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Wednesday, June 9, 1886.

GENERAL G. ERSKINE, Vice-Chairman of the Council, in the Chair.

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THE NECESSITY FOR A PARTIAL ENFORCEMENT OF  
THE BALLOT FOR THE MILITIA, AND ITS BEARING  
ON THE REGULAR ARMY, THE YEOMANRY, AND THE  
VOLUNTEERS.

By Major A. D. ANDERSON, R.H.A.

UNDER this heading I purpose inviting attention to the Militia, the Force maintained by the nation for home service, the backbone or foundation of any system of local defence, upon the condition of which much of the efficiency of the Regular Army, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers should or could be made to depend.

I cannot but approach this subject with caution and almost surprise at my own rashness, when I recollect how ably the question has been treated by numerous members of this Institution, and when I study the valuable Report of the Committee which sat on the Militia in 1877; but I am emboldened when I notice that there runs through all the published utterances an indirect, and in some cases a direct confession, that after many years' experience, during which every conceivable remedy has been suggested and tried, the Militia as at present existing is neither complete nor sufficiently efficient; that many give these attempts up as a bad job, and boldly express their opinion, that as at present organized it is futile hoping to get the Militia up to the required standard of efficiency, and that recourse must be had to the Ballot; while the Militia Committee of 1877 conclude their Report with: "but we venture to point out that time and preparation are such material factors in modern wars, that without some previous organization it would be practically useless to revive, or even to recast, the laws affecting compulsory service."

Momentous words these, penned by a body of most experienced and highly responsible Officers, but as in time of invasion we would most certainly "revive the laws affecting compulsory service," it would be better to have the previous organization they speak of prepared and adopted now than wait for a time of emergency.

The Ballot Bill of 1860 stands as one of the Statutes of the land, by which the enrolment of all males over 5 feet 2 inches in height, and

between the ages of eighteen and thirty years, is provided for, and admits of the whole or part of these being taken as required.

This Ballot Act is, however, annually held in abeyance by Act of Parliament, and Forces dependent on their popularity with the masses, as is the Militia, continue in their normal state of unpreparedness.

One feels almost ashamed to repeat the hackneyed cry of "Prepare," but we find it in the mouth of every soldier or sailor who reads or thinks, and who has the honour and safety of his country at heart.

We need, for an illustration of the fate of such unpreparedness, go no farther than the campaign of 1870-71, where we saw the fairest provinces of France devastated by war, nobles and peasants alike sacrificing their lives as simple volunteers in the ranks, in a fruitless endeavour to retrieve what want of organization and preparation on the part of the State had entailed on their beloved country.

Such would be the case with England if invaded by hostile foes; thousands of all classes would gladly and proudly volunteer their services, but they would be but a courageous armed mob, with whom it would be practically impossible to achieve anything, owing to want of previous training, and they would be annihilated by regular troops, as were the Garde Mobile of France by the organized forces of the German Empire; while money would be made to flow like water, to, if possible, remedy what would then probably be irremediable.

It is therefore, I submit, a duty of the first and most urgent necessity that a law shall be enacted to place at the disposal of the military authorities the means, the men, and the power of organizing an ample Force for national defence, and these authorities should be held responsible for the thorough efficiency of this Force, as they at present are for that of the Regular Army.

The military authorities have now to take what they can get under voluntary enlistment, and make the best they can of it; and so averse is the Nation, and many Officers of Militia themselves, to conscription, that they would rather go on in an incomplete and insufficiently efficient state, than face the only remedy.

Assuming the advisability, even the necessity, of a large Militia Force for home defence, and in view of the fact that there is at present an annual expenditure on it of 1,348,100*l.*, it is right and fitting for us soldiers to consider its present efficiency as a military machine, and it is from the point of view that "the Militia as at present raised and trained, does not sufficiently represent the nation, or offer a safe groundwork upon which in time of attack from abroad, the remainder of the Regular Army, the Depôts, the Yeomanry, the Volunteers, and all rapidly organized levies could be grouped and formed for systematic defence," that I invite you to consider the question.

In discussing the fitness of the Militia to fulfil its mission as our "first line of internal defence," we must commence by dismissing from the calculation any hope of support in time of war from the Regular Army.

Past experience has convinced us that a European war, requiring the maintenance of two Army Corps in the field, in addition to supplying the wants of India, would drain the country of all Regulars and

Reserves, and necessitate the use of the youngest, last-joined recruits in the ranks of our battalions in the field; it also teaches us that the Regular Army left in Great Britain after a short continuance of a foreign war, would, instead of being able to furnish regiments for internal defence, consist of nothing but recruiting depôts, and would rather look to the Militia, and draw upon it for a supply of partially drilled and suitable men, than be able to contribute any appreciable forces for local defence.

As has been before said in this Institution, "the presence of the regular troops may be, in the first moment of invasion, considered an accident, and their functions should be of manœuvre, as a reserve, to consummate the defeat prepared by the resistance of the Militia, to which we must now add, of the Volunteers."

But I would go further; the Regular Army would more than likely be occupied abroad, and for its probable condition and that of the depôts remaining behind, we need no better illustration than the Army in the Peninsula in 1813, and its means of being reinforced in England. For the sake of exemplification we will take the three regiments best situated, and the three worst off, at that time:—

Corps.		Wanting to complete	Means of re-inforcing the regiment.	Rank and file for immediate service in depôt.
Three best off.	5th Foot, 1st Battn.	none	2nd Battn., Exeter	344
	7th " "	none	2nd " Jersey	326
	91st " "	86	2nd " Ayr ..	362
Three worst off.	74th Foot.....	531	Depôt, Carlisle ....	10
	2nd " 3rd Battn.	486	" Battle.....	32
	30th " 2nd "	456	" Hull .....	16

Or, a shortcoming of 12,609 men wanting to complete establishments on a force of 68 regiments, and 6,480 men in England to meet the demand; this is leaving out of the question sick, 18,151.

It is therefore evident we must, under such conditions, dismiss from our thoughts any hope of expecting material assistance from the Regular Army, should England be invaded while we are engaged in a foreign war.

Thus the nation having only its Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers to depend on for national defence, should not rest content with half measures, but insist on such laws being passed as will leave no possibility of these Forces being ever found otherwise than in the most thoroughly efficient and prepared state.

This I submit is not now their condition. It is true that the Ballot Act, if enforced, would in time of war give us, as regards numbers, all we require, but it would then, in the moment of our greatest trouble, and possibly peril, give us but raw recruits with which to defend our hearths and homes. This state of affairs has been brought about,

not by supineness or neglect on the part of the Officers responsible for the Forces, but because the true foundation of internal defence, viz., that every sound man between certain ages is available for the defence of his country, has, in the Militia of to-day, been allowed to stand in abeyance; the State fixes the numbers required, and the pay, and takes what men are pleased to come. This has resulted in the standard being lowered to 5 feet 3 inches, and a 32-inch chest for lads over twenty years of age, and for those under that age to 5 feet 2 inches, and chest at discretion of examining medical officer; and therefore to the Force being far below an average specimen of our race, as regards size; to its being always from 20 to 25 per cent. under strength, or roughly, deficient of about 30,000 men on a total of 142,000; to a large deficiency in the complement of Officers; to about 25 per cent. of those enlisted not being forthcoming at the annual training; and to the standard of shooting being dangerously low,—while portions of the kingdom furnish heavy drafts for Militia, others supplying none, or next to none, and owing to the facility with which men can withdraw their names, to the possibility of their being absent, and to the numerous difficulties attending their training, no really fair standard of efficiency can be expected from them as a body.

This all arises from the good old fundamental rule of general liability for Militia service having been gradually lost sight of. So distasteful is "conscription" to our race, to men preoccupied with their business, their pleasures, everything except thinking ahead of the necessity for providing for the defence and protection of the same, that they are glad to shun the subject, or argue, "Let us pay more and get what we require;" but I submit it should not be so; we should pay for what is deemed necessary in the Navy or Regular Army, and for the requirements of efficient Yeomen and Volunteers, but there draw the line, and rigidly enforce the principle of universal liability for service in the Militia, for purposes of internal defence.

Without going so far on the one side as an Officer who writes—"All I can say, gentlemen, is that I should be proud to command such a force on any service, and I feel sure we should not get licked;" or as another, who, when speaking of the Militia being supported by voluntary enlistment, says—"And I think it the great glory of Old England that such is, and is likely to continue to be, the British system of our day;" very admirable sentiments, if capable of proof; nor upon the other side, as a third Officer, who, writing of the Militia, describes them as "in peace a charge, in war a weak defence,"—I shall, I feel certain, be expressing the opinion of the mass of Officers, Regular or Militia, when I apply to them the terms used by the late Captain Home, R.E., when speaking of the French Reserves before the last Franco-Prussian War, that "they are a mass of trained, partly trained, and untrained soldiers," and I trust I may be excused in making the attempt to sketch out in what this state of things appears capable of improvement.

The first tendency in all cases where larger establishments or greater efficiency are demanded is to yield to the clamour for increased

expenditure, and the cry comes alike from Army, Navy, Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers that more money is required to render the Forces decently effective, although the Naval and Military Budgets already stand at an extraordinarily high figure, and those who are called on to finance for these Forces must be driven to their wits' end to avoid the calls for further expenditure, and to devise methods for economizing.

There must, however, be a limit to this, and in carefully considering the matter, with the knowledge, that to stint the Army or Navy of necessary supplies, or to check the growth of the Yeomanry or Volunteer movements for want of small reasonable grants, is short-sighted policy, our thoughts naturally turn to the Militia, the statutory Force of the country, with the feeling that if economy cannot be effected in this vote, no increase of expenditure need be required for it; but after a careful study of the Force as it has existed for the past ten years, and having fully considered the very numerous suggestions that have been put forward for its improvement, the conviction is forced on us that, palatable or unpalatable, this economy can only be maintained, and the Force at the same time raised to completeness and efficiency, if the law of the land, the Ballot, be enforced when requisite.

From what has already been advanced, I submit—

1st. That improvement is desirable in the numbers, composition, and efficiency of the military forces provided for home defence.

2nd. That for the Militia such laws should be enacted and put in force as will give the power of providing such a Force as would, along with the Yeomanry and Volunteers, be fully efficient and adequate for internal defence.

This I hope to be able to show may be done with little if any increased cost.

Before going any further, let us look back at what our ancestors did.

In the years 1803-4, or it may be said at a time when invasion of England was more seriously planned by a Foreign Power than at any period in the century, when Napoleon I was but waiting an opportunity to transport his fully organized and enthusiastic army from Boulogne to the coasts of England, confident of success if they could but land, George III, in continuation of former Militia Acts, issued one amending and annulling all others, and commencing as follows:—

"Whereas a *respectable* military force under the command of *Officers possessing landed property* within Great Britain is essential to the Constitution, and the Militia as by law established, through its *constant readiness on short notice for effectual service*, has been found of the utmost importance to the internal defence of this realm," &c.

I would here invite attention to the words underlined by me—

1st. The force was to be "*respectable*" as regards the strength maintained.

2nd. Officers to "*possess landed property.*"

3rd. "*Constant readiness on short notice for effectual service.*"

To carry out the above conditions, the Act referred to further  
VOL. XXX.

provides, that out of a total population in England and Wales of some 8,000,000, a force of 41,000 Militia should be maintained, taken by ballot from all males, with a few exceptions, between the ages of 15 and 45, fit for service, and from every locality in proportion to population, endeavours being made to regulate the demand equally on all alike; that Officers appointed to the Militia should be possessed of property or estate in the county, city, or town, valued at that time at sums varying from 400*l.* a-year for a Colonel to 20*l.* a-year for an Ensign; that a man chosen by ballot might if he so wished, and was able, produce for his substitute a man of the same county, riding, or place, or of some adjoining parish or place, whether in the same county or riding or not, able and fit for service;

And, lastly, that the force should be kept efficient and in readiness for work at short notice.

Here, then, we have the State providing a sound groundwork of efficiency.

(a.) A simple and sure method of keeping the ranks fully supplied with the required complement of suitable men locally raised, with a minimum height of 5 feet 4 inches; each county being responsible for its own quota.

(b.) A complete establishment of Officers closely connected with the county.

(c.) The power of rendering all efficient.

With opportunities as described above, should the machine when put upon its trial have been found wanting or inefficient, all blame could with justice have been thrown on the Officers whose duty consists in keeping thoroughly serviceable the charge they receive over.

Such unfortunately is not now the case. Military or Militia Officers could not be held at fault for inefficiencies originated by such a system as the present, and the nation could blame no one but themselves. Instead of a Force as described above, provided by the Act George III, the military authorities have now—

(a.) A militia bearing a proportion to the population eligible for selection of about 2 per cent., with a very reduced standard of height and size; while the full numbers, owing to the scarcity of recruits, are never procurable.

(b.) An insufficient number of Officers raised from all parts of the kingdom, while the cadets use the force as a stepping-stone, and have, therefore, not its interests sufficiently at heart.

(c.) Insufficient power over the force to make them individually efficient.

Thus when the day of trouble comes, with its accompanying recriminations, blame could in no possible way be laid at the door of the military departments responsible for the Militia or of the Militia Officers themselves.

No better instance could be found of the apathy of the nation, of its tendency to leave existing conditions alone, and its dislike to face the possibilities of the future, than the late Socialistic riots in London.



The London Police were always looked on as a most efficient force, fully competent for all work likely to be required of them, but it does not come to light until a serious catastrophe has occurred, that the system under which they have for years past been working has been all along most faulty, and much of the blame is rightly attributed to this cause.

We can afford to run these risks in connection with riots and our Police Force, for we can rectify matters and pay compensation at our leisure, but with foreign invasion and our Militia it becomes, I may say, criminal, to rest until the nation can say, "We here hand over the materials and power for a complete organization," having thus done their duty, and being fully justified after that in laying all blame for any failure on those Officers to whose care they entrust the Force.

From the above, it will be seen that I do not propose to urge a desertion from our own institutions or imitation of those of a foreign nation, but to revert to so much of the Ballot Bills of 1803 and 1804, and to enforce so much of that of 1860, as will admit of the Militia being raised and maintained on an efficient footing, and the Force organized somewhat on the following basis:—

(a.) Strength of Militia Force to be fixed by the State at a percentage on the population; the local authorities of each county being responsible for their own quota.

(b.) Every male resident in the country between the ages of 18 and 40 years to be eligible to serve; except peers of the realm, clergy, officials of the Civil Government, Officers and men of the Army and Navy, efficient Yeomanry and Volunteers, employés in Government factories, and those physically unfit.

(c.) Terms of service.—Enlistment for ten years' Militia service, with liability to be called out after that to the age of 40 in case of invasion; all others between the ages of 18 to 28 to be available for ballot to fill vacancies in their own county.

(d.) The Force to be paid under regulations now existing; to be recruited as at present by voluntary enlistment, any deficiency in the quota being made up by the local authorities by ballot from the county.

(e.) A man chosen by ballot and unwilling to serve, to be allowed to find, if possible, a suitable and eligible substitute from his own or any other county.

(f.) Officers to be selected by the State from among applicants, residents of the county, in possession of landed or other property to the amount of, for a—

	£
Lieutenant-Colonel .....	600 a-year.
Major .....	400 "
Captain .....	300 "
Lieutenant .....	200 "

Failing a sufficiency of applicants, the required number to be balloted for among those in the county in possession of the above qualifications.

(g.) Officers to qualify by service with the local battalion of the Regular Forces until fully efficient, failing which to revert and complete service in the ranks.

(h.) The length of the annual training to be, if possible, reduced, and made good by an extra fifty-two hours per annum for preliminary drills and musketry.

(i.) Standard.—That a higher standard be fixed for artillery and infantry; men under height and over 5 ft. 2 in. to be enlisted for the other branches, such as engineers, transport, commissariat, &c.

(k.) Nothing in these regulations to affect the provisions of the Ballot Act, by which all males over 5 ft. 2 in., and between certain ages, are available for service in time of invasion.

Before considering the results to the country and to the Militia of these proposals, permit me to direct your attention for a little to the prominent factor in the scheme, "the Ballot."

This word "Ballot" conveys to us a meaning with very much harsher accompaniments than in this case it really possesses, when we bear in mind that the ranks of the Militia are three parts filled at this moment by voluntary enlistment, that none of the inducements to this voluntary service would be abated, and that the ballot would only be enforced to complete the existing deficiencies in those counties which do not furnish their respective quota.

Further, when we consider the duties that a militiaman in peacetime is called upon to perform, duties by no means irksome, and which to many form a pleasant change, almost a holiday, we feel convinced that those who inquire into the probable results will find that the amount of enforced militia service which it would be necessary to exact would certainly not entail the hardship that at the first blush the word "Ballot" conveys.

Now to proceed with the different proposals:—

(a.) "Strength of the Militia Force to be fixed by the State, at a percentage on the population; the local authorities of each county being responsible for their own quota."

As has already been shown, the drain caused on the male population resident in the United Kingdom, between the ages of 18 and 40, to furnish the 142,000 men now required, amounts to only about 2 per cent. This force, if kept up to full strength and highly efficient, is ample, but I submit the principles on which it is raised lack two essential qualifications:—

Firstly.—The whole population do not bear the burden alike.

Secondly.—No sufficient provision is made for engineers, transport, commissariat, or any organization for harbour defence.

George III in his Ballot Act of 1803 drew Militia from every county, as far as we can gather, in proportion to population, and held each county responsible for its own quota; it being allowed to individuals to find a substitute from those not taken by ballot.

So it should now be; instead of recruiting the force from districts where men are most likely to be forthcoming, the old system of county organization as tending most to *esprit de corps* should be reverted to, the population of each county being drawn on to the

extent of 2 per cent., or whatever proportion may have been fixed, of males between 18 and 23 for its quota, to be raised as far as possible by voluntary enlistment as at present, and deficiencies to be completed by the ballot; arrangements for which to be carried out by the Lord Lieutenant of the county and entirely under the control of the civil authorities, who should cause lists of eligible men to be kept up.

Take as an example Devonshire; population of 286,242 males, from which the State now hopes for 1,742 Militia.

From this the number of Officers is complete, and there is a deficiency of about 500 rank and file; these the county would have to make good, being responsible for its own shortcomings. It does not at all follow that to do this the ballot need at once be enforced; the county would undoubtedly find various ways of producing the men required, and hold the ballot in hand as a last resort; while the State need not question the means, if legitimate, so long as the end be attained.

With regard to the second requirement, no Force of this description can be considered efficient that does not contain in itself a complete organization, and we should not rest satisfied with the provision of infantry and some artillery; the Force should consist of—

Infantry.	Transport	} Corps;
Artillery.	Commissariat	
Engineers.	Telegraph	

the exact proportion of each being fixed by the military authorities, who would take into consideration the probable requirements of each county, while a full and sufficient body of men for torpedo corps and harbour defence boats, taken from the seafaring population round our coasts, could without difficulty be fixed; men below the standard in height being accepted for all except artillery and infantry.

(b.) "Every male resident in the country, between the ages of 18 and 40 to be eligible to serve, except peers of the realm, clergy, officers of the Civil Government, Officers and men of the Army and Navy, efficient Yeomanry and Volunteers, employés in Government factories, and those physically unfit."

The above are practically the classes who were exempted in years gone by.

Peers of the realm: by virtue of their position; some would add Members of Parliament; I would not, they can if they wish provide a substitute.

Clergy: out of respect for their occupation.

Officers of the Civil Government: because the Government of the country must proceed.

Employés in Government factories: because munitions of war will continue to be required.

Officers and men of Army and Navy: otherwise employed by Government.

Efficient Yeomanry and Volunteers: ditto.

And those physically unfit.

I cannot think of any other class whose duty it would not be, in the hour of invasion, to be up and doing.

(c.) "Terms of service.—Enlistment for ten years' Militia service, with the liability of being called out after that up to the age of 40 in case of invasion; all others between the ages of 18 and 28 to be available for ballot to fill vacancies in their own county."

The present system of six years' Militia service, with 25 per cent. passing into the Reserve for four years, gives us roughly 110,000 men effective, including Reserve, and after deducting absentees; this Reserve being unlike most others of the name, in that it forms part of the embodied force, and is no increase of strength, being simply a portion to be called out first, if required; while a compulsorily completed Militia with a service of ten years, and further liability for another twelve, would, if the establishment were maintained at 142,000, as it now on paper is, place more than double that number at the disposal of the State, in fact close on 300,000 men, a number in excess of what will, I think, be deemed necessary, and which would, after the first fifteen years, admit of a reduction of the embodied force to 100,000, yielding when complete 200,000 for defensive purposes.

Another alternative is worthy of consideration, viz., a recruits' training of 93 days and a shorter Militia service, say 4, 5, or 6 years, thus passing men quicker through the ranks and admitting of a reduction of the strength; but this could only be attempted after it was clearly proved that the required efficiency could be attained equally well with a shorter service.

As this scheme developed, and, as it undoubtedly would do, filled the ranks of the Yeomanry and Volunteers to overflowing, the possibility of gradually reducing the Militia could be taken advantage of.

Here again George III., at the beginning of the century, gives us a good line. From a population of 8,000,000, exemption from liability to ballot so filled the ranks of the Volunteers, that 300,000 were enrolled, and it was only necessary to keep up 41,000 Militia, a very different ratio to what now exists, viz., 250,000 Volunteers to 142,000 Militia, out of a very much larger population (17,000,000).

(d.) "The Force to be paid under regulations now existing; to be recruited as at present by voluntary enlistment, any deficiency in the quota being made up by the local authorities by ballot from the county."

The Militia are at present paid practically the same as the Regular Army, and with the Ballot in force it would undoubtedly be possible to effect a reduction of pay, and a saving on the vote. This, however, would rob the Force of much of its popularity, and render voluntary enlistment (which we have every right to expect should continue, as at present, the rule) the exception. If at the same time economy becomes imperative, reductions must take place in the pay of the Officers (exclusive of the Commanding Officer) and the rank and file, not among the permanent staff or non-commissioned officers.

Good Commanding Officers make good Officers and good battalions; without these it is hopeless to expect any efficiency, and no pains

should be spared to secure them. Raise the standard of indiscriminate selection to any necessary pitch, and offer what emoluments may be deemed advisable, but secure the best men possible for these posts, and much of the difficulty will be solved.

From Officers and non-commissioned officers of the permanent staff, as will be shown later on, much must be expected, and every effort and inducement should be exerted and held out to obtain thoroughly efficient men. No reduction in their pay would be good economy, and, as I said before, if compelled to offer them more, do so at the expense of the remainder of the Officers and of the rank and file. I think, however, it will be found that very considerable reductions can be effected, as I am proposing, without lowering rates of pay, which should only be resorted to for very urgent reasons, as tending, as a matter of course, to lessen the popularity of the Service.

(e.) "A man chosen by ballot and unwilling to serve, to be allowed to find, if possible, a suitable and eligible substitute."

This is a point with which the State need not concern itself; the man must appear or find a suitable substitute. We know well enough that Militia service, with its annual outing, change of scene and life, with its gaieties and fun, renders the duty sufficiently congenial to many, and that we need not fear that if men be driven to find substitutes, either as Officers or as privates, ruinously high sums will have to be given, or should they have to serve themselves, any great injury will have been inflicted on the individuals.

(f.) "Officers to be selected by the State from among applicants, being residents of the county, in possession of landed or other property to the amount of, for a

	£
Lieutenant-Colonel .....	600 a-year.
Major .....	400 "
Captain .....	300 "
Lieutenant .....	200 "

Failing a sufficiency, the required number to be balloted for among those in the county possessing the above qualifications."

Next in importance to completing a military force with good recruits, stands officering it.

Sir Donald Stewart's remark that young soldiers can do anything if properly handled, contains the whole pith of the argument. Officers are nine-tenths of the battle; without efficiency among them there can be no real efficiency in the ranks.

Although the Army List shows a large number of Officers posted to the Militia, I think I am safe in saying the whole Force is close on 1,000 short of its full strength, chiefly in the junior ranks, while a large proportion of the subalterns at present use the Force as a stepping-stone to the Regular Army, and are therefore of but little permanent use to the Militia; further, although it is known how many really efficient Officers there are in the Force, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that there are numbers who look upon their duties in it as pastime and amusement, and scarcely the serious responsibility which

it in reality is, while there are Commanding Officers who not only are far from being at home in command of a single battalion in the field, but would themselves be more distressed than anyone else if asked to handle a brigade on parade or at manœuvres.

The importance of this question to the Force cannot be over-estimated; its whole value as a fighting machine, or as an expensive toy, hinges on it, and the Officers themselves are always the first who appreciate endeavours to practically improve their efficiency. To the value of drawing for Officers on the gentlemen of the county I attach the greatest importance, and further also the power, in the case of their not fully qualifying, of relegating them for their further service to the ranks of the Militia.

At present the book portion of examinations for Lieutenant, Captain, and Major is severe enough, were only the Officers as conversant with field duties. I do not for an instant mean to insinuate that there are not many who are so, but if there be a doubtful one, the power of replacing him by a certainty should be there. Half-trained soldiers are more difficult to lead than those fully trained, and much is therefore required from Militia Officers.

This proposition to expect the private gentleman, who in many cases has nothing to do but amuse himself, to apply some of his leisure-time seriously to Militia duties, will not be a popular one, but it is nevertheless one of the most essential points. Without local connection and a high standard of efficiency, Officers in a local Militia are valueless, and no sentimental ideas should for a moment be entertained to prevent the highest and best results being demanded from them.

The idea of the irksomeness of the duty is far greater than the reality, and once fully qualified, very little trouble is necessary to remain so, while to a young man who knows his work, interest is sure to arise in it, and pleasure and pride be derived from it.

(g.) "Officers to qualify by service with the local battalion of the Regular Forces until fully efficient, failing which to revert and complete service in the ranks."

The above runs with the preceding paragraph, and should be rigidly enforced; ample opportunities exist for Officers to thus fully qualify themselves, and no relaxation of the rule should be permitted; when we bear in mind that one inefficient Officer is a positive source of danger.

(h.) "The length of the annual training to be, if possible, reduced, and made good by an extra fifty-two hours per annum for preliminary drills and musketry."

The militiaman of to-day undergoes when a recruit a preliminary drill of fifty-six days in his first year, and an annual training of twenty-eight days. In his recruit drill the rough edge is taken off him, and he goes through a short course of musketry, while during the annual drills his time is fully occupied with setting up, squad, company, and battalion drills; three to four days are allowed for musketry, and one to brigade drills; the result of all this is, that, speaking generally of the Force, manœuvres in brigade are to them unknown,

and musketry stands at the lowest point. Officers and men who do not practise movements more than one day in a year, and that at most with only two or three battalions; who have never in their lives, perhaps, taken part in the manœuvres of large bodies of troops, cannot possibly be expected to know anything about it, and would have to learn their lesson as best they could, if time were allowed them, after war broke out; while as regards shooting, nothing could be done but accept matters as they stood.

An Inspecting Officer says of the Militia, "making every allowance, the shooting is very, very far from what it should be, and every effort must be made to reach a higher standard," while an Officer of the Force remarks, "they are to a great extent untrained in shooting." This is scarcely to be wondered at, when we know how little time can be spared for musketry; that the permanent staff have, in that short period, to deal with 600 or 800 men, to whom it is impossible they can do justice in the time, resulting in many corps putting only a half battalion through each training; that out of 148 battalions, only about 100 train annually; that only about 70 per cent. of those embodied can be got for musketry; and that barely 50,000 of the whole Force annually go to the targets, the natural result of which is, the figure of merit of shooting is very low.

Now, considering that the beginning and end of soldiers is, that they shall march and shoot, that they shall be capable of being moved in masses from point to point, and, when required, handle their rifles skilfully and accurately, reflection as to how far our Militia of to-day, in its training, prepares itself for or comes up to these requirements, must cause serious misgivings. To effect improvement in the manœuvring power of the force would be a simple matter, calling for a little increased attention to that branch of training, but good shooting cannot be taught in a hurry; it must be the result of patient care, training, and practice, without attention to which all soldiers are valueless. Officers labour at and elaborate schemes for the defence of the country, but what, I would ask you, is the use of schemes of land defence of any sort, if the men we purpose using in these defences can't shoot? Until we ensure good shooting, schemes of defence, be they ever so able, are only worth the paper they are written on. General Brackenbury accurately described what we require, when he said:

"If we could only train infantry soldiers to shoot until each man had such confidence in himself and his weapon that he felt himself equal to any odds, you might do what you pleased with them;" and towards this end we must always strive.

To arrive at this in the Militia, a change in the system of training will be necessary; shooting and manœuvring must be the crucial test of efficiency, not smart appearance, marching past, and battalion drill.

Considering the number of men to be dealt with in each corps and the size of the permanent staff, it will be necessary to have the power of carrying on instruction for some additional time other than the annual training, when all are fully occupied, with a view to working the men up in preliminary drills before they are embodied, and

thoroughly preparing them in musketry : to this end I have proposed that one hour per week, or a total of fifty-two in the year, be devoted to this purpose.

This amount of time is little enough to expect from a man for such an object, and it could most profitably be spent under the superintendence of the permanent staff, on the drill ground or ranges, in the long summer evenings or on half holidays, and in shooting galleries during the winter nights.

We hear reports of Militia battalions being unable to practise for want of ranges which one can scarcely believe to be true ; the State might as well disband corps, whom it is not prepared to instruct in musketry, and should allow no expenditure to take precedence of ranges and shooting galleries for its troops of all classes. That the shooting of Militia Artillery is below the mark cannot be wondered at, if their want of opportunity be realized or known, and this can best be described in the words of an Officer of that branch when speaking of his own battery, viz., " They have never seen, fired from, or drilled with a rifled gun of any kind, or ever seen a rifled gun cartridge, and they only use their carbines for manual and platoon drill." To carry out this intermediate instruction, which should for the convenience of the Force be spread throughout the year, the permanent staff of the Militia would require to be placed more fully at the disposal of the Commanding Officers of Militia battalions than they at present are.

It is of course necessary that the Militia should bear its share, but not an undue proportion, of the duties arising from the brigade depôt, the benefits of which it enjoys with its affiliated battalions of the Line, but no duty should be allowed to prevent their permanent staff from giving full and undivided attention to these intermediate drills.

If these 52 hours be effectively carried out, in no way interfering with the present preliminary drill of the recruit, which is in all cases necessary, the militiaman will present himself before his Commanding Officer a decently drilled man, sufficiently instructed in target shooting, and it will only remain needful to drill him in battalion and brigade, and exercise him in manœuvres with field-firing, and should men be found still inefficient, power should be given to Commanding Officers to render them efficient by keeping them for a further fortnight or month after the completion of the annual training for musketry instruction, until they reach the required standard.

Under such conditions we are, I consider, justified in considering whether the period of annual training could not be reduced, and I submit this could be done to the extent of 14 days, without in any way diminishing the efficiency of the Force, at a saving of expense to the State, and at the same time withdrawing men from their occupations 14 instead of 28 days. With men prepared as I have proposed, by their 52 hours in musketry and elementary drill, the fortnight of annual training would amply suffice for—



- 1st Week.—Muster,  
Issue of Clothing, &c.,  
Battalion and Brigade Drills,
- 2nd Week.—Manœuvres or Camp of Exercise,  
Field Firing;

which, with a sufficient permanent staff and thoroughly efficient Officers who must beforehand have learnt their work when attached to the Regular Army, would I feel confident yield very much higher results than are in any degree possible under the present system. \*

Some will doubtless urge the difficulties that may arise in carrying out the fifty-two hours' preliminary drill; I can see no more difficulties than at present oppose the Volunteers; they find it possible to devote stray hours throughout the week to drill, and there is no doubt that there are numerous idle moments which could be profitably so employed; these the permanent staff must watch and utilize to the best purpose, while it would seem advantageous and economical that these setting up and musketry drills should be given along with those of the Volunteers whose sergeant-instructors might materially assist the permanent staff of the Militia, and *vice versa*.

Others will argue, that as much is lost by dispensing with 14 days of the annual training as by adding 52 hours of preliminary drill; this would, however, not be the case. Granting that every recruit receives his 56 days' recruit drill, 52 hours per annum will be ample for an intelligent, willing man, who picks up some small idea of musketry, to qualify, while those less skilled with the rifle could devote more preliminary hours to practice, well knowing that any shortcomings on their part would render them, in common with all who are found inefficient from carelessness or other causes, liable to a fortnight, a month, or such additional drill after the completion of the annual training as the Commanding Officer might deem to be requisite.

To this power in hands of Commanding Officers, to detain Officers and men till qualified, the highest importance may, I feel sure, be attached. Voluntary effort, as a question of self-interest, in addition to zeal, will with the majority be encouraged to the fullest extent, while at the completion of the training the whole attention of the Staff could be devoted to those who have been found backward.<sup>1</sup>

While on this subject it appears clear that the two points in the training of the Militia soldier, which should never be lost sight of, irrespective of the branch of the corps to which he may belong, are—

(a.) That he shall be led to take an interest in shooting and be thoroughly instructed in the same.

(b.) That he shall spend one week of the annual training in a camp

<sup>1</sup> Since writing the above, a Militia Commanding Officer has kindly given me the opportunity of inquiring from his men, in his presence, as to how the proposed change would affect them. With one exception all preferred the 14 days, being confident that they could find the time to do the 52 hours in their leisure moments, and also that they could thus reach a higher average in musketry.—A. D. A.

of exercise, if it be only a small one, and that opportunities as convenient be taken of moving and forming bodies of Militia on different points with defensive objects; all duties being performed by the force with its own men and material and without aid from the Regular Army, and further, that when sufficiently far advanced, Yeomanry and Volunteers be brigaded with and formed on them.

(i.) "Standard.—That a higher standard be fixed for infantry and artillery; men under height and over 5 feet 2 inches to be enlisted in the other branches."

Although the localization of the Army and the connection of Regulars, Militia, and Volunteers was perhaps one of the soundest and most beneficial measures ever introduced, the continuation of which, the still closer binding together of the three forces, should never be lost sight of, as tending to materially improve all; one point that should not be encouraged is, that by means of this connection, small, under-sized men may make use of the low standard of the Militia (5 feet 3 inches with a 32-inch chest and less for boys) to obtain an entrance into the Regular Army, thus lowering its standard of size.

George III accepted no one under 5 feet 4 inches in his Ballot Act; we have not only fallen below that for our voluntary Militia, but down to 5 feet 2 inches in our Ballot Bill of 1860.

Note what the Inspector-General of Recruiting says: "If it is agreed that a man between 5 feet 3 inches and 5 feet 4 inches when properly developed, and with a good chest, can make a good infantry soldier, then the criticism as to shortness *quâ* shortness falls to the ground."

But this is not by any means agreed to; the military authorities are, against their will and wishes, driven to low standards to keep the ranks in any way up to the establishments.

What does raising or lowering the standards denote? Not a change of opinion as to the class of men, but a plenty or a scarcity of recruits; we find the ranks of the Foot Guards filled over establishments, the standard is raised from 5 feet 7 inches to 5 feet 8 inches; recruits are scarce for other portions of the Army, the standard is lowered in one way or another. On no point is there a greater consensus of opinion among Officers of the Army and Militia than that, though the recruit of to-day and of the last few years has steadily and decidedly improved in education, intelligence, and orderly behaviour, as compared with his predecessors, the physique, height, and chest measurement have fallen off and are below what is required.

This opinion is also found fully borne out in the reports of Officers commanding regimental districts where recruiting is carried on. There is no necessity to discuss this fact or its causes; there it stands firmly rooted in the minds of nine out of every ten Officers of every branch of the Army, and the nation should not and cannot afford to ignore it.

The short service system, with its necessary reserves, forms a younger army than did long service, while youth combined with reduction in physique entails a loss of power which becomes a serious

consideration, and can only be met by raising the standard of both Regulars and Militia.

This should be done to the extent of an inch, and no man be taken under 5 feet 5 inches into the Army, or 5 feet 4 inches into the Militia, for infantry or artillery, with proportionate chest measurement.

In the case of the Army, it is yearly becoming better known and more popular; but even should raising the standard mean extra expenditure, it is an outlay that should not be shirked, while in the Militia it would only necessitate a greater number being completed by ballot, and would ensure a larger stamp of man and one more suited, in the opinion of all, for the work required of him.

A certain proportion of the smaller men from 5 feet 2 inches to 5 feet 4 inches, and in the Army 5 feet 5 inches, but with good chest measurements, could with advantage be utilized in all the branches of the Army and Militia except those already mentioned.

(k.) "Nothing in these proposals to affect the provisions of the Ballot Act, by which all males over 5 feet 2 inches between certain ages are available for service in time of invasion."

Whatever regulations the State may adopt for the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, the power of calling on every efficient male for service in case of invasion would as a matter of course be necessary, and all the machinery for exercising the ballot for this should be kept in readiness.

Having now sketched out, as fully as space will permit, proposals which, in conjunction with the introduction of the ballot to fill vacancies in the Militia, would, I submit, materially strengthen and improve the Force, let us turn to the probable effect of the same on the Regular Army, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers.

History continues to repeat itself, in recording the valuable assistance afforded to the nation and the Regular Army by the Militia in the Peninsular and Crimean wars; whole battalions volunteered for active service, while regiments were transferred twice over to recruit the troops in the field, and first-class work many of them did; but that was in the times when wars started slowly and progressed equally slowly; the Militia of the day had then plenty of leisure to organize and perfect itself.

Now, when everything moves faster, when large armies are kept ready for immediate action, and wars are commenced, carried through, and ended with the greatest possible rapidity, it is madness for us to leave any essential precaution to the chance of being allowed time to attend to it when war is declared; and what is deemed requisite for the Militia should before everything else receive attention and preparation, to ensure that if required for service in or out of the kingdom, we may safely rely on them.

Since the introduction of the localization scheme, the ties between the local battalions of the Regular Army, and the Militia have gradually tightened, as may be seen by the steady increase of recruiting from the latter to the former, amounting in 1884 to 13,259 men from the Militia out of 35,653 recruits raised for the Army. Thus,

not only is it of importance to the Army that these men be of the best possible stamp, and well drilled, but it is of far greater moment that the Reserves (as Militia battalions undoubtedly are) which they leave behind them when they go on service, and to whom they naturally look for their best recruits, are thoroughly efficient and on a sound footing. Still further, the knowledge that we possessed a highly efficient Militia would immensely strengthen the hands of the military authorities when denuding the country of the Regular Army to support our forces in the field, in that the legitimate defenders of the nation were at hand and equal to their own task.

That the Yeomanry would find it easier to complete their numbers, were freedom from Militia service granted to them, most of their own Officers will readily allow, and though we have no former experience on this point to work upon, I feel certain it would be found to be so. Should it, however, turn out otherwise, theirs is only a question of horses; given a sufficiency of these to hand, the Yeomen will be forthcoming, and it would, after trial of exemption from Militia Ballot had been found ineffective, become necessary to consider whether it might not be better to reduce the present number, 14,405, of whom some 4,000 are now deficient, and slightly increase the capitation grant.

The benefits that would accrue to the Volunteer Force by exemption from liability to ballot for the Militia being granted to efficient Volunteers are admitted by all, and can scarcely be calculated.

Friends of the Force, in their enthusiasm, claim for them great things, such as "being our first line of defence in case of invasion," &c., &c., while they make many suggestions, chiefly in the shape of appeals to patriotism, by way of remedy for existing inefficiencies, but there it may be said the matter rests. The Force is, I understand, at this moment some 1,500 Officers and 50,000 men short of what is considered full strength, while none will deny that with opportunities, many of the inefficiencies complained of could be removed. The world produces no finer force in physique or intelligence than our Volunteers; and as a nation we have every reason to be proud of them, but their organization precludes our getting at them with a view to increasing efficiency in any other way than, as it were, indirectly.

The exemption of efficient Volunteers from Militia service would, however, effect what nothing else will, without in any way touching the constitution of the Force as purely voluntary. As only a thoroughly efficient Volunteer would be exempted from the Militia ballot, the Officers would be able to insist on greater regularity and attention to drill than they can now do, and also to introduce and enforce a sufficient code of discipline; and thus the whole condition of the Volunteer Force would be most materially improved. It is probable that the indirect pressure of the ballot would be so great, that applicants for service as Volunteers would exceed the requirements.

George III, in 1803, similarly exempted Volunteers, with the result that 300,000 out of the then much smaller population were enrolled. We do not require that number at present, but the State could by

this means raise the standard of efficiency of both Officers and men in shooting and general duties to any reasonable pitch. A claim for an increase in the capitation grant has just been staved off; but it is necessary; the State will have to give in, and the pockets of the Force will thereby be relieved. I would suggest that, in making the grant, a part of it be applied to providing drill halls and musketry ranges, which would do for the training of the Militia as well as the Volunteers. The Volunteers are not, and cannot ever become, our "first line of defence," but they are a most valuable and necessary adjunct to it, their efficiency ranking only second in importance for internal defence to that of the Militia; and in the manner I have pointed out this may be very materially improved without any additional expense.

Let us now enumerate the advantages that may with justice be claimed for these proposals:—

1. A thoroughly efficient Militia for our first line of internal defence, upon which economy can be effected by—

(a.) Reduction by degrees of the force from 142,000 to 100,000, or even lower, if the Volunteer force were increased.

(b.) Shortening of the annual training.

(c.) Saving of all expenditure on the present Militia Reserve in the shape of bounty, &c.

2. A strong and efficient reserve for the Regular Army.

3. The completion of the Yeomanry and Volunteer Forces to full established proportions, at the same time materially raising the standard of efficiency.

The one drawback that can be urged to this scheme is the unpopularity of the ballot.

Officers and civilians of all classes who interest themselves in these subjects bring to notice, lament over, and suggest, partial, and, as a rule, ineffectual remedies for the numerous shortcomings of the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, all alike admitting that the only panacea for all and everything is resort to the ballot; while, if my information be correct, I understand that Lord Cardwell went so far as to include provisions for the ballot, which he afterwards struck out, in his Militia Bill of 1871; but all shrink from introducing it; not because it will cost money, not because it will in any possible way fall short in effecting the desired results, but because it may or will be unpopular, because they consider the nation is not prepared for it. Under these circumstances we are justified in asking, "When will the nation be prepared for the ballot?" The answer is simple enough; not until invasion is at the door, until foreign troops are embarking for a descent upon our coasts; a line of action the madness of which should be unceasingly brought to prominent notice by every individual in any way concerned with the safety of the country.

It cannot be too clearly understood that the nation is placing its reliance on forces which are not, and never can be (owing to their organization), in a forward condition of preparedness.

Since the beginning of the century gigantic strides in readiness for war have been achieved by the armies of the larger European States

and by our own, but while foreign Powers carry these reforms throughout their whole forces, we stop short of our Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers. These with us, it may be said, stand, with the exception of a change in weapon, where they stood at the commencement of the century, the Militia, owing to relaxation of the ballot rules, may even be considered to have gone back in its completeness and efficiency for immediate service, and nothing that Military or Militia Officers can do will be of any avail to raise their condition much above what it now is and has for years past been, unless the organization be altered.

This ballot, too, which it is proposed to introduce, will, as I said before, on inquiry, be found to be far less irksome than is imagined.

The Militia force is at present kept up to three-quarters of its establishment in Officers and men by the present inducements, none of which would be abated or reduced, voluntary enlistment continuing as before, while more work in the non-training season and a shorter annual training would be expected from the rank and file; recourse only being had to the ballot in the case of deficiencies, and that, in the county, to complete its own quota.

Voluntary enlistment and a partial ballot would be able to, and would, I feel confident, work successfully and harmoniously side by side; the community would suffer in an infinitesimal degree, if at all, and the nation would be a material gainer.

Colonel the Earl of Wemyss, A.D.C.: I think we are greatly indebted to Major Anderson for having brought this vital subject before the Royal United Service Institution. I regret that it has been done in Ascot week, because the attractions of the racecourse I have no doubt have thinned these benches, and I think it is worth the consideration of those who have charge of this Institution as to whether another year it would not be better not to have so important a paper as this read in the middle of Ascot week. I do not think that one can very well exaggerate the importance of this question. Major Anderson in his paper has touched upon many points which I shall avoid, questions of detail as to height, chest-measurement, shooting, and various other things which are wholly independent of the question of the ballot. With reference to that question, which is the important consideration before us, there is much with which I agree in what Major Anderson has said. For instance, the state of our military organization, whether you look to the supply of men in the Army or the Militia, or to the comparative inefficiency of the Volunteers, is thoroughly unsatisfactory. When Lord Cardwell introduced his Reform Bill in 1871, I recollect making a very strong speech against it in the House of Commons, and I venture to say this new system, which was to remove from us for ever anything of the fear of invasion, was simply being founded upon quaking bog and shifting quicksand in the absence of the ballot. And so it has proved. We were promised a reserve of 60,000 men by the year 1890, but we have nothing of the kind. I do not believe you have more than 40,000 men in the Army reserve at the present time. As Major Anderson has pointed out, the Militia is our backbone, but as I have often expressed it, it is in an invertebrate condition, being always 30,000 short, while the boys you see running about in red coats are not those to whom anybody would like to entrust the defence of our hearths and homes. General Peel when he established the Militia reserve intended, not that they should be taken out of the Militia, but that for every man who volunteered from the Militia to the Militia reserve the Officer in command should be empowered to raise another. So much for the importance of the ballot as regards those effects. I believe the ballot is really the only remedy for the present military organization, and till you have that as the

foundation of your military system, it is a matter founded upon sand and will never be satisfactory. Major Anderson has spoken of the way in which he would apply the ballot, and there I venture to differ with him. I thoroughly agree as to its necessity, but I think it might be applied, and I know that is the view taken by General Erskine, in a very much less onerous way than is proposed by Major Anderson. When Lord Cardwell put the ballot in the Bill to which I referred, which he subsequently struck out because of the difficulty in passing the abolition of purchase for the Officers, those who fought it in the House of Commons did not do so on account of the Officers, but simply because we believed it was the wrong end of the stick, and because it was the ballot that they ought to have laid stress on and not the abolition of purchase. We know that purchase Officers could have been trained up to any degree of efficiency, and therefore it was really throwing dust in the eyes of the British public to try and make them believe that the abolition of purchase could increase the efficiency of the Army, the really important thing was the ballot, but it was not to enforce the ballot. The object of Lord Cardwell's Bill was to simplify the machinery of the ballot, the ballot had not been in force for years; it was to simplify the machinery, that was all, and even with the simplified machinery it was calculated that it would take at least three or four months before you could get a single man. That was the reason why we opposed Lord Cardwell's Army Bill. Now can the ballot be applied less harshly than is proposed by Major Anderson? I venture to think it can. I object to the ages which he proposes, I object to the time of service, I object to substitutes, I object to qualifications, and there is one exemption which I object to very strongly, that is the exemption of "peers of the realm." I think they would be glad to take their share, and as one, I repudiate the exemption as far as I myself am concerned, though I am sorry to say I am past even the ballot age as fixed by Major Anderson. Major Anderson proposes that every boy from eighteen up to forty should be liable to be struck for the Militia. I have often spoken on this Militia question; I brought it two or three times before the House of Commons, and before the House of Lords I have spoken of it many times. In doing so all I have ever asked for the ballot has been this, that at the age of twenty every Englishman should be liable to serve his country in some shape or other. My exemptions would be exemptions of service and service only, except professional men such as clergymen and Government Officers who are also serving in another form, that unless a man when he attains the age of twenty can show that he is serving already in the Army, Volunteers or Yeomanry, and that he has engaged to serve 3, 4 or 5 years with those forces, he shall then be liable to be struck once in his life for the ballot for the Militia. That is all; there should be no substitutes, the only substitution would be another kind of service. I think there is a strong feeling that money exemption would not be desirable, and that if you have men who are liable to serve that they should serve in person in some form or other. General Erskine had a very good suggestion when he was at the War Office, a very simple way of applying the ballot. I believe at present under the Militia Law, beside the force annually voted of 140,000 men, there is power also to raise 60,000 more, and General Erskine's proposal was that these 60,000 men should be raised by ballot gradually, in five or six years, 10,000 a year, but that they should be simply there and not called out, that you would have them in hand. In that way the people would get gradually accustomed to it, and it would be no hardship upon anybody; they should be liable during the term of their five years to be called out for training if necessary. In that way you would have 60,000 men ready to put your hands on without having to wait months and months to get them and then begin to train. That seems to me to be a very practical and simple way of dealing with this question. As regards the effect of the ballot upon the Volunteer service there is no question about it; you could then do anything you liked with the Volunteers, if they did not fulfil the full conditions required of them, if they were not engaged to serve three or five years. Any man who failed, even though he had passed the age of twenty, to fulfil all the conditions of efficiency in any one year ought to be balloted for the next year, and with such a screw as that on both the Yeomanry and Volunteers there is nothing in the world you could not make of that force, which comprises upon the whole a superior class of men to those found in the Militia. I have nothing further to trouble you with except to say this,

that I hold the first duty of citizenship to be to defend your country. That is your birthright, and with all the blessings of our island home the first duty of an Englishman is to defend his country. We hear a great deal about the German and another Continental military systems; I think the old English military system of last century is absolutely and entirely sound if properly applied. You may talk about "conscription." The ballot is not universal conscription. You could not go for universal conscription, to take men from their homes in this country and send them out to India and Timbuctoo. Englishmen are very fortunate as compared with other nations that so little is required of them in the way of compulsory service, but that they should be compelled to serve in some form or other is only right. Do not forget this, the ballot really is a great privilege and a boon, for instead of every man, which is the theory of the English military system, being bound to serve when called upon, it gives the population a chance of escape and the lot only falls upon a few. Therefore the ballot instead of being a hardship is really a boon, and I maintain as applied in the more moderate way that I venture to suggest instead of the more stringent way proposed by Major Anderson it would not be unpopular. No man who has had anything to do with public life, who knows anything of Army or Navy matters, can fail to know this, no man who has ever held the position of a Commander-in-chief will not tell you in private that the foundation of the Army and our Militia rests on the ballot. No Secretary of State would refuse to tell you the same thing only they are afraid of Parliament. A Conservative Secretary of State who brings in the ballot is afraid lest there should be the cry of "coercion" in another form, and that the other side will go to the country denouncing this horrible military coercion. It would be just the same on the other side, if the Liberals were to do it I am afraid the others would, and I know with regard to Lord Cardwell, this is an historical fact: that when he was considering what the great military reform of 1871 was to be that was to make this nation for ever safe and free from panic, that although we put in the Bill only the machinery of the ballot, the idea was also to strengthen our new military system by establishing the ballot. I was going to give a notice in the House of Commons upon the subject, and Lord Sandhurst, then commanding in Ireland, had been called over from Ireland to consult with Lord Cardwell upon the whole military question, and he said to me, "Don't be in a hurry about this, for my hope and belief is that they are really going to establish the ballot." I only wish they had: that is all I have to say.

Major McDONNELL (late 10th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers): After the able speech from Lord Wemyss, I need not make any remarks on the general questions raised by Major Anderson, but there are one or two points of detail on which I should like to say a few words. In the first place, as to the provision which Major Anderson has made, not without much precedent, for substitutes. I hope this system will never be again recognized in this country. The privilege of getting a man to serve for you by a money payment appears to me to be thoroughly bad, and to have been shown to be bad in other armies. The French Army would have been better in 1870 if the system of substitution by money payment had not existed, and certainly the opposite system has helped the Germans in bringing their Army to its present marvellous state of efficiency. By the fact that substituted service is absolutely and sternly forbidden they do sweep all classes into the military net; the whole nation is fairly represented in the armed forces, and that enables them to make their military machine more perfect than they otherwise would have been able to do. The value of this prohibition of substitutes is practically recognized by all the great military nations of the Continent. No substitution is allowed now in France, Germany, or Austria, I do not know about Spain or Russia, but I believe not in Russia. I quite admit that there must be some safety valve, that is, some consideration for the value of the time of the more highly educated young men. The Germans as we know have the safety valve of the one-year volunteer system, which is very ingenious and works extremely well. If the ballot were revived in England and substitution absolutely forbidden in England, the effect would be this, that our safety valve would be that the young men who in Germany enter the Army as one-year volunteers, would in our country qualify themselves either as Officers for the different



branches of the auxiliary forces, in which case we might get great efficiency out of them, or they would at the worst go into the ranks of the Volunteers, and by that means you might very greatly raise the standard of efficiency of the force. But if you do allow a man who is drawn for the Militia to buy a substitute, every man who by hook or by crook can scrape sufficient money together will pay a substitute. This is particularly found to be the case in Belgium, where substitutes are still permitted. I heard of a case there the other day in which a friend of mine, a professional man, a doctor, had paid a very considerable sum of money, I think 200*l.*, for his son, a student for the bar, rather than permit him to go through service in the ranks. If it were allowed here you would find the very same thing would occur, the middle classes at any rate would stand aloof—as many of them I am sorry to say do at present stand aloof—even from the ranks of the Volunteers. But if you did not allow that money payment of 50*l.* or 100*l.*, then you could make really efficient fencibles or militiamen or whatever you pleased of them; and you could raise the standard of the education of your Officers in a way that you never will be able to do till you have some form of compulsion. I hope if the country has the courage to adopt compulsory service, it will also have the courage to say that neither peers of the realm nor any other persons shall be competent by money payment to escape the balloting and actual personal service. To go to another point. In the first part of the lecture Major Anderson drew a comparison between the condition of France at the latter part of the war of 1870–76, and England after an invader had gained a foothold here. He said: “We need, for an illustration of the fate of such unpreparedness, go no farther than the campaign of 1870–71, where we saw the fairest provinces of France devastated by war, nobles and peasants alike sacrificing their lives as simple volunteers in the ranks, in a fruitless endeavour to retrieve what want of organization and preparation on the part of the State had entailed on their beloved country. Such would be the case with England if invaded by hostile foes; thousands of all classes would gladly and proudly volunteer their services; but they would be but a courageous armed mob, with whom it would be practically impossible to achieve anything, owing to want of previous training, and they would be annihilated by regular troops, as were the Garde Mobile of France by the organized forces of the German Empire; while money would be made to flow like water, to, if possible, remedy what would then probably be irremediable.” I do not think these are quite parallel cases, because the French had only untrained levies at that time, and their territorial organization for those levies was interrupted by the outbreak of the war. But our untrained levies would at any rate have the Volunteer organization to receive them as it were, and mould them into shape, every man would have some *cadre* to fall into. I believe, therefore, that our last line of defence would be a better fighting machine, though not a more gallant one, than the French levies of 1870.

Lieut.-Colonel GARNHAM (late 3rd Battalion West Riding Regiment): As a witness before the Committee of 1876, I wish to say a few words. I remember being asked the question as to what I thought of this question of balloting for the militia, and my answer was I thought it was one which concerned the statesman more than the soldier, because the soldier could only have one opinion on the subject, which was that it was the most important thing for the military organization of the country. I therefore am pleased to find that this subject has been so ably brought forward by Major Anderson, who is not a Militia Officer, but an Officer serving in the active army. I am delighted as an ex-Militia Officer to find that such interest exists in a lively way amongst Officers who are serving. There can be no doubt of the importance of the ballot to the Militia, and through the Militia, as Lord Wemyss has said, to the Volunteers. With respect to the Militia, it would be invaluable because it would in the first instance remove any difficulties on the part of employers of labour. I have had men come to me in my regiment who gave up 30*s.* a week for the pleasure of serving for their month in the Militia. They had to go back again to a very much lower rate of wages, their places were not kept open for them, and they did it for the pleasure of serving. See how it would help those men if the master himself knew that it was a good thing for him to have a certain number of his hands in the Militia. I happen to have served in a Yorkshire regiment where we depended a great deal upon mill

hands—see how it would assist in protecting the master of a mill from the chance of being drawn for the Militia, if a number of his men voluntarily served in it. And I think one of the best parts of the scheme propounded by Major Anderson is that the present voluntary system should go on. I quite agree with Lord Wemyss in thinking that the ballot might be so worked as to be in no way oppressive to the working population of this country, but there is this difficulty in all questions relating to the Militia, namely, the very different circumstances under which Militia regiments are raised and serve. I remember General Herbert in a letter which he wrote to me upon Militia matters saying that, and of course in some districts it would be very much more difficult than in others, and the ballot would press upon a different class of men. In the manufacturing districts it is a question of trade whether you get the men; if trade is brisk you have to go into the market to tempt them. In the agricultural districts it might press more severely upon persons in better positions of life, but I am convinced myself it only requires to have a statesman who is bold enough to bring the ballot forward and the thing would be done. In the meantime it is most useful that it should be brought forward here, and I quite agree with what Lord Wemyss has said. The only comment I can in any way make on the subject of the lecture is, that I think the details may to a certain extent obscure what is the really important question to keep before the public, that is, the great question of the necessity for the ballot in the Militia. We cannot settle those details now. If we were discussing those details I could make many remarks, but I quite agree that it is only necessary to look at the principle, which is, that the Militia requires help. What the need for that help is only those Militia Officers who have served in every rank, as I have done, can know, they alone can know what it is to come into this Institution as I have come time after time to hear excellent suggestions made by Officers of experience, and to know that when they walked out of the doors, they were obliged to shut off any hope of those suggestions being carried out owing to the question of money. I remember an ex-Financial Secretary of the War Office, Colonel Loyd-Lindsay, presiding here; a good many Officers had made some very valuable suggestions, I had made one very humble one, and he said, "The only suggestion that there is any chance of being carried out is the one made by Colonel Garnham," not because it was the best, but simply because it happened to be the one which did not require any money. Now this is one which does not require money. It is certain that a system of conscription in an industrial country like England would be fatal. Much as the soldier must admire the system in Germany, there is no doubt it is sapping the very vitals of that country, the way in which every man has to devote a considerable portion of his time and service to his country is and must be detrimental, that is a known fact, independent of our Colonial service, which would make conscription an impossibility. But I fail to see a difficulty in really raising the few thousands more that we want to complete our Militia. It is not only raising the numbers, it is strengthening the hands of the authorities, and what we want to do with respect to the Militia is to raise its tone, to make it as military as possible, and to get rid as far as possible of that cursed question—excuse the strong word because it really is a real curse to the Militia—the question of money. You want a range, you cannot get it because it costs money; you want men, you cannot get them because wages are higher. We have money before us as a difficulty in everything. The ballot would level a great many of these difficulties. I do not agree with the lecturer in thinking that the expense of the Militia would be reduced, because I do not think less training or less anything in the way of cost would result from it; but the force, the power which you would exercise would make your service three times as efficient. You would have a greater hold upon your men, you would get men of a better class, you would in every way have a greater pick; but as to reducing expenses there I must differ, because the only way in which the Militia service can be efficient is by increasing the facilities for improving it, notably in that most important question of musketry. Musketry is the first thing to be considered, and unless we have ranges and money at the disposal of the Militia it would be perfectly useless bringing together more men. But by bringing in men with aid of the ballot we should then not be obliged to take the lower class of men who, on some occasions, we are obliged to take now, and we should raise not only

the tone of the Militia but also of the Volunteers, because there are a great many men in the Volunteers now who do not belong to the artisan class. We ought to have these men in the Militia instead of a still lower class, and the more you raise the Volunteers by getting into their ranks the artisans, the more you will in that way send the next lower class of men into the ranks of the Militia. I had for many years the privilege of being on friendly and intimate terms with the Inspecting Officers of Militia, and I was the first to call the attention of the authorities to the fact that men were serving at the same time in the Militia and Volunteers. In my company when I was a Captain, I had twenty-five Volunteers serving who were in the Volunteers at the same time, and it was owing to that representation on my part, that regulations were issued which rendered it almost impossible for them to serve in the two. We are all very much obliged to the lecturer for having brought this subject forward. Matters of detail will have to be left, but what we want is to put support in the House of Commons with reference to this question of the ballot.

Colonel EVELYN, 3rd Battalion East Surrey Regiment: It is very satisfactory to hear a paper so interesting and containing so many important matters respecting the Militia introduced by an Officer of the regular service. I think that the views not only expressed in the lecture but also those which fell from Lord Wemyss, are those which I myself and many others have constantly urged in this theatre, that our military system is good in this country if it were properly carried out, and that instead of introducing the systems of Germany and foreign countries, we ought to try to develop our own system, as it is capable of development. The Militia is the most important of all branches, it is the ground of the whole because it is the only branch of the Service to which the ballot could possibly be applied. A pamphlet which has had a great circulation, and which I believe comes from very high authority, would seem to advise the ballot for the regular Army, but we could not possibly apply that to engaging men to go all over the world. For that reason it is only the Militia to which the ballot in any form could possibly be applied. The three branches of the Service are distinct: we have the Army, which ought to be highly paid, liable to general service; the Militia, which need not be so highly paid, only for home service; and the Volunteers, who theoretically should be men who are able to pay for their own military training. That I think is a point that has been very much forgotten of late, and unfortunately so. I do not like these constant increases in the sum allowed for each Volunteer; I think it will interfere very much with the service of the Militia; and I know that the Volunteers are composed of quite a different class of men to those of which they were composed during the first few years of their establishment, when I took great interest in the Volunteers and worked very hard to get them up. I was looking at a Volunteer regiment the other day. I inspected every man in the regiment carefully, and from the look of them I could see they were of the labouring class, in fact men who served for the sake of the suit of clothes that they got. Instead of that they ought to have to pay for their own clothes, or be liable to be drawn for the Militia. I do not think that unless we keep constantly in view these three points, the Army, Militia, and Volunteers, the one highly paid, the other less paid, and the other unpaid, that the system of the ballot could be applied to the Militia, for if the terms of the volunteer service are made such that labouring men can afford to join, and thereby escape the ballot, few will enrol voluntarily into the Militia, particularly if they see a chance of getting a large payment for joining as a substitute.

Major ANDERSON, in reply, said: Lord Wemyss accuses the paper of being harsh as regards the ballot, but as far as I can gather he proposes to ballot upon everybody, and I must own my only reason for bringing substitutes in at all was to try and lessen the severity of the working of the ballot. We all know the difficulty we have to contend against, that is the difficulty of leading the nation to accept this very ballot. Doubtless foreigners, as Major McDonnell has stated, get very high efficiency, but it is by dragging the nation through fearful difficulties, in fact ruining it in other ways. If this question ever again comes before Parliament, what we must think of will be every possible way in which we can smooth down that harsh word the ballot and the working of it. If we can get the men in any other way by all means let us get them, but what the nation requires is the men,

one way or the other, and the ballot is the last resource. Of course a money exemption is a very bad thing and not to be advocated, not so substitutes, fairly worked out, and I think it would be most unpopular in the country if there was no such provision, especially when we consider that if a man of education could not get into the Volunteers he might be driven to serve in the ranks of the Militia. Of course you might get out of it by the German one-year system, or some provision of that sort; the suggestion as to substitutes was only put forward by me because we find it in George the Third's Ballot Act, and because we must think of every little loophole to make the ballot palatable. As regards the levies which Major McDonnell spoke of, of course we should have a certain organization to attach our rapidly raised levies to if England were invaded, but at that moment, as you will all allow, the Ballot Bill will be put in force and we shall get men who never touched a rifle, who would then be in exactly the same position as regards training as the *Garde Mobile* of France.

Major McDONNELL: What I said was that these untrained men would have had some kind of organization to fall into, that the recruits would go naturally to the regular volunteer battalion, and that those battalions the French had not got for them to go to, their territorial organization was not complete.

Major ANDERSON: I of course was arguing that the man as he came to us would be but a raw recruit; and as regards the cost of the force, my reason for pointing out that there would be a saving, was because as I mentioned in the Act of George IIIrd, there were 41,000 Militia; we require 142,000, and I cannot help thinking by degrees we could do with a good many less. There would be more Volunteers, the Yeomanry might also be increased, and a corresponding reduction made on the Militia, while if you shorten the Militia service and run the men more quickly into the Reserve, the reduction might be still greater; that is supposing we get the efficiency in a shorter time, I think a saving could be effected in that way.

The CHAIRMAN: I must express my regret that the lecturer having prepared a very able paper has not had a larger audience; however, as Lord Wemyss has said, in the middle of Ascot week we cannot expect anything better. Major Anderson has evidently studied, and studied in a very intelligent way, the great question which should be before the minds of all Englishmen who love their country, that is, whether the military forces of the Crown are adequate to the very great requirements which would be laid upon them in case of hostilities breaking out; and I think he has come to the only conclusion which would present itself to the mind of any thoughtful Officer like himself, and that is that those forces are not adequate. Then like a sensible man he does not stop short with that conclusion, but having established to his own satisfaction, and I think to the satisfaction of all who have listened to his paper, that there are great shortcomings in our military system, he proceeds to propose remedies for the evils which exist, and foremost amongst those remedies is the enforcement of the ballot. I say enforcing the ballot, because by the law of the land the ballot is already in existence, being as you know suspended by an Act of Parliament passed every year. I quite agree with what Lord Wemyss has said—most soldiers do—I do not think I ever met with one that did not—that the ballot is at the foundation of our military system; but unfortunately from the pressure of political circumstances we have never yet had a Government—I say this without respect to party politics—we have never yet had a Government that has had—may I say the courage?—to propose the enforcement of the ballot, and I am afraid we should have to wait many a long day before we see such a phenomenon in this country. However, the defence of the Empire cannot wait for that, and therefore it behoves us all who are interested in the safety of the nation to cast about for means of making the military forces of the country as efficient as possible on the present military system, which is based on voluntary service. Major Anderson has said in regard to home defence that he cannot look upon the Volunteers as the first line of defence. Well, I do not quarrel about the question whether they are the first line of defence or the second or third (it does not matter what order they may be placed in); but I must say that in existing circumstances,—in case of an invasion of this country, we should have to depend very materially upon our citizen army, and that citizen army is already in a very fair state of efficiency

for the purposes for which it was intended. It has this admirable feature in its organization, that it admits of almost indefinite expansion. Now I wish to guard myself against being understood as saying anything in disparagement of the Militia, for I have the highest opinion of its value, and I quite assent to what has been said in regard to its being the backbone of the military forces of the Crown, but in speaking of the Volunteers, I think that in existing circumstances we should be careful to foster them in every way possible, and it is highly to be lamented that they have not had greater encouragement than is given to them at the present time. It requires the expenditure of a very small sum in addition to which they already receive to make the force much more valuable than it is. We want a volunteer reserve, and we should raise corps representing the different departments of the Army, such as Transport Corps, Medical Staff Corps, Commissariat Corps. All that might be done without adding scarcely a penny to the estimates. Then, again, there should be a great improvement in the musketry instruction. We should have the musketry instruction of Volunteers made a reality, which it hardly is at present. Of course we see that there an expenditure of money would be required, but whatever is required for the force should be given cheerfully by the Government, and it is a very poor policy that refuses to do this. We can only hope that the question of the ballot will come up at some future time, but as things stand at present we must be content with voluntary service being the foundation of our military system. It is very easy, however, for every one of us to foresee that circumstances might arise to necessitate a resort to the ballot; and, therefore, I think Major Anderson deserves well of his country for having brought this question forward for consideration, and I am sure that I shall be acting in accordance with the sentiments of all here present when I tender to him the expression of our cordial thanks for the very important paper he has read to us.