Royal United Services Institution. Journal

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

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

Lessons of the War: Personal Observations and Impressions of the Forces and Military Establishments now in South Africa

Colonel Sir Howard Vincent K.C.M.G., C.B., M.P.^a

^a Commanding Queen's Westminster Volunteers

Published online: 11 Sep 2009.

To cite this article: Colonel Sir Howard Vincent K.C.M.G., C.B., M.P. (1900) Lessons of the War: Personal Observations and Impressions of the Forces and Military Establishments now in South Africa, Royal United Services Institution. Journal, 44:268, 605-662

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03071840009420013>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or

indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

THE JOURNAL

ROYAL UNITED SERVICE INSTITUTION.

VOL. XLIV.

JUNE, 1900.

No. 268.

[*Authors alone are responsible for the contents of their respective Papers.*]

LESSONS OF THE WAR: PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND IMPRESSIONS OF THE FORCES AND MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS NOW IN SOUTH AFRICA.

*By Colonel Sir HOWARD VINCENT, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.P.,
Commanding Queen's Westminster Volunteers.*

Monday, 30th April, 1900.

Major-General J. F. MAURICE, C.B., R.A., *p.s.c.*, Commanding Woolwich District, in the Chair.

THIRTY years ago, General Maurice, I made my first speech in the theatre of this valuable Institution. At the invitation of the Council, it was my privilege often in subsequent years to deliver addresses upon Foreign Armies—the Russian, the German, the Turkish, the Austrian, and the armed strength of Europe. In it a three days' Conference also formulated, in 1878, at my instance, the first definite suggestions for the improvement of the Volunteer Force. They bore, and are still bearing, good fruit.

My desire has always been to see the Volunteer Force so intimately connected with the Standing Army as to afford it not only an immense reserve for home defence, but a valuable adjunct in the field. When, last August, war with the Transvaal Republic seemed highly probable, I made application to be allowed to raise from the whole Volunteer Force a picked battalion of 1,000 marksmen for active service, should occasion require. This was repeated in October and November.

The black week of December, 1899, will long live in British recollection. The disasters of Stormberg, Magersfontein, and Colenso followed in rapid succession. They alarmed the nation. They aroused the War Office. There was as prodigal an acceptance of service of any kind, as there had previously been abrupt and ungrateful refusal. The patriotism and determination of the country were evident, and the Government was not slow to feel the pulse of the nation.

The Lord Mayor of the City of London, assisted by Colonel Boxall, V.D., came forward with funds no one else could have commanded, and an irresistible energy. The proposal of Colonel Balfour and the London Scottish to send a company to the Gordon Highlanders was also accepted, and made to apply to all Volunteer corps having Line battalions in the field.

In a few days a fund of over £100,000 was forthcoming, and owing to the Lord Mayor's persistence and steadfast refusal to understand the word "impossible," the City of London Imperial Volunteers, under Colonel MacKinnon, left London in less than a month from the time the matter was first taken in hand.

I must confess myself to a feeling that there was still truth in the old proverb "More haste, less speed," and it was not unsupported by the experience of others in authority.

But these were matters of detail. In the end they came out well.

I had been offered and had accepted command of a Division. But, in common with 36½ per cent. of the Regular Army ordered for active service, I reckoned without the doctors. They declared me insufficiently recovered from an attack of illness in October and November for the field. So I left at once for South Africa on my own account. Three weeks on a Castle-Union liner is the finest restorative, with the South African climate to complete, although 250 officers and 5,000 men have been sent home as invalids. I was in hopes that the Commander-in-Chief in the field would in the altered circumstances be able to find me the employment sought, but all the youth and vigour of the British Empire were at his door with like request.

Lord Roberts gave me, however, permission to visit the various armies, camps, and military establishments, and it is the result of these visits that the Council ask me to-day to narrate.

THE BRITISH IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Before, however, one enters into military questions, it is essential to say one word as to the British and their Possessions in South Africa. The Cape of Good Hope was discovered by the Portuguese just over 400 years ago. In 1652 the Dutch East India Company took possession of it, and for nearly a century and a half held it amid perpetual complaints from the settlers against tyrannical Governors. In 1796 the English occupied the Cape at the request of the Netherlands, to prevent its falling into the hands of France, and restored it in 1803. In 1806 it had, however, to be re-occupied by us, and at the Peace of 1814 Cape Colony was finally ceded to the British Crown on payment of some millions sterling to the Netherlands.

Since then manifold have been the difficulties in its administration, many the blunders, frequent the wars and disputes with the natives and the descendants of the Dutch and Huguenot colonists. Between 1834 and 1837 the Dutch, furious at the abolition of slavery, undertook the Great Trek from Cape Colony to Natal. There they established a separate government at the muzzle of the musket. They harassed the

remaining natives, they imperilled British interests. The annexation of Natal by the Queen in 1843 became necessary. The Boers trekked to the north and west. The Orange Free State and the South African or Transvaal Republic were recognised between 1852 and 1854. In the latter the turbulent spirit remained undiminished. When unable to fight with natives, the Boers quarrelled with each other. Disaster was only averted by the British annexation in 1877. It was followed by some ill-advised steps, and especially by the replacement of a popular and genial civil administrator by a military officer of more austerity than tact, and who, for other reasons, became peculiarly distasteful to the governed. The risings, the disasters, and the shameful peace of 1881 resulted, and since then there has been no rest.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CAPE COLONY AND NATAL.

It is necessary also in connection with South African affairs to remember the vast difference between Cape Colony and Natal. Cape Colony is the original home of the Cape Dutch. Its 400,000 white inhabitants, amidst over a million Kaffirs and persons of mixed blood, consist of about 250,000 Dutch, who in legislature and justice retain their language, and belong to the Dutch Reformed Church. The remainder are British. In Canada, in India, and elsewhere, different races agree perfectly under the sceptre of the Queen. It has been less so in South Africa. Strife is frequent. The fault is, perhaps, as much on one side as on the other. The Dutch are obstinately conservative, slow to move, adhesive to old ways and old methods, and though law-abiding and religious, very jealous of their vigorous, energetic British neighbours, and greatly resenting their oft-vaunted superiority. The country is to a great extent a wilderness—desert plains of arid sand, interspersed only by the karoo and addo bush, succulent to cattle, sheep, and goats, but much visited by flights of locusts, resembling a heavy snow-storm, and doing untold damage. There are bright patches, but they are few and far between. Water is said to be obtainable, but is as yet scarce. In Australia an acre will often carry five sheep. Between Table Bay and Modder River, if not far beyond, three acres are required for one sheep. The farms are therefore of enormous size. Life on them is lonely. They are mostly in Dutch hands. In the Eastern Provinces things are brighter. There are English settlers, and ostrich farms betoken greater prosperity, but they rarely lead to fortune.

Natal, upon the other hand, is a different country—geographically and politically. The endless plains of Cape Colony are replaced by the mountain scenery of Switzerland. The clamour of contending factions is replaced by a harmony of sentiment rarely met with. The Dutch are not in the ascendant as in the older Colony, but in a small minority—one-twelfth of 60,000 whites, amid three-quarters of a million stalwart Zulus, the finest native race in South Africa. The Administration is enlightened and enterprising. At its head a popular and genial Governor, Sir Walter Hely Hutchinson, and a Premier, formerly a Colonel of Engineers, whose urbanity has dissipated all opposition. The municipalities take their line

from the Government. No corporation is better administered than Durban. Wide streets, beautiful avenues, faultless cleanliness. The people are all Imperial, and, finding little or no opposition in argument, are fair and broad-minded.

There is but one drawback—the great heat—and in some districts, want of water. These make it unsuitable for British immigration to any extent. The Government has, however, brought over some 50,000 of the Queen's loyal Indian subjects, who frequently find prosperity upon the fruit plantations, and, in any event, enjoy every fraternal protection and facility for return at the end of a fixed period to their own homes.

Only one prefatory observation more, and that is the enormous distances which have to be overcome in South Africa, the hundreds and hundreds of miles with great difficulties of inter-communication. This is of supreme importance to bear in mind. In examining the present campaign, remember always that your armies have been and are fighting in a country which can furnish next to nothing, except perhaps a few cattle decimated by rinderpest, over 6,000 miles away by sea, and then between 700 and 800 miles of land, served only by a single railway, and that only up to a certain point.

Or, to put it in another way. You start from Calcutta, you land at Marseilles, and you are fighting at Hamburg, shorn of all resources, and you have lines of land communications of over 1,200 miles to protect.

THE FEEDING OF THE ARMY.

It has been said that "an army fights on its belly." This is more true of the British Army than of any other. The officers are accustomed to every luxury, the men to more ample fare. Unless well fed it can do nothing. It is moreover a voluntary Army.

To every British soldier in the field has to be conveyed every day for necessaries no less than 6½ lbs. avoirdupois, of which 1½ lbs. are for cases, tins, etc., leaving 5 lbs. net. For every native follower 3 lbs. For every horse 12 lbs. has to be brought up, and for every mule 8 lbs.

You may take it that in round numbers the Field Force in South Africa numbers 200,000 British troops, with 50,000 camp followers. That is a quarter of a million persons, with 40,000 horses and 30,000 mules, who have to be provided for upon this scale. The total is absolutely appalling. It means the daily conveyance of over 600 tons of necessaries for the troops, for camp followers, and for animals. The forethought necessary for the purchase of these enormous stores is great. The calculations must be made months ahead. But it is small compared to the difficulties of sea and land transport. Yet so smoothly have things worked, so admirable have been the arrangements, that not only have supplies never been short, but there has been scarcely a difficulty about a single meal, save on the loss of a convoy. I do not hesitate to say that no great army in the field has ever been so well fed, and with such extraordinary regularity.

Honour to whom honour. The credit for this state of things rests in part with the authorities at home, in part with the Transport Depart-

ment of the Admiralty, but most of all with the Army Service Corps and the organisers of Army Transport. It is a duty to pay homage to this service, whose labour is greatest, whose opportunity for distinction is least, but upon whom depends the fighting efficiency of the soldier, more than upon armament, and more than upon leadership, for if it fail both guns and generals are valueless.

The troops in South Africa have received as a daily ration per man :— 1 lb. of fresh or preserved meat (increased to $1\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. when the supply of cattle has been abundant), $1\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. of fresh bread or 1 lb. of biscuit, flour, or meal, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of potatoes or other fresh vegetables, or $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. of onions, or 1 tin of pea-soup, 1 oz. of chocolate, or $\frac{2}{3}$ oz. of coffee, or $\frac{1}{3}$ oz. of tea, with 3 ozs. of sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. of salt, and $\frac{1}{16}$ oz. of pepper; and 12 ozs. of jam or marmalade a week.

In addition to this, spirits and lime-juice have to be carried for issue as the Commander-in-Chief may direct, and hospital diets of arrowroot, bovril, brandy, calf's-foot jelly, champagne, cocoa paste, cornflour, roast fowls, condensed milk, extracts of meat, port wine, etc., besides a large quantity of disinfectants.

These stores, independently of tents, clothing, arms, and ammunition, have had to be conveyed not alone by sea, but also along a single line of railway, both in Cape Colony and Natal, and then by ox-wagon and mule transport.

One word as to the railways. No words can express the debt of the military authorities to Mr. Elliott and Mr. Price of the Cape Government Railway, or to Mr. Hunter of the Natal Government Railway. Protected by Colonel Girouard, Captain Leggett, and the Railway Staff Officers against subordinate military officials, the railway managers, their inspectors, station masters, conductors, drivers, firemen, and shunters have worked incessantly and with such success that civil traffic has not been seriously interfered with. When rewards come to be considered they must not be forgotten, nor yet those who so successfully sent six hundred special trains of troops from London to Southampton, and thence carried them over the ocean. The German calculation is that not more than 40,000 men can be fed upon a single line. In Cape Colony more than thrice this total has been reached, and without great interruption of the civil traffic.

But it is not only a matter of railway. The Western Army alone has required 2,000 ox-wagons, each with a 16 span, or over 30,000 oxen. An ox-wagon trekking alone may carry up to 8,000 lbs., but not more than half that when moving in military convoy, or 3,000 lbs. if the march is in any way forced. Its animals cannot move quickly, nor yet by day, when they must rest and feed, and each requires a driver and leader. The hire rate has been 45s. 6d. a day per team.

I have dwelt upon these matters because it is important that they should be remembered by those at home.

For the efficiency of the Army Service Corps we owe much to Sir Redvers Buller. Those of us who joined the Army thirty years ago know how defective it was. Those of us who know foreign Armies, know how defective it often is. In the Queen's service the best officers and men

have been happily attracted to it. In Cape Colony they have been submitted to an especial strain, and the Army and the country owe much to the discipline and loyalty of all under Colonel Richardson and Colonel Bridge. All the work of recent years had made each marching unit complete in the matter of transport. Every driver took pride in getting his brigade or regimental stores up in time. Commanding officers prided themselves upon their animals.

The Field Army Order of 24th January, 1900, abolished the carefully matured War Office Scale of Transport in Cape Colony, by a stroke of the pen; it made it all general. Every company of the Army Service Corps was divided into two. New officers on a liberal scale of allowance were imported. It was a risky experiment in mid-stream. But Lord Kitchener is great in re-organisation. His energy, enthusiasm, decision, and ubiquity command the greatest admiration. The end justified the means. Of course Lord Kitchener did not act without good reason. His object was that the transport should always be working as required for the whole army, although a marching unit might be resting. But the army undoubtedly hopes that the general system of transport may not permanently replace the brigade and regimental system which has been productive of such happy results.

EXCELLENCE OF BASE ARRANGEMENTS.

The observations made upon the excellence of the Commissariat and Transport arrangements apply generally to all those connected with the base. The highest foreign authorities present with the armies have told me that they could not be improved upon, that they taught them much. This applies to the disembarkation and forwarding of troops, as much as to their victualling and the repair of casualties in men and horses. Officers full of life, activity, and hope, resent being left at the base, or being placed in arduous thankless posts on the line of communications, and they fret to be at the front. Indeed, to the glory of the British race be it said that the difficulty of the Commander-in-Chief in this campaign has been not how to feed the front line, but to satisfy the cravings of the representatives of each part of the Empire, each branch of the Service, Volunteers and Regulars, *pro patria mori*. So long as this is so, we can do without conscription. A free soldier is worth two conscripts. The latter can be taken to the battle, but cannot be made to fight, any more than the horse taken to the water can be made to drink. But assuredly whether in docks, at railway stations, remount establishments, or at base depôts, officers, and non-commissioned officers and men are rendering not less valuable service to their Queen and their country than those who head the march or lead the charge.

THE MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS.

First and foremost in the organisation of the base of our army in the field comes provision for the sick and wounded.

If no army has ever been better fed than that in South Africa, it is no less true that no army has ever been better doctored.

The Royal Army Medical Department, under Surgeon-General Wilson, has covered itself with honour. Lord Lansdowne has called to its aid the highest professors of contemporary surgery. It is true that their duties and responsibilities might have been more clearly defined, but their presence and counsel have brought timely advice and comfort to many a sufferer.

Large numbers of zealous civil practitioners have also been employed, while noble and devoted women have come forward in endless stream to place their nursing skill and kindly sympathy at the disposal of the injured. I have visited nearly every hospital connected with the armies in South Africa, and if Cape Colony presented perhaps greater luxury and comfort than the army in Natal, there is at least but little room anywhere for aught but unqualified praise. Especially is this so as to the base hospitals, placed as a rule amid attractive surroundings. It is also true in large measure of the stationary and the field hospitals; dressing stations must unavoidably be rough, nor can conveyance by ox-wagon, or ambulance—the transport alterations reduced the number of ambulances—be easy. A military hospital can rarely be upon quite the same standard as a civil hospital. It has no choice of patients. Its business is to deal as effectively and quickly as possible with them as they come—perhaps two hundred or more by a single train, thrice that in a single battle. Its business is to get them back to the front or away to the base as soon as may be, to make room for others, for, as the intercessory prayer says, “Many must inevitably suffer.”

But it is in the field that admiration for the Royal Army Medical Corps is most elicited. In the very front line, with little to stimulate their courage, save the whiz of bullets overhead, and of suffering below, the surgeons devote themselves to their humane duties. Even so the stretcher-bearers, among whom and in the hospitals there are no less than 1,200 volunteers from the St. John Ambulance Brigade. They enjoy no immunity. They are exposed to all the risks, their duties are responsible and painful, and the opportunities for distinction are few.

The medical results are on a par with the medical arrangements, the proportion of dead to wounded (one to five) is less than in any previous campaign, the proportion (25 per cent.) of convalescents and returns to the front within a few weeks is greater, while the deaths in base hospitals are less than 2 per cent. Much of this is due to the admirable nursing of the highly-trained, noble-hearted, scarlet-caped women who belong to the Army Nursing Staff or its Reserve. Seventy-five per cent. of the wounded recover. Stomach, spine, and head wounds have alone proved serious, and it remains to be seen if invention cannot find some portable protection—such as the *Boynton* shield—against them in the next war.

Protection, however, against enteric fever demands even greater attention. How far inoculation has been successful as a safeguard, or in reducing severity, remains to be seen.

But despite enteric and despite the ravages of free trade in contagious disease, and which ostrich-politicians insist shall be allowed to

spread unchecked "unto the third and fourth generation," and despite variations in temperature, often between 30° and 40° between 3 p.m. and 3 a.m., the Army has been wonderfully healthy.

GENEROSITY OF THE PUBLIC.

In connection with the sick and wounded must assuredly be mentioned the extraordinary generosity of the public towards the troops in the field.

Apart from numerous hospitals placed at the disposal of the authorities by public societies and private individuals—the Princess of Wales's ship, Princess Christian's Red Cross train, the Portland hospital, the Iveagh hospital, the Yeomanry hospital, the American hospital-ship "Maine," the Langman hospital, and others, I calculate that to the Lord Mayor's fund, to the Absent-Minded Beggar's fund, to the *Daily Telegraph* fund, and to numerous funds in counties, cities, and boroughs, organised by civic authorities and private individuals, the British public has voluntarily subscribed in the last six months upwards of £4,000,000 sterling for the comfort of the troops in the field, the relief of widows and orphans, and the succour of the sick. Who, after this, can say that we are not a military nation, that the Army is not a popular institution, that we are not grateful to those who fight for England?

THE QUEEN'S CHOCOLATE.

But undoubtedly, the gift among so many which has elicited the greatest appreciation from the soldiers is the gracious New Year's present made to each man in South Africa on 1st January, 1900, by Her Majesty herself. That box will be handed down from many a generation in many a family, and be ever held in proof of the Queen's sympathy and Queenly thought for the humblest of Victoria—Queen and Empress.

In analogous category must be placed the extreme kindness to the troops, and especially to the sick and wounded, of British residents in South Africa. Quantities of fruit—often too much, considering the prevalence of dysentery, reading-room tents, seats, and every kind of small comfort has been showered upon them in camp and hospital, on the railway, and so far as possible on the march. The children made small subscriptions among themselves, and ladies have met nearly every train with sick from the front, and provided tea, coffee, or milk for all as they came, or were carried, on to the platform.

THE TROOPS IN THE WEST.

The armies of operations have been three in number, the Western in Cape Colony, in two columns, under Lord Methuen and General French respectively; the Central under Sir William Gatacre; and the Eastern in Natal, at first under Sir George White, then under General Clery, and subsequently under the personal direction of Sir Redvers Buller.

To take them in the order named, Lord Methuen had the best, and indeed the only possible, country for military operations—vast plains com-

manded by high but stormable kopjes—positions admirable for defence, but capable of being turned by a sufficiently strong force, consisting largely of cavalry, mounted men, and horse artillery. Lord Methuen had none of these arms, or hardly any, and although his infantry at Belmont, at Graspan, and at Modder River, succeeded with considerable sacrifice in thrusting back the enemy, he had no means of pushing home the advantages won.

Much had been heard, more will probably be heard, of the disastrous attack on Magersfontein. Its failure probably had its origin in the notice given by the movements in broad daylight on the preceding afternoon.

But seeing the broken ground—in company with a gallant officer, Captain Barrow, whose last ride it was—intersected by dongas and every kind of pitfall, over which the Highland Brigade had to advance to the attack, on a pitch-dark night, without the slightest moon, it is quite conceivable that close formation was the only one in which the direction of attack could by any possibility be maintained. Whatever the cause, it is quite certain that the enemy were perfectly forewarned and ready. No one would undertake to dissect truth from invention in the multitude of current stories. One though is credited, that so well apprised were the Boers of the intention, that the leading company of the mass of quarter columns actually ran across a wire impediment, on the right flank of which was a lamp, and the overturning thereof was the signal for the fatal volleys which broke the closed ranks.

General French had quite a different country in which to operate. Much closer, with higher and more inaccessible hills. His great success, which, with the heroic defence of Mafeking, by Colonel Baden-Powell, stand out as the brightest pages of the war, was largely due to the considerable force of cavalry he had with him, and to the great use he put them to in ascertaining the movements of the enemy, keeping him always on the move, and being beforehand with him. Material advance in that direction was, however, almost impossible, and not the less because, although the greater portion of the entire railway line in Cape Colony had to be constantly patrolled, and the bridges and culverts guarded night and day by piquets and sentries owing to the disaffection of the Dutch population, those precautions were supremely necessary in the Nauwpoort and Colesberg district, the front of which occupied over 30 miles.

THE CENTRAL COLUMN.

Like difficulties beset Sir William Gatacre with the central column. He was moving in a district which might rise against him at any moment. He had a front of over 40 miles to protect from any Boer incursion, and if the attack on Stormberg was disastrous, it must be allowed to General Gatacre's credit that his vigilance saved an invasion of the Eastern provinces, which might have been fatal. The full facts concerning that woeful night march have yet to be ascertained. But this might be said at once, that it was no chance guide whom the General trusted to lead

him, but a sergeant of Police, of unimpeachable character, and having life-long experience of the district. It is probable that when the guide found himself to be out in his bearings he had not the courage to say so, but trusted to come across some landmark which would again put him in the right course. This result actually occurred, only of course the enemy had been perfectly informed of the movement by train and the contemplated attack. Needless to say, the story about the General shooting the guide with his own revolver is a pure invention.

NIGHT ATTACKS.

It does not appear from all one can ascertain as if these night, or rather early morning, attacks, are likely to be so successful as they have occasionally been in the Egyptian desert. They necessarily involve preparation which is of a very evident character. They cannot be undertaken unless the troops have coffee or something to eat, and the horses are fed before setting out. This entails preparation on the eve, the signs of which are very evident in the collection of wood for fires, and by positive orders given to many. The troops themselves know what is on foot, and sleep badly, while the silent march in the dark in an uncertain direction tries the nerves of the bravest. At any rate, it is clear that night attacks have not proved successful against an enemy always accustomed to be up before the break of day, and knowing an intricate country thoroughly. Very different might have been the result if the habits of the Boers had been more closely studied in the earlier as in the later stages, including their love of sleep after the evening meal, and dislike to close quarters. A movement shortly before midnight requires much less preparation than an early morning attack, and although it has the disadvantage of not having light for the actual onslaught, and precluding the use of artillery, it has in previous Boer wars proved useful, and particularly those waged against them by natives. Indeed, it is from Kaffir chiefs that the Boers acquired many of the artifices which have proved so useful to them in this war—the feigned retreat, the double flank attack, the closing of the horns of a crescent round the rear, the ambush, the lying still and hidden close to the enemy. The only wonder is that with equal opportunity of practical instruction we have been less apt and ready to learn. In support of the advantage of midnight over early morning attack there is the instance of General Hunter's sortie with the Volunteers from Ladysmith which proved singularly successful. To prevent the sleep, to break the sleep, of your enemy is usually worth while. Therein, perhaps, lies the great moral effect of torpedoes at sea. It is not less useful in bringing a criminal to justice.

CRITICISMS UPON GENERALS.

At the same time, it is quite impossible for anyone to criticise the actions of a General, unless actually upon the spot, and having before him all the topographical conditions, all the information the General possesses, not only as to the capacity of the forces at his disposal, but also of the

strength and intentions of the enemy, of the movements of co-operating columns, and of the ultimate plans of the Commander-in-Chief. Generals, it must be said, have not been hampered by home instructions, nor have they been interfered with by a press inclined to the intelligent anticipation of events, for the censorship has been as strict as that of the Third Section in St. Petersburg, and, it is said, sometimes placed in too often changing and inexperienced hands. But an unsatisfactory feature of the South African campaign has certainly been the very free criticism and denunciation of Generals by many under their command and by the public. It may or may not have been deserved in this instance or in that, but it certainly does not lead to satisfactory results, and has undoubtedly an untoward influence upon the Generals themselves, quick to perceive that they do not enjoy the confidence to which they are entitled.

Some say, however, there has perhaps been an excessive desire in high quarters to support Generals who have signally failed, and to maintain them in their commands when it is well known that the troops have lost faith in them. Colonels of regiments and Staff officers have in some cases been sent down, and it is claimed that the same measure ought to be meted out to their superiors.

THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

But whatever criticism may be brought to bear against any single individual for real or alleged errors of judgment, there is only praise and veneration for the Commander-in-Chief—Field-Marshal Lord Roberts.

His only son, earning the Victoria Cross in his heroic death, and sleeping the sleep of the soldier hard by the Chitveley Station on the Tugela, Lord Roberts did not hesitate at once to respond to the call of his Sovereign and his country. It would be impossible to imagine one of such supreme tact, such never-failing consideration of the feeling and aspirations of every branch of the Army, and every man in it. He thinks of everything himself, always does that which gives pleasure, and extracts the last ounce of devoted service from all. He can outride and outpace his staff and escort. Lord Roberts never tires, is never in a hurry, is never ruffled or excited. I arrived at Paardeberg from the Tugela and Sterkstroom—nearly 1,200 miles—of which over 150 by horse, buggy, and mule cart, 250 by sea, and the rest by rail, in the moment of victory, when an army was surrendering, and the conquered General was in the British camp. A more unpropitious moment could not be conceived for audience with a Commander-in-Chief, yet Lord Roberts sent for me, had plans and maps brought and talked under his wagon quietly, and unconcernedly, without the slightest press. And as he is himself, so is his staff. From Sir William Nicholson, the Military Secretary, and Colonel Neville Chamberlain, the Private Secretary, downwards, Lord Roberts has surrounded himself by a staff, Imperial almost in its dimensions and composition, but representative of all the best types of the Army and the nation. Needless to say that from Colonial troops as well as from South African, from Australasian and Canadian, he has evoked the most valuable service, putting them in the post of honour one after the other, and

preventing the rise of even the smallest ripple of jealousy in any portion of the Army.

THE CITY IMPERIAL VOLUNTEERS.

If, indeed, Lord Roberts has shown favour to one corps or one body over another, it is towards the City of London Imperial Volunteers, whom he has honoured by becoming their Honorary Colonel. He came down to the "Briton" to welcome their arrival as "invaluable comrades in arms." He inspected them himself. He addressed them in terms alike eloquent and historical, pleasing not less to themselves than to the Dutch, whom, under Elizabeth, said his Excellency, the Volunteers left England to succour in the Netherlands.

He sent the Mounted Infantry, under Colonel Cholmondeley, to the front so soon as they had got astride the horses purchased for them by the activity and judgment of Mr. Abe Bailey. They left Cape Town amid unequalled demonstrations of enthusiasm. At the engagement of Jacobsdal they covered the advance, and gained the praise of General Wavell, commanding the Brigade, and of all who saw them, by their dash and steadiness. Colonel Cholmondeley had his horse killed under him, and Bugler Pink, of the Queen's Westminsters, holding four horses, had three killed. Eighteen other horses were shot, for the led horses were a little too close to the firing line. The wounded sergeants and privates I saw in the several hospitals, and all doing well.

At the engagement at Paardeberg the City Imperial Volunteers held the eastern outpost line, and were assigned the honour of escorting General Cronje and the Boer prisoners thence to Modder River. Never was there smarter escort than that under Captain Waterlow, and well have the Imperial Volunteers earned the Free State Standard presented to them by Lord Roberts, from the Boer laager. The only trouble has been in keeping the Mounted Infantry Company together, so anxious have Generals been to secure, for their intelligence and bearing, C.I.V. troopers as orderlies. This has, however, enabled individuals to see and learn a great deal.

It should be mentioned that neither the individual position nor the financial backing of the City Imperial Volunteers have induced them to make their lot in the least different to that of the ordinary soldier. They share all his duties, all his hardships. Of turtle they have none. Indeed I confess to a passing thought that they were inflicting needlessly Spartan hardships upon themselves, and not making themselves as comfortable as Guards, Cavalry, or Rifles.

Not less deserving is the infantry battalion, under Lord Albemarle. It will have its chance—has doubtless had it. I saw them in their wind-blown desert camp at Orange River. I met them at Potfontein, coming back from detached duty, and bring to London their enthusiastic greeting.

At Green Point camp, when I sailed, was the battery of artillery under Major M'Miking. If the non-commissioned officers and men of the City Imperial Volunteers have no equals in the army in the field for

stature, for physique, for soldierly bearing, and for intelligence, there is certainly no battery which can compare with the horsing of that furnished mainly by the Honourable Artillery Company. The battery had the immense advantage I was anxious to secure for the other divisions, of being in barracks a fortnight before embarkation. It enabled all ranks to learn to know each other. It enabled discovery to be made of those who, although passing a medical examination not always so strict as it should be, soon showed themselves unfit for a campaign.

But taking all in all, the Lord Mayor and the City of London, as also the Metropolitan Volunteers and all the Volunteer Force, may be proud of the words of Lord Roberts, written from Modder River on 11th February: "I have no finer or keener material under my command than that which has been enrolled in the ranks of the City of London Imperial Volunteers."

THE COLONIAL VOLUNTEERS.

If the City of London, and the Volunteer Force of Great Britain have reason to be amply satisfied with their representatives, this is assuredly also the case of Cape Colony and Natal, of Canada and New South Wales, of New Zealand and Queensland, of Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia. The Volunteer troops in the field number some 26,000, and it is not too much to say that the honours so far rest mainly with them. Many know the country, they can ride, and shoot, they can scout independently, and act together. They have eyes and ears, and, above all, heads.

It has been said that the reluctance of the War Office to have anything to do with Volunteer offers of help until the dark days of December, and until forced by the sharp edge of the national voice, was due to the fear in some old-fashioned minds that the British public would say, "Oh, if we can have so many Volunteers for active service when we want them, it is not worth while increasing the Regular Army."

Whether this is so or not, this war in South Africa has not only shown the unity and military strength of the Empire, but has proved the triumph of Volunteer forces. If no other result had been forthcoming, the war would nevertheless be rich in reward.

Where all have done so well, where the Imperial Light Horse, the South African Light Horse, the Natal Carabineers, Thorneycroft's Horse, Rimington's Scouts, where the Australians—converted in a minute from infantry to horse, on the chargers of Madras Lancers—where the New Zealanders have covered themselves with honour, and the Canadians advancing left hand on right wrist to the Boer trenches, brought about the great surrender on the anniversary of Majuba, it is invidious to discriminate between corps. But the interests of truth compel the statement that while South African laws fix the rate of pay of South African volunteers (and the members of South African corps have not all been South Africans), on mobilisation at 5s. a day, with 2s. 6d. if they find their own horse, and 2s. 6d. a day if they find their own rations, those of Greater Britain, Canada, and Australasia, only obtain the ordinary pay of the

soldier in the field—1s. 3d. a day. That is not sufficient. An enterprising German at Modder River sold Modder soda-water at 1s. a bottle (without the bottle), and tea at 1s. a cup. I gave 5s. for a pint of beer. These were about the prices at other stations where anything at all could be purchased, and such camps or stations were very few, and there was a strict order against selling drink to soldiers. May this enforced sobriety be permanent, and not be discouraged by hero-worshippers. I think, however, something might have been done in the way of a dry canteen for the troops, and the manufacture of aerated waters. It would probably have stopped some of the typhoid and dysentery which have been more deadly than lead.

THE REGULARS.

In this connection the Regulars claim attention. The regimental officer and the regimental soldier have done wonders. Their bravery, their endurance, their courage, have been that of Blenheim, of the Peninsula, of Waterloo, of the Crimea, of the Indian Mutiny. The race is the same. Its instincts are the same. Short service and young soldiers have come out triumphant. Where the officers have led, the men have followed. Their cheerfulness under the most trying circumstances has never been impaired. It might have been increased by more music and more song. "Those who sing on the march, march to victory," says Lord Wolseley. I have been in the open railway track through the long hours of the night, in the drenching rain, with men knowing me only as one of themselves, who stripped to warm a more sensitive comrade, succumbing to the cold. Their conversation and bearing were fit for any drawing-room. I have lost my way in the shades of night on the open veldt, close to the enemy's lines, and made common cause with one or two in like predicament, in a deserted Boer farm. Hour after hour my admiration of the soldiers of the Queen has increased. The country owes a debt to its soldiers, a debt it must pay, until those who stay at home, and who at home do nothing for the country, are driven to mend their ways for very honour, for very shame, and very livelihood.

THE NATAL ARMY.

I have been lured from my course. We were visiting the different armies. Lord Roberts, the Volunteer, and the Soldier arrested us.

Let us go to the Army of Natal. Bear in mind what I said before as to the configuration of the country, its Alpine character compared to the endless plains of Cape Colony.

There are some who say that the Natal campaign was unfortunate. I submit that it might have been infinitely worse. But for the opportune arrival in September and early October of the contingent from India, nothing could have kept the Boers out of Durban. As it was they came within thirteen miles of Pietermaritzburg, and the governor was within an ace of having to stand a siege in Fort Napier.

The entanglement of Ladysmith if it was an error, was not one of yesterday or the day before. Fifteen years ago it had been selected as the

most suitable *place d'armes*, the junction of the railway system, well watered, and suitable as a *depôt* for corps operating towards, or resisting attack from, the Free State, the Transvaal, Zululand, or Portuguese territory. The idea of its being besieged had never been present. There appeared to be no forces in Africa for such an enterprise. It was largely stocked with munitions of war. Its abandonment was out of the question. It has been said that the true line was south of the Tugela. I should like more authoritative endorsement of that view. The northern bank is an impregnable fortress. The southern an open, a grassy, but a waterless plain. No description that I have read of the task before Sir Redvers Buller approaches the reality. His army lay upon that plain, its every movement under the eyes of the enemy securely hidden in the mountain fastnesses of the further shore. Not all the engineers of the armies in Europe could have improved upon that work of Nature. The steep slopes, the huge stones bringing the soldier often to his knees, defying cavalry, the top hog-backed for the mounting of artillery, the slopes protected by row upon row of trenches, the flanks guarded by mountains, one height commanding another, and as a moat in front of all a broad, swift, deep river, fordable only in one or two places, the fords dammed and crow-footed.

There was no hope of a frontal attack, there was no chance of a flank movement. A less persistent, a less enduring soldier than Sir Redvers Buller would have renounced the task as hopeless. It was discouraging to him and to his army. I was present at the commencement of the final attempt. Determination rather than hope was the prevailing sentiment. But the relief of Kimberley and the invasion of the Free State had disconcerted the enemy. On the morning of St. Valentine's Day the Boers saw the endless lines of a British army corps, 25,000 strong, marching—out to battle as unconcernedly—shall I say in some cases as carelessly?—as to an Aldershot field day. Far as the eye could reach in columns of attack, five miles across. More and more men in *khâki*, battery upon battery, more brigades, more regiments, more guns. One asked oneself would they never end, as looking back with field glasses and telescope new brown lines breasted the crest of the hills we had crossed. It was wise policy to parade them thus in face of an enemy whose spirit was already shaken. It was wise policy to hold them in hand in the burning heat, a heat one cannot describe, which made it impossible, heliographed General Lyttelton from the right flank, for troops to move, or for gunners to handle ammunition. The advance, therefore, was only slow and gradual, while water had to come twenty miles by train and five or more by bullock wagon. Hlangwane Hill was the objective. It seemed almost impossible of assault. The army moved on Hussar Hill as on a pivot. The Royal Welsh Fusiliers were in the front line. I had left them twenty-seven years before, and the rare fortune fell to me of going out with them again after this lapse of time. Colonel Charles Thorold, best of colonels, bravest of men, fell before Ladysmith was reached. Cingolo Mountain was occupied, then Monte Cristo, then Hlangwane, then Colenso, and after ten days' tedious but steady progress the road to Ladysmith was open

to Lord Dundonald, now so worthily promoted general, and the sore-pressed garrison with its two thousand sick—50 per cent. from typhoid and dysentery—in that circle of hills was relieved. It could have held out for just thirty days more. General French once had opportunity to take out his five regiments of cavalry. Superior orders forbade him. It was, perhaps, as well, useful as they would have been outside. Of the horses of those regiments, 63 had to go daily to the slaughter, 30 for meat, 33 for "Chevril," the invention of that genial, resourceful officer, Colonel Ward, D.A.G., of the Home District, which under the motto "Resurgam" mainly kept the garrison of Sir George White alive. We will give Ward fitting welcome at the next Tournament to which he lends his services at the Agricultural Hall. Ladysmith was possibly a theoretical mistake on our part. But it offered great attractions to the enemy, and but for his locking up his forces by its investment, worse troubles might have ensued.

DEFENCE OF LADYSMITH AND KIMBERLEY.

The defence of Ladysmith was noteworthy. No doubt Sir George White, not less accomplished than brave, did what he could. Seventy per cent. of the garrison were admitted to hospital during the four months' siege, and 169 officers and 3,163 men succumbed. Fifteen thousand shells were thrown into the invested area by four 94-pounders and twenty-nine long-range Boer guns, while the defenders could only fire 4,700 rounds from two 4·7 naval guns, three 12-pounder naval guns, and two howitzers. But the history of Ladysmith will have to account not only for Nicholson's Nek, but also for the inability of upwards of 13,000 British troops to cut their way out, or effectively to co-operate with the relieving army.

The defence of Kimberley—the Volunteer, the civilian defence of Kimberley for 124 days—is, however, much more remarkable. The area of defence was more extended—thirteen miles in circumference. There was but half a battalion of Regular troops, the Loyal North Lancashires, and a few artillerymen, about 500 in all. The artillery could only throw a 7-pound shell 3,000 yards, while the besiegers had 12- and 15-pounders, with a range of 4,000 or 5,000 yards. There was little ammunition. The civil population exceeded 40,000, and was composed of heterogeneous, if not turbulent, elements, including 10,000 Dutch and 10,000 Kaffir. It was by happy accident that Mr. Cecil Rhodes, never thinking a siege in the least probable, found himself invested. He was a tower of strength to the commandant, Colonel Kekewich, and to the beleaguered town. His large-hearted generosity was never used to greater advantage. His resourcefulness knew no bounds. He was the fountain of money and organisation; under his example and direction bomb-proof shelters were constructed in every direction. He sought no cover for himself and his party—a few sandbags on the roof, in the balcony, of the Sanatorium, and nothing more. He gave employment; his immense gardens—the work of a few years—furnished vegetable food, and prevented scurvy. De Beers workmen were kept on full pay constructing shells and

ammunition, and erecting search-lights. Volunteers, exceeding 4,000 in number, including 700 mounted men, were organised, and with such success was the line of outposts maintained, that at no place round their wide circle during all those four months did the enemy venture upon assault. Perhaps the scientific use made of dynamite, and the proclaimed intention to blow up redoubt after redoubt by electricity from the Conning Tower, where sat Colonel Kekewich, if the enemy met with any temporary success, had not a little to do with Boer forbearance. On the other hand, twice Major Scott Turner led a sortie—once taking a Boer redoubt, the other time losing his life. It is wonderful how little the town, greatly scattered, has suffered—perhaps a score of houses in all show what it has passed through, and the people looked (despite the reduction of food to a quarter of a pound of horse or mule flesh per adult, and two ounces for children), on their relief by General French, surprisingly well. This result is due not a little to the successful alimentary organisation of Major Gorle, of the Army Service Corps. The last few days were, however, the worst, when the Boer 100-pounder was kept going all day, and the women and children had to be placed in the 1,500-foot level of the Kimberley mine. The siege will be worthily commemorated to future generations by the statue of Mr. Rhodes the grateful besieged are going to place in the city square. In front of it will stand "Long Cecil," a remarkably perfect gun, throwing a 30-lb. projectile, constructed by Mr. George Labram, an American engineer, from designs found in an old book, without the slightest previous experience or any suitable machinery. It will call to mind the ingenuity of the American race, at one with us in this war, and mark the regret of the community that one so able was himself blown to pieces by a bursting shell within a few hours of the completion of his great work.

THE ENEMY.

It is time that we paid some attention to the enemy. President Kruger was right when he declared that the Boers would astonish us. They have proved a marvellously brave, tenacious foe, unlimited in their ingenuity and utilisation of all the devices of war. What have been their numbers? Agreement upon this matter will never be reached. British calculations were based upon the census of 1890, the Presidential election of 1893, and that of 1898—but the voters in these latter were only first-class burghers, descendants of those in the country before 1876. At best a census in a widely scattered, imperfectly organised community, is an untrustworthy guide. Even with us it is only approximative. Much more is this the case when the giving up of numbers is looked upon as a sure prelude to taxation and to military service. To the latter the Boers have never evinced the dislike they have to the rendering of tribute. The census showed 63,000 Boers, men, women, and children, say 80,000 allowing for the increase in nine years, of whom it would be an extravagant estimate to say that half were capable of bearing arms in a campaign.

How many would respond was an uncertain factor. Lord Salisbury once said that wars are now made by peoples and not by rulers. This was

eminently a war made by rulers and not by peoples. It was impossible then to forecast how peoples would support their leaders.

That the Orange Free State would deliberately sacrifice her freedom, her prosperity "one of the most prosperous territories in South Africa," says Mr. Robert Russell, the historian of Natal, and her independence, without the slightest reason or provocation, for the purpose of joining with the Transvaal, was a result no sane man in or out of South Africa would credit. The Free State had no complaint against us. We had none against it. True, that the treaty concluded by Mr. T. M. Reitz, now Transvaal State Secretary, when President of the Orange Free State, and President Kruger, at Potchefstroom on March 29th, 1889, was no secret. It provided for "abiding peace," and bound the contractants "to assist each other with all power and means whenever the independence of one of the two States shall be threatened or assailed from without, unless the State which has to render the assistance shall show the injustice of the cause of the other State." But President Steyn had shown an apparent desire for peace by inviting the Conference to Bloemfontein. He had indignantly repudiated in solemn message to the High Commissioner the suggestion that he might join with the Transvaal. There was no evidence of his military resources.

The natural inclination of our generals and military authorities suffering unexpected check was, and is, to magnify the strength of the enemy. This will continue to be the case, while the Boers, to make their achievements the more remarkable, will strive to diminish them. The probable truth is that the two Republics were able, together, to put 60,000 men into the field, a number brought up to 70,000 by commandeered Uitlanders, foreign mercenaries, rebels from Cape Colony, and natives, either voluntarily serving, or compelled to serve in some capacity or another. Major Albrecht (formerly a non-commissioned officer in the German Army), who has for 20 years been resident in the Free State, and who organised its artillery, has stated that at the battle of Colenso the Boers had not more than 13,000 men, and it has been affirmed that they never had more than 7,000 before Lord Methuen or between the First Division and Kimberley. Probably these numbers are understated. But I doubt if they are to any considerable extent. It is, however, perfectly certain that a certain number of Boers were moved from Modder River to Ladysmith and back again by the railways running from Bloemfontein to the trenches before Ladysmith, and even to the very base of Hlangwane Hill, as also from the north to Kamfersdam, whence the 100-pounder laid on a temporary branch to the top of a kopje, hammered Kimberley. We despoiled our enemy and suffered accordingly.

I repeat, however, that estimates of hostile numbers, as much on one side as on the other, are quite unreliable. What is perfectly certain is that insufficient strength was attributed to the extraordinary military positions the Boers were able to take up, and also to their fighting capacity.

Of all the hundreds of able soldiers who in recent years have gone by coach or rail from Cape Town to the Free State, from Maritzburg to

the Transvaal, not one seems to have noticed how difficult those great plains would be for infantry to traverse if the kopjes were held by a defending force with modern arms. Insufficient account was taken of the mobility of the enemy, and if the view was in part correct that infantry was the right arm for operations in Natal, it is difficult to understand how or by whom, Mr. Secretary Chamberlain was advised to ask for infantry from Canada and Australia, when replying to the magnificent offers of those Colonies. Perhaps the notion that horsemen cannot be improvised had something to say on the matter. It is one of the delusions the war has in part dispelled. Volunteers may not be expert or smart riders, but if they can get about on a pony it is something.

But we may presently consider this matter in connection with the British case, the British preparations upon which in Parliament and the country much has been and much more will be said. For the present let us confine our attention to the Boers and their plan of campaign.

Judged by the light of events it was undoubtedly erroneous. Four factors took the Boers to Natal, and it was for the British a providential decision. They were drawn thither in the first place by the presence of the Indian contingent; in the second by the strong sentiment attaching to their Great Trek to Natal—in which President Kruger as a boy of ten took part, and the dream of re-establishing at Maritzburg the Republic of Natalia, of gaining the sea, and the power to issue Letters of Marque. But in all probability the greatest determining influence of all was the confident belief that the Dutch in Cape Colony, or at least in the most Dutch districts thereof, would of themselves rise. It is not necessary in support of this theory to show the existence of any formal, any written, any organised conspiracy. There is ample proof of the sympathy of a very large proportion of the Dutch—even of the Dutch long loyal to the English Queen, in Cape Colony for the Boer cause. Cousins and even nearer kindred were burghers of one or other of the Republics. Not a few families had sons, or sons-in-law, or nephews, or grandsons fighting on both sides. To the Dutch loyal to Britain, Britain owes untold gratitude. It is a gratitude it may, I hope, be possible to recognise, and if by no other means at least by contrast to rebels.

I have made every endeavour to inform myself of the facts from the best Dutch as much as from other sources. Indeed, my action in that respect, although purely that of an individual responsible only to himself, created alarm in some circles in Cape Town, accustomed to state only one side of a case. And I do not hesitate to express the belief that Mr. Chamberlain was perfectly justified in saying that the British Empire had only just escaped one of the greatest dangers to which it has ever been subjected. I am convinced that had we been engaged in any other part of the world, with a great Power, British dominion in South Africa would have been wiped out.

For the avoidance of that danger we have to thank

LORD SALISBURY AND THE PARIS EXHIBITION.

I say Lord Salisbury, because had it not been (in the past tense, because the danger is now past, whatever may arise) for the extraordinary

skill with which, in the face of unparalleled difficulties in many quarters of the world, and with more nations than one, Lord Salisbury has succeeded in laying pending questions to temporary rest, we might have had great armies, and powerful navies to contend against at the same time.

I say the Paris Exhibition, because, although I do not believe that there is any serious hostility towards us on the part of the French people, as a whole, while the attitude of the French Government is perfectly correct, I do not think it would have been sufficiently strong to withstand the pressure of the noisy anti-English section, but for the rampart of the great—of the greatest—exhibition, to be opened next Saturday, and to which the whole French nation is committed, not only in millions of money, but by all that makes for prosperity.

Nor can sufficient acknowledgment be made to the German Emperor for His Imperial Majesty's visit to the Queen at a most important juncture, and even in the face of much ill-concealed dissatisfaction on the part of his own people. It served to show other nations besides the Boers that we were in agreement with that great Power, and materially to restrain accessions to the hostile ranks.

THE AFRIKANDER BOND.

There is no reason why, in the heat of racial conflict, we should forget the material services rendered to the cause of the Unity of the Empire by the Hon. Hendrick Jan Hofmeyr on more occasions than one. He was a representative of Cape Colony at the Imperial Conference in the Jubilee Year, 1887. He was a representative of Cape Colony at the Colonial Conference convened by the Dominion of Canada in 1894, and Mr. Hofmeyr himself proposed at Ottawa the resolution, which, being unanimously carried, led to the accomplishment of the first part of the work of the United Empire Trade League, namely, the abolition, in 1897, of the treaties precluding the establishment of preferential trading relations within the Empire.

The Afrikaner Bond, of which Mr. Hofmeyr is a leader, is, however, much blamed. It was founded in 1880, and is a political association, composed of 300 branches, sixty district committees, provincial committees, and a central committee, with 10,000 members, for the formation of a South African nationality by means of the union and co-operation of all who, whether by birth or by adoption, consider Africa as their home and its interests as their own. In 1883, the Farmers' Protection Association, representing the Country Party, in which Mr. Rhodes had been associated with Mr. Hofmeyr, amalgamated with it. Whatever the work of the Bond, there is little room to doubt that if the Republics, instead of sending their armies to Natal, instead of locking them up between two British forces before Ladysmith and before Kimberley in hopes, it may be, of capturing Mr. Rhodes and Dr. Jameson, had sent commandoes straight upon Cape Town, Cradock, and Queenstown, their forces would have been augmented like snowballs, and we should either have to content

ourselves with Simon's Bay, securing the coast from foreign aggression for the Dutch, as they planned, or have on our hands a gigantic, a terrible, if not indeed, an impossible task.

It was a clear and positive error of judgment on the part of the enemy, for which we may be most thankful. It probably had its origin in the boastful declarations of young sympathisers as to what they would do under certain contingencies. Rebels are rarely—if ever—to be relied upon, and in Poland, in Spain, in Ireland (although there are few or none there now), and in every Republic of South America, they have deceived those who had the idiocy to attach any belief to their promises. Indeed, they happily always contain a good proportion of those who are rebels only in outward speech for want of moral courage, and who jump at any opportunity of surrendering or betraying what they know to be a hopeless cause.

THE TRANSVAAL

undoubtedly astonished us by the numbers of the troops at the disposal of herself and her ally. But she astonished us even more by the excellence of her armament. That President Kruger was heavily arming was perfectly well known, and equally that the armament was directed against the British. It began on a considerable scale in 1893. In 1894 and 1895, £400,000 were spent on cannon in Austria and Germany. But the events of New Year's Eve, 1895, redoubled the orders. Vickers-Maxim Pom-Poms, Maxim batteries, Creusot Q.F. throwing eight shells a minute five miles, and Schneiders throwing shrapnel with 230 bullets, were ordered in considerable quantity. But how was it possible for us to enter any effective protest? We could not allege that the Republic had no enemies against its independence. The Jameson Raid was proof positive as to the contrary. The agitation in Johannesburg was evidence to the contrary. All through 1896 we were suitors at President Kruger's audience chamber—first, for the lives of Dr. Jameson, his officers, and men; secondly, for the lives of the arrested Committee of Johannesburg, whose injudicious leaders, pleading guilty to high treason, were condemned to death; then for the franchise and other things. The British Government was frustrated by the premature and senseless acts of its own subjects, arousing much feeling at home, and there was not a little suspicion that some of these sought to set up a British Republic at Pretoria for their own ends, rather than the British flag.

It is, however, idle to dwell needlessly upon the past, its blunders and vices, and weep over what might have been. It is the war with which we are concerned. Some amongst us have called out energetically for more vigorous action as regards

DELAGOA BAY.

Undoubtedly the larger portion of the armaments of the Transvaal were received through Delagoa Bay, and thence doubtless transferred in part to the Free State. It was not a matter over which, before the war, we

could exercise any material control. Delagoa Bay was discovered by the Portuguese four centuries ago, and has ever since been in their possession. It is the principal port of all that remains to them in South or East Africa of the discoveries of their great navigators, to whom the world will ever remain in lasting obligation. Portuguese East Africa comprises a territory half as large again as the United Kingdom. Delagoa Bay could not be treated separately. In 1823, Captain Owen, of the Royal Navy, obtained from native chiefs certain islands in the bay, and the river Espirita Santa became known as English River. The claim was never pressed, and no occupation ensued. But in 1852, when the Transvaal Republic was acknowledged, Captain Owen's claim was re-opened. A little diplomatic correspondence ensued, but nothing more done until 1861, when Captain Bickford planted the British flag and annexed the islands and the adjacent roadstead to Natal. The Portuguese protested, and a lengthy diplomatic correspondence ensued. In 1864 the Portuguese established or developed the fever-frequented town of Lourenço Marques, and in 1869 made a commercial treaty with the South African Republic. Thereupon Great Britain laid claim to the southern and eastern shores of Delagoa Bay, basing their action upon that of Captain Owen. In 1872 Mr. Gladstone's Government referred the matter to the arbitration of the French Republic. It was not a good choice, and, as might be expected, Marshal MacMahon, in 1875, gave his award against us—the Portuguese case being, moreover, far better and more carefully prepared than ours. Five months afterwards there was a fresh treaty between Portugal and the South African Republic, for the free interchange of products and free transit of many classes of goods, and others at a moderate duty, and in 1883 Portugal granted a concession for the railway from Pretoria, which has been the subject of recent arbitration in favour of the bondholders.

The Portuguese viewed with little favour the subsequent British advance into Matabeleland, and the agreement with Great Britain of 1890 was not ratified by the Cortes. On 14th November of that year there was a collision between the British South Africa Company's Police and the Portuguese, resulting in the defeat of the latter. This created great excitement in Lisbon, and volunteers demanded to be sent out. They arrived at Beira, and were totally defeated on 11th May, 1891. The Governments concerned at once hastened to sign, on 11th June, a treaty defining the British and Portuguese boundaries, and providing that in the event of either Power proposing to part with any territory south of the Zambesi, the other should have a preferential right to it.

I have recalled these facts as showing that the question of Delagoa Bay is by no means the simple one some people have asserted. Nor are there wanting other matters to be considered in this connection besides the feeling of an ancient race, whose ruler, under Philip II., was styled "Lord of the Conquest, Navigation, and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia, and India." Although the blockage of the Tagus would be quite possible—so far as any blockade is possible after the late Admiral Sir George Tryon's proof to the contrary—any interruption to our friendly relations with Portugal would be exceedingly inconvenient at a moment

when the seaway between Great Britain and South Africa was covered by our transports requiring coal at the Portuguese islands of Madeira and St. Vincent. Nor can we forget that the Queen of Portugal is a Princess of the House of France, and near akin to the Princes of Orléans, whose extreme Anglophobe opinions are well known, despite our hospitality for half a century to that exiled family.

Undoubtedly, what we have suffered during the war by the Delagoa Bay being used as a transit port for arms and men to the enemy, is as nothing compared to the international difficulties which might have been created by any offensive action as to Delagoa Bay, or even of overtures to purchase. Moreover, it is a trade which, with the rights of belligerents, command of the sea, and eight British men-of-war constantly in port, as well as under martial law in Natal, Her Majesty's officers have been able largely to control, and to render at least dangerous.

BOER TEACHING OF THE ART OF WAR.

But after all has been said, the Boers have taught us, and not us alone, but all the world military, valuable lessons in the art of war. They have shown :—

1. Extraordinary mobility.
2. Ingenuity in moving heavy ordnance to and from distant parts of the country, and to the summit of positions which would have been considered inaccessible.
3. Great command as much of artillery as of rifle fire.
4. The extreme value of entrenchments, and the power of ill-organised, undisciplined troops behind them, operating upon interior lines even against vastly superior numbers perfectly trained.
5. Scientific utilisation of cover.

It is worth while briefly to consider these characteristics on the part of the enemy.

1. As to *Mobility*.—There has been astonishing mobility, both strategically and tactically. We have positive proof that a certain number of the Boer forces, and especially the artillerymen under Major Albrecht, were transferred from Ladysmith to Kimberley and Colesberg and back again. We have seen Boer commandos moving sixty miles in a single night. The endurance of their half-starved horses knows no bounds. A single team took Colonel Young, the Red Cross Commissioner, and myself, ninety-eight miles over an awful country in fifteen road hours—not counting three outspans—and they shied at an ostrich the last mile. The Boer mobility is increased by absolute independence of food for themselves, or forage for their horses. A little biltong or dried meat, a blanket, and a little bush, and they are content. They want no great coats or tents. How different to ourselves! I counted over a hundred ox-wagons going out with great coats and comforts for two divisions bivouacking for a single night. True, Lord Kitchener cut down to the

smallest possible fraction the baggage of the outflanking column—no tents, no great coats, no blankets,—but still how enormous it inevitably was! The loss of the convoy meant the loss of over 300,000 rations. With six galloping mules it took me an hour to pass a convoy to Paardeberg.

Tactically, the mobility has not been less amazing. Now a kopje is apparently held in force with artillery and infantry. It draws the fire of all our batteries and rifles. There is no response. But are the guns silenced, as enthusiastic correspondents hasten to cable? No; they have only been moved to a secure place, while the infantry occupy, unobserved, trenches at the foot of the hill to sweep the advance at the right moment, and with a flat trajectory from rested rifles at marked distances. Now, while a carefully posted detachment holds the front and entices the advance into the zone of an enfilade from equally carefully posted rifles, hostile parties, small in number it may be, but effective, will threaten both flanks simultaneously, as well as the line of retreat. Not even the Brigade of Guards under that cheerful, brave, and adaptable General, Pole-Carew, could have moved companies and battalions from flank to flank with the ease and discipline shown by General Cronje. The Boers were discovered in full retreat by Lord Kitchener himself. He thereupon at once changed the march from north-west to due east, and directed his pursuit by General Kelly-Kenny (the first Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces to command Volunteers in the field, and whose aide-de-camp, General Maurice, is your son, whose military career may I hope equal your own in distinction), and General Tucker, most popular and kindly of leaders. The forced marching of the infantry was magnificent—four miles an hour over rough veldt, fourteen miles without a drop of water in a burning sun. General Cronje had been deceived by a great camp left fluttering in the breeze before his lines, while the mass of the troops had been withdrawn in dead of night, moved to a secret point of concentration, and with other forces from south and east, led by forced marches on his communications. He had to fly at once, yet he fought a rear-guard action yard by yard, facing his commandos three-quarters about, while the right moved behind the firing line and took up position again on the left. And this notwithstanding the presence with the laager of women and children—yes, children! to the number of nearly one hundred... What could have been the object of exposing women and children to the horrors of camp and trench life, to the storms of lyddite and shrapnel? I cannot conceive. No family love can excuse it. It is horrible to think of. I should not have believed other evidence than my own eyes and ears, and could I not testify myself to the bitterness of the women. It is said some acted as loaders, and that others were dead shots.

The horses of the Boer mounted infantry are not awkwardly held by No. 3 of the sub-section. They dismount twenty or thirty men, and either leave them alone knee-haltered, or tied in a circle, or put them in charge of one man or one native. This is impossible with big British-fed British horses. It will be one of the difficulties with some of the fine horses of the Imperial Yeomanry. The Prince Imperial of France lost his most

precious life because his horse was too big and restive in mounting. Further, the Boers are very clever in keeping their horses out of fire. They are instruments of locomotion, and they do not run the risks we do with led horses.

2. *The Transport of Heavy Ordnance* has surprised all. Who could have foretold that even with a hundred yoke of oxen and thousands of pairs of arms working downhill on double windlasses fixed up the hill, the Boers could have moved guns of position to the great heights protecting the passage of the Tugela? Who could have imagined that between 12 noon and 7 p.m., on 15th February, they could have dismounted and moved away unseen by rail from Kamfersdam before Kimberley a 100-pounder gun, weighing between 10 and 20 tons? They thus prevented its capture and that of most of their siege ordnance by General French's relief column, of which they could not have had earlier notice. Our smart and mobile horse and field artillery were of course outranged. But for the Royal Navy, but for the perseverance of the officers and men of H.M. Fleet in outshipping thirty-five of their heavy guns, the Army would have been in a bad way. The land transport of this heavy ordnance was no easy matter, especially for the 6-inch guns from the "Terrible." But for the zeal and ingenuity of Captain Percy Scott, seconded by Mr. Reid and the Natal Railway workshops, it could not have been done. As to heavy ordnance, even more assistance might possibly have been rendered than was actually the case by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines to the Western as well as to the Eastern Army. The fault was not with those Services. Every officer, petty officer, seaman or marine in them was eager and ready to do anything, and the 1,100 who were allowed to go up to the Modder or the Tugela did magnificent and most gallant work. It is impossible to believe that there was any jealousy or dislike of the Army. Of course it is the business of an admiral to keep his fleet ready for any emergency. But if the War Office or the Admiralty tolerate for an instant in any individual, whatever his rank, any want of ready co-action with the sister Service, the country should hold their responsible Ministers to strict account. The armed forces of the Crown, whether afloat or ashore, whether Regular or Auxiliary, must be one in the service of the Empire.

3. *The Command of Artillery and Rifle Fire* possessed by the Boers has been amazing. While some of our batteries have run serious risks of being short of ammunition, in their desire, and that of Maxim gun sections, to make a noise, and riddle any trench or bush where the enemy might be, wholly irrespective of whether he was actually there, the Boer artillery fire has, as a rule, been intermittent. Ten minutes of the Vickers-Maxim Sheffield-made "Pom-Pom" and its demoralising effect, then a pause of an hour or two, and re-appearance on the same or on a fresh position. The Boer shells do not appear to have done great damage. Seven hundred shells thrown into Kimberley in the course of a fortnight killed one Kaffir woman, wounded one man, hit one church, two public-houses, and a few other buildings, but otherwise did no harm. Major Albrecht says the same of our shells—"1,000 shells killed a dozen

and wounded forty." Of course, no one can obtain exact statistics, and no artillery officer will ever admit that his range-finder and his careful laying were ineffective. I can only say that more than once the most powerful naval telescope on a tripod showed no sign of that commotion in the enemy's trench where a British shell fell, which is almost unavoidable if it had done much work; and the opinion that ten minutes of rifle fire disables more than ten hours of artillery, is one which, if authentic, as I believe it to be, demands careful consideration. It will not be difficult of approximate proof by our hospital returns.

But whether accurate or not, the Boer command of their rifle fire has been far superior to all the sections in our drill-books devoted to fire discipline, to all the close study of our generals, colonels, and captains, to the words of command of section leaders—to all the praise of the simultaneity of a volley. As if it mattered one scrap whether twenty rifles went off on the word of an officer or sergeant behind them who can see next to nothing, unless he stands up to be killed, compared to the twenty bullets hitting twenty different men. As if any marksmen, however expert, could keep his sight aligned on the object, and his forefinger on the trigger, whilst the section leader behind was counting four, and often double or treble that, on the most approved Hythe method. One might as well shoot pheasants and partridges by volleys by command of the head keeper or loader. It is not given to the human heart to stand such suspense.

Nor have the Boers limited their marksmen to a pouchful of cartridges. Their trenches show that an entire boxful has been at the disposal of the occupants of this or that rifle pit, and yet each man has held his fire until he could fire with some effect at something definite, an officer standing up, an officer using his field glasses, a general, or colonel, or adjutant, or staff officer moving about, a moving kilt, a pair of white or brown calves blistering in the sun, showing the back of a khâki-clad man, a helmet over a stone or ant-hill. Nor were volleys and incessant fire not forthcoming at an advance in mass, a battery, battalion, a regiment or serried column of route, or in the favourite formation nicknamed "awaiting shell."

An exception, however, there has often been to this Boer restraint and this individual aim. British infantry are advancing the other side of that hill or slope. They are located by Boer scouts concealed in dongas. They are out of sight and out of range. But no matter. Rest the lower joint of your thumb upon the top of the backsight, align the foresight and fire. You will annoy the advancing infantry, you will hit some. You will make an intermittent noise of bullets. Where in the world do they come from? There is not a man to be seen, not a single puff of smoke, not the slightest report of a rifle. The use of the "thumb sight" by the enemy has been very irritating, even at 3,000 or 4,500 yards. That gallant Highland commander Colonel Dick Cunyngham was killed by a bullet at over 3,000 yards distance, and yet our War Office on 16th February "will not trouble" the inventor of a high-angle rifle-sight costing a shilling. It is this bureaucratic obstinacy which the nation has to fight as the curse of the country.

The fourth matter for note is the great use made of rifle pits, entrenchments, and barbed wire entanglements. Often these trenches have been rough and rude of construction, often quite shallow and flat, showing no earth in front, invisible at 1,000 yards, just sheltering the recumbent riflemen, and no more. Often deep pits, with a cave or hollow at the bottom—for, *horribile dictu*, a woman or a child, or for the rifleman it may be, to creep into until danger from that whizzing shell is past. They have never before been seen in war, and were a revelation to all at Paardeberg. Unless the shell bursts in the pit itself—and the chances against that are ten thousand to one—no damage is done. The labour of the Boers in constructing trenches has been perfectly marvellous; they never seem to tire. At dusk that hill is clear; at dawn a treble row of trenches bars the advance. How different to our people! Islandwhana, Majuba, and many instances show the difficulty of getting them even to laager, or throw up any protection. A field gun emplacement, a shelter trench thrown up by infantry in the German manner, if occupation is but for an hour, is practically unknown. I have often kept the most powerful glass constantly to my eyes to discover a German battery in manœuvre, so artfully is every gun hidden by straw, grass, or earth, according to the surrounding ground. On the Tugela the naval and other guns were left absolutely in the open for weeks and days in some cases, for hours in others, and even while well in range with shells falling close around. The Artillery may not like this, but I have a note of place, date, and hour. What entrenching has saved the Boers, what it has cost us, casualty returns show only too clearly, albeit they are, of course, far more applicable to defence than attack.

But close akin to the part entrenchments have played in the campaign is the fifth point—

THE SCIENTIFIC USE OF COVER.

Only by such means is any advance now possible against an enemy in position with modern weapons. The highest authority in the German Army has said to me, "If the men are encouraged to take cover, you will never get them out of it to face Maxim fire." It is an opinion which I venture to think will have to be modified, or there will be none to stand shoulder to shoulder in the "parade march" preceding the charge.

The grief of the nation is great at the loss of over 250 officers, besides 2,400 sergeants and privates killed in action, or died of wounds in this war, besides 150 officers and 3,600 men missing and prisoners. It is not that the men have clung to cover too tenaciously, and had to be drawn out of it by the orders and example of the officers. True, that the war shows that any economy in officers is a false economy; that the modern weapons necessitate more scientific, more courageous leading than ever. The loss lies, however, in great measure, at the door of the officers themselves. It is a magnificent national characteristic which no other nation can equal. It is one only to be admired, to be worshipped, to be encouraged, never to be condemned. The fear of being thought to shirk is a factor. The desire for distinction is a great one; but needless

exposure is suicide, and unfair to the Queen, the country, and the Army. Many are the instances—names could be given; but why give pain to those longing for that life to come back?—of a general, of a colonel, of a captain, or subaltern, deliberately leaving cover, deliberately standing up, deliberately going to the top of a hill “to have a look,” deliberately walking across a front, with no particular object in view, save, perhaps, a word with a comrade. The life has gone, and probably taken others with it.

But for scientific use of cover, the Boer has proved himself *facile princeps*.

When the Army comes home, you will be surprised to find how few members of it have ever seen a Boer, save with a flag of truce (it may be improperly used), or as a prisoner. I did not meet half-a-dozen officers in all Sir Redvers Buller's army who saw one at the battle of Colenso. Nor is it only in defence that the Boer has been marvellous in taking cover. Writing of the attack on Ladysmith, the special correspondent of the *Standard* says:—“As usual, it was impossible to see the Boers, so cleverly did they take cover among the stones. But their presence was made known by a continuous shower of lead, some of which did mischief at 3,000 yards. Our men are slowly adapting themselves to this game of ‘hide and shoot.’” The bullets come, they find their billets; but what is there to fire at in return? Not a man to be seen. A tiny enclosure or grove in a trench or on the top of a rifle pit. A stone. Yet behind it is a Boer rifleman. When he fires he does not stand up to fire by the word of command of a blind or blinded section leader, does not show a helmet over the top, does not place his shining barrel along the upper surface. It lies along the side. The right shoulder and right eye and left knuckles are only exposed for a second or two. The stone still shelters the rest of the head. There is no smoke.

Small wonder that under such circumstances few Boers are to be seen—that their loss has been comparatively small. “Seven killed” is the official record for the battle of Colenso. The commander of the Dutch artillery put it at 36 killed and 70 wounded. But, whatever it was, the total, I fear, was very short of ours—158 killed and 765 wounded, besides 224 missing. Again, in moving from position to position, as in attack, there is no Boer mass to be seen. Single files or double files at twenty paces intervals, individual movement, “scatter boys,” and rendezvous at a certain point—one mile, two miles, twenty miles away. See that battery of Royal Artillery moving along the front of our position. See that infantry column in close order. The general-in-chief is in despair, but says it is hopeless to try and correct during a battle such incessant mistakes. Nor are army, divisional, and brigade staffs always themselves free from blame. I have in my mind one hill tenanted by general, brigadier, C.R.E., C.R.A., and escort, in the most approved Aldershot “pow-wow” manner. “The troops can go home,” says he in authority. Six hundred yards of retirement was done by the last squadron, when from that very hill came volley after volley, emptying ten saddles in fewer seconds. Granting to the Boers more than double our mobility, then

they were not 1,500 yards away, carefully concealed all the while, close to the hill.

Why did they hold their fire? Why not *terrasser* generals with one volley? Because the numbers of the enemy were few and unsupported, and the reconnaissance was strong in all arms.

THE BOER WEAKNESS.

But if there be prudence and the wisdom of the serpent in clinging to trenches, to kopjes, to dongas, and to cover, it is a virtue easy to be carried into a vice. This is so of the Boers. However arbitrary their generals, however persuasive their commandants and field cornets, they could once only be persuaded to assume the offensive. The experiment was not one to be repeated. It was at Ladysmith on 6th January—a most gallant effort of the Harrismith Free State commando, under Commandants de Villiers and Van Wyck. They took off their boots, they assaulted two flanks simultaneously and noiselessly in blackest night. They completely surprised the British pickets and were all but successful—indeed they were only expelled from the positions won after 17 hours desperate fighting, by the glorious courage of British officers and men—too many of whom fell never to rise again—Lord Ava, Digby Jones of the Engineers, and Hunt Grubbe of the Manchesters. The Imperial Light Horse had the colonel, two majors, and four officers *hors de combat*. The only officer of the Devons who escaped was Colonel Pack, who led them. But if before Kimberley in the early days of the siege it had been otherwise, success would have been difficult to resist.

THE LESSONS OF THE WAR.

What are the lessons of the war as read by ourselves? I will not dwell upon those at home, although they are deep—the disjunction of the armed forces of the Crown, the treating of Army, Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers as separate and rival bodies; the want of preparation, the melancholy condition of inland defence—Great Britain left without guns, without ammunition, without cavalry, without any of the essentials for defence.

But what of those read at Dundee, at Elands Laagte, at Rietfontein, at Nicholson's Nek, at Colenso, at Spearman's Camp, at Spion Kop, at Hlangwane, at Ladysmith? what of those read at Belmont, at Graspan, at Modder River, at Magersfontein, at Enslin, at Klip Drift, at Paardeberg, at Kimberley, at Bloemfontein Water-Works?

They must not be lost in the pæan of honour and glory in which the troops will soon return. We must profit by the experience of the war. The key-note has been sounded by Sir Redvers Buller himself. "I suppose our officers will some day learn the *value of scouting*, but at present our men always seem to blunder into the very midst of the enemy."

They cannot learn the value of scouting unless the opportunity is afforded them. It is not to be done by a vast number of men, brigades

as strong as divisions, in a confined space. It is not to be done in a short parade in a morning's work. No cavalry has greater dash than the British. No cavalry officers are such good horsemen, straight riders, or brave men. Were it otherwise, the three brigades of horse and eight batteries of horse artillery, under General French, could not have done that hundred-mile march to the relief of Kimberley in 96 hours—could not have done those five miles at a gallop from Klip Drift which entirely disconcerted the enemy. But why so many complaints by Generals of the scouting work? It is for the cavalry to answer. The advance of an invading army is strewn with dead horses and dead oxen, with trains of sick and wounded jolting painfully to the base. Alas, too, there are shattered reputations of brave leaders as milestones. It will be an evil day for England if the *jeunesse dorée* is turned away from the cavalry because the training is too thorough, the work is too hard and too trying; yet the cavalry must become more of a profession.

Some have thought that the day of cavalry was over. Field-marshal have chosen it as a theme for post-prandial oratory. But this war has shown, as did that of 1870, that the day of cavalry is now, and has still to come, not, it may be, of charging cavalry with sword and lance, but of mounted infantry, capable of quick movement on horses easy to mount, and of foot work in the fire zone.

This war has shown more than ever that the battle is to the swift as distinguished from the impetuous. It is a strategical race for the best positions, a tactical race for a change of front, for flank movement, for lines of supply and communications, and then victory is to the patient and the cautious, the troops using their arms and long-range weapons with greatest effect and least risk. This war has shown that every ounce you put upon the soldier's back is a drawback. He must be in a position to move quickly, quicker than his adversary, whether on his feet, by horse, or in wagon. *The Equipment* needs revision. You cannot fasten a soldier's body round about with straps and impedimenta which a comrade must fix. You cannot give him an equipment depending upon counterpoise—pouches that have to be kept in place by the counterweight of the great-coat, betraying the small of his back 1,000 yards away to the enemy—as a Boer commandant showed me, a great-coat requiring ball cartridges to keep the belt in place. Yet of such is our Slade-Wallace. A kit bag holds three times as much, but of course must be carried by the transport and can only be available in camps standing for some days. What is wanted for marching columns is a light but warm brown waterproof, and a light woollen "combination" garment for night.

A bandolier presents many advantages over pouches—a slouch hat over helmets. Indeed the latter, except for India, are the worst form of head-dress imaginable—hideous in themselves, a water-spout in rain, difficult to shoot in, a specific to give headache.

Then again, *the day of the sword is done* save as an emblem. It is doubtful if a sword in this campaign has ever inflicted a wound upon anyone save upon the hips and legs of the wearer, or the flank of a horse. It

was quickly recognised as a sort of legend, "Here, I am an officer, shoot me," and laid aside, with colours and other relics of the past. Are not kilts to go with grey horses? Highland losses have been too heavy. But there must be some means by which an officer can be distinguished by those he leads. Khâki has been a great success, but Stohwaser gaiters are much better than putties, and far easier to put on. The boots have been a great improvement on those in the Soudan, but no one pair of boots would stand such work in such a country.

"Our Tommies are splendid fellows, but I wish to God they could shoot better." This was the observation of a loyal and experienced colonist as a train-load of brave men went by. It contains but too much truth. The nation must, before it is too late, endeavour to teach its youth to shoot—as a compulsory branch of education. It is as important as any subject of the Seventh Standard. Drill and musketry, as Dr. Warre, leader of headmasters, has declared, must become national, as in Natal, must become compulsory at Eton, Harrow, and Westminster, at Oxford, and Cambridge, and Dublin, if we are to avoid forced military service. Rifle practice must be brought within reach of every cottage, says the Prime Minister. The choice is before us. No man can think, despite the Hague Conference and the aspirations of the Tsar, that the day of war is over, or that this generation of Britons will not see a great foreign effort to stay the march of their Empire.

Nor can *the question of armament* escape revision. There are many who declare that the Mauser rifle has proved far superior to the Lee-Metford. It may be, though, only a matter of the carpenter, not the tool. The Mauser revolver is certainly better. The regulation weapon is antediluvian, and warranted to be perfectly safe in anybody's hand, save by accident or at point-blank range. Moreover, our officers and sergeants of the Regular Army are not, as a rule, taught revolver shooting, as are those of some Volunteer corps.

The calibre and range of our artillery will also command close scrutiny. It is alleged that it is inferior to that of foreign nations, because Woolwich will make for itself, and is slow to move, and won't trouble about new inventions. But in this connection it will have to be weighed whether there is not a danger to be avoided in excessively powerful field guns carrying beyond any power of natural or artificial vision. At least two instances are substantiated of our own artillery mistaking at long distance our own troops for the enemy, and being responsible through this accident for the loss of valuable lives. Again, it missed an opportunity of inflicting crushing loss upon the enemy in the Boer flight from Dundee, because it feared our own people were in close pursuit.

Again, *tactics and formations* will have to be revised—the close order is done. Seven years ago at Aldershot I started with a provisional battalion a "creeping" advance in column of attack. It was not approved. It was made the subject of good-humoured caricature. The army in the field is to-day being taught it.

But after all is said and done, the greatest lesson on the war is

THE ARMED STRENGTH OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

The map given my name by Messrs. Keith Johnston & Co., and on the walls of nearly every school in the Empire, carries this legend:—

“The British Defensive Power is represented by 500 ships of war, and 2,000,000 soldiers, sailors, and volunteers, but most of all by the patriotism and union, the brotherly affection and mutual confidence of all races, classes, parties, and peoples in every part of the Empire, and the unswerving loyalty of each single individual to the common whole, the common good, and the one constitutional Sovereign.”

It is not in excess of the truth. Who could have thought six months ago that we should have 220,000 troops, with 40,000 horsemen, in the field? If Lord Wolseley had ventured on such a prophecy, critics would have torn him to ribands. Who could have imagined that 94 per cent. of the Reservists would come to the colours? Who could have forecast the enthusiasm of the whole country, of the Militia, of the Volunteers, of the Yeomanry, that dukes would have left their palaces, lawyers the tribunal, brokers the Exchange, tradesmen their counters, workmen their homes, and husbands their wives, for the war, most eager for the front, and still less that Greater Britain would vie with Greater Britain to send the most troops, the best troops, in the shortest possible space of time. The General Staff in Berlin, the *État-Major* in France, have found all their calculations erroneous.

President Kruger took the Army List, President Steyn listened to false counsellors, and between them they came to the conclusion that Great Britain could perhaps put 50,000 men against them, and these, they were convinced, and perhaps rightly, they could drive into the sea, if they reached the coast beforehand. The Presidents have been mistaken; we have surprised ourselves; we have surprised the world, and it has been worth the discovery.

There are some people who blame the Government for insufficient preparation for a war they wanted to avoid, they hoped to avoid. These are the very persons who said at the end of last September they could see no reason for military preparations. Now they say we should have punctuated despatches, with army corps. It is indeed marvellous that we have sent 220,000 troops, and all their arms, ammunition, and stores in British ships, 200 in number, with a burden of a million tons, over 6,000 miles by sea, between 20 and 30 days on the ocean, and three hundred leagues by land, with only two or three mishaps. Such a work reflects the greatest credit upon the War Department, upon the Admiralty, upon the mercantile marine, upon the heads of the railways. Where is the Power which could accomplish, which could attempt, such an undertaking? Then would you blame *The Intelligence Department*? I will allow that military officers are bad detectives, that they may not get the most out of an informant. But—

Information is a commodity, like boots or clothing. If you want it you must pay for it. When 22 years ago I went to Scotland Yard, they

said you must get information of coming murder, plot, and robbery, but it must be all for love of serving the public. Stuff and nonsense. When I want a thing I buy it.

We pay little for information—one ten-thousandth part of the budget for all the departments of the State. What does that mean for the Army? A few hundred pounds, and for that you are going to know everything concerning the Armies and armaments of every Power in the world, for we are coterminous with them all. It is absurd.

But I am much surprised if there were wanting reports concerning the enterprise before us in South Africa, which, in the result, have shown themselves to be fairly accurate. It is one thing to write reports. I have spent half my life in writing them. It is another to get them believed or acted upon. Colonel Stoffel told Napoleon III. the exact state of affairs as regards the German Army compared to the French. He was not believed. He was set down as an enthusiast led away by the *genus loci*. Has there been no British "Colonel Stoffel" in our case? But the fact is none of us, or few of us, believe except what we wish to believe. This is so in commercial business. As Her Majesty's Consul at Grand Canary truly writes:—"From personal observation I believe that British consular reports are made more use of by our commercial competitors, especially Germans, than by our own countrymen, for whose sole benefit they are supposed to be written." It is so in affairs of State. An instance is averred against a general officer early in the war, who refused to believe his own outposts that the enemy was advancing in force, until a shell in the middle of the camp brought home the truth. But even if a military officer had been sent to the Transvaal to collect information, what would have been his opinion of the *personnel* of the Boer Army? Thrice the 4,000 prisoners of Paardeberg passed before me. Old men and boys—men of middle age and youths carrying blankets and kettles, coffee cups and teapots, in any and every dress, presenting no trace of homogeneity, possessing no single outward attribute which would appraise them at all as a fighting, an ordered, a disciplined unit; albeit they seemed to be suffering in no way physically from a siege in the bend of a river—a place where a less skilful general than Cronje, where less brave men could not have held out for a day. To whom would our emissary have looked for information beyond the range of his observation—from the Dutch or from the English?

He would have most certainly gone to Mr. Rhodes, who knows the country better than anyone, who had been in high office, head of the Progressive Party, who is a Privy Councillor, and the most patriotic of Britons; with great wealth, yet moving among the people, with limitless command of information and its equivalent.

In July, August, and September of last year, Mr. Rhodes would have said—he did say—"There will be no war; the Boers will not fight, they will give way if you are firm, if they stand they will not prove formidable."

This was the language the foremost man in South Africa held in public; this was the language he held in private, to his friends, supporters,

and colleagues in the Legislature and Commerce. He held it still in the early days of October. And is your Intelligence Department, administered by military officers, likely to have got better information than either Mr. Rhodes, or the leaders of Johannesburg, or the Civil Service Club in Cape Town, that forum of South African polemics? I care not for the prophets wise after the event. What I say is, there was not one, or hardly one, who gave the slightest indication of what would probably come to pass, what did happen. Imagine the position of a British officer in a mess—general or subaltern—who ventured to traverse the boastful newspaper headlines of the easy task before us. At Johannesburg, at Cape Town, at Durban, he would have been an object of pity. In the Carlton Club I had that hardihood, and it was so much resented that it was more prudent to change the subject. —“They won’t have anything to do with your Volunteers,” sharply said a high official. It is not fair then to blame the Intelligence Department, although incontestably in England, as in France, it is capable of much improvement. To saddle it, for instance, with the preparation of maps at home and in the field is absurd. Naval and military information is one thing, and map-drawing is another. Some can speak languages, some can draw maps, but the sciences are quite different.

POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

do not happily come within the purview of the Institution. I will, therefore, only say that they are the most difficult to touch upon. Study of the state of affairs in South Africa, independently of the political element, is impossible. Moreover, peace is in sight. The war has been difficult. But the peace, at least a permanent peace, is even more so. The hands of Sir Alfred Milner are, however, capable, and he knows the problem to be dealt with.

It is certain that nothing will satisfy the Imperialists of South Africa but the complete razing of what Mr. Chamberlain has termed the citadel of sedition and ferment. It is due to those who have fallen, it is due to those who are bearing the cost, to take every precaution that such a war shall never again be forced upon us, that Dutch national feeling shall never again be so well armed. Lord Salisbury has written:—“Her Majesty’s Government are not prepared to assent to the independence of either the South African Republic or the Orange Free State.” That is final. It is due to the patriotic co-operation, however, of Canada and Australasia to make them—to make Greater Britain—parties to the final settlement. It is due to a million Kaffirs, to a million Zulus, to half-a-million Basutos, to a quarter-of-a-million Swazis, all of whom, although not employed in active operations, looked upon the British triumph as essential to their own welfare. There could be no clearer tribute to the justice of our cause. But how the hundred millions sterling the war must cost are to be recovered from the offending territories; how they are to be administered, whether as a whole, as some recommend, or as two; what proportion of their lands can be given to Natal in compensation for occupation and devastation, are problems it would be unwise here to examine too closely.

But may I venture upon a respectful appeal to the South African League, to the Progressive or Imperial Party in Cape Colony, to the leaders of thought in Johannesburg and Kimberley, not to aggravate the difficulties of the situation, not to encourage, nay to repress, any excess of language or action, to restrain by every means in their power all mob excesses, and everything which may make a lasting peace more difficult of attainment, having regard to all the local circumstances of race and population within the borders of Cape Colony itself. Lord Roberts, great soldier as he is, has shown an admirable example of moderation and conciliation, which all may follow.

My task is done. I have endeavoured to set out the result of personal study, tempered by the experience of the most experienced. If in any point I have ventured upon criticism or suggestion, it is less that of an individual than the collective voice of others more competent. I am too well aware that whatever aptitude there may be for weighing information, the South African problem, and not less the military one, is not within the short range of any individual. I can at most hope to have contributed something to knowledge, and to have given some food for thought to the thoughtful.

AFTER THE WAR.

There can be no doubt that the peace, and more especially if it be a peace which, while it will prevent any possible further outbreak of disturbances in our generation, will not implant excessive hatred and bitterness in its train, will open to South Africa a great era of development. The attention of all the Empire, of all the world, has been vividly drawn to the great continent. The future will not hang like a cloud upon all transactions. It will attract men and money. It will attract energy and enterprise. The mineral resources, the gold, the diamonds, the coal, which give such evidence of existence from Delagoa Bay to Walfisch Bay, from Durban to Buluwayo, will be worked. Many fortunes will be made; many will be lost. There will be many openings, but this must be borne in mind, that the ordinary agricultural emigrant, burdened with wife, children, and household cares, must think twice and thrice before he embarks upon a land which, so far as can be at present seen, offers far more prospect to the celibate urban than to the rural settler. I can say nothing, however, about the Transvaal or about Rhodesia. But let us all hope that the future may be "Advance South Africa" under the British flag, which has won and made it.

Major-General C. H. OWEN (late R.A.):—I must apologise for opening the discussion to-day, but having to leave early, General Maurice was kind enough to call upon me, to speak first. I will try and be as short as I can, as I daresay there are a great many other speakers more worth hearing than myself. I had not the advantage of hearing this paper read by Sir Howard Vincent, but I have read it over carefully, and I shall confine what I have to say merely to one or two points. Sir Howard Vincent says:—"As to heavy ordnance, even more assistance might possibly have been rendered than was actually the case by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines to the Western as well as to the Eastern Army. The fault was not with those Services. Every officer, petty officer, seaman or marine in

them was eager and ready to do anything, and the 1,100 who were allowed to go up to the Modder or the Tugela did magnificent and most gallant work." Sir Howard goes on to say:—"It is impossible to believe that there was any jealousy or dislike of the Army." Now, I confess I do not quite see what this means, whether there was any unwillingness on the part of the artillery or the naval Service; but what I wish to point out is, that there was a very large and important part of our Service, the garrison artillery, which at that time had not apparently been employed in the operations. Now, I will ask these questions: Should not this Service be employed for the defence of our Colonies? Ought not a strong force of garrison artillery, with proper guns, of course, to have been sent into Natal two or three years before the outbreak of this war? Ought not Pietermaritzburg to have been defended properly with fortress guns, and a number of position guns in store, so as to send up to Ladysmith, or any other place at which they might be required, and to be ready for their defence? The naval guns, as we know, got in just in the nick of time; a day longer, and the railway would have been blocked. Where should we have been then? The naval guns saved the situation; but why should we run such risks when we had garrison artillery and plenty of guns that might have been on the spot? Then, in consequence of this deficiency the Boers could, with the greatest ease, if they had had, I was going to say the pluck, but I will say the dash, have rushed down to Pietermaritzburg, and it would have been at their mercy after Sir George White had been shut up. 5,000 or 6,000 Boers going down to Pietermaritzburg, which was totally undefended, would have caused the most terrible confusion, and we should have had to begin again from Durban. I do not see myself that the War Office is responsible for this; the responsibility lay, I should think, with the military and the civil authorities at the Cape. We knew, from the Intelligence Department, that the Boers had purchased a large number of heavy guns, very formidable guns, and they had a trained body of men from Germany and other places to work those guns. They had railways, plenty of horses, and it was perfectly evident to anybody who knew anything at all about the question that the first thing they would do would be to invade Natal. It has been argued that until Ladysmith was shut up we could not have foreseen anything of this sort. I do not think so at all. We have had a great deal of criticism on the field artillery, but the fact has been forgotten that our field artillery was pitted against the garrison and siege artillery, which the Boers brought down by means of their railways. The second point I wish to refer to is this, Sir Howard Vincent says:—"The opinion that ten minutes of rifle fire disables more than ten hours of artillery, is one which, if authentic, as I believe it to be, demands careful consideration. It will not be difficult of approximate proof by our hospital returns." Well, I think this is a very rash opinion, and it is evidently shared by Sir William MacCormac, because he says that hospital experience confirmed the ineffectiveness of artillery fire to destroy life, and he instances the small amount of damage done to Kimberley and Ladysmith by the artillery fire of the Boers. I thought I had done something to demolish this idea of the relative damage done by artillery and infantry fire in the old lecture hall of this Institution in 1889, when I read a paper on "The Value of Artillery in the Field"; and this point has also been pretty exhaustively treated by our gallant Chairman, General Maurice, in a book he published in 1891. When we come to consider this question, there are a good many things which show that hospital experience is not of the smallest use. A good many of the wounds and the damage caused by artillery do not send men to the hospital; it knocks them over at once, and kills them outright. I have seen men wounded, dashed to pieces and their heads taken off. And besides the killing of men, you must remember that artillery does a great deal of damage to guns, carriages, horses, bullocks, ammunition wagons, temporary magazines, etc. There is another thing to be considered, which General Maurice laid stress upon; and that is, that if you have a heavy fire upon the enemy they will take care to keep out of the way of it

—they will not stand the fire of artillery. As to the effects of the fire of field artillery during the campaign, it is evident that they have been far more apparent in the Free State than in Natal. In the latter, strong entrenched positions have had to be attacked. What is the good of attacking strong entrenched positions with field guns? And I should like to know what could be done against such positions by musketry. It is equally true that the Boers did a great deal of damage by musketry against us, but that is a different point. Taking the Natal campaign, the field artillery did great damage and plenty of execution at Elands Laagte; and in the attack on Pieter's Hill, when Sir Redvers Buller had got hold of commanding ground on which to put his guns, and bring a very heavy cross or enfilading fire on the Boer positions, our shrapnel did very heavy damage in such cases. I pointed out in November last the mistake we made some years ago—I do not know who is responsible for it—in doing away with common shell. We should have had common shell with our field guns. But you must remember we had one of the most powerful field guns—the most powerful, I should say, as regards its shell—that has yet been used, in the 5-inch howitzer, which throws a shell of 50 lbs. There has been, in our Service, a great prejudice against it; I do not know why, and until two or three years ago there were only three howitzer batteries out of ninety-two field batteries. We want more common shell fire. Shrapnel is only of use in the open or when cross or enfilade fire can be obtained. Take the shrapnel fire of field guns under Lord Roberts and you will find they have done a tremendous amount of execution. The Boers nick-named them "hell-scrapers," which shows they do not like them. If you have watched carefully the accounts of the operations you will see they have done a fair amount of execution.

Colonel Sir HOWARD VINCENT :—Common shell or shrapnel?

Major-General OWEN :—Shrapnel. Then again, as to the effect upon us in these hospital returns. At Spion Kop, a great deal of the damage, if not most of the damage, to our troops was done by artillery fire—much of it shrapnel. They got the proper range there—about 2,000 yards. The number of men afterwards brought into hospital—I have seen it stated over and over again—wounded in the most frightful way by shells, was very great. Then again, you must remember there has been a great reason for our suffering so much from rifle fire, because there have been front attacks, marching slap up to trenches. What can artillery do there? The men defending them managed to plunge a good many thousand bullets into the unfortunate people attacking them. That has nothing to do with the relative power of artillery and infantry. There is another thing I will mention. The officers of the British Army do what is the right thing: they always lead their men. But they have been very rash in this war. Men stood up over and over again and thus became marks for fire, and we have lost a great number of officers from that cause. Sir William MacCormac instances, as I have said, the few casualties in Kimberley and Ladysmith. This cannot have surprised anybody who understands anything about the matter. The Boers seem quite ignorant of the proper way of disposing guns for bombardment. They seem to drag their guns about into all sorts of positions, some of them favourable and some of them not; and they blaze away at all kinds of things. They did not in bombarding concentrate their fire. With four months' firing at Ladysmith with these improved guns, some of the positions at Ladysmith ought to have been made untenable and ready for assault; and at Kimberley the same; the Boers do not understand how to use their artillery, and in addition to that, a great deal of their fire was ineffective because their shells did not burst. There is another thing which is very important to remember. The public are very much exercised because we do not fire at from 8,000 to 10,000 yards. What is the good of firing at from 8,000 to 10,000 yards? How much is that? From $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles. They say we have not got telescopes. I should like to see anybody with a telescope tell what a shell is doing even at 7,000 yards. I have had as much practice as most people in artillery—I am an old gentleman, and

have retired some years ago, and so perhaps my opinion is not worth anything—but I have been under fire for a considerable time, and I am supposed to know something about it. And I say it is perfectly impossible to make accurate practice at such distances. The Boer guns were probably well laid, and made fair practice; but you want a shell to pitch within five yards, and a good number of shells pitching one after the other into the same place. Therefore I think these great ranges have been utterly useless, and I hope, for Heaven's sake, we shall not copy them. We know that the Boers, with some of the guns they took from us at the Tugela, and some other guns, dug a hole in the ground and fired the guns at an angle of 45°. I think any officer would not mind standing anywhere at 7,000 yards, and would not have much chance of being hit by that sort of practice. What did we accomplish in one day's firing at the bombardment of Sebastopol? Considering what we did then with smooth-bore guns, what ought we not to do with the powerful rifled guns we have now? In the first day's bombardment, after the French had been silenced, which they were very early in the day—they got their batteries into wrong positions—after the fleet had retired, the whole brunt came on our English guns; and you can read Todleben's account if you like, for he confirms entirely everything I am saying now. With eight guns disabled, we knocked the Malakoff and Redan into ruins, and dismounted thirty guns. There were only five gunners left in the Redan, and the whole place was a scene of carnage, and the guns and carriages, and everything else, were shattered about in confusion. As to the fire on us, I remember a shot knocking a leading horse of an ammunition wagon off its legs, passing through the stomach of the wheeler, and going on as if nothing had happened. I have been in the same battery twice when magazines were blown up. In one case seven guns were silenced out of eight. We found only three toes of one man who had been blown up with the magazine, and he certainly would not have been found in hospital. The value of artillery depends on whether you use it properly; whether you use the guns you have got, and use them for the purposes intended. What I think we have lost sight of is this. We have siege guns, position guns, field batteries, mountain artillery, and machine guns. If they are taken in that order, siege guns should overpower position guns, position guns overpower field guns, and so on. Let us remember there are those classes. I do not find in any official returns any position guns mentioned at all. We shall have to overhaul our artillery after the war, I have no doubt. The critics are persistently telling us to remember what was done in the war of 1870. I think we should do very much better to follow the precedents of what occurred in many of our own wars and the American War. The war of 1870 was quite a different thing to anything we are ever likely to encounter. There was not a single position there that was defended as we should have to defend it now. There were fortresses like Strasburg to besiege, but no entrenched positions. Take Sedan, the mere pounding by artillery of an army confined in a pit, the casualties were mostly due to artillery there, of course. But I think what I stated three or four years ago was this, and I do not see that I have any reason to go back upon it; the tactics of 1870 will require a good many modifications, in consequence of the introduction of smokeless powder, magazine rifles, and the greatly increased power of artillery, due to the improvement in shrapnel fire, and that of common shell having bursting charges of high-explosive powder. I do not believe there is an officer in the Army in Africa who has ever before been under heavy artillery fire. They have to learn all this. A certain number of older ones may have been under some kind of artillery fire, but we have been so long engaging enemies who have no artillery that will give anything like effective power, that we have acquired a wrong idea of the effects of artillery fire. I think critics, correspondents, and Members of Parliament should reserve their opinions on this matter (artillery fire) until the conclusion of the war; describing things they have seen is, of course, very useful, but reserve all these sort of wild opinions in

technical matters, which are going about and doing a great deal of harm. There was a discussion in the daily papers some four months ago, in which was stated some of the greatest nonsense I have ever heard in my life. One man proposes that lyddite should be put in shrapnel; another was not satisfied because twenty rounds were not fired from a field gun in a minute, and the range was not that of a siege gun. Some of the Members of Parliament know a great deal about this subject, and they are quite right to have their say. For instance, men like Sir C. Dilke, Mr. Arnold-Forster, or Sir Bevan Edwards, who was a great loss when he left the House, know a good deal about these matters. But I think most of you will agree with me in saying that it is a great pity to ventilate all kinds of notions until the war is over and we see whether they will hold their ground.

The Right Hon. Sir CHARLES W. DILKE, Bart., M.P. :—The last speaker has told us that we ought to reserve our opinion, and not to pronounce general judgment at the present time, and I am one of those who share very strongly that view. But at the same time we must all of us do what lies in our power to prevent any risk—and there is a real risk—of the lessons of the present war being lost at the time of what we hope will be the successful termination of the war, in a sort of general and, in some part, undeserved self-congratulation. There is a real danger, I am sure, of that; and anything that Sir Howard Vincent can do, and has done, and anything that others, who have seen something of the war, can do to prevent that coming about, will be of real national service. We, none of us—neither rash civilians, nor soldiers who, because more experienced, are more timid in criticism—can venture now to pronounce anything like a personal opinion on any point submitted to us; but there are certain lessons already, the moral of which we can begin to draw, and that is what, I think, Sir Howard Vincent has invited us to do. This is the right place to do it, because, at all events, the Royal United Service Institution can claim credit for having been almost the only scene in this country, with the exception of technical bodies like the Artillery schools and others—I mean the only scene in past years of that sort of politico-military criticism of the chances of future war—that this country has exhibited at all. And if the lessons which have been drawn in this hall in past times had been attended to, many difficulties that we have got into would not have occurred on the present occasion. We have had a synopsis circulated of the order in which it is proposed that the subjects arising out of the paper should be discussed here to-day, and it is very far from my wish to go through the whole of the heads, or anything like the whole of the heads, in that synopsis. It would take, indeed, a very long time to do so. I only propose to allude to some of them—beginning, perhaps, with the sixth. The latter heads are the more important because they are more general. The earlier ones are on rather technical and comparatively narrow points. The sixth question concerns “The regimental soldier: his pay in the field. Is it sufficient?” That is a matter which is prominently brought before us by the present war, because almost for the first time in the course of the military operations of this country has there been such an enormous discrepancy between the pay given to one private soldier and another private soldier. In the present war where our own men would get about 1s. 3d., many of the Colonists are getting as much as 6s. 3d. a day. That fact brings before us at the present moment the pay of a British soldier as illustrated by the present war. All I think it is possible to add to what Sir Howard Vincent has said upon that point is, that in order to prevent a feeling of irritation and great difficulties arising in the future, we clearly ought to insist for the very high pay on getting a higher standard than that which we get from the ordinary soldier. I am convinced that even without going to the Colonies or even in addition to going to the Colonies, that in this country, at pay anything like so high as the New Zealand trooper is getting, 1s. 3d. from us and 5s. from his own country, which is 6s. 3d. a day in all, you could raise a very fine body of men with a specially high standard. Not men like some of the Yeomanry who

can only shoot or can only ride, but men who can both shoot and ride, and look after themselves, which is the greatest thing of all—men who, without belonging to the gipsy class, have the same power of hardiness in sleeping out and in providing for themselves, that the ordinary Surrey tent-dwellers have. That is what is wanting in the British soldier. He is largely a town boy; he has been accustomed to be provided for all his life, and he has not got the resource of looking after himself, which is so important in campaigning of the kind we are engaged in now. For anything like 6s. 3d. a day we ought to be able to raise in this country mounted infantry who can ride and shoot and who would be able to look after themselves in this way. The lecturer has spoken of the South Africans as getting 5s. a day, and the men from Great Britain, from Canada, and Australasia, only obtaining the ordinary pay of the soldier in the field. South Africans get 5s. from us; our men get 1s. 3d. from us, and the same scale is given to the Australians, but they get a great deal from home. I have seen the arrangement which was made with the New Zealand troopers. The men know they get 5s. from New Zealand sources as well as their 1s. 3d. from us. I turn now to No. 8, a very important heading in the synopsis, "The Enemy." In the first place, I would allude to page 627 of the lecture. Sir Howard Vincent has said—and this connects itself with some of the latter numbers in the synopsis—that the Boers have taught us valuable lessons in the art of war. The first remark I would make upon that is, that unfortunately the Boers taught us, for those who were willing to learn, very much the same lessons on a smaller scale in 1881 that they have taught us now. It is an undoubted fact, which is, of course, familiar to you, Sir, that many officers, especially those whose attention has been drawn to the subject by serving in South Africa, have been for years past preaching the very doctrines which now everybody is preaching on the text of the present war. The course of the war in 1881, on a small scale, was very similar to the course which has been followed by the present war on a large scale. Potchefstroom played the same part in that war that Ladysmith has played in this war. It was the successive attempts, which were actual attempts to relieve the investment of Potchefstroom, which led to all the calamities in that war which have been repeated on a large scale in the present war. Colonel Ian Hamilton, who was at Majuba, and Colonel Spence, I think, employed under Sir William Butler, and many other officers had, before this war began, drawn very much the same lessons we are all drawing now from the present war. One of those lessons on which Sir Howard Vincent has laid great stress is the extreme value of entrenchment and the power of ill-organised, undisciplined troops behind them, even as against superior numbers. In one passage with regard to the arm which you represent, I think, Sir, to-day, and which is represented by other distinguished officers here, viz., the artillery, he makes the statement that they have repeatedly during the war and in his presence long remained under heavy fire without the smallest attempt to protect the guns by artificial means. That is a matter to which great attention has been called in recent years in Germany and other countries, and one would have thought that that was not likely to have happened again at the present time. In the synopsis we have an allusion to the numbers of the enemy. I do not find any very detailed statement upon that subject in Sir Howard Vincent's paper, but he does say that the Transvaal astonished us by the numbers of the troops at the disposal of herself and her ally. I am afraid we must not flatter ourselves that the numbers in the field against us in this war have been anything like so large as newspaper correspondents and even generals make out. I doubt whether the Intelligence Department would allow that their estimate before the war has been exceeded at all. This is a war in which some day we shall know the exact facts. It is not like dealing with Dervishes: we are dealing with a people who keep careful records, and we shall know some day the records of every man who has fought against us in the field. I very much doubt if we shall be able to show then that the numbers given by the Intelligence Department have been exceeded. It is the extraordinary military

ability of the Boers in their own particular style of fighting which has led to a very exaggerated idea of the numbers opposed to us in particular engagements. Speaking of the ability of our enemies, Sir Howard Vincent attaches importance, as we all do, to the power of moving heavy ordnance about, which they have illustrated by the fact that they have been able to make rapid retreats without our being able to capture their guns. Here, again, this Royal United Service Institution is not to be blamed. Attention has been called in this room in past years, as it has been called by the Artillery body at Woolwich, to the fact that the Germans have for some years past been experimenting in this direction, that they have succeeded with great effect in bringing position artillery into the field at their manœuvres and moving it rapidly about. It occupied an intermediate position between siege artillery and field artillery of a highly mobile type. Then the lecturer attaches importance to distant fire with high-angle sights, and he rather complains of our Government for having neglected inventions upon that subject. There can be no doubt at all that distant fire is very effective when you have thoroughly trained shots dealing with the rifle. When our present rifle in its first form—not in its most recent improved form—and with its first ammunition, which was considered extremely defective and withdrawn—when that first rifle reached India I was present at the first trial which it received (in the Pishin Valley), and there picked shots from two battalions, firing at an unknown range, which proved to be about 2,300 and 2,400 yards, made most admirable practice with this rifle, although it was, of course, not sighted for anything approaching that range. They were firing by what might be called guess-work. There is no doubt picked shots can do those things, and in facing an enemy of picked shots, like the Boers, we are exposed to effective fire at enormous ranges. It is a very different thing to expect to teach the ordinary private in the whole battalion to reach any level of shooting which will enable firing at a great distance to be effective in the hands of large bodies of men. Under the same heading, No. 8 in the synopsis, and under a sentence, part of which I have already read to the meeting, but which I should like to return to, Sir Howard Vincent tells us that the enemy have been operating upon interior lines, and, no doubt, we are glad to find any reason for explaining the very considerable reverses, or great troubles, that we have recently got into. At the same time, during the most recent operations of all in the campaign, it appears to me that to some extent we may be said to have been operating on interior lines, because one of the most remarkable facts that has recently occurred has been that the Boers have shown extraordinary mobility by going round us on two occasions in a circle, while we have been, as it were, in the centre of the half-circle round which they have been moving. On that occasion the advantage of the interior lines appears to have been locally upon our side. When we come to 9—"The Lessons of the War"—we find one main reason touched upon, which, I suppose, is generally given to account, especially in these most recent operations of which I have just spoken, for our non-success, or for the non-completeness of our success. Sir Howard Vincent alludes there to certain "blundering into the midst of the enemy," "cavalry more a profession," and the importance of mounted infantry. On page 613 in his lecture I find allusion to the fact that Lord Methuen had not sufficient cavalry, horse artillery, or mounted infantry in any of his operations, and that even where he won a temporary success he had no means of pushing home his advantages, and that he was driven to frontal attack, as contrasted with turning movements of any kind. On another page the lecturer again endorses that view, and alludes to the commencement of the war—to our having refused to accept mounted infantry at that time from the Colonies, and preferred infantry; and he discusses the question of whether men who can get about on ponies are not better for the purposes of the present war than ordinary infantry soldiers in many instances. He also discusses at page 634 the question of how far our cavalry has hitherto been a professional service, and how far from that point of view it can be improved. Now, I imagine that there can be no doubt that we have been short for one

reason or another—the responsibility, of course, being a matter which we cannot yet finally allot; but we have been short of cavalry and horse artillery during this war; we have been short, in its early stages, of mounted infantry, and we have been short of horse and mule transport and of a sufficient number of horses for our movements. There can be no doubt also, I take it, that it is universally admitted that the war has shown a defect in scouting and the obtaining of information in advance of attacks, and that no one pretends that it is otherwise. That these things have been to a considerable extent foreseen by those who do give their attention to the subject is, I think, a demonstrable fact. But, unfortunately, that foresight has been confined to individuals here and there, and has not spread generally throughout the Army and throughout those responsible for the Army, and for the preparation of the Army for the present war. In the synopsis we are invited to discuss the equipment of the British soldier. One lesson which I think has been taught by the war is the inferiority of the carbine for mounted men. It is very doubtful, in the opinion, I think, of all who have watched the proceedings in South Africa, judging from all the letters that I have seen from there, whether the carbine can be considered of any use—whether the full-sized rifle with the same sighting and the same distance of range as the ordinary rifle should not now be substituted for all purposes for troops that carry a firearm at all. For professional cavalry, in the highest sense of the word, it is very doubtful whether the firearm is a useful weapon, and, to my mind, it is one of the lessons to be drawn from this war that we must more than ever distinguish in our minds between the cavalry use of cavalry without firearms and the mounted infantry who are infantrymen conveyed from place to place, infantry soldiers bearing a proper rifle and able to fight against infantry. The carbine seems to please no one, and has been ineffective in the present war. We are asked, towards the end of this paper, to discuss a large and more important subject. The whole question, indeed, under 13, of the Armed Strength of the British Empire, which is alluded to in the closing portions of Sir Howard Vincent's paper, is too large a question for me to go into here to-day. It is too large a question for the country to go into at the present moment, as illustrated by the present war, except so far as to keep certain points before us and on record. If I were asked to discuss Sir Howard Vincent's paper upon those heads, I should myself complain that they are too one-sided. A too purely Army view is taken of the problem of defence, where he says, for instance, that Great Britain has been left without guns, without ammunition, without cavalry, without any of the essentials of defence; because it is impossible to consider problems of that sort without taking into consideration the position and proper duties of the British Navy. But, as I say, those are matters too large to be discussed to-day. Personally I have a great objection, which I have frequently stated in the House of Commons, to military preparations at home which are of a merely defensive character. I doubt altogether the wisdom of spending money on the Royal Reserve battalions tied to home service only. I believe all the energy of the country, in a military sense, should be devoted to the creating of a striking army, which can be sent abroad if necessary. Sir Howard Vincent, while he may be accused of pessimism in portions of his paper, gives some figures towards the end which are open to the charge of optimism. He quotes from a map which he says bears his name, figures of two million soldiers, sailors, and Volunteers, which constitute the armed strength of the British Empire. I hope that no one will be tempted, by the fact that the Boers are an armed people, to believe that some men upon paper, or even men for whom you have muskets and gun-powder, constitute an army upon which we can in any sense rely. We have not, in any proper military sense of the word, anything like two millions of men in the whole of our Empire put together. In order to arrive at such figures you must count the whole of the Canadian Militia—not the 30,000 men of their organised Militia—but the whole of their nominal Militia on paper, and those are forces upon which it would be idle for us to reckon. They are mere potential forces

on which we can draw as a reserve. As Sir Howard Vincent points out, we are drawing in this country on our Colonial Reserve in that sense of the word. The Empire has been able to draw even more largely on the Colonies in the past than on this occasion. We drew upon them to an enormous extent in our wars with the French in North America, and the siege of Louisberg is a case in point. These are potential reserves. What we want is to be able to count on an army organised beforehand, which can be used suddenly and at a pinch. We want something organised and ready, and in that case we have nothing like two millions of men, or anything of the kind. Then Sir Howard Vincent turns to the Intelligence Department, of which I will say nothing, except that no well-founded attacks appear to me to be made upon that department, so far as I have seen at the present time, and he deals with what he calls prophecies before and after the event. What I have said with regard to the prophecies of certain men is, I think, worth illustrating, because it will cause this Institution in the future to listen perhaps to some of their skilled men on their own subjects with even greater attention than that with which they have been listened to in the past, when you find that these men are able, from their scientific study of the subject, to tell you beforehand what is going to occur, while it is still a closed book to the general public. I ventured some time ago to state in the House of Commons that at the end of January and beginning of February the war up to that time had confirmed skilled prevision of what was likely to be its character, startling though it had been to the general public. I based that statement very largely upon a lecture and discussion which had taken place at Malta—a lecture delivered by Colonel Spence. The lecture was delivered in June of last year before the war was thought of. In February Colonel Spence delivered a second lecture, and there again was a debate on the subject in Malta in a body similar to this—an offshoot of this body—where exactly the same skilled prevision was shown as before, and which has been again confirmed. To show you how completely these things may be seen beforehand—it is, of course, familiar to you, Sir, and familiar to many in this room, but it is not familiar to the large body of the public—this lecture was delivered at Malta, with five or six gentlemen taking part in the discussion, and everything that has subsequently occurred was thought out in advance and prophesied for us. After alluding to the way in which the Boers were allowed to select for themselves the field of campaign in Natal, and showing how their selection of their own field of campaign and one most favourable to their arms had helped them in this war, as it helped them in 1881, Colonel Spence alludes to the configuration of the country, which he points out in detail, and says that it gives General Joubert the opportunity of practising the most recent strategical principles lately enunciated by the Germans. He points out the class of movements which were subsequently observed, and he says the whole of our risk of failure on the Modder River side depends on the lack of cavalry. He then points out how we failed to carry out the original plan of penetrating into the heart of the Orange Free State from the north of Cape Colony. He states what was the evidence to the general public of the existence of the plan of campaign in the number of horses which had been collected and the places at which they had been put; and then he says that the necessary number of transport animals for the ultimate movement had not been collected. A general advance could not be made, the result of want of transport; “no mounted force of sufficient value; no manœuvring power; no turning movements possible”; and he points out it would be desirable for the purpose of overcoming these evils to collect a force of at least 20,000 mounted men. That is exactly what has since been done. And yet in February that was laid down by Colonel Spence in Malta. There was a very interesting debate which took place on the reading of that paper. Colonel Spence ended by saying that the ultimate movement through the Free State would be a war of communications—the enemy tearing up the lines of rail, making the supply of the army a constant anxiety on a line of 350 miles long in the Free State alone. He said they would threaten our

rear to force us to attack them (exactly what has occurred). In the debate Sir Francis Grenfell, who occupied the position you, Sir, occupy to-day—he was in the Chair—alluded to letters he had received already in February from distinguished officers in the field, showing the insufficiency of the transport for them to make earlier movements than they have made, and the total want of transport at that time to carry out turning movements. As I say, it is too soon altogether to allot responsibility. I think that these facts go to show us that there is reason to believe that there has been deficiency in the supply of sufficient mounted men and sufficient horses for transport all along, and that is the main cause of the difficulties which have occurred. I repeat, as I began, that I agree with the last speaker, it is too soon for any of us to attempt to pronounce anything like a final judgment on these subjects. In thanking Sir Howard Vincent for his paper—a very useful paper, and, in a sense, a paper to make people think on these subjects—our object ought to be to help guard against doing that of which there is a great risk, viz., letting the successful termination of the war be a signal for general congratulation and for the forgetting all about the lessons we ought to have learnt.

Captain W. H. JAMES (late R.E.):—I think, Sir, we are all agreed on one point, that is, that the evidence we have at present before us, and the fact that the war is still going on, is one reason why we should hold our comments before we write down any criticism against the generals who are concerned in the operation. I agree with Sir Charles Dilke on another point, that it would be very wrong if at the end of the war, in the general congratulations which will be given to everybody, and the shower of honours and medals and stars which will fall broad-cast over the whole of the huge forces, if indiscriminate praise be given, and blame not properly given to those to whom blame is due. It would be a great mistake both for the nation and the British Army. Even at the present moment I would say there is one little instance, a very concrete one, in which we have all got a right to know that which we do not know at present, that is, the Koorn Spruit disaster. I think there is one lesson also to be drawn if the military side is to be criticised. I am a little inclined to think there is a civilian side to this war. I am not at all certain that our present machinery for constructing the British Army and conducting it, whether at home or in the field, is quite what it should be if the nation means to have the work properly done. There are indications in the present conduct of this war which show that our War Office machinery is distinctly old-fashioned and obsolete, and certainly not adapted to conducting the war in the way it should be conducted. I will not say much with regard to one point that has excited a great deal of attention. There is not the very faintest doubt that no one believed in war against the Boers, but I think the reason for that is very easy to put one's hand upon at once. It was a fact that the people in Natal, and the people in the Cape, and the Administration of those two Colonies, did not believe in war themselves. I think there is not the slightest doubt of that. They believed that the Boers at the last moment would cave in, and that influenced the preparations which were being made at home. I was glad to see that the last speaker stood up for the Intelligence Department. The Intelligence Department have had rather a rough time from the expressed opinions of ignorant people, but not from those who really know and are capable of judging the questions at issue. The controversy that took place in the *Times* with regard to the artillery was so childish that it was almost impossible to ask any man who knew anything at all about the question to take part in it. It culminated in a letter sent home by a correspondent, containing statements with regard to guns more fearfully wild than were ever before put into type. The attack on the Intelligence Department was chiefly with regard to two points, one, the number of the Boers—and I unhesitatingly say they were right and the correspondents were wrong—and the other with regard to the maps. If we are going to entrust the Intelligence Department with the construction of maps for every possible theatre of war in which the British Army is likely to take part, we shall

have to begin at once by allowing them several millions a year for the purpose. A map is no good for military purposes unless drawn on a fairly large scale, and showing accurately the detailed points. For strategical purposes perhaps you do not want so large a scale; but to draw a map on any scale whatever which would be of real and great utility to the officers engaged in this war, that is to say, one which would have shown them accurately the character of the ground over which they were to operate, would have been so costly a proceeding that it is idle to think any British Government or Colonial Government could undertake the preparation of it. It is ridiculous to make an indictment against the Intelligence Department because their maps have not shown the country with that accuracy which one finds in the map say of France to the scale of $\frac{1}{2000000}$. Sir Howard Vincent has called attention to a point which wants to be well rubbed in, and that is, that if you want intelligence you have got to pay for it. What he practically tells us is this, what a good many of us I daresay know, that the total sum for secret service money is £10,000. I should like to know how much of that goes to the Intelligence Department—a precious small portion, I think. It is impossible to work an Intelligence Department except on the principles on which the foreign Intelligence Departments are carried out. If we are prepared to do that we shall have the intelligence, but if we are not, do not blame the Intelligence Department, which is provided with men equal in intellect to any men in the world, but which is hampered by the paltry sums allowed to it. There is one point which comes out very strongly in this war, and that is the use of railways. We all know at the present moment that it would be impossible for Lord Roberts's force to continue its march to the Vaal and on to Pretoria at any pace whatever, were it not for the railway which enables him to supply it. I will give you some statistics here which will show what we have been doing. It is a fairly well-known thing that the Germans consider that on a single line of railway you can pass twenty-four trains a day. I am glad to tell you that our administrators in South Africa have succeeded in passing thirty-nine per diem, from Norval's Pont to Bloemfontein, which shows that our Railway Department—organised by a number of officers, some of whom had very little previous railway experience, but who brought common-sense to bear on the matter—is able to do its work very well. With regard to the rifles, it has been said that our Lee-Enfield is an inferior weapon to the Mauser. I do not really think there is much to choose between the two, except in one point, and that is, the fact that the Mauser loads five cartridges at a time, whereas we only load one. I know we have a magazine with ten rounds, but the magazine ten rounds are not to be used until the supreme moment. If we were engaged in attacking the chairman, the lecturer, and the secretary, up there on the platform, we should all have our ideas as to when that supreme moment came; afterwards we should, if we were armed with the British rifle, be reduced to a single loader. I daresay a good many of you know that I have taken up this subject of rifles, and I have for years and years tried to get the Government to introduce the clip loader. I believe at last, taught by experience in South Africa, they are going to do it. But the rifle of the future is not in the hands of any Army at the present moment; the rifle of the future is an automatic rifle, which merely requires you to pull the trigger, like the Mauser pistol, and you fire your shot and reload your rifle. I have no doubt that will come about. The automatic rifle is an arm of the future, and the Army who first adopts that will have a weapon which will give it enormous advantage over those who still adhere to the ordinary magazine rifle. The question of artillery is one I should like to say a few words upon. Our artillery has been attacked, as I said at the beginning of my remarks, chiefly by people who do not know what they are talking about. My old friend General Owen said that the position gun necessarily snuffed out the field gun, and the field gun the mounted gun, but that has not been the opinion of the man in the street. He has believed in a sort of Jack-of-all-trades weapon, which was at one time to beat the position gun, and another time to be as mobile as the field gun. If the gentleman in question would design a weapon of that sort which did not

burst, he would no doubt be a very great inventor; but certainly as far as we know, humanly speaking, it is impossible to do what the gentlemen who were so fluent in letters to the *Times* demanded from the gun constructors. I think we have learned one thing. We have been a little inclined to sacrifice to mobility the need of a heavy shell. A good many officers may remember that some years ago, when the re-armament of the artillery with the breech-loader was discussed, it was proposed to have a 20-pounder for that field artillery. I do not think this gun ever got beyond the experimental stage, and personally I think it is a pity it did not. Take the nations of Europe at the present time. The Russians have a large proportion of 28-pounders with their Army, which are very formidable weapons, firing heavy shell, and experience has shown us ever since guns were used that the effect to be derived from a heavy gun is very much greater than can be derived from a combination of smaller guns, even if the sum of their weights of their projectiles in a given time make up the weight of that fired from the one big gun. I am inclined to think that the heavy gun will be the gun of the future. Whether it will take the form of the howitzer, or whether we shall deal in a more drastic way with the question of mobility—we have seen 4·7 guns moving about very freely in this war—is a point I leave artillery officers to decide; but I am quite sure that in future, to make up for the increasing value of rifle fire, we shall have to adopt technical measures which will increase the value of artillery fire. People say the artillery does the frightening, and the rifle does the killing. It may or may not be true, but no human being has ever yet proposed to send an army into the field without guns; and if frightening is a part of the process which is necessary to aid the rifle to success, let us have the most frightening weapons we can. But do not say artillery is no use because the statistics you have show us very few casualties from artillery fire. There is a great reason why these statistics are false. The men destroyed by artillery fire do not go into the hospital, and these statistics are all deduced from hospital statistics, and are absolutely valueless. Take the evidence of Mr. Treves with regard to artillery firing on this occasion. He himself says that the percentage of deaths from shell casualties is enormously great, and that the wounded never do satisfactorily; and that, I think, is a point in favour of the guns. I am convinced also, for instance, that we largely argue from statistics of the Franco-German war. It is admitted that the artillery statistics are only taken from hospital. If there is a big battle, you do not turn over every corpse to see how it was killed; you bury it out of sight as soon as you can. I am perfectly certain that the opinion is erroneous that the artillery does the frightening and the rifles do the work. I have no doubt the rifle does more of the killing, but I think an efficient artillery is an absolute necessity. There is only one point on which I differ from the lecturer—I think almost throughout his lecture—and that is with regard to the protection of the infantry soldier. I do not believe in protecting the infantry soldier. Any shield you would give him is so heavy that he would throw it away; he would run the risk of suffering from a rifle bullet rather than march about day by day with even a few pounds of iron on his back. It is human nature. Soldiers throw away even their kit on service, and would be very glad of it subsequently; but they will not carry weight. They prefer to throw away the evil they know of, and risk that which may or may not come. With regard to cavalry or mounted infantry, I must say myself I have always been an opponent of the school that believes the days of cavalry are still in existence for the battle-field. I do not believe in the great cavalry charges which you see carried out at the German autumn manœuvres. I believe the theory is totally wrong, and that you never can get into anybody with the modern rifle, and it would be a wicked waste of men, and is altogether wrong training to teach them to believe anything of that kind is possible. But there is still a great field for cavalry. There are wild outflanking movements, getting to the rear of the army where surprise is an element in the case—that is a very different thing. It is more required than ever for scouting,

because the general absolutely depends upon scouting for his conduct of the battle. He cannot see the disposal of the enemy, and he can only tell how to fight the battle by the accurate reports of his scouts. For this purpose cavalry is necessary, but I do not believe about charging on the battle-field. As to mounted infantry, I have never been able to see that a mounted infantryman is anything more than an inferior cavalryman. If you taught the cavalryman to fight on foot, he is as good as a mounted infantryman. The argument is that the mounted infantryman is much cheaper. I know that. A pair of boots with brown paper soles is cheaper than a pair with leather soles; but it does not follow that brown paper boots are the things to buy. I do not think they are. There is one little criticism which I think one may be permitted to make on this war. We started this war with an army corps which has never been used as an army corps. I cannot conceive that anybody who has studied the theatre of war ever believed it would be. Personally, I have written in the *Contemporary Review*, and have shown, I think, that the proper organisation for a war of this kind is divisions, with a large proportion of cavalry and mounted infantry attached to them. I am not going back on what I said about mounted infantry and cavalrymen. At present an infantry division, with a cavalry brigade, and three or four battalions of mounted infantry would be the proper kind of division to send to South Africa. We shall find out probably by and bye why so small a proportion of horsemen were sent out. It is perfectly impossible to allocate the blame to those concerned now. There is one deduction we have all to make in this war, and that is in connection with the system of training of the British Army, that it has got to be altered. I am going to make now what is perhaps a very radical statement. I believe that the great fault in the training of the British Army has been what I may call Aldershot. I believe that these permanent camps, in which every blade of grass, every stone, is known to every man from the general commanding down to the junior bugler, are the worst places you could possibly have in which to train soldiers. It is the unknown which is the great factor in war, and to do things over a country which everybody knows, and then to pretend you can do them in a country which nobody knows, is to my mind patent folly. What we want in England is what they have abroad. With regard to the minor portion of their training, the drills, they may be done almost anywhere; but every year our troops ought to be assembled for what I may describe as Autumn Manœuvres, with free power to move anywhere, so that they may be properly trained over the ground which is absolutely unknown, both to the leaders, the regimental officers, and the men. There is one point on which I am sure we all agree, and that is, that the bravery of the British officers and the British soldier has been shown to be as great as it ever was in any previous conflict which we have been engaged in. But untrained bravery is of no use. The bravery of the future must be trained by a proper professional course of instruction, and the Army has, to put it in one word, to be made more professional than it has ever been before.

Colonel T. STURMY CAVE (1st V.B. Hampshire Regiment):—Sir, the real problem before us is this—that there are in South Africa some 150,000 troops, the finest troops, we believe them to be, in the world; and they seem barely, if at all, equal to 70,000 Boers. That is a very serious state of things, and ought to teach us a very valuable lesson. We have heard that the lesson is not the difference in the value of the armament. The guns, General Owen has told us, are very good guns; the rifle may be to some extent inferior to the Mauser, but I doubt very much whether that has much to do with it. The lesson we have to learn now is the same lesson that has been taught in every campaign since the first recorded battle, which you will find in the earlier chapters of Genesis. There the five kings overcame Lot, and Abraham overcame the five kings. It is the same lesson that is taught by the campaigns of Alexander the Great, by those of Julius Cæsar, and those of the Emperor Napoleon, and by the war in 1870: it is that an army, to be efficient and ready to win directly it takes

the field, must be permanently organised into a mobile field force. Our army that went out to South Africa went out as individual regiments, individual battalions, and squadrons; but they were only individual units, and we left the task of organising them into a mobile field force to be done in the presence of the enemy. It is exactly what the French did in 1870. Whereas the Germans were already organised into a mobile field force, they tried to organise in the face of the enemy and failed, as we have, unfortunately, failed, in the initial stages in South Africa; and we shall certainly fail again unless we profit by the lesson at once. Particularly, I say, it is desirable to learn it at once, as we have here in England still remaining from 400,000 to 500,000 troops, even less of a mobile force than those in South Africa. We talk about divisions and army corps, and we see printed in the paper a list of battalions, which are called the First Army Corps and 10th and 11th and 12th Divisions, and so on; but I venture to say that they do not really exist as an organised field force, that is, mobile, and with the generals known to the men and the men known to their superiors. It is impossible for the general to really get the best advantage from his troops if he knows nothing of them until he is actually in the face of the enemy. You must have a permanent organisation if you are to get mutual confidence and co-operation between the commanders and the commanded and between the different units of the force. Sir Charles Dilke talked about the impossibility of fixing the responsibility, and said it was undesirable to attempt to do so at this time. I venture to say that it is not impossible. The responsibility rests with our gallant lecturer and with the able exponent of so many details, Sir Charles himself, and their brother Members of Parliament. They have, if ever anybody had, at the present moment a mandate from the people of this country to give us an efficient Army, which, I say, and which I challenge anybody to deny, is an Army organised into a mobile field force; and unless they and their fellow Members of Parliament carry it out without delay, they are betraying the trust that is committed to them.

Captain R. J. MACDONNELL (late 81st Regiment):—The very interesting paper of Sir Howard Vincent which we are called upon to consider this afternoon ranges over such a wide field of subjects, that it would be impossible to do anything more than advance very shortly any matter that interests one. There is only one matter—which I shall allude to later—which induced me to be here; but before I proceed I should like publicly to express—as I know Sir Howard Vincent is a public man and a Member of Parliament—the sympathy which I am sure this meeting, and not alone this meeting, but the public at large, feel for him in the bitter disappointment which has come to him, at not being able to proceed to the front, after being selected, to fight the enemies of our country. There are several interesting points in the paper which we have before us, and I think the writer has shown us a very good example indeed in the manner in which he has refrained from all criticisms reflecting in any way on the officers who are in command. But he has told us in his own way, reading between the lines, one or two things which I should like to put before the meeting, and call attention to, which seem very extraordinary indeed. In his paper he mentions that the general, the brigadier, the commanding officer Royal Engineers, and commanding officer Royal Artillery and escort were on a kopje, and that within a few minutes of retiring from it, before they got 600 yards, the Boers seized the kopje and fired upon them. I do not propose to make any comment upon that, but it does seem a strange thing that it should have happened. It seems strange that the general had not better information on the subject. Again, on the next page, Sir Howard Vincent mentions the opinions he gave at the Carlton Club when he was told they did not want Volunteers—that no Volunteers would be wanted. I think that is one of the tendencies of the bureaucracy, if I may call it, of the War Office. I cannot help thinking that the question we have to discuss here to-day is a question of the future, not so much of the past—to see how we shall be able to form an Army in the future that will ward off any attacks

that may be made upon us by other nations. To my mind, the opening remark of Sir Howard Vincent deserves to be remembered, when he says:—"My desire has always been to see the Volunteer Force so intimately connected with the Standing Army as to afford it not only an immense reserve for home defence, but a valuable adjunct in the field." I might well add to that—I am sure we all wish that—but I think he might have added the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Reserves. It seems to me, as far as I can understand it, that we want a thorough and entire re-organisation of the military forces of the Kingdom. We want to weld them into one homogeneous body, each having its proper place, but each being fitted, by military education and training, to take any part in any war in which we may unfortunately be plunged. At the present moment it seems to me that the position of the Militia is one quite out of harmony with our present and future danger. I pass from that to the question which more immediately concerns me. There is one word in the gallant lecturer's paper about which he expresses his opinion—he used the word "conscription." It seems to be admitted on all hands that conscription is not a proceeding that will find favour in this country. He has expressed his own opinion in no uncertain manner. What, then, are we to do? I will say what I have always advocated for years. Some years ago, when I was the acting editor of a Service paper, I had the honour of several interviews on the subject with the then Adjutant-General, who is now Lord Wolseley. As you are not adopting conscription, the only possible way to have the nation prepared and ready to fulfil the duty—which I venture to say is incumbent upon every male member—is by obligatory military instruction in our schools. I say that, and that only, is the means by which you can train the youth of this country, by which you can accustom them to military service, without throwing the least burden upon them, because we know that in the Board Schools many of the young fellows, almost children, have a certain amount of time which must be used to earn their living. I am extremely pleased to have an opportunity to-day—in so large an audience where there are so many men, some Members of Parliament, who perhaps may be induced to look at this subject—of saying that when the late Mr. Forster established the Board Schools of this country, now over 30 years ago, if he had only added to it some clause, by which every boy could fulfil the duty of citizenship, which I say again is incumbent upon us all, by a training extending over a certain number of years, and in which every youth should be supplied with a certificate showing he has undergone that training, it would have been of immense utility. The certificates might be the same as those of the educational authorities, showing that each boy has passed through a certain standard. If that were done, then I say we should have the youth of this country growing up educated in the first principles of a soldier, and, above all, trained when they are young to shoot. And mind you, the younger you train them, co-existent with their strength to shoot, the better they shoot. Shooting is a science; the teaching of shooting is an art; and it may be that the man who teaches the other may not be so good a shot. And then what a vista it opens up for us for providing for the non-commissioned officers and soldiers in after life when they leave the Army. Every Board School would be supplied with teachers, every Public School in the country would perhaps have officers; and in my opinion it is the only means to meet this great want which cannot be met unless by conscription.

Mr. H. O. ARNOLD-FORSTER, M.P. (late Lieutenant Middlesex R.V.):—I read this paper very carefully indeed last night, but not with the intention of speaking on it to-day. I cannot, however, help feeling, since I have had the advantage of being in the room, that some of the speeches, at any rate, have been of such a character that they might almost equally have been made if this paper had not been before us. My feeling about what Sir Howard Vincent has done is very clear. I am in the habit of looking at a great deal of MS. and typed matter, and I must bear my testimony to the admirable

qualities of this paper. The vivacity and the sustained thread of interest throughout mark it in a very large degree as the work of an experienced hand. I ask anyone in this room who has read the paper as I have read it, with care, whether it does not tell us in every line something which we all wanted to know, but which, not being eye-witnesses of what has actually taken place, we were not competent to form a just opinion about? I, perhaps, missed something which may have been said before I came into the room, but I had hoped we might have in the discussion something dealing with the particular matters which are mentioned in Sir Howard Vincent's paper, because then we might have succeeded in eliciting from him even further information than that which he has already given us about matters which are of peculiar interest, though not of the same kind of interest as the necessity of the re-organisation of our Army in the future and other subjects which have been dwelt upon. I should like to make my small contribution to the discussion in this fashion: I should like to ask Sir Howard Vincent if when he replies he can tell us a little more even than he has already told us in the paper. He dwells on the question of entrenching, and he says that practically there was no entrenching on our part. That, to an outside observer, is one of the facts that has appeared the most astounding. I have read in the account of the Boer attack upon Ladysmith that our outlying post was driven in after, I think, two months of the siege, and that the whole party was practically cut to pieces because they were able to fall back on no entrenched post at all, and actually while we had been holding a fortress in the face of the enemy we had not taken that ordinary and reasonable precaution. If that were so, it is, of course, not hard to understand why in the ordinary routine of daily campaigning this precaution should have been neglected. But, perhaps, Sir Howard Vincent could tell us how it is that a thing so obvious and so desirable as entrenching has not become a matter of strict order, and that it has not been made compulsory on the troops to make use of the means of defence which precedent would have guaranteed as an enormous assistance to them; and the facts that were brought home to them by the losses of every day must have shown to be of overwhelming value in the present campaign. I want to know whether it was the regimental officers, the divisional officers, or who it was that failed to give this absolutely compulsory instruction to the troops to entrench on every occasion? I noticed another matter that aroused my curiosity and interest very much in the paper. Sir Howard Vincent has touched on a point which, I am sure, is in the minds of many of us. He speaks of some twelve or thirteen thousand men contained in Ladysmith, and he expresses some wonder why it was that those thirteen thousand men were contained during so long a period by a force which, as far as we can ascertain by the latest details given us to-day, at no time exceeded eight or nine thousand men. I have no business whatever to criticise the operations of military men, but if that be true or untrue of Ladysmith, it certainly does appear to be true of a great many other parts of the theatre of war. We have had very many superior forces on our side confronted by very inferior forces on the side of the enemy. I suppose there is a reason for the apparent anomaly, which is probably that constituted by the difficulty of attacking or the difficulty of moving in the enemy's country, or by something which is a sufficient explanation of this apparent inability of a superior British force to successfully engage or to avoid being contained by an inferior force of the enemy. I read every day accounts of how our horses are exhausted, how our ammunition—and this is a point Sir Howard Vincent refers to—is only supplied with difficulty, and I see that provisions are not available. I entirely bear my testimony to the praise the lecturer gives to the Commissariat Department; but there have been cases, as in the case of the march after the relief of Kimberley, when provisions have not been easy to obtain. All those difficulties must apply in equal measure, and in some cases in greater measure, to our opponents. I think from conversations which I have had and from the various sources from which I collect such opinions as I am able to form, that there is still, I am glad to say, some further explanation than we have hitherto received of why this great preponderance of

forces has not made itself as yet more effectively felt. I notice that the general public has not been very widely astray in the remarks which in its uninformed and unregenerate state it made before and during the progress of the war. There were many things suggested by the public which were fairly obvious and sanctioned by precedent, but which were not done for a long time, and which when they were done did meet with that success which it was anticipated they would meet with. Even in the last few days General Pole-Carew has adopted a manœuvre which to a layman seems a very simple one, although it may be a very complicated one—I do not know; he has adopted the expedient of using a very large force, partly to contain and partly to outflank the enemy, who occupies a strongly fortified position. I am sure Sir Howard will tell us why that inspiration has not been acted upon on any previous occasion. Those are the troubles which still affect my mind. In conclusion, I should like to say, in reply to one gentleman who made us Members of the House of Commons responsible for some of the evils which he has deplored, that I am perfectly prepared to take my share of the censure, but I do not altogether accept the condemnation. My own feeling is that if, in a private business, a man employs a specialist to do a particular thing for him—a tailor to make a coat, a lawyer to draft a will, a builder to build a house—it is a very strange method that, when the man finds that coat is not made, the house not built, or the will not drawn, the man whom he has employed should say, "It is perfectly true; why don't you do it yourself! If you would come down and bother me every day, if you would compel me to carry out my work, if you would superintend the drafting of the will for me, or mix the mortar, I will condescend to do the work for you." When we pay the enormous sums we do pay, the first and last person on whom we must place the responsibility are the persons who have, by the admission of the gentleman who spoke, to some extent failed to perform that duty, namely, the War Office and the military authorities. Although I am prepared to take my share, I am not willing to take all or even the greater proportion of the responsibility that has been spoken of.

Colonel Sir HOWARD VINCENT, in reply, said:—I am not going to trespass between yourself and this audience, Sir, for any length of time. It is perfectly certain that what a great many have come here to-day for is to have the pleasure and satisfaction of hearing your observations, because we all know a more scientific soldier than yourself, or anyone who has studied the profession more deeply than yourself, does not exist in the Army. I have been a little disappointed in the discussion. I expected to have been attacked, and to say that I have not been attacked and assailed is to say there has been little for me to reply to. I am glad that my observations were not called criticisms, but I expected that some of my respectful suggestions would be challenged. That also has not been the case, and, therefore, I am in a difficulty as to replying; but I may sum up very briefly the observations that have been made. In the first place, General Owen, in his earlier remarks, did not quite understand what I meant as regards the co-operation of the Navy. I am not sure, although the naval guns, the officers, the men of the Marines and the fleet have done all they were allowed to do, whether there might not have been more co-operation on the part of the Navy—at any rate, in the earlier stages of the campaign. I am quite well aware that it is the business of the admiral to maintain his fleet in an absolutely efficient state, but I am not quite sure whether there has not been a little feeling on the part of some branches of the Service that those in high places were not quite so willing to support the Army on land as it was desirable in the interests of the country. This is exactly what I meant. As regards garrison artillery, the gallant general thought more garrison artillery ought to have been sent to Natal before the campaign. Surely he does not think, nor anybody else, that we were going to stand a siege on the borders of Natal? If we were going to fight the Zulus, or the Portuguese, or the Basutos, or any people we might be brought into collision with

in South Africa, our force would be an active force pushing ahead, and not a defensive force requiring siege and garrison artillery. I cannot quite share his views, although he is an expert, and I am not. As regards more common shell being required rather than shrapnel, I took it that he doubted that himself, because I understood him to speak very warmly indeed of the wrecking effects of shrapnel fire, which is a most undoubted factor in this campaign. He was rather condemnatory of critics, correspondents, and Members of Parliament, and strongly urged that their criticisms should be postponed to a future day. I cannot deny that I am a Member of Parliament, but that I am a critic or correspondent I do venture to traverse. I should like to touch upon the current running in the mind of every single speaker, and most undