of any one branch of our armed forces must necessarily resolve itself into a general review of the history of our country, and of the different aspects in which our military problems have presented themselves to those in high quarters. We shall therefore find that the history of the Yeomanry resolves itself into some clearly marked epochs. It is, however, very difficult to get any reliable information as to the early history of the force, considered as a whole, and I shall not therefore dwell on the extremely interesting period covered by the Napoleonic Wars, when the Yeomanry reached its zenith, nor upon the very dull period of reaction which followed the Treaty of Vienna down to 1870, the date when the War Office took over the important duty of looking after the welfare of the Auxiliary Forces.

It may be of some interest to give the numbers of the Yeomanry in the following years:—

Year.	Troops.	Officers.	Yeomen.	Total.
1804	395	1,334	19,291	20,625
1824	506	1,666	25,915	27,581

These figures seem to mark the top of the wave during the period of the Napoleonic Wars and immediately after them. In 1828 and 1838 great reductions were made in the strength, so that just before the Crimean War we find the following numbers:—

Year.	Troops.	Officers.	Yeomen.	Total.
1853	254	924	14,292	15,216

In 1831-2 the cost of 19,047 Yeomen was returned at £145,679 0s. 0½d. This is the only separate return of their cost that can be found before the War Office undertook the management of the force.

The Yeomanry appears to have been raised in 1761 and embodied in 1797. In 1799 the Pembroke Yeomanry were called out to resist a French invasion at Fishguard. In 1804 an Act of Parliament, which is still the Statute Law, was passed, and this Act of the Legislature deals very minutely with the duties and privileges of the Yeomanry. It has not yet been repealed, and may cause some confusion under our present changed conditions if its provisions are ever put into operation.

From 1828 to 1871 the history of the Yeomanry resolves itself into a series of disbandments, and we need not examine with any amount of care the colourless annals of this period.

The Franco-Prussian War brought out the advantage of the squadron system in cavalry organisation, and so we find that over twenty years after this event the Yeomanry was remodelled to meet some more or less passionate and popular desire for Army Reform prevailing at that time. The principal effect of this comparatively harmless shuffling of the cards was that the troop system gave way to the squadron organisation. The troop system, which prevailed when I joined, gave one Permanent Staff Sergeant to every field troop. Some money was saved by the squadron system coming into vogue, and the savings thus realised were spent on increasing the contingent allowance, for by this means one Permanent Staff Sergeant was made to do duty with several field troops. A singularly unintelligent arrangement was also arrived at whereby one Adjutant was made to do duty with two regiments, thus depriving two commanding officers of any power for furthering the good of their units. It was under this extraordinary system of organisation that the Yeomanry of this country was working when the Boer War burst upon us.

It may not be uninteresting to examine in some detail the changes which were effected by this transition from the troop to the squadron system. In 1892, when the troop system was at its height, there were 39 regiments of Yeomanry, with an establishment of 14,000, and an enrolled strength of 10,500, costing the country about £74,000. The details of the way in which this £74,000 was spent are as follows:—

A. Regimental Pay:—

Permanent Staff	...	...	£21,500	
Yeomen	...	...	31,400	
			<hr/>	£52,900

B. Extra Pay and Allowances:—

Contingent @ £2	...	...	...	£18,350
				<hr/> £71,250

This money provided thirty-nine Adjutants and two hundred and thirty-nine Permanent Staff Sergeants. The remaining £2,750 was spent on objects which need not arrest our attention.

In 1899, when the squadron system was in full swing, we find that there were 38 regiments of Yeomanry in existence with an establishment of 11,800 and an enrolled strength of 10,100, costing the country about £75,000. The total cost and numbers differ very little from the figures of 1892, but the way the money was spent is different. We find £75,000 distributed as follows:—

A. Regimental Pay:—

Permanent Staff	...	...	£14,000	
Yeomen	...	...	33,000	
			<hr/>	£47,000

B. Extra Pay and Allowances:—

Contingent @ £3	...	...	...	£25,500
				<hr/> £72,500

The small balance of £2,500 does not call for any particular explanation.

Under this scheme only 19 Adjutants and 148 Permanent Staff Sergeants were supplied to the Force. The whole of this famous reform consisted in starving the establishment of the Permanent Staff and increasing the contingent allowance. Another saving was also effected by abolishing the Yeomanry School at Aldershot; but this change is not included in the figures we have been considering. It is difficult to understand why a scheme of this description should have been hailed as a great step in the progress of the Yeomanry; but in those days our ambitions were very limited, and we were only too glad if our threatened total extinction was temporarily averted.

In the autumn of 1899 the Boer War commenced, and it took us two months to realise the comparatively elementary truth that it might be better to oppose mounted troops with the same description of soldiers. The question was how to do it. Our Regular Cavalry and available mounted infantry were squeezed dry, and it was then realised that the Yeomanry alone could supply any large numbers of mounted men. The number of effective Yeomen in 1899, exclusive of the Permanent Staff, was as follows:—

Officers.	Yeomen.	Total.
635	9,312	9,947

The Home Yeomanry supplied to the South African Imperial Yeomanry:—

	Officers.	Yeomen.	Total.
	224	2,789	3,013
Percentage volunteering for Active Service ..	35%	29%	30%

This small and starved force therefore gave the country some 30 per cent. of its whole numbers. I am well aware of the fact that

these figures do not compare favourably with the magnificent totals shown by our Militia, but it must not be forgotten that they had the enormous advantage of being able to volunteer by complete units, whereas Yeomen had to do so individually.

The most important service rendered by the Home Yeomanry during the South African War was the provision of a machinery by means of which we were able to raise mounted men. When we come to look at this aspect of the case, we find that the cadre of the Yeomanry Force was able to put into the field the following numbers:—

Officers.	Yeomen.
1,393	34,127.

The small nucleus of 10,000 Yeomen in this country raised and sent to the seat of war more than three-and-a-half times as many men as were then serving in England. Mistakes were made, and plenty of them, in the raising of this force, but the marvel is that there were not more. Still, the fact remains that a great effort was demanded from the Yeomanry, and that this effort was made. It is not very much to be wondered at that in maturing his schemes for Army reorganisation in 1901 the Secretary of State for War should have stated that he intended to put his money on the Yeomanry, and thoroughly to remodel the Force by bringing it up to date, as far as our faulty system of Army organisation would allow. It would be impossible for me within the limits of this paper to go into any detail on the reorganisation of the Yeomanry, but suffice it to say that much was asked from and much was given to the Force.

In 1899 the establishment was 11,800; in 1901 this was raised to 35,000. In 1899 the period of training was six days in billets; in 1901 sixteen days in camp were required. The horse question was treated with liberality and wisdom; provision was made to teach the men how to ride, and an adequate sum was allowed for compensation to men who lost their horses in the public service. The Permanent Staff were largely increased, one Adjutant and five Sergeants being allotted to each regiment; their pay and allowances were also placed on a satisfactory footing, though the question of pensions for the Sergeants of the Permanent Staff is not yet settled. Perhaps the most momentous change in the organisation of the Yeomanry was the introduction of a uniform establishment, the advantages of which, from the point of view of higher organisation, cannot be overestimated. In 1899 there were 38 regiments; 16 had an establishment of 200 of all ranks, exclusive of Permanent Staff, 10 of 300, and 12 of 400. In 1901 it was resolved to raise the establishment to the uniform level of 596, subsequently reduced to 476. The wisdom of this change can hardly be doubted, as there are now only four regiments, out of 58, that are more than 100 below, and there are 22 regiments above their establishments. The Yeomanry School of Instruction was also re-established; but it must be remembered that the pay of the individual Yeoman was reduced from 7s. to 5s. 6d. The Militia and Yeomanry Act was passed in August of 1901, and introduced far-reaching changes in the constitution of the Force. Under its provisions the officers of the Yeomanry are at all times placed under Military Law. The Yeoman is made liable to compulsory training and to embodiment in case of a National Emergency. The Yeoman is also enlisted for a period of

three years, and can only obtain his discharge by purchase; whereas under the old conditions a Yeoman could give notice of his intention to leave the Force, and in fourteen days he was freed from all liability for Military Service. Such was the general outline of the scheme for Yeomanry reorganisation, which was first promulgated in April of 1901, and fully amplified in the Regulations issued in 1903. It may be of some interest to draw attention here to a comparative table which will show the difference that was made in the Army Estimates for 1904 when compared with those of 1899, though it must be borne in mind that the Estimates for the former year were not framed on a 35,000 establishment, but on one of 28,000; this change of establishment was brought about by the new order of things at the War Office in April of 1904. The point which is of importance is to appreciate the fact that the reforms of 1892 were only in the nature of a shuffling of the cards, whereas those which followed the publication of the Royal Warrant of April, 1901, were of real importance.

