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Our First Reserve

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OUR FIRST RESERVE.

By Captain L. LOFTUS B. FOX, Royal Longford Rifles.*

AFTER having long been kept out in the cold, there seems at last some prospect of the Militia being admitted to the sunshine of national favour, for the question of Military Reserves has come to the front, and the most competent authorities are agreed, not only that an Army of Reserve is requisite, but that the Militia is the source from which it is to be obtained, and as a Militiaman I hope that I shall not be considered presumptuous if I offer a few remarks on the present organization of the Militia, and its adaptability for the purposes of an efficient Reserve.

It may be as well, in the first place, to inquire why it is we require a Reserve, and to define the terms "Reserve" and "Militia."

There is very high authority for stating that we require a Reserve, because on a sudden call, any of the great continental nations can muster their hundreds of thousands in the field, while "perhaps we "might assemble in the United Kingdom some 40,000, or at most "50,000, effective men of all arms of our regular forces" (*vide* Report of Commissioners on Military Recruiting); because "it has become "absolutely necessary to place ourselves less at the mercy of events "than we appear to be at the present moment" (the *Times*); because experience has warned us "that in future wars will be so sudden, so "sharp, and so short, that there will be no time for preparation" (General Peel's speech, Nov. 9th, 1866); and because "the history of "the recent war in Germany has taught us that whatever combatant "force is maintained, the complete equipment and machinery for a "much larger one must be prepared and kept at all times ready for "immediate use" (*Edinburgh Review*).

As I understand the word "Reserve," it means, an inexpensive auxiliary force, capable of rendering immediate assistance to the regular forces in cases of sudden emergency—in fact that, like a fire brigade, it can turn out at a moment's notice.

The Militia may be shortly described as a force called out each year for 27 days' military training, and commanded by officers appointed by the Lords Lieutenant of counties.

This force has been styled by the highest military authority "Our

* This paper was submitted to the Council in June last, but its publication has been unavoidably postponed till the present time.

first Reserve," and concisely defined by the *Times* newspaper as "a dormant element of national strength, available at an hour's notice, and yet not trenching to any serious extent upon the resources of the Treasury or the industry of the population." This is the official and traditional, and what may be termed the public-dinner-theory respecting our Militia ever since its first establishment in the days of Charles II., and if it were but true, would define a force whose value could not be too highly estimated, and whose reformation would be a work of supererogation. But, unfortunately, it is not so highly estimated by the nation, and, to tell the plain truth, is regarded by many of those who think about it at all as a mouldy and unmeaning relic of the past, and by not a few as an unmitigated nuisance. It is not saying too much to affirm that it absolutely counts for nothing with military men, and of those connected with it, from the Minister of War to the lowest drummer boy, there is not one who can really believe that it is an "element of national strength available at an hour's notice." There is not a man in the community who regards it with pride or security. The regular Army look upon it with undisguised contempt, the civilians who are not brought into contact with it regard it with derision, the civilians who are, with aversion, for in too many cases it symbolises to the inhabitants of those districts in which the annual musters are held all that is debauched, lawless, and degraded.

Without at all admitting that the Militia merits such general scorn and sweeping censure, I fear that public opinion is in the main, correct as to its utility.

I will endeavour to show that such is the case, and that the shortcomings of the Militia are not attributable to lack of zeal on the part of its members, whose hands are tied behind their backs, and who are perfectly helpless in the matter, but to the persistent disregard on the part of the nation, of those indispensable conditions, already quoted from the *Times*, without which an efficient force is an impossibility.

These conditions are, 1st, that the force be dormant; 2ndly, cheap; and, 3rdly, available at a moment's notice. If it be not the first and second, it is nothing less than a standing Army. If it be not the third, the country in the hour of need will derive but little benefit from its antecedent cheapness and immobility, and it follows that if any of these essential conditions be wanting there can be no efficient Reserve, and it appears to me that it is because the third and most essential, because the vital condition, has been neglected from the days of Charles II. to the present time, that our Militia has been through all those 200 years, a bye-word and a reproach among the people, instead of being a source of national pride, and a strong tower of national defence.

What are the principles on which the Militia was organized and is still maintained, but those of Feudal ages and of patriarchal days long prior to the Feudal ages, when nations were enumerated as so many hundred thousand fighting men, besides women and children—when every able-bodied man was both soldier and civilian, and the nomad shepherd of yesterday was the Captain of the Host of to-day?

No better system was obtainable or possible for those primitive times, and it was equally well adapted to the Feudal ages, when every inch of land was held by military tenure, when every man's hand was against his neighbour, and when it behoved him who cared to live, to know how to fight. Unquestionably the artisans and clod-hoppers of those rough times were as skilful, perhaps more so, in the use of the sword and spear as of the shuttle and the hoe. But when the Feudal system mouldered away, and was superseded by that of standing Armies—when the man of peaceful pursuits did his fighting by deputy instead of with his own right hand, there was then no longer any necessity that he should be skilled in the use of arms, and he speedily became slack in military matters, and ultimately lost all knowledge of them. It could not have been otherwise. A man cannot be a soldier any more than he can be anything else by intuition, and when soldiering was no longer compulsory or generally necessary, it was not to be expected that the agriculturist or artisan would voluntarily take to it as a profession. Thus the third and most vital essential of the old system, namely, that every citizen was available at a moment's notice, died out. But the fact was ignored at the time, as it is now, and the skeleton of the feudal system was preserved, under the name of *Militia*, though the vital spark was extinct. Cheapness and the dormant condition were easily maintained, and efficiency was expected to follow as a necessary consequence. But that it did not do so, even in a generation who could remember Naseby, and had taken a part in the Battle of Sedgemoor, is apparent from the literature of the period. Dryden's *Militiaman* is pretty much the same as Punch's in our own day—

"Raw in fields the rude Militia swarms,
Mouths without hands maintained at vast expense;
In peace a charge, in war a weak defence,
Stout for a month, they march a blustering band,
And ever, but in time of need, at hand."

Very different were the terms in which Shakespeare spoke of the raw levies of the 15th century. They are, indeed, covered with ridicule, but not on the score of inefficiency. They are "slaves as ragged as Lazarus in the painted cloth," "discarded, unjust serving-men, "women's tailors, revolted tapsters," &c., but they are not "mouths without hands," even the country bumpkin Wart, "the little lean old "chapped bald" Militiaman is a proficient in the Manual of the day and "manages me his caliver exceeding well," and Falstaff, though he would not march through Coventry with his raw recruits, did not hesitate to lead them, without a day's training, to the front of the battle, where if being "peppered" almost to a man, is any test of stout fighting, they fought as well as the best. Shakespeare's Militiaman was available at a moment's notice, and Dryden's was not, because the Feudal age necessitated every man in the community being expert in arms, and the standing-army-age did not necessitate individual efficiency, inasmuch as the battles of the country were to be then fought not by the nation at large, but by the professional soldier, especially trained and paid for that purpose.

To be available at a moment's notice is, and always has been, the main spring, the very life, of every military organization, active or dormant; but this vital principle is not intuitive. It must be infused into the system, and be carefully cherished there, or it will languish and die, and the system with it. An untaught country lout cannot fight on equal terms with a trained soldier, nor can he obtain those equal terms by being hustled about in a drill field for 27 days in a year. There is no royal road to a knowledge of soldiering any more than there is to anything else, and yet from the days of Charles II. to the present, England has been saying to her first Reserves, "I have made you cheap, I have made you dormant, make yourselves efficient," and pre-supposing the possibility of doing this, has wrapped herself up in the delusion, that she possesses in the Militia an element of national strength available at a moment's notice.

On that point I take issue, and I venture to assert that our Militia, or any Militia so constituted, is not, or ever has been, or ever could be, *quâ* Militia, an element of national strength, or an efficient Reserve for an unforeseen emergency.

It may indeed be urged, that the Militia did yeoman service in the wars of the first Napoleon, by releasing the regular forces from home duty, and furnishing them from time to time with recruits fairly disciplined. Nor can it be denied that in these respects it was of some use, but a force that had been embodied for nearly a quarter of a century was virtually more a standing Army than a Militia, though to the last, from the inherent defects of its system, ever an unreliable force. And the question is not whether during that protracted period it became serviceable to a certain extent, but whether it was when first embodied, or for long after, an efficient reserve able to cope with an emergency at a moment's notice. In those days, that word emergency had a very different signification from what it bears in our times. War loomed long in the distance before bursting over a country, and then dragged its slow length along for years without any decisive results. There was ample notice, and ample time and opportunity for working up raw materials, but as far as I know, no one ever dreamed of bringing the Militia to the front, or placing it in any post of danger, except in the case of the French invasion of Ireland, when the results were, to say the least, not encouraging; and I doubt if there are many Militia regiments who took part in that campaign, who would care to emblazon on their colours the actions in which they were engaged, nor do I know any portion of the United Kingdom in which the Militia is held in such contempt as in that part of it where for the first and last time it took the field against a foe. Even at their best, the nation had no faith in its constitutional defenders, they were still a bye-word, a reproach, a reed on which the country refused to lean, and after the peace of 1815, they were suffered to melt away without lament into total nothingness and oblivion.

Nor when exhumed, during the Crimean war, was their organization in any way improved. At the time of their embodiment and for long after, they were notoriously a rabble and nothing more; and if after two years of constant training and discipline, some few regiments

amongst them vied in some degree in efficiency with the line, it was owing to their voluntarily availing themselves of the opportunities afforded by such a protracted embodiment; the great majority, however, who to the last failed to approach to such, or in many instances to any measure of proficiency, are a strong proof how little the authorities regarded them in the light of a *first reserve*, or thought it worth their while to take any proper steps to make them so.

I freely acknowledge that much has been done since then to put the Militia on a better footing. Previous to the Crimean war it was a perfect myth. The Adjutants, who had nothing earthly to do but draw their pay, were all that remained (in memoriam) of the great constitutional force. Since then, annual trainings and inspections have been revived, efficient staffs constituted, recruiting admirably organized, clothing, arms, drill, discipline, interior economy, personal comfort of the men carefully attended to, a special department created with a distinguished General Officer at its head to supervise and control the force, and yet, if an emergency arose to-morrow, where is the Militia regiment in the United Kingdom available to grapple with it? Is there a General in the Service who would venture into action with the flower of our Militia as it now is, against the worst disciplined regular Army in existence, European or Oriental? Improvement has just stopped short of practical utility, every step has been in the right direction, but none have gone far enough. The organization has become more perfect every year, and yet has stopped short of efficiency, and all that has been done is fruitless, because no opportunities are afforded us of availing ourselves of this admirable organization.

It must be borne in mind that the Militiaman, except he be taught by authority, has neither inducement, nor means, nor capability, of teaching himself. When his training is over, he lays aside his rifle and his uniform, and is not permitted to use either one or the other until called up for training again. Nor is he the stuff out of which Volunteers are or could be made; a man who of his own accord hires himself out for one shilling and two pence per diem, cannot afford himself the luxury of amateur soldiering, and yet notwithstanding the patent fact that he is of himself perfectly helpless, and also the experience of 200 years, a great blot remains untouched, and the Militiaman is still expected to learn the whole duty of a soldier in twenty-seven days. Recruit and company drill, battalion and brigade exercises, some knowledge of musketry, experience of the interior economy of a regiment, *esprit de corps*, and habits of discipline are all essentials for the soldier, they cannot be dispensed with, and they cannot be acquired in twenty-seven days. Something may be done as to drill. As a Musketry Instructor, I can safely say that next to nothing can be done with musketry, and that under the most favourable circumstances it would take five years to put a ten company regiment once, and imperfectly, through the course. As to habits of discipline, without which a soldier on active service is worse than useless, how can they leaven the whole man as they ought in twenty-seven days, or at all when, as is too often the case, a Militia regiment is billeted during its training on the public-houses of a country town? I trust I may not be con-

sidered presumptuous if I say that I cannot see how the Government scheme of an Army of Reserve, as far as it has been developed, is calculated to meet matters. The Militia are to be recruited up to their full number, but how will that increase individual efficiency? 100 sheep are as helpless as 50 against the wolf. Thirty thousand men (about whom I have a word to say presently), are to be picked out from the rest, and, in some way not specified, to be made more efficient than their fellows, but bearing in mind the modern acceptance of the word "emergency," how does this secure the efficiency of the remaining 90,000 men who are debarred from similar advantages. The control and organization of the Militia have indeed been handed over to a distinguished General Officer, but much on the same terms as the making of bricks was entrusted by the Egyptian taskmasters to the Israelites of old. The task is that 130,000 rough clods are to be worked up into efficient fighting men in twenty-seven days; a task which we have been for 200 years endeavouring to accomplish, which we have hitherto totally failed to accomplish, and which no nation in the world in any age has ever accomplished; yet this is the task required of the New Reserve Department. We must clearly understand that this is the task and no other. In these days when wars burst like a thunderstorm without warning over our heads, and are matters of but a week or two, and in a country which could barely oppose 40,000 regular troops to an invading Army, a Reserve Force must be something more than a nursery for the line, or the germ merely of future organization; it must be a good thing and not merely the promise of good things to come, a present and not a prospective help in time of trouble: in a word it must at all times be a Service, capable of independent, though subordinate action, able at a moment's notice to defend garrison towns, as well as occupy them; to back up the Regular Army in the field, as well as feed them with recruits. If a Reserve cannot do this it is but an imposture and a make-believe, and would prove as worthless for defence in the hour of need, as would the men in armour of a Lord Mayor's show.

This is but the simple truth, and yet the nation will not look the truth in the face, but persists in demanding bricks while it refuses straw. In fact the Militia question has never been fairly dealt with yet, it has never been discussed on its merits or probed to the quick; it is the political red-hot poker which statesman after statesman has grasped only to drop again.

Whenever the Militia question crops up in Parliament or elsewhere, it is jumped upon, stifled, and buried out of sight as speedily as possible. No one dares to grapple with it, to strip it of its theoretical and traditional trappings, and expose it as the arrant cheat, the miserable sham, the poor helpless, lifeless scarecrow that it really is. Individually we know this to be the case, and very freely acknowledge it to one another in our individual capacities, but as a nation we ignore the fact, because if acknowledged it would present itself as a very ugly fact, which could only be got rid of by decisive measures, to which we are not inclined, in other words by *opening our purse strings to the Militia*.

This is the great lion in the path.

No statesman has been able to bring forward a comprehensive scheme of Militia organization; he has been obliged to speak evasively and mistily, and with bated breath to veil the whole truth, to propose measures which are totally inadequate and admittedly makeshifts, because he knows that the nation has no faith in the Militia, and will not submit to costly experiments on its account. In this country everything is a matter of FAITH and MONEY. Where there is faith, there money will be poured forth like water; where there is no faith, the purse strings will not be relaxed, let the charmer charm never so wisely. We believe in blue books and naval experiments, and, though warned by experience that both might prove valueless, would sell the shirts off our backs to indulge in either one or the other. The Militia, though we affect to regard it as the great constitutional force of the country, we do not believe in, and refuse to dole out more than a beggar's alms for its maintenance. And the instructions to those who administer or would reform its system, appear to be virtually the same as those which Lord Hotham asserts were given to the Royal Commission on Recruiting—"Mind you don't recommend anything which will entail an increase of expenditure." We cling to the shadow, but reject the substance, and the result of all the commissions, and schemes, and legislation, of late years, has been that though there has been much tinkering, LIFE has not been infused into the Militia, a corpse has been galvanized, the outside of a cup and platter cleansed, a sepulchre whitened, and that is all.

It is really time that there should be an end of all this. If we have no faith in our Militia let us say so openly, and throw it overboard at once, and, if possible, obtain our reserve from some other source. But if we are determined to mould the Militia into an efficient reserve, let us manfully look its deficiencies in the face and seriously address ourselves to remedy them if we can, and above all, let us give it fair play. Don't let us play fast and loose with it, or set it a task to do and then tie its hands behind it, but deal with it on its merits, and endeavour honestly to make it an element of national strength available at a moment's notice.

When we reflect that 136,000 men of the Line (to speak of the effective services only) cost upwards of £10,000,000 annually, and 134,000 men of the Militia cost not quite £1,100,000—that the men of the Line drill 365 days in the year and the men of the Militia 27—that the men of the Line acquire *esprit de corps* and habits of discipline by constant supervision and association in well-ordered barracks, while the men of the Militia, billeted through the slums and public-houses of country towns, run riot uncontrolled—that the men of the Line are officered by professionally trained soldiers appointed by a soldier, and the men of the Militia by untrained civilians appointed by civilians—and further reflect that this organization of the Line is essential to its efficiency, it will not be difficult to place our finger on some of the principal blots on the Militia system.

But if these points of comparison between the Line and the Militia — some of the sources of the latter's weakness, they appear to

me to indicate also the sources from which it is to obtain increased vigour and vitality. I will take these points *seriatim*. The first two, inadequate estimates and inadequate training, are inseparable, and must be considered together. But here the tax-payer and the political economist stop the way. The tax-payer will not submit to a material increase in the military estimates, and the political economist will object to the prolonged withdrawal of 130,000 men from the labour market. I will endeavour to show that neither the estimates nor the labour market need be affected to any excessive degree. If the experience of all times proves conclusively, as I think it does, that a knowledge of soldiering cannot be intuitive, recent events have, on the other hand, clearly shown that a man can be rendered efficient for active service in far less time than was thought to be possible even a few years ago. As Lord Hartington remarked in his speech on General Peel's scheme for organizing a Reserve, "If the German war proves anything, it is, I think, the fact, that in the Prussian campaign in Bohemia, it was clearly shown that an efficient infantry soldier might be obtained by an amount of drill not exceeding three years—indeed, a great part of the Prussian Army was composed of men who had only served one year."

Nor must it be forgotten that the Landwehr of the first call, with less service still, and who are essentially a Militia Reserve force, bore a conspicuous part in the campaign, and contributed largely to the success of the Prussian arms; and I think that most military men who have been connected with the Militia, or have been in the habit of inspecting them at their annual trainings, will be of opinion, that it is amazing what an amount of drill and general knowledge of soldiering can be picked up by a man even in 27 days—picked up to be, alas! only dropped again, for 27 days are not sufficient to give a man time to absorb and retain the knowledge and habits he has acquired. The real problem is, how to give the Militiaman a leavening of soldiering that will make him serviceable on an emergency without seriously trenching on the resources of the country. This problem Prussia has solved, and the other nations of the continent are solving for themselves, and while to graft the feudal and coercive systems of the continent on the voluntary system of Great Britain would be impossible, I think we might take some useful hints from them, and adopt with advantage some such plan as that on which the new French Garde Mobile is based. I would therefore suggest that instead of a uniform training of 27 days every year, one third of the Militia force should be embodied annually for *three months*, another third for two months, and the remaining third for one month. In other words, to have in 1869, say 50 regiments out for three months, 50 for two months, and 50 for one month, and the regiments that were out for three months in 1869 to be out for two in 1870, and for one in 1871, and so on with every regiment in succession. By this system every Militiaman would receive triennially a three months' brushing up, and learn lessons which he could not, if he would, forget, and acquire habits which he could not, if he would, shake off, and which would be kept alive by the reduced terms

of training in the two intermediate years. But, above all, there would then be time to impart to the Militiaman some knowledge which he does not now possess, of brigade movements, for battles are not fought by isolated regiments, but by associated regiments habituated to brigade movements; while Militia training at present is purely regimental and isolated. Each regiment, even when there are several in the same county, drills by itself, and association with other corps is unknown. An experiment has, indeed, been made, last year and this, of sending several regiments to Aldershot, to be brigaded during their training with regiments of the line. This is, no doubt, a step in the right direction, but a very short one. No benefit can accrue from it to the Militia generally. There are but two camps of any size in the United Kingdom, Aldershot and the Curragh, and the distance and expense are too great, and the time too short to send to either camp any regiments except such as are in their immediate vicinity. As a matter of fact, all the regiments that went last year and this to Aldershot were within easy distance of the camp, and in some instances, the same regiments have been selected both years. But the benefit that even these favoured corps can derive from their camp life will be very trifling. Their whole term of embodiment occupies but 27 days. The first two are taken up in mustering, clothing, and arming, the last two in unclothing, disarming, and paying off; then three Sundays have to be deducted from the balance, and if every remaining day should be fine—and who is there that believes in the possibility of such a thing?—there will be twenty clear days left for moulding the Militiaman into an efficient fighting man, able to cope with an emergency at a moment's notice.

The time allotted is too short—too short, in fact, for anything but an imperfect grounding in company drill, and a superficial knowledge of a few of the simplest battalion movements, to show off on the day of inspection. The Militiaman may indeed get a slight inkling of camp life, and the Linesman may see that the Militiaman is the right material if properly handled, but beyond that but little good will be effected. But in three, or even two months, much might be done. There would be time to form temporary camps in districts where no permanent one exists, and men could, in a great measure become habituated not only to the drill but to the discipline and duty of a soldier. They would have the great advantage of being brought into close contact and fellowship with the professional soldier, and of being familiarized with a soldier's life, and I cannot but think that happy results would follow from such protracted association, that prejudice and contempt would give way to more generous feelings. The Linesman might be brought to look upon the Militiaman not as a clumsy caricature of himself, but as a valuable auxiliary; and the Militiaman would gain the inestimable benefit of feeling that he belonged to a force that was really looked upon as a Service, and which could, if called upon, take its part, though a subordinate one, in the defence of the country.

If this system was adopted, I do not think the political economist or the tax-payer would have much ground for alarm; for though the nominal strength of the Militia is 134,000 men, I doubt if there will

ever be much more than 100,000 embodied in any one year: but even if the full number entered an appearance, the derangement caused by the withdrawal of 40,000 men annually for three months from the entire population of the United Kingdom, could be but slight. Many Militiamen have no fixed employments; those who have, can, as experience has proved, be very well spared by their employers for the present term of training, and the man who can be spared for 27 days in each year, can easily be spared for 81 days once in three years without inflicting any very serious loss on the agricultural or commercial portion of the community, which would be amply compensated for the inconvenience it might have to put up with, by the increased efficiency of those upon whom in some degree they rely for security and protection. Nor do I think there would be any difficulty with the men themselves. A spirit of soldiering, which is becoming stronger every day, is abroad. Even Militia soldiering is much more popular among the men than it was a few years ago, and the great majority of Militiamen whom I have come across, would much prefer a three months' to a one month's training, and would not require the incentives of additional bounties and allowances to reconcile them to a prolonged term of duty.

As to the question of expense, if we refer to the estimates, it will be seen that the total charge for the Militia for the year ending March, 1868, amounts to £986,762, including a sum of £5,565 for the pay, &c., of the Inspecting Staff of Reserve Forces (a portion only of which is justly chargeable to the Militia).

Of the total charge, the Establishment absorbs, including bounties, expenses of enrolment, &c.	£286,365
Permanent Staff pay, allowances, clothing, medical expenses	246,977
Volunteers' pay, allowances, medical expenses	217,700
Ditto clothing	191,720
Pay Recruits and Volunteer Non-commissioned Officers' preliminary drill	24,000
And additional charge for those Volunteers in the Militia who may engage to serve in the Militia Reserve force	20,000
	<hr/> £986,762

The first two items are fixed charges, and would be but slightly, if at all, affected by any extension of training. Whether the drill is for 1 or 27 days, the charge for bounties, general and permanent staffs, &c., will remain the same. It is the number of men, and not the number of days, that determines the amount of the bounties, and the pay and allowances of the general and permanent Staffs are estimated for every day in the year, and cannot be affected in any way by any diminution or extension of the term of training; and for the purposes of a serviceable Reserve, the fixed establishments appear to me to be as complete and efficient as they need be, and require little, if any, further development.

Then, though at first sight it might appear to do so, I think the charge for clothing (£191,720) would not vary.

A soldier of the Line receives a new uniform every twelve months, a Militiaman, nominally, every five years, but virtually every five months, as he is only called out for duty one month in each year. There is no reason why a Militiaman's uniform, making every allowance for the disadvantages he labours under, should not last nine months to the regular's twelve, and in that case no alteration as to the issue of clothing would be required. As to the shirts, socks, and boots that are supplied annually, they would be the merest rubbish if they could be worn out during the term of a three months' training.

The item of £20,000 for Reserve Volunteers would of course, under the system I propose, disappear, and the charge £24,000 for the preliminary drill of recruits (£21,000) and volunteer Non-commissioned Officers (£3,000), remain as it was.

There would then be left but the item of £217,700 for volunteers' pay-allowances, &c., which could in any way be affected by an extension of training. According to the scheme I venture to suggest, this sum would be exactly doubled, and £217,700 represent the increased annual charge for the Militia, minus the £20,000 before referred to, and there might also perhaps be a further reduction (though I would deprecate it) of £21,000 by dispensing with the 14 days' preliminary drill for the recruits.

There is, however, the Government scheme and its cost to be taken into account, on the other hand. As I understand it, 30,000 men are to be selected from the Militia force, who are to receive double bounties, and in some way, not yet made public, to be made more efficient than their fellows. The double bounties will amount annually to £30,000, and a month's additional training—and it could not well be for less than a month—would cost at the least £70,000 more. So that the difference between making the whole Militia force and a fourth of it, efficient, would not amount to more than £97,700.

But this is not all, for even if the Government scheme could be carried out without any increase of expenditure whatever, it would still be in my opinion most objectionable; for, admitting that 30,000 men were made efficient, the condition of the remaining 100,000 would be rendered far more hopeless and helpless than it is even at present. An efficient reserve, as I understand it, is a force that stands on its own legs, and is not to be cut up into small pieces to prop up the legs of another force. If you want a Militia regiment to be of any use, keep Officers and men together, and train them properly; but, if in a corps you exalt a certain number of men above their comrades, and, in case of war, detach them altogether from their regiment and merge them in the Line, you destroy the efficiency and morale of the remainder, and you create jealousies and heart-burnings amongst the men, and disgust amongst the Officers. It is not very encouraging to 100,000 men to be stigmatized as the refuse of a force which is sufficiently contemptible as it is in the eyes of the public, nor to zealous Officers to have the *sic vos non vobis* principle applied to them, and to have to submit to the humiliation of being considered unworthy, when real work has to be

done, to lead men who had in a great measure been made efficient through their exertions. No Officer with a spark of *esprit de corps* would care to act merely as a dry nurse for the regular Army without a chance of ever seeing actual service, and neither Officers nor men could ever feel an interest in a corps which in no event, as a whole, could act together in the field. Cohesion is as essential to the Militia as to any other agglomeration of atoms. Separate its men and Officers, and it is as a bundle of sticks, whose fastening has been loosened. Shoulder to shoulder with old comrades, and led by Officers to whose control he has become habituated, the Militiaman will be turned to far better account than by the irritating and invidious system of partial selections and extra bounties. If 30,000 men should be required to reinforce the Line, there will be no difficulty in finding them, and they will, I feel certain, be obtainable without any bribe whatever. During the Crimean war and Indian mutiny, most Militia regiments (indeed I don't know of any exceptions) volunteered without any inducements being held out to them, for foreign service in the field, and meant it, too; and the same patriotic and martial spirit, rather more intensified, if anything, is alive still, and will at any moment place twice 30,000 Militiamen at the disposal of their country. And if in an emergency the entire Militia force should not be required at once, and selections had to be made, why not make selections which would be provocative of emulation instead of disgust? In such an event, let a dozen of the most efficient regiments be called out in their integrity, Officers and men, just as they are, into active service. Let a Militia regiment be brigaded with a Line regiment, instead of a fragment of a Militia regiment being merged in a Line regiment, and, I venture to say, that the result would be such a spirit of generous rivalry and emulation throughout the whole Militia force as would render extra bounties and inducements altogether unnecessary.

But the desired end will never be attained, let the training be ever so much extended, until the billeting system is abolished. It is doubtless important that a soldier should be well drilled, but it is far more important that he should be well disciplined. Even a Militiaman can see that the internal discipline of a regiment can never be carried out in the drill-field, and that it is within the barrack-walls alone, it can be thoroughly developed and enforced. *Esprit de corps*, regular habits, unquestioning obedience, complete subjection of the individual will, are more indispensable even than drill. A man may manœuvre steadily, and fire straight, and have a stout heart, but if he has not learned the lessons of complete self-abnegation and perfect obedience, he will be at all times, and more especially in the flurry of action, or the demoralizing hour of disaster, a very inefficient and worthless soldier; and it does not require to be a military man to see, that the general adoption of the billeting system would render internal discipline impossible, would disorganize the best trained army in Europe, and convert it into a rabble. If this is the case with the dry tree, what must it be with the green?

How are 100,000 Militiamen, who have been running wild through the length and breadth of the land for eleven months, to be disciplined when they are allowed to run still more wildly for the remaining month,

through the towns in which they are billeted? But this is literally the case; for, practically, a Commanding Officer has no full control over his men once they leave the parade-ground. Pickets and inspections of billets, by Company and Orderly Officers, and all that sort of thing, where they are practicable, can never insure constant supervision of the men; and even these are delusions where men's billets, as is the case in many instances, are three or four miles distant from their head-quarters.

If any one wishes to see the working of the billeting system amongst the Militia, let him take an afternoon walk in any district; let us say, for instance, the metropolis and its environs, when a regiment is out for training, and see the guise in which too many of the constitutional defenders of their country present themselves. I was going to say that they look like the refuse of a disbanded army, but the representation would be far too flattering to them. It would be more correct to say that they resemble a rabble who had lately looted a military baggage train, and decked out in shreds and patches of their plunder were disporting themselves according to their various inclinations. The costermonger of the East, and the donkey boy of the suburb, may be seen pursuing, in full panoply and unrebuked, their several avocations, under the very noses of Adjutants and Commanding Officers. Here a speculative group, civilian from the waist upwards and military from the waist downwards, or *vice versa*, are occupied in the ennobling pastime of pitch-and-toss; there a free fight between two pairs of regimental trousers, bottle-holder, a full Non-commissioned Officer, in full regimentals and billy-cock hat; further on, an omnibus, crowned with flushed warriors, rather drunk than otherwise, and mostly open as to the tunic, and cotton handkerchief as to the neck. At every corner public-house, a guard of honour hilarious, and for the most part riotous. These can be seen any day, and to say nothing of midnight orgies and the consequent sensation-headings in the public prints of—*Another Militia Outrage—Alarming Disturbance of the Peace by Militiamen, &c., &c.*, ought to afford convincing proof how the billeting system trails the Queen's uniform in the mire, and stigmatizes and degrades the men who wear it.

It is with the soldier as with every other man,—our habits of life are not formed merely by what is learned from books, as a boy, but mainly by the discipline which is undergone, either at home or at school, in early days. It requires no prophet to be able to predict that a boy who is suffered to run wild out of school-hours, will come to grief in after years.

The obvious remedy for this crying evil is the erection of barracks for the Militia; and the obvious objection to the remedy is, that it will cost too much. Well, if that be the case, let only such a proportion of the Militia as can be provided with barracks, not then occupied by regular troops, or who can be brigaded together under canvas during the period of their training, be called out every year.

By that means the nation would have a small number of men worth something, instead of a great number worth nothing at all; and what would be lost in numbers, would be gained in efficiency. I doubt, however, very much if the nation would, in the long run, be at all a loser by the substitution of the barrack for the billet system.

The estimate this year for "allowance in lieu of lodgings, billet money of Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and men, and hire of barracks"—for the Permanent Staff and Volunteer Militia amounts to £78,300, which, at 4 per cent., represents the interest of nearly £2,000,000, a sum which would go far towards housing the entire Militia Force of the United Kingdom. Indeed a letter has lately appeared in the *Times*, from an Officer commanding a Militia Regiment, stating that "an eminent architect offers to build barracks of a "most excellent and substantial kind for a regiment of 1,050 men, with "Officers' quarters, for a sum not exceeding £14,000." If this estimate is correct, 140 barracks could be provided at the cost of the present billeting system. But 140 barracks would not be required. There are many unoccupied barracks in the United Kingdom that could be turned over to the Militia, and there are many that could be occupied by the Militia during the absence of the regular troops in camps and elsewhere. Then a portion of the Militia might and ought to be brigaded during their trainings in permanent or temporary camps; and again, the trainings of three or four adjacent regiments might be consecutive, and each in their turn occupy the same barracks, which could provide accommodation for the Staffs of all during the intervals between the trainings. So that I do not think that more than sixty or seventy new barracks would be required, and a considerable margin of the present expenditure of £78,000 be still left for their maintenance and repairs.

But even if barracks be added to extended training. There is still a formidable obstacle (to my mind the most formidable) to Militia efficiency in the way. If other parts of its system require to be reformed, the officering of the Militia requires to be revolutionized, for the mode in which it is conducted, is in every respect as faulty as it well can be, and is of itself sufficient to paralyze all the vital energies of the force. As the first step to its reform, I would wish to see the patronage of the Militia remodelled. At present it is altogether in the hands of the Lords Lieutenant of Counties, and the upholders of the present system will doubtless defend it on the grounds, that as the Militia is a local force, and the Officers, country squires or their sons, who must by law possess a certain property qualification, and whose tenants and dependants fill the ranks, therefore the chief man in each county is obviously the proper person to select the Officers for his County Regiment, and that a departure from this system would, by destroying the local character and clanship of the Militia, thin its ranks, and impair its efficiency. This was the idea no doubt on which the Militia system was originally based, and a very good idea 200 years ago, when, though the sun of chivalry had set, the glow of its parting rays were still felt throughout the land, when feudal traditions and influences were still potent, when most country gentlemen knew more or less of soldiering, when there was no manufacturing or floating population worth talking of, and tenants were more dependent on and attached to their landlords than they are at present. But it is a worn-out, effete, and utterly impracticable idea now-a-days. A Captain of Militia does not now grow his company

on his estate, and bring it with him to the annual trainings; many of the men, in some cases all, are strangers to him, until he meets them on parade, and few and far between, are the faithful clansmen, "who follow to the field their warlike Lord." There is no balloting for recruits now-a-days, and consequently no occasion to make compulsory service palatable to an unwilling recruit, by placing over him men whom he has known and to whom he has been attached all his life. The fact is, that the Militia is altogether recruited by the Adjutant and the Permanent Staff, men who for the most part have no tie or connection whatever with the county in which they are stationed, and who pick up their men by means of the blandishments and allurements, ordinarily had recourse to by recruiting parties for the Line.

Nor are the officers invariably county potentates; some certainly are, and I wish there were more of them, but in many instances Officers of the Militia have no more connection with the locality in which their regiments are trained, than Officers of Line regiments with the localities in which they are quartered. They appear on the first day of training, no one knows whence, and disappear on the last, no one knows whither, and most probably are neither seen nor heard of again until the next annual muster. I do not know how the question of qualification is got over, but it is somehow, for denizens of every quarter of Great Britain may be found sitting at the same mess-table, many of whom are as devoid of any property qualification whatever, as they are of local connection with their regiments; nor are instances wanting in which the Sister Isle supplies Officers to English regiments, not a few of whom, and some of superior rank, are in their own country, officials in professional or public offices with small salaries, and still smaller private means, and who could not possibly afford to retain their commissions, if their regiments were called out for active service. But even this infringement on the principle of local appointments has failed to secure a sufficient complement of officers. For though "the further appointments of Ensigns and Second Lieutenants in Militia regiments have been suspended," there are still in the reduced establishment of Officers nearly 1,000 vacancies, and every day it is becoming more difficult to induce any one to accept a subaltern's commission in the Militia. There are at present actually six regiments who have not a single subaltern amongst them, and twenty-four who have not more than two each.

But if the arguments in favour of the present system are out of date, the objections to it are not. It is manifestly detrimental to its efficiency, that the appointments and promotions of a military force should be altogether in the hands of country gentlemen, for the most part totally innocent of any acquaintance with military affairs. To be merely the nominees of a Lieutenant of a County, is in itself a deterrent to many gentlemen, who would not only willingly accept, but seek a commission, if, as in the Line, it proceeded directly from the Sovereign; and this is one amongst many reasons, why a Militia commission is so little valued, that few officers care to assume the titles of their rank, except during the brief period of training. We are all accustomed to,

and wish to avoid the supercilious elevation of the eyebrow with which Captain So-and-so of the Militia is received by his brethren of the Line. But that is not the worst—the *pitchforking*, which is the necessary consequence of the present system, is still more galling and pernicious. The Lord Lieutenant may virtually appoint or promote just as he pleases without reference to regimental fitness or seniority. The civilian of to-day may, and sometimes is the Colonel Commandant of to-morrow, and grizzled Field Officers of many years' standing touch their caps to, and "Sir" beardless boys just emancipated from school and college—

"That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle know
More than a spinster."

and mushroom commanders of companies are such every-day occurrences, that a covering serjeant would be quite taken aback, if his newly-appointed Captain could face properly on parade without assistance. Within the last few years indeed, a recommendation—it can scarcely be called an order—has been issued, that promotion should go by seniority, except under peculiar circumstances, but the order has been "more honoured in the breach than the observance," and the evil has been but very partially checked. It would be waste of time to comment on the results. They are self-apparent, derision and contempt from without the force, from within, heart-burnings, jealousies, disgust, resignations, and inefficiency. All this might be avoided if the feudal idea was modified so as to suit the requirements of the present day. For it is with the State, by its blind adherence to the feudal idea, and not with the Lieutenants of Counties, that the blame lies. They but administer the system as it has existed and been sanctioned, and indeed encouraged by authority for two centuries; and though their appointments may have been in some cases detrimental to the Militia service, they have hitherto been in accordance with the Militia system. I should be sorry to see the connection between the Militia of a county and its Lieutenant severed, or the local principle of officering abandoned; for though the Militia is not now recruited by its officers, still more cordial and intimate relations are likely to subsist between officers and men, when both are of the same county; and an officer who in his civilian capacity has been looked up to, and respected by the privates of his regiment, has opportunities, if he will but use them, which no stranger could possess of exercising a beneficial influence over their character and conduct whilst under his command. It is because I attach great importance to the maintenance of the local principle, and believe that it would be strengthened and confirmed, if the status of the officers was improved, and appointments and promotions proceeded from a higher source, and were less capricious than at present, that I would strongly urge, that while the nominations to commissions should remain in the hands of Lieutenants of counties, the final appointments and all future promotions should be under the control of the Commander-in-Chief, and that the commissions should be the gift of the Sovereign, and not of a subject; and that pitch-

forking being done away with, every Officer, Squire or not, should begin at the lowest rung of the ladder, and that promotions should be regulated as they are in non-purchase regiments of the Line.

I do not apprehend there would be much difficulty with the Squire in these days, when soldiering is returning to its old rank as a national rather than a professional pursuit, and men of wealth and position through the Volunteer ranks as privates. No man of spirit would object to enter the Militia as an Ensign merely because he happened to be a county magnate. Make the Militia a Service that they can take pride in, and I venture to say there will be no lack of country gentlemen amongst its subalterns. But every man cannot be a Squire, and the Squirearchy is not sufficiently numerous of itself to officer the Militia. To fill the gaps, therefore, it must be supplemented by a class as to whom there would still be a great difficulty, namely, the men of small means who have their way to make in the world, and who cannot afford to fritter away their time in profitless pursuits—such men have at present every reason in the world for avoiding the Militia. It is a source of present expense, and holds out no hopes of advancement for the future. It offers them no opening in life, it is a complete *cul de sac*, and a road that not only leads nowhere, but that diverts the footsteps of many a young man from paths which would lead to profit and honour. For while Volunteer-soldiering is merely the occupation of leisure hours, and has become so blended with his other pursuits as to form part of the daily programme without interfering with the business of a man's life, Militia-soldiering while it lasts, is pure and simple soldiering, out of which all civilian element has been eliminated, and it lasts long enough and is pleasant enough to unsettle many a young mind, and give it a distaste for the sober occupations of its ordinary civilian life. But if by any means the Militia could be made to forward a young man's interests in life, if it could be the stepping stone to a military career, and that a certain number of direct commissions could annually be given amongst those subalterns who do not possess the necessary qualifications for the higher grades; if Militia service could count for something, say two years for one, in the cases of those who pass from it into the Line, then, I think, the difficulty as to Militia subalterns would speedily be got rid of.

Never having been a Linesman I throw out this suggestion with great diffidence, not knowing whether from a military point of view it would be possible, but I trust that some such encouragement may be given to Militia subalterns, for without it I do not see how the gaps in their ranks are to be filled.

But even if the gaps were filled up, and the appointments and promotions all that could be desired, the Officers will still remain a blot on the Militia System, if more attention be not paid to their military education. At present it is lamentably neglected. There is absolutely no provision made for training the Recruit Officer. The Adjutant and assistant staff are barely sufficient to look after the privates, and as much and indeed more than they can do to get them into suitable trim for the inspection day. The Officers are pretty nearly left to themselves, and may learn their duty as best they can, if they

cannot learn it at all, and the consequence is, that very few of us know more than the alphabet of soldiering, if we even know that. We are not indeed so disgracefully ignorant as we were during the Crimean war, and some little pains are now taken with us, but even now, there may be found Field Officers who read off words of command from cards pinned to their holsters, and Company Officers who are the mouth-pieces of their Covering Sergeants, and there are few, if any of us, except such as have been formerly in the Line, who are competent to take charge of men in the field, or within the barrack walls; in fact, generally speaking, the men know much more than their Officers, while exactly the reverse should be the case, for if the steadiest and best disciplined troops require to be well led, *à fortiori* the Officers of an imperfectly trained force such as the Militia, ought to be men thoroughly well up to their work, and who could command the respect and perfect confidence of their men. A half-trained Militiaman may to a certain extent be serviceable if commanded by a well-trained Officer, but a half-trained Militiaman commanded by an incompetent Officer is worse than useless, and in the Militia, of all Services, lions should not be led by asses. Until the Officer, even better than his men, and at the head of his men, is available for active service at a moment's notice, until in times of emergency and danger, the Militia force can be safely intrusted to Militia Officers, it will be impossible to convert it into an efficient Army of Reserve; for on the first outburst of war men would be separated from their Officers, and drafted by fragments into the regular Army, and the Militia would revert to the ignominious position it occupied during the Crimean war, of being a mere feeder for the Line.

I have a strong impression that the efficient service of the Prussian Landwehr in the late campaign, was mainly attributable to the fact that the men, who after all were but imperfectly trained, were led by Officers who had received a thorough professional education prior to appointment, and who, though totally distinct from, were not one whit less efficient than the Officers of the regular Army; we may thus learn from Prussia how to provide for our first reserve a body of efficient Officers trained in all the duties of the Line. In that country in the Landwehr of the first call, which is in reality what our Militia pretends to be—the support of the Standing Army in case of war—commissions are laid open without distinction of class, and the Officers are a truly national body, but every candidate has to produce before a mixed military and civilian board, certificates of age, means, consent of parents, conduct and attainments, and if these testimonials are satisfactory, to undergo (unless he be a student from the universities or certain royal schools) an examination in German, Latin, French, Mathematics, Geography, History, and the elements of Natural History and Physics. If he passes, he receives a certificate and is posted as a cadet for twelve months to a regiment of the line. During the first six months he serves as a private soldier, and is chiefly occupied with recruit's drill. In the next six months, if perfect in drill and a private's duties, and has passed a practical examination in Surveying and Gymnastics, he receives the grade of Corporal, and is instructed in the

duties of an Officer. Three weeks before the end of the twelve months' service he has to appear before a regimental board, and is tested, first, orally indoors; secondly, in the field; and thirdly, by written papers on all the ordinary duties of a subaltern in field and garrison. Should the result and the Cadet's personal qualifications prove satisfactory to the board, and the other Officers of the battalion, he receives a certificate which entitles him in due time to a commission in the Landwehr battalion of his own district.

From this we may see what importance is attached in Prussia to the professional training of Militia Officers, and the late German war affords proof that the importance has not been overrated.

Though, for obvious reasons, we could not in this country apply so crucial a test, and the elaborate Prussian system of *Einfahrige* affords facilities for educating Officers which we do not possess, still I think a modification of the Prussian training might be adapted by us with advantage; and indeed in a very small way, we have already taken a step in that direction. A Militia Officer may now, if he makes application, be attached for one month's training to a regiment of the Line. This is all very well as far as it goes, but it is open to two fatal objections—

1st. The time is too short.

2ndly. The training is purely voluntary.

Nothing can come of a month's training even in the best of schools; and where the voluntary principle is applied to education, I fear the number of scholars will be very limited. Besides which "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing," and the smattering of soldiering thus acquired, not unfrequently turns the recipient's head and makes him intolerably cheeky, and self-sufficient, and insufferable when he joins his comrades of the Militia. To effect any good the professional training must be more thorough, and I would venture to suggest that no nomination for a Militia commission should be confirmed, until the candidate previously approved of by the General of Reserves had as a Cadet gone through a regular course of training with a line regiment for six months at least (I wish it could be for twelve), and at the end of that period had obtained a certificate of efficiency after a searching examination by a military board.

If the commissions were made contingent on the certificate, sham Officers would become an impossibility, the chaff would be sifted from the wheat. We who hold our commissions, though we think them a bore, because Lord So-and-so pressed them upon us, or because there was always a Major or a Captain in our family, or on account of the uniform, or because we like the fun of playing at soldiers for a month every year, should disappear, and our places be filled by working men, well up to their work. It may be that our places would not be easily filled, that the test is too severe, and that the asterisks in the "Army List" would be increased instead of diminished, but even if it were so, and that the gaps were multiplied tenfold, I would still be an advocate for thorough professional training. A battalion with but three zealous Officers who knew their work, would, I venture to assert, be more efficient than one with a full complement of such Officers as we

have under the present wretched system. I do not, however, anticipate that there would be any falling off. Let the Militia be once made a SERVICE, and it will be found that there are still enough spirited gentlemen left in old England to officer her First Reserve, notwithstanding the preliminary discouragement of professional training.

I have not been able to ascertain with precision the annual average of Militia appointments, and therefore the expense of the professional training scheme suggested must be in a great degree a matter of conjecture, but I do not think that in one year there would ever be more than 200 candidates for Militia commissions, and if each cadet during his probationary course received the allowance of 5s. per diem now given to Militia officers while attached to the Line, the total annual cost would be something under £10,000; to my thinking not too high a price to pay for obtaining efficiency in the officers of a First Reserve.

In these remarks I have confined myself altogether to the consideration of the possibility of converting our present Militia into an efficient Reserve. I do not feel myself competent, nor will I venture to enter into the general question of Army Reserves, but I trust I may not be considered presumptuous if, as an outsider, I express a hope that the services of those men who leave the regular Army in the prime of life may in some way be secured for the Militia. It is lamentable to see 4,000 or 5,000 as fine men as ever stepped, lost annually to the country, who, if diffused through the Militia, would leaven the whole mass with the leaven of true soldiering; and if it were practicable that every soldier who re-engaged to complete, say 25 years, was bound to serve 15 years in the Line and the remaining ten in the Militia of the district to which he originally belonged, a most valuable infusion of seasoned soldiers in the full vigour of manhood would be secured for every Militia regiment in the United Kingdom.

Now, with respect to the whole subject, I am very sensible that the crude suggestions I have ventured to offer are open to many objections, but even if they were unimpeachable in other respects, I feel that they, or any other scheme by which the estimates would be increased, will be met by an objection which, for some time at least, will be a lion in the path, and which can be summarised in one word—Abyssinia. But this is an objection which applies with equal force to the Militia, as at present constituted, and the same prudential reasoning which would deter us from making the Militia efficient should also prevent us from throwing away a million annually on a perfectly useless force. It may indeed be said that though worthless as a military force, it still has its use as a nursery for the Line. On that point I will merely observe that the estimates for the Militia this year amount to £986,762, and the total charge for direct recruiting for the Line to £103,258, that the number of recruits finally approved for the Army during the years 1863, 64, and 65 was 42,457, giving a yearly average of 14,200 recruits, of whom more than four-fifths were obtained by direct recruiting, indeed in the six months from July to December, 1859, out of the exceptionally large number of 14,000 recruits finally approved, but 1,002 were enlisted through the agency of the Militia, so that if 10,000 recruits obtained

direct by the Line cost but £103,258, while 1,000 or 3,000, or 4,000 recruited by the Militia cost £986,762, or even if the Militia recruited man for man with the Line, it can scarcely be considered an economical or satisfactory nursery for the regular Army, and it appears to me that there are but two courses left for us to adopt with respect to it, either to make it efficient or to abolish it altogether. Either alternative is preferable to the perpetuation of the present costly delusion; but the first will, if I mistake not, be found in the long run to be the better and the cheaper of the two, for that ugly problem, how with 10,000 men to meet him that cometh against us with 20,000 men, still stares us in the face, and sooner or later we shall have to deal with it, either by making the Militia more efficient as a Reserve, or by a material increase of the standing Army. I can see no middle course, for if the Militia do not furnish a very considerable portion of the materials for a Reserve, I do not see where sufficient materials are to be found elsewhere.

There is no one who estimates the value of the Volunteer force more highly than I do. I look upon the Free Lances of England as a tower of strength to the country, and though they have completely taken the wind out of our sails, I do not grudge them in the least their well-merited popularity. But they can never form a *First Reserve*.

The functions of a *First Reserve* are, in time of war, to release the regular forces from garrison duty at home and in the colonies, and to take the field whenever and wherever it may be called upon, and these are functions which the Volunteers are unfitted to discharge except for a spurt with an enemy at our very gates. Then, the Army of Reserve Force, as constituted under the warrant of 1859, has been a complete and admitted failure, and the pensioners are, for the most part, stale and numerically insignificant, and if the nation will not utilize the materials for a Reserve which they possess in the Militia, and is still bent on solving the ugly problem, I see nothing for it but a large increase to the standing Army. In a word, we have three courses to pursue, to make the Militia an efficient First Reserve at a moderate expense; to increase the standing Army at an immoderate expense; or to abolish the Militia, save the money it costs, and trust the future of the British Empire to the mercy of events, and to the forbearance of the great Powers of Europe.