	1899	1904.
A. Regimental Pay:—	£	£
Permanent Staff.. ..	14,000	45,000
Officers and men	33,000	175,000
B. Regimental Allowances:—		
Contingent	25,500	91,000
Command.. ..	170	900
Postage	20	—
Contingent to Adjutants ..	424	—
Servant allowance to Adjutants	348	1,000
Captain's contingent allowance ..	138	700
Officers under instruction ..	300	Mess } 4,000 Allow. }
Horse allowance	—	
Allowance for riding lessons ..	—	123,000
" recruits riding ..	—	5,800
Regimental transport	—	3,300
Travelling to ranges	—	2,000
Signalling allowance	—	3,000
Storeroom allowance	—	700
		5,200
C. Miscellaneous Charges:—		
Clerks to Lieutenancy	50	} 7,500
Compensation for loss of horses, etc.	210	
Medical bills, gratuities for injuries, etc.	850	
	75,010	468,100 ¹

¹ The total amount spent on the Yeomanry, in addition to that stated above, which is an abstract of Vote 4 only, was:—

1898-1899	- - - - -	£115,350
1904-1905	- - - - -	£602,955
1905-1906	- - - - -	£546,800—Estimate on
		Force reduced from 35,000 to 28,000.

A glance at this table will enable us clearly to understand where the money has gone. There is no doubt that a very great increase has been incurred in the amount we spend, but I think that the money has been well spent and that we really get value for it. The success of the new Yeomanry movement is undoubted, for, according to the last returns of the Director-General of Recruiting, the Yeomanry is only 250 men, or '1 per cent., below its establishment; whereas the Militia and Volunteers, I regret to say, are not in such a satisfactory condition, the shortage in the Militia being 37,000 on an establishment of 123,500, or 26 per cent. The Volunteer shortage is also great, but as the establishment in this case is an imaginary one, no useful purpose can be served by drawing attention to it.

We have sounded the praises of the Imperial Yeomanry, but I do not want you to go away under the impression that all is well with this force, so I shall now call your attention to its shortcomings and needs.

The wants of the Yeomanry at the present time are so numerous that it is difficult to make a selection from them. I shall therefore only state for discussion to-day some of our most urgent requirements, those needs, in fact, which, if not met, will make us a force incapable of fulfilling the trust imposed upon our branch of the Service. I am well aware of the fact that our shortcomings are shared by the other branches of the Auxiliary Forces, and that we do not suffer either alone or in silence. Still, I must present my case from the Yeomanry point of view alone, and in so doing I do not wish it for one moment to be supposed that I am not anxious for our fellow citizen soldiers to share in the reforms which I am about to suggest. I would indeed rather present my case as one calling for immediate remedy alike in the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, as the disease is the same and the remedy very similar.

We have seen that the condition of the Yeomanry has gradually been improving, but this improvement has been halting, and only gained after the most tremendous efforts. The reason for this has, in my opinion, been due to a lack of intelligent apprehension as to what function our civilian army is destined to play in the defence of the Empire. If it were clearly realised that the Regular Army, owing to its small numbers, will be totally inadequate, when our national existence is imperilled, to perform any function other than that of a stop-gap, we should have advanced many steps in the direction of the understanding of our military problem. Surely we have had object-lessons enough during the last few years. The South African War, one of the smallest contests we have ever had—if we consider the national magnitude of our opponents—or are ever likely to have, called for a provision of over two hundred thousand Irregular soldiers. The next time we have to wage war it will probably be against a first-class military Power, and not against two of the smallest States in the world. The Manchurian campaign is another object-lesson for us. We have, in considering its operations, to think in millions of men; and if ever we are engaged in such a struggle, from where can we expect to get a sufficient supply of raw material?¹ The answer must be, from the Auxiliary Forces. If that is the case, it is surely a good

¹ It is officially reported that Russia has had to place in the field 832,000 men since the outbreak of hostilities in Manchuria.

thing to encourage and foster these forces to the best of our ability. It may, of course, be said that all Irregular soldiers are inferior to Regular troops; and though this may be an arguable point, I am quite willing to concede it. Still, we must look at what is practicable in our own special case, and I contend that it is not possible to expect from this country any comprehensive system of enforced service for use over the seas.

The first and most pressing of all our needs is found in the problem we are faced with relating to the shortage of officers. According to the last returns, we had an establishment of 1,596, and only 1,237 enrolled officers—a shortage of 359 in the commissioned ranks, or about 25 per cent. There can be no doubt that without a full establishment of officers the Yeomanry must be considered inefficient. The question is, therefore, how are we to remedy this state of things? I believe that the remedies lie close to our hands.

The Act of Parliament of George III., which is still in force, exempts members of the Yeomanry from the ballot for the Militia, allows them to ride through a toll-bar when in uniform without paying, and also relieves them from the tax on powder for the hair. These privileges were no doubt highly valued in 1804, the date when this Act was passed, but as Yeomen are not now liable for the Militia ballot, as toll-bars have been abolished, and as hair powder is no longer in great request, these privileges have ceased to have any practical value. Why not then give us some fresh privileges? Might it not be possible to exempt an officer serving in the Yeomanry from filling the office of High Sheriff? The game licence and others, which do not yield a large sum to the Exchequer, might be remitted to Yeomanry officers, and other small, though highly valued, privileges might be granted to them through such remissions of taxation as would make no appreciable difference to our national income. There is one way of insuring a supply of officers which would be most effective: that of not allowing any new Deputy-Lieutenants to be appointed who either will not give their services to the Yeomanry, or find substitutes for that purpose. It may, of course, be argued that very few new Deputy-Lieutenants are now made, owing to the fact that there are many supernumeraries on the establishment; but it must not be forgotten that there are over five thousand of these dignitaries in the United Kingdom, and that they must all be replaced when the existing ones fall out. Therefore the few officers whom we now require might easily be found from this source alone in the course of time. I should also favour making it obligatory on all candidates for cavalry commissions to qualify by service in the Yeomanry. It is true that this method would not at the present juncture materially help us, as there are very few candidates for cavalry commissions; but in more normal times the remedy would no doubt be particularly effective, as nearly all our shortage is in the subaltern ranks.

The number of our officers is, of course, of the utmost importance; but their training is also a subject which must not be passed over lightly, and great improvements have taken place in this respect. The Yeomanry School was re-established in 1902—after being abolished on the introduction of the squadron system—a great step in advance. Still, the school only provides excellent elementary instruction, so that now the field officer and the subaltern have to go through what

is practically the same curriculum. This is not sound, and some means of imparting advanced instruction should be devised.

If the supply and training of our officers are of consequence, the provision of horses on mobilisation must also be considered a vital point in the organisation of the Yeomanry. In this, I regret to say, things are not all well with us. The Yeoman, it is true, receives £5 at his yearly training for the provision of a horse, but no further effort is made by the Government to earmark an animal to be produced on mobilisation. It is, of course, conceivable that, when the order to mobilise is issued, a large number of owners of horses will appear at the point of concentration with their own animals; but this is problematical, and in any case the number of Yeomen owning their own horses has not gone up in recent years.

The figures at annual inspection are as follows:—

	Horses.		Total.	Percentage of Horses Owned to those Hired.
	Owned.	Hired and Lent.		
1876	7,194	2,493	9,687	74%
1899	6,340	2,629	8,969	70%
1903	11,381	10,667	22,048	50%
Government ...	562	—	—	—
	11,943			

The above table shows clearly that the number of men owning their horses has diminished in an alarming manner, so that no reliance can be placed on our British Cossack bringing his own horse to the place of mobilisation; indeed, the Yeoman who owns a horse would probably be very likely to leave it at home in such an emergency. We shall therefore have on mobilisation a fine body of infantry trained as cavalry, but not a horse. The Remount Department tells us that it is in a position to provide all the horses we may want; but I have my doubts on this point, and I should much prefer to leave the provision of horses in the hands of officers commanding regiments of Yeomanry. This could not be done without some money being expended on the service. Now we want on mobilisation some twenty-six thousand horses, and I think that if a registration fee of ten shillings per horse were given, we might make such arrangements as would ensure the production of these horses at a total expense to the country of some thirteen or fourteen thousand pounds a year. When we consider that the Yeomanry costs over five hundred thousand pounds, such an arrangement would appear to be cheap. It is argued that the Government scheme for the registration of riding horses was not a success, and this I am willing to admit; but at the same time, Yeomanry officers have better opportunities of securing the sympathies of the class which owns riding horses than the Government ever had. But even if this is not the case, it does not strike me as a forcible argument to state that inasmuch as the Remount Department once made a hopeless failure of its scheme for the registration of riding horses, it will therefore in the future, the conditions being practically unchanged, make a complete success of it.

The importance of a Reserve for the Auxiliary Forces was recognised by the War Office when a large sum of money, amounting in 1903-4 to £150,000, was set aside to pay some fifty thousand Militiamen in the Reserve. This was an excellent plan and a step in the right direction; but nothing was done for the Yeomanry, though it was fully recognised that since Yeomen have the same legal liabilities as Militiamen, they ought to be paid the same retaining fee. Still, the expense involved made our authorities timid, and instead of extending the principle of a Reserve division to the Yeomanry, the newly-formed Militia Reserve was knocked on the head, enlistments into it were stopped, and the Estimates for 1905-6 provide only forty thousand pounds for this service. There is one thing quite clear, and that is, if the Auxiliary Forces are ever called upon to take part in any future campaign, they will badly want a Reserve. If this Reserve is not forthcoming in the time of need, their effectiveness will be seriously crippled. We shall then have to witness for the second time the wasteful process of scrambling for untrained men at the last moment, whilst offering them an exorbitant rate of pay. If we choose to advance a moderate sum for a proper Reserve in times of peace, we shall avoid all the waste and confusion that must occur in times of war, when no adequate provision has been made for Reserves. But there is one thing quite certain, we shall not get a Reserve without paying for it; and it is also equally certain that no Yeomanry regiment could take the field on its first mobilisation without calling upon some extra men to fill the places of those who, for various reasons, are unable to accompany their unit on active service. We shall therefore feel the need for a Reserve as soon as the Yeomanry is mobilised; when it has taken the field, the necessity for Reserve men will be greatly increased.

The question of the supply of saddlery is also a very important one. At the present moment, the Yeomanry being up to its establishment, this service must be paid for out of the yearly Government grant or contingent allowance of £3. Saddlery is by far the most expensive item in a regimental budget, and as the new saddles which have been supplied gratis for the purpose of raising regiments up to their increased establishments get worn out, the expense involved in replacing them will cause financial trouble to commanding officers. The War Office, having foreseen this difficulty, has wisely directed us to form a sinking fund to amortise our saddlery. This is an excellent suggestion; but as at the end of each financial year all the Government funds of a regiment have been spent on other objects, it is rather difficult to see whence the money is to come. What will probably happen is that old saddles will be patched up and made to do duty; but they will be quite unfit for service in the field, and thus another cause of inefficiency will be added to our already by no means depleted supply of shortcomings.

The provision for mobilisation stores is not perfect, but is decidedly in advance of that prevailing before the South African War. At that time no arrangements were made; now we have, at all events, thought out the subject, and an official handbook of forty-four pages is published, giving at least all the necessary information. In this book it will be found that a certain number of mobilisation stores are provided by the Government, but that the remaining ones must be bought by regiments, a fixed sum of money being paid to them on mobilisation for

this purpose. It is quite true that this is not an ideal arrangement, for no regiment can afford in peace time to purchase the stores required; and it may further be urged with some truth that the provision of such articles when war is imminent would be a difficult matter. Still, to make the Yeomanry alone complete in all these details, not less than one hundred and twenty thousand pounds must be found. The Militia and Volunteers would, if this were done, justly press their claims to be at least as well provided as the Yeomanry, and the result would be the expenditure of several millions of public money. The best solution of this difficulty appears to be the grant of a retaining fee to tradesmen to cover their loss of interest by being required to keep mobilisation stores in stock, and thus we could be certain of a source of supply for our requirements in time of war, without throwing too great an additional burden on the Exchequer. I am not alarmed at the prospect of having to find transport on mobilisation, as I feel convinced that country Yeomanry regiments at least would always be able to put their hands on suitable carts and waggons.

To insure uniform and progressive training in our force, a proper system of inspection should be adopted, and the present arrangements cannot be said to be satisfactory. Stray cavalry officers are pounced upon and sent hither and thither to write inspection reports, and then never again see the regiments upon which they have reported. The great difficulty in dealing with this subject is that nearly all regiments train at the same time, and I remember in one year when I was at the War Office ten regiments had to be inspected on the same day. We should, perhaps, before offering any suggestions on this critical point, wait until the new scheme for the administration of the Army has had time to develop; but I am not full of hope that this difficulty will be overcome. No department for inspection should be appointed *ad hoc*, because it is evident that for a short time its *personnel* would have to be very large, whereas for the rest of the year there would be nothing for the inspecting officers to do. Perhaps the best solution of this difficulty would be to appoint competent Yeomanry officers to act as inspectors for certain areas, though this is by no means an ideal towards which we should strive. The Estimates for 1905-6 provide for three Staff officers for Imperial Yeomanry, but it is difficult to criticise this departure, as we are told that "these grades are new, and no rates of pay have yet been assigned to them."

The last need of the Yeomanry to which I shall draw your attention, though it by no means exhausts the list, is one shared by the other branches of the Auxiliary Forces, and is by no means peculiar to our wants. The administration of the Yeomanry by the War Office is not suited to our requirements. This subject is a very complicated one, and as it is intimately wrapped up in our whole system of Army administration, it will be therefore quite impossible for us to discuss the matter fully to-day; I can only hope faintly to sketch the outline of my argument.

The War Office is—we have it on the authority of the Chief of the Staff—at present divided into four water-tight compartments. One of these compartments is occupied by the Adjutant-General and his staff. This high official deals only with questions affecting the *personnel* of the Army, yet it is in this water-tight haven that we

find the official representative of the Auxiliary Forces. The Adjutant-General is, and rightly so, the champion of the Regular Forces, but even he only deals with certain kinds of questions relating to them. Therefore we suffer under a double disadvantage. In the first place, our official champion is not likely to pay any very great heed to the dangers and difficulties which threaten us, as it is primarily his duty to defend the interests of the Regular Forces; in the second place, our representative on the Army Council, the Adjutant-General, may never hear of some change that has taken place in one of the other water-tight compartments—let us say in that of the Chief of the General Staff. Thus some momentous change may be made in the conditions of efficiency of the Yeomanry, and it is quite conceivable that the representative of the Auxiliary Forces may never even hear of it. In the old unreformed War Office, into which the water-tight conditions had not yet been introduced, it was quite possible for Army Orders affecting the Auxiliary Forces to be published without the knowledge of the Inspector-General of these forces. Under the present arrangements it is not only possible but probable that this may take place. Besides, it is absurd for a body of citizen soldiers, which number some three hundred and seventy thousand men, not to have direct representation on the Army Council. If it is considered undesirable to disturb the present organisation of the Council, which is now conceded by competent authorities to be as near perfection as anything can be, it may still be thought advisable to hand over the advocacy of the cause of our Auxiliary Forces to one of the civilian members of the Council, who would have as his adviser a General Officer of high rank, assisted by a competent staff. I should select a civilian member of the Army Council to be our advocate for two reasons:—

- (a) The Yeoman is a civilian first and a soldier afterwards. It is from not realising this elementary truth that the War Office has so often misunderstood us.
- (b) The four military members of Council have their own specialised military functions, and the path of Yeomanry interests passes through all four departments.

A civilian member of the Army Council would thus appear to give us our best chance of synthetical treatment, though under him there should be a General Officer and an adequate staff of Auxiliary officers representing the various branches of these forces to advise the civilian member on military matters, and also to carry on the administration of the citizen Army. Nothing that is good will ever come out of the present hybrid system of administration, which, whilst it grants us a nominal representative at the War Office, yet takes especial care to label him as an inferior in the official hierarchy by giving him two-thirds less pay than he ought to receive, and by depriving him of any of those executive functions the possession of which might render him of real service and value to the Yeomanry.

When we have our cadres of officers quite full, our remount questions satisfactorily settled, a Reserve formed, mobilisation stores in adequate quantities, perfect saddlery, and an ideal system of administration at the War Office, there will still remain the question of training the Yeomen. At the present moment the majority of Yeomanry regiments go out alone in regimental camps and do a great deal of very useful work; but when they are called upon to go

through a field day, the training that is received by them in tactics, divorced from the co-operation of the other arms, cannot be considered instructive. It may with some truth be argued that during the short space of time allotted to the annual training, it is absurd to call upon Yeomen to perform exercises involving the employment of artillery and infantry, and that it is not reasonable to expect them to run before they can walk. It is not unnaturally asserted that the best use that can be made of their sixteen days is to teach them the elements of camp life and discipline. This is no doubt quite true; but at the same time it must not be forgotten that it is necessary to impart some elements of the knowledge of real tactics to Yeomen, and that the only way to do this is to make them co-operate with the other arms. If this is not done, lessons full of faults will be learnt, and knowledge thus acquired will be difficult to forget on the battlefield.

We are again led to the borderland of those problems which are the common ground of all our Auxiliary Forces, and are driven to the conclusion that a policy founded on the separation of their three great branches is faulty. We should rather strive to make co-operation between the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers possible; Auxiliary camps composed of units of all arms should be encouraged, and the wild administrative jumble under which the Auxiliary Forces now groan should be simplified, and, as far as circumstances permit, made to run on the same harmonious lines.

When we are next attacked in any of our distant Colonies or possessions we shall require vast numbers of men to defend them, and it is difficult to see how we are to get these numbers unless we rely on the Auxiliary Forces.

A Bill has been read for the first time in the House of Lords making the Militia liable for service out of the United Kingdom when it is embodied. I believe that this Bill, if it is added to the Statute Book, will do a great deal towards improving the status of the Militia; and if legislation on similar lines were passed for the Yeomanry, our force would gain enormously in that public consideration which is the necessary precursor of all serious reform. I am well aware of the fact that the Minister in introducing this Bill restricted the use of the Yeomanry to the United Kingdom, but it must not be forgotten that in 1902 a Bill was introduced into the House of Commons providing for a restricted use of Yeomen abroad.

It is difficult to understand why the conditions that govern this problem have changed so essentially between December, 1902, and March, 1905. The establishment of Regular Cavalry is now 19,000, of whom 15,000 are serving abroad. There are also 5,000 Reservists of the Regular Cavalry. During the South African campaign we put 27,500 Regular Cavalry in the field. Therefore it may with some amount of confidence be predicted that when we next have to make a great national effort, the Yeomanry will be the first of the Auxiliary Forces that will be called upon to find men for active service.

If the Yeomanry is willing to accept the liability for foreign service in times of emergency, I feel certain that the War Department will rectify the shortcomings to which I have drawn attention by supplying us with the money necessary for this purpose. When the problem is placed fairly and squarely before Yeomen I have little doubt but that they will respond to their country's call. I am encouraged to hold this opinion when I look back upon the way in

which the Yeomanry accepted the conditions that apply to the Militia. We are now mounted Militia, as far as our legal status goes; and if the Militia are willing to accept the conditions of foreign service in case of a national emergency, I have no doubt that Yeomen will readily follow them. We shall then be able to deserve the title of "Imperial," which now only half belongs to us, and we shall perhaps in some future time of our country's need be able to earn the eulogy which Lord Castlereagh bestowed upon the Militia on the 11th of November, 1813, when he said that—

"Parliament ought always to bear in recollection that it is to the Militia we owe the character we at present enjoy in military Europe, and that without the Militia we could not have shown the face which we have done in the Peninsula."

These words of praise were spoken about our old Militia Force. Since that time we have trod a hard and thorny road; the conditions of military activity have changed vastly in Europe, and we are faced with armed nations. I have enough confidence in the English people to make me believe that we shall not be incapable of solving the problems with which we are now confronted, and to my mind the solution best adapted to our case is to train our civilian population in vastly increased numbers as Auxiliary troops, to throw no obstacles in their way, and to extend towards them a generous measure of sympathy and of encouragement.

Colonel H. F. Viscount EBRINGTON, A.D.C. (Hon. Colonel, Royal North Devon Imperial Yeomanry):—Sir, I think all interested in the Yeomanry must feel very grateful for the paper which Colonel Le Roy-Lewis has read, and I am glad you have given me an opportunity of making a few remarks upon it. I agree with a good deal of it; but I am not sure that I see eye to eye with the author in all the arguments which he puts forward. In the early part of the paper the author spoke of the mistake in not training Yeomanry as Cavalry, and said the pace of the charge on active service, being the pace of the slowest horse in the troop, was only a walk, and that therefore no great amount of training was required to do that. That argument seems to me to be self-destructive, because if that is the case, and if no troops exceed a foot's-pace in shock action, it is not necessary to train any highly. Passing from that subject, I was sorry to hear in reference to the present and earlier rates of pay that he put the matter in a way which is capable of misinterpretation outside this room, although not by anybody who knows the circumstances. He spoke of the Yeomanry pay at present being 5s. 6d., instead of 7s. a day, as it used to be. That is quite correct; but for the 7s. a day the Yeoman used to find his horse and his forage. As a matter of fact, the Yeoman to-day is very much better off than he was then, and to that extent what is in the paper would be misleading to people who are not well up in the subject. I agree with Colonel Le Roy-Lewis about the great difficulty of the Force being a shortage of officers; but his suggestion as to Deputy-Lieutenants would not go as far as he thinks in filling it up. Five thousand Deputy-Lieutenants, the number given for the whole country, is not the establishment. The establishment is a good deal less than that; and the supernumeraries have got to be absorbed. In regard to the training of officers, it would be more advantageous that facility should be given to senior officers especially to make themselves

proficient in their business. No doubt there are too few officers, and there is a danger, if not a probability, of the Yeomanry being habitually short of officers. But I should say the fewer you have the better trained they should be. The instruction of officers is a difficult question; and it is a pity officers do not get more encouragement to attend schools and get attached to regiments. It is usually found by officers who do those things that it costs them a good deal of money; and although, owing to the kindness of the regiments to which they are attached, the officers who go in for courses have a very good time, yet they do not always get the instruction which they need. Then again, the horse question is a very important one, and I think probably the best way of dealing with it would be to deal with it through officers commanding regiments. But the little I know about the Yeomanry has made me sure of one thing, and that is, that the circumstances of every regiment differ, and you cannot be certain that what will apply in one district will also apply in another. I believe, in point of fact, that there is no lack of horses in the country as a whole, but it is a fact that the farther you go in the parts south of the Severn and west of Yeovil the more difficulty there is in finding horses. And it is possible that in the case of regiments in the Home District, who hire something like 400 horses, that the Remount Department might be able to make as good arrangements as commanding officers do, because they can go to big dealers. But in districts such as that with which I am acquainted, where what one may call the horse population is a large one, commanding officers would be able to make arrangements by which horses would be forthcoming on mobilisation. It is unfortunately too true that a Yeoman would be able—and would be tempted if there was a threat of war—to sell his horse before mobilisation, and turn out for mobilisation on his own feet only, expecting somebody else to find a horse for him. And there are difficulties about registering horses in the case of people who only own one or two. A man who has got a young horse is very unlikely to register it, because if he sees a chance of selling it he will desire to be in a position to do so. It is easy enough to register horses if you go to a big dealer, or to a 'bus company, and register two-thirds of their horses, for you will always find at least that number in the stables fit for your use, even if you do not find the identical animals which you registered a short time previously. But with people who own only one or two horses it is a different matter. Then there is the other difficulty: that you may register a horse for 10 years, and if the man disappoints you at the last moment, you have no remedy, and no means of recovering your money or the horse; but if you let the registration fees accumulate for say 10 years at compound interest, you will accumulate a sum sufficient to enable you to give 10 per cent. to 25 per cent. over the market price for an animal on mobilisation, and this procedure may be as effective in bringing horses into your hands as registration. But, on the whole, where the circumstances and the district justify it, I agree in thinking that commanding officers would be able to make arrangements as to horses which would make their regiment efficient when mobilisation came about; and it might relieve the central authority of a great deal of trouble at times of great pressure. I agree as to the desirability of a Reserve, especially people like shoeing-smiths and signallers. There is a certain amount of raw material for ordinary troopers which you can get at short notice, and a certain number of men who had left within the last year or two might be expected to rejoin; but it would be most desirable, in the interests of efficiency, to have a Reserve which would at any rate cover 25 per cent. extra of

shoeing-smiths, and the same number of signallers. But Reserve signallers would be required to meet for instruction and practice from time to time. I must say I do not agree with the lecturer about saddlery and mobilisation stores. He spoke of saddlery under the present system as being unfit for use when most required. After all, the Yeoman does not use his saddle more than three weeks in a year, and it must be very badly looked after if a saddle which is only used for that short time every year will not last for many years. It all depends, as far as my experience goes, on the extent to which the squadron officers and permanent staff look after their saddlery. If they pay attention to it, and the saddlery is put into store and looked after when it is not being used at permanent duty, there is no reason why it should not be kept efficient for years. Then again, with regard to mobilisation stores, they can be got, or a good many of them, when required, in the neighbourhood. It does not signify for active service whether your axes and spades are of the sealed pattern or not, and a great many articles of that description can be got through the men themselves, or at any rate from the towns where the headquarters of the squadrons are situated. There are other stores which are apt to deteriorate if put away, but I think the suggestion made a good one for certain articles; but the number of them, after all, is not very large, and I think there are more pressing needs in connection with the Force than the one I have referred to. The question of training is, of course, a most important one, and it is of great advantage when a regiment does get the opportunity of a little combined tactics with other regiments and with guns. We have been lucky enough in Devonshire in the last year or two, thanks to Sir Evelyn Wood, to have had Batteries of Artillery sent down for a week or two at the same time that the North Devon Yeomanry has been in camp. I think it will be worth the consideration of the authorities whether they would not, once in 3 or 4 years, suspend the recruiting of a regiment, and send it, composed only of "old soldiers," to train in conjunction with other units and other arms. We are in a different position now compared with what we used to be. Formerly men could send in their kits at a fortnight's notice, and the number of recruits which would be available to take their place was always a matter of uncertainty. But now men have to enlist for a minimum of 3 years, in that way you are able to know nearly where you are; there is not the uncertainty as to strength that there used to be, and there is no difficulty in filling up vacancies when they occur, I am glad to say. So, although the regiment might not turn out more than 400 strong, if no recruits were present, yet I think it is an experiment which might be worth trying. For, of course, a good deal of the time in camp now is taken up in instilling the elements of camp duty and discipline into the men who have never been under canvas before, and if that were done another year, or on some other occasion, the instruction of the "old soldiers" might take a more advanced form, and there would not be the same risk as now in trying to run before you can walk.

Colonel the Hon. H. L. W. LAWSON (Buckinghamshire Imperial Yeomanry):—Every member of the Yeomanry Force here, Sir, must be very much indebted to Colonel Le Roy-Lewis for the able and interesting paper which he has read to us. We were also much indebted for his constant and intelligent sympathy while he was in the War Office acting on our behalf. I do not know whether he has ever had the recognition to which he is entitled for that. So far as the general position of the Yeomanry goes, I suppose we are, on the whole, the most fortunate of the Auxiliary

Forces, and we may say that the sum total of money paid by the country is fairly satisfactory from our point of view. But what we have had to complain of since the modernisation of the Yeomanry has been the uncertainty and variation, almost from week to week, of the conditions under which we serve. I do not think anybody will need to follow the exhaustive survey of the ancient history of the Yeomanry, because those who can go back 20 years will know that up to the time of the war, except that it was a nucleus of fighting material, the Yeomanry were more or less of a mounted mob, or at any rate, up to within a short time of the war. The modernisation began with the war, and we must date the conditions with which we are dealing from the war. That being so, it seems a great pity that a variation of establishment should have occurred in the two years, 1902 and 1904, which caused regiments like my own and others to stop recruiting altogether for that period, and, therefore, that there was to that extent a loss to the country of material or manpower which was available in the country during that year or some part of it. I do not know that it checked the Yeomanry spirit, but it was not good for Yeomanry generally. Besides that, it created some difference in the conditions under which men are enlisted. I think, on the whole, that will have a good effect. We are told that officers commanding regiments should go in for numbers pure and simple, subject to a certain standard, but mainly to get as many men as we could to ride and shoot. But since the reduction of the establishment, most regiments have had opportunities for squadron enrolment, and have been able to raise the standard. I think we are bound, considering the money which is given to us, to see that the country gets its money's worth in respect to men and horses. I confess with regard to men that I do not think the medical examination has been sufficiently stringent in some cases, and I hope that will be raised. In fact I do not know whether the lecturer, in his statement of the Imperial Yeomanry during the Boer War, included those who were rejected by the medical examination. If not, that would increase the number of those who were willing to go on service in that war. I hope the numbers so discarded will be a diminishing one as time goes on; but I think we should be able to raise the medical standard. I have tried to enforce that point on all medical officers examining recruits for Yeomanry. With regard to horses, too, I am not at all certain that the Government is getting its money's worth now; and especially is that so with regard to those metropolitan regiments which take great drafts of horses, which go the round of the whole lot so far as their terms of training allow, so that one has seen horses used in such a condition that one would be sorry to see the standard reduced to that in active service. The whole question of horsing for the Yeomanry requires further consideration. When the lecturer pointed out the difficulties of mobilisation now, of course he hit upon a very patent blot in the system, but one which we are told we can forget because, as he says, the Remount Department undertakes to provide Yeomanry embodied with horses. I share his doubts as to their capacity for so doing, and when I remember there is no such thing as a remount farm, except that for remounts for officers' chargers at Melton Mowbray, and one at another place, I cannot help thinking that the difficulties in the Boer War were greater than the authorities would allow. But I think the conditions are such as can be accepted for active service; they are very much below any standard which could be fixed. I do not attach so much importance to the difference fixed between those owned by the men themselves or their relatives and those which are hired, because when

their own horses are not brought out often for training (and if we are to consider these horses as required for active service) I think undoubtedly that the standard should be raised, and I am inclined to think that the Government might take a liberal view, provided the standard of horsemanship of the Yeomanry were increased and the conditions were made more favourable for active service in case of mobilisation. That is with regard to the country's bargain with us. So far as we are concerned, upon our side we have to complain as a body at the present time that we have no Yeomanry staff, no satisfactory system of Yeomanry inspection, and we are quite ignorant of our functions and of our places in case of mobilisation. However, I understand these things are now under consideration at the War Office. Lord Lovat has taken prominent steps very much in the interests of the Yeomanry with regard to that, and I understand these things are necessarily deferred until the War Office has decided what its mobilisation plans are, and what part we are to take in them. With regard to the staff arrangements, it is said that efforts will be made to provide for a Yeomanry staff in connection with the inspection of the Yeomanry. I believe there are inspecting officers to be appointed in five divisions, and it is understood that these inspecting officers, who I believe are to be Cavalry officers, will be looked upon as brigadiers in case of mobilisation, and that they will command, or are intended to command, the brigades that they inspect from year to year. If that is so, I think it is a fairly satisfactory arrangement, and we must hope that it will be carried out in practice, and that of course the staff will be adequately made up in other particulars. At present, of course, it does not exist, and therefore it is all a clean sheet. I do not think, on the whole, that the Yeomanry can be expected to furnish staff officers or the inspecting officers, but we have enough to do with our own regiments, and the only fear is that we shall be forced to part with more than we want to. The more efficient will be taken for staff purposes, when we should require them in our own regiments for our own purposes. The less we say about the Yeomanry officers being required outside, the better. We want to increase our regimental strength. With regard to the stores on mobilisation, several regiments have already done as suggested: pay a commission or lien to certain dealers in their own neighbourhood, so that they have a lien on stores on mobilisation; but I hope that without further expense being put upon us we may get a guarantee that we shall be able to draw them, and that the Quartermaster-General will hold himself responsible in respect to stores for our purposes in mobilisation. It is absolutely necessary that they should be provided. They say some are held for our use, and I hope the tale will be completed. Now to pass to another point raised with regard to the training of the regiments. Of course it is most desirable that we should be able to mix with other arms, but the difficulty is a very great one in the case of many counties, such as that with which I am connected. There is no great space of ground available for the purpose, and of course if the Yeomanry regiments are trained outside their counties you will get difficulties with regard to the class of men whom you will be able to reckon on in the ranks; that is to say, the small master or farmer, to whom the training far away from his employment is always a difficulty. It prevents him paying the occasional visit which enables him to carry on his business without dislocation during his encampment. That is a very great difficulty, which, in my own case, for example, glad as I should be to see training on a larger scale, I do not for the time being see the solution of. Of course, if you are drawing in the Militia class

of men it is easy enough; but directly you draw a higher class—and after all it is only the higher class which justifies the present pay to the Yeomanry, the difficulties are considerable, and in some cases, I fear, insurmountable. Anything which could be done on the lines on which Sir Evelyn Wood seems to have acted would be very good; but I have never known a general officer commanding elsewhere ready to help us in that matter. With regard to the training of officers, emphatically I believe that there should be another and shorter term for senior officers, because at present there is almost a universal disinclination on their part to go for a month, and for the first fortnight or three weeks of that to be doing the most elementary kind of work in company with subalterns who have never seen a camp or had anything to do with military arrangements before. This is a very favourable time for pressing on questions which we consider important, because the whole system is in a state of flux, and therefore, although we cannot expect to get more money—we cannot expect to see our grant increased—we may, I hope, be able to obtain some changes in organisation, several of which the lecturer has indicated. The difficulty of course with regard to the very important suggestion made as to the Yeomanry Reserves is, that that involves a further grant, and at the present moment I think there is very faint hope of our getting it. It is most desirable, I agree, but whether we shall get it outside the limits of our present grant I doubt; but I am certain it is advisable. If we had to save money by reduction of insufficient and inefficient regiments it might be worth doing, but short of that, I do not see how we are to get it, though no one would welcome it more than I. It is almost essential for real efficiency for our branch of the Service. We must recollect that we are being fairly well treated from that point of view, and therefore it is not very likely that if the Auxiliary Force receives larger grants that we shall be the recipients. These discussions, Sir, do very much good, and we all highly value the trouble the lecturer has taken in preparing the paper which he has read to us this afternoon.

Lieut.-Colonel JAMES TOMKINSON, M.P. (Earl of Chester's Imperial Yeomanry):—Sir, I feel somewhat diffident in taking part in the discussion, and would have preferred to have heard more from Yeomanry officers who served their country in active service in the late war. I can only claim to have been a civilian soldier for nearly 40 years, and during that time, naturally, I have seen great changes in the Force. When I joined the Cheshire Yeomanry it was 600 strong, composed almost entirely of farmers of an average age, I suppose, of 40 years at least, many of them mounted on very heavy horses, and almost all serving more or less compulsorily under the Feudal system on the great estates, one of the conditions of their tenure on their farms being obligatory service. Since then great changes have taken place, and, I admit, entirely in the right direction. It was only on the outbreak of the Boer War that the system finally broke down, and a great change was effected. I think it was by the appropriate and liberal grant of £5 to every man bringing a good horse. There was no difficulty in obtaining men. I never made it a condition of compulsory service on my own estates; but the difficulty I had was to keep up the horses. I used to hire to some extent, and I could get horses for £2. This £5 a horse has removed that difficulty, and, to speak on that subject first, I agree with my friend behind me in thinking that the Government hardly get good value for that £5, and I think that is because of an insufficiently strict censorship of the horses sent up by the commanding officers. If I have the good fortune to succeed to the

command of the regiment next year, I shall try to make that a stringent obligation : that every horse should be passed by the commanding officer, or by someone appointed by him—the adjutant or some other officer—as a thoroughly effective and *bona-fide* horse. It seems to me that the payment of £5 has been the occasion for everyone who had a horse he could possibly lend and put into the field for the 15 days, to take advantage of it, and if possible to obtain from the man hiring it the full value of the horse in one or two trainings. That is a subject which should be very carefully looked into, and it should be the duty of every commanding officer to see that the Government, as far as possible, gets an effective class of horse. As I said in the House the other day, although the proportion of existing Yeomen who volunteered for the war was not very large (although the figures given by Colonel Lewis are fairly satisfactory, that is to say 30 per cent.), the class of men in the Yeomanry were a class of men you could least expect to volunteer. You could not expect farmers, fathers of families, with farms to look after, to volunteer for active service abroad. But now with the change, we have in my experience the very class of men that one wants to get—an improved class of men, young men, unmarried and active, and quite able to go, and very much the class who did come forward from outside the Yeomanry in such gratifying numbers, and who formed such a satisfactory force as left our shores for the last war. That is all to the good. I must say something on the terms of service. I confess I do not think we can have a Yeomanry with the obligation of going on foreign service; but we ought to have a large force for home defence. I do not think the country will ever consent to place its defence in the hands of one arm of the Service; and it would not be wise to put one's whole faith in the Navy, or to put all our eggs into one basket and say : If we have a sufficiently powerful fleet we do not want a force for home defence. On the contrary, I think the concluding words are true, that our Volunteer Forces should be encouraged as much as possible, as the lecturer said. We should have an efficient force of Volunteers and Yeomanry for home defence; but I believe the Yeomanry, recruited as they are, drawn from the class from which they are drawn at present, will, when required, furnish a large proportion of their numbers for foreign service, as last time. The same applies to the Militia, and speaking as the son of an old Peninsular and Waterloo officer as I am, it is well known and remembered that our splendid Army all through the Peninsula did depend chiefly on the Militia the whole time, and that was by volunteering. Of course, the Militia were then drawn by ballot, but the supply of men from the Militia to the Line for active service was by volunteering only, and I see no reason for change, and the Militia has given no indication of change in its attitude. I believe the Militia will still furnish large numbers for garrison work or for the field, as they have done in the past, without compulsion. With regard to the shortage of officers, I suppose that is a difficulty. I was talking lately to Colonel Lord Windsor and Colonel Barclay, and they said they had the same difficulty; and I am inclined to agree that the conditions imposed, or sought to be imposed, upon young officers are too onerous and unnecessary. Colonel Barclay said : "You have two classes of young men ready to go into the Yeomanry—one a rich class, who have not had much to do as a rule, and they find it too irksome, and refuse to go for a month to Salisbury Plain and for a month's musketry instruction besides; the other class consists of men who are too busy, although but for that they would willingly go through with it. Therefore in some regiments you find a distinct

difficulty in getting the required number of officers." I do not think it is a very great shortage; but it is a matter which requires attention. I think certainly that musketry instruction should not be insisted upon. You do not need for every officer to know the red book, and to know musketry instruction off by heart. The Adjutant, one or two officers perhaps, and the sergeant-instructor are sufficient to give the necessary tuition to the men. I think we want more ranges. In our country all the squadron ranges which the different squadron officers provided have been done away with, and much time and money are wasted in sending the men long distances to Government ranges. In a civilised and populous country it is impossible to get one mile to the target, two miles behind the target, and one mile on each side. If a man can shoot up to 600 yards he is well trained enough, and each regiment can probably find a suitable range of that distance conveniently situated. With regard to Inspecting Officers, I confess I have not had the experience which Colonel Lawson has. From Chester, which is our headquarters centre, we have the same officer to inspect us every year, Colonel Courtney, and the General comes out and they are able to inspect the other regiments in the district. They do not go out at the same time, and I thought we had got rid of the old system of casual officers from the nearest regiment coming to inspect them. The inspection of both men and horses of course ought to be most thoroughly done, and, as far as my own experience goes, it is well done. I would like to associate myself very warmly with the tribute of gratitude and acknowledgment which has been expressed to the lecturer for the time and trouble which he has bestowed upon the paper, and for the extremely interesting lecture which he has given us.

Colonel L. ROLLESTON, D.S.O. (South Notts Hussars, Imperial Yeomanry):—I am afraid I am more used to commanding Yeomanry than to making speeches about them, and although I am aware that a great many excellent suggestions have been made for the improvement of the Forces, both in the lecture we have heard to-day and also in other quarters, I only rise to-day because there are several things which appear to me among the most essential, which have not been mentioned at all. With regard to most changes, I am strongly with the gentleman who spoke before, who said that, considering the awful things which are happening to nearly every other branch of the Service, not excluding the Cavalry, I think we shall do well to sit tight and court as few changes as possible, and occupy our time in trying to improve our own regiments. But there are one or two things which I will shortly, at this late period, mention to you, which in my own case at any rate, and in that of some other commanding officers I know, would help us. One is with regard to the length of service. We are obliged to recruit men now for 3 years only, and renew them from year to year. In many parts of the country I believe this is an excellent arrangement. In my own part of the country, in the class of men from whom the Yeomanry come, the people are very slow in thought; it takes them a long time to make up their minds to belong to the Yeomanry at all, but when once they have belonged to it, it takes them a long time to make up their minds to retire from it. And what I would ask is simply this: that we should be allowed the option of recruiting a man for 5 or 6 years instead of 3, if the man so wishes. That would, I am sure, help us greatly. In my part of the country it takes many years to convert one of these slow-thinking gentlemen, and he is not in the regiment half as long as it has taken him to make up his mind to join. The result of that is that we have a decided

difficulty in keeping our numbers up, without enlisting an undue proportion of recruits. I know it is not the case in all parts of the country; but if it can be so arranged that it would be optional to recruit men for 5 years or 6 years, it would be a very great help to many of us. Another thing which will be considered as less easy of accomplishment because it involves a little increase of money, is for us to have some very slight sum set apart for teaching reconnaissance in the winter time. The greatest stress is laid on detached duties and reconnaissance, but you cannot teach a man to scout properly in the summer time, when a man is unable to ride across the country. If a large sum were asked for from the Government it would be no doubt refused; but if a few hundred pounds were asked for for those purposes, for men who really came out to be taught as scouts in the winter, it would be an enormous advantage to the efficiency of the Force, and the relative cost would be very small. I had an experience in this respect some years ago. I ferreted out in the Regulations that one might go out for exercise at 3s. 6d. per day per man, besides regular training. I therefore got my scouts out, 70 or 80 of them, and gave them two or three days in winter time, and applied for 3s. 6d. per man. There was a terrible fuss, and it was refused, and after spending nearly the whole sum I asked for in railway expenses, the War Office, who do adhere to their own regulations, gave in and paid me the sum; but in the next Army Order which came out there was an order that no one should ever do it again! Therefore we did not get much further in that matter. But if some money could be put down for that in the winter, it would be a great advantage to officers who want to get their regiments efficient in that respect. There is another thing, and that is the recruiting of the men for foreign service. As a practical Yeoman, I am altogether opposed to recruiting men for foreign service. Many a man will not be recruited for foreign service, who will go on foreign service if he is in the corps. I have been thirty years in the Yeomanry now, and have recruited a great number of men. You go to a young gentleman at a farm who is doted on by his mother, and he is perhaps engaged to the young lady at the next farm, and it is a great difficulty to get him to enter the Yeomanry, and if he were liable to foreign service it would, in many such cases, be impossible; but at the next inspection he sees the uniform and smart appearance of the men, and he wants to join them, and you get him. He is trained and becomes a smart, active soldier; he takes his own line with his mother, probably the young lady at the next farm marries somebody else, and when next a war is declared away he goes. I have found this sort of thing in practical work, and if these ideas I have mentioned should be put into practice it would be a great help to us. In conclusion, I would join with the others who have expressed their great admiration of and thanks for Colonel Le Roy-Lewis's excellent lecture.

Colonel H. LE ROY-LEWIS, D.S.O., in reply, said:—I am very much obliged to the officers who have made speeches on this subject, for the suggestions which they have made, and especially for finding fault with several points in my lecture. All I can say is I wish they had found fault with more points. Of course this would have had one disadvantage, and that is, I should have detained you in replying to them; but discussion is very good in all these matters. With reference to Lord Ebrington's remarks on the pay of Yeomanry, I must confess I am unrepentant; I stick to what I have said. It is true that more money is spent on the Yeomanry, and also that the Yeoman is now put to less expense than he used to be, by providing him with a horse at the training; but the point

I wish to insist upon is that the personal emoluments of the Yeoman have gone down; 5s. 6d. a day is what he makes at the training. It is true he used to be put to extra expense by billeting, and the 7s. was supposed to cover that, but his personal emoluments are less. In the West of England £5 for the horse more than covers the expense; but Lord Ebrington will remember the Committee on which he and I sat, he as Chairman and I as one of the members, which enquired into this question of expense exhaustively all over the country. We concluded that there were many parts of the country where £5 more than covered the expense, but there were parts of the country—metropolitan areas principally—where £5 does not cover the expense. Taking a general view, I think the £5 about averages the cost for the whole country, therefore that £5 does not, except in favoured districts, find its way into the Yeoman's pocket. With regard to the "charge," I think Lord Ebrington caricatured my idea. I am so glad to see that Colonel Rolleston is here. I said that on active service you never know where you are or what is going to happen to you. Colonel Rolleston and I started from Boshoff, members of a Yeomanry brigade which covered the advance of a large force of infantry and of artillery; we were the only mounted men with that force, and if we charged once I was going to say we charged a hundred times, but that would be an exaggeration. We charged a large number of times, because we were obliged to, and if Lord Ebrington tried to charge and hurt his enemy with a rifle in his hands he would find it a wearisome business. Lord Ebrington thinks our saddlery is good; so I think, too, at present. My point was rather that the Yeomanry colonel's temptation is to save on saddlery; it is the most expensive item he has to deal with. We found in South Africa, unfortunately, that this theory was well borne out. When I took over the command of my regiment in South Africa, I gathered together all the saddles of one of my squadrons, which had belonged to a distinguished home regiment, and I burned them, because they were of no use to anybody. They were old saddles which had done duty for years and years, and had been patched up for active service. Lord Ebrington thinks mobilisation stores would be available when you come to the pinch; but I have my doubts on that subject, because I have had experience on the Yeomanry Committee. I remember at one juncture of our fortunes we could not get slouch hats, and at another time I do not know what sum of money we offered to get saddles. Of course these conditions always occur in times of great stress and emergency. My suggestion was that we should not have the same number of articles earmarked in the hands of tradesmen, but that there should be a constant supply of fresh articles passing through their hands on which interest would be paid for the capital expended by them. Colonel Lawson has objected that there were many uncertainties about the dealings of the War Office with the Yeomanry. I do not want to let anybody into the secrets of the War Office, but I would call your attention to the fact that those uncertainties are not confined to the Yeomanry, and that the reason for this very often proceeds from the inability of certain persons to make up their minds. The Inspecting Officers whom Colonel Lawson has alluded to are, as I said in my paper, provided for in the Estimates for this year—three of them. But there is that ominous foot-note, that no rate of pay has been allotted to them because, the appointments being new, it is not known what their functions are going to be. There you have admirably illustrated the policy of doing something and thinking about it afterwards. Colonel Tomkinson, I think, has touched upon a variety of subjects, with which I

am in complete agreement with him; I am so glad he drew special attention to the numbers who volunteered for active service, because it has been cast in our faces that few Yeomen went to South Africa. I think 30 per cent. is not a bad showing, and that percentage, it must not be forgotten, does not include those who offered themselves but were medically rejected. The numbers of Yeomen who were rejected are not known, but I think if they were, the figure would come up to nearer 50 per cent. than 30 per cent., and, as Colonel Tomkinson said, for a Force purely enlisted for home defence, without any idea of going abroad, that is very creditable. The sweethearts and farms alluded to by Colonel Rolleston play a great part in his imagination, but I do not feel that difficulty about enlisting Yeomen for foreign service, because it must not be forgotten that this foreign service liability will only be enforced in times of the greatest national emergency, and I do not think anybody who calls himself an Englishman would care to resist such a call at such a time. It is true that call will be responded to, as it was in the case of the last Boer War, voluntarily; but, on the other hand, it is impossible to form any military plans or forecasts on a purely voluntary basis. A war may be popular, and there will then be no difficulty in getting men to fight. On the other hand, a war may be equally necessary for our national existence, and yet not so popular. Therefore I think that from the point of view of organisation I should like to know how many chickens I have before they are hatched. There is another consideration which I think Colonel Rolleston and Colonel Tomkinson ought to remember in reference to this matter, viz., that during the debate in the House of Lords on the introduction of the Militia Bill, the Militia colonels were practically unanimous in its favour, and I trust that if the time should come when the same kind of measure is passed for the Yeomanry that we shall find the Yeomanry colonels no less unanimous.

The CHAIRMAN (Major-General Sir A. E. Turner, K.C.B.):—Colonel Le Roy-Lewis commenced his most excellent lecture by questioning the wisdom of drawing public attention to the Yeomanry at the present time. But we can hardly hear too much of that excellent body, whose development has been so very rapid, and which is greatly due to the initiative and energy of Mr. Brodrick. I consider really that the creation of the Imperial Yeomanry will be the brightest memorial of his period of service at the War Office, the termination of which I and a good many others have very great reason to regret. We may gather, perhaps, from analogy that Colonel Le Roy-Lewis is not altogether wrong, for the Militia and the Volunteers have attracted a considerable amount of attention of late, not in all respects to their advantage. The Yeomanry, since the establishment was reduced a year or a little more ago, from 35,000 to 28,000, and regiments from 596 to 476, have enjoyed that Elysian state of being left alone by the War Office, and that is a very rare blessing for any unit or corps of the British Army. The growth of the Militia and Volunteers has been stunted and their vitality sapped of late, owing to the uncertainty of their future, and the threats of reduction and destruction which have been held over their heads. Certain it is that sympathy has been expressed with them by people in high positions; but I am afraid that sympathy is somewhat the same as that extended by the walrus and the carpenter to the oysters, of which not a single one was left. The Yeomanry at the commencement of the war numbered some 13,000 and 224 officers; of these, 2,879 men went to the war, and formed the nucleus of that great force of 1,343 officers and 34,127 men who actually served in

South Africa, and which did not include those who volunteered but were rejected owing to physical disability or other causes. We know that the first batch which went out was excellent, the second was tolerably good, but in the third there were a large number of totally untrained men, who could neither ride nor shoot. The lesson to be drawn is, what a different state of things there would have been if we had anything like universal training in the country. We know we cannot get conscription. Mr. Balfour, in his celebrated Army speech, said that those who advocated conscription in this country do not know what it does and what it is intended to do. It is impossible to hold distant positions across the sea by conscript soldiers, and therefore he considered it unnecessary and impossible for foreign service, which is our great difficulty in the Army, and unnecessary for home service. And he went on to say what we must have is a small, perfectly equipped Regular Army whom we can send to a threatened point without delay at any time; but if the stress of war continues, especially if one of the great military nations of Europe is brought against us, we must depend not upon the Regular Army for the time being, but on the readiness of the population of this country and on the free Colonies to aid us in repelling the aggressor. What does that mean? It surely means that the people in this country and in the Colonies should be trained to arms. In this country every young man should be induced if possible to go into the Militia, the Yeomanry, or the Volunteers; but what do we see? The Secretary of State for War considers that the National Forces—I may call them National or Citizen Forces—are too great, and he wants to reduce them. He says the Volunteers are not necessary for home service, and that it is a delusion to regard them as being able to furnish a Reserve to the Army in the field. Look at the Reserve which was furnished by our Auxiliary Forces: 100,000 from the Yeomanry, Militia, and Volunteers, and something like the same from the Colonies. And therefore the lesson to be drawn is this, that it is the duty of the Government to induce every sound man to join one branch of the Auxiliary Forces. With regard to what the author of the paper said about an Adjutant to two regiments, there was never a better step taken than cancelling that order and giving each regiment one. It was a piece of economical juggling in order to save a little money at the sacrifice of efficiency, which almost beats anything I know which has been done even in Pall Mall. With regard to the shortage of officers, that is very serious, and it is most disappointing to hear the Secretary of State making continual remarks about the shortage of officers, but devising no plan and putting forward no scheme to induce officers to come forward. I do not think it would be difficult to obtain officers if more consideration were paid to the necessity of their carrying out their avocations in private life; and if the training and administration of the Auxiliary Forces were left to a separate department of the War Office, which had nothing to do with any other department, except in the way in which one branch of the Army must dovetail into the others, and which had unrestricted power to deal with the Auxiliary Forces, whose conditions are in many respects peculiar and do not apply to the Regular Army. With regard to the Reserve, that is a most important thing, and nothing pleased me more when I was in the War Office than the creation of a Militia Reserve. But what has been the fate of it? £150,000 was allotted to it the first year, £50,000 the next year, and now it is reduced to £40,000 this year. How can we prosper when all things are changed in that way? It was acknowledged by everybody who knew that the Militia Reserve was a most excellent thing,

and in 3 years the same gradually dwindles down, and perhaps in a year more it will be reduced to vanishing point. What applies to the Militia applies to the Yeomanry also, and the creation of a Reserve of Yeomanry as proposed to-day by Colonel Le Roy-Lewis would be a most important and excellent measure. With regard to the liability for foreign service, I agree entirely with what Lord Raglan said with regard to the Militia the other day, and Colonel Rolleston has said to-day. There are great advantages no doubt that we should have both Yeomanry and Militia with a liability to general service when the country is in serious danger; but we should get those men whether they are under that liability or not, and we shall lose many officers and men if they were always faced with a liability for foreign service. Mothers, fathers, and sweethearts will be strong obstacles, and will bar their serving. When first the proposal of foreign service for Militia was introduced I was entirely in favour of it; but after what has been said on the subject by Lord Wemyss and others, I have thought more about the matter, and believe that we may lose the services of many officers and men, who would be available for home service but who cannot go abroad owing to their circumstances of life. There is nothing now left for me except to offer our sincere thanks to the speakers who have favoured us with their remarks, and also to Colonel Le Roy-Lewis for his most excellent and instructive and valuable paper, the report of which will be a most valuable record—a most valuable statistical record—not only to those who are interested in the Yeomanry, but also those who study the question of our Army and have the good of the Empire at heart.

Colonel Sir WILLIAM BAILLIE-HAMILTON, K.C.M.G., C.B. (Lothians and Berwickshire Imperial Yeomanry):—Before this meeting breaks up, I think that it will be only right to express our sense of the obligation we are under to the distinguished General Officer who has been good enough to preside to-day. I have been a Yeomanry officer 30 years, and I have had some practical experience of the War Office authorities and their ways of dealing with the Yeomanry, some of which have been to the advantage of the Force, and others very much the reverse. I can say without hesitation that the Yeomanry never had a better friend than General Sir Alfred Turner during the time he was Inspector-General, and we were all heartily sorry when he gave it up. As a member of the Council of the Institution—I believe I am the only member of the Council present to-day—I beg to move a hearty vote of thanks to him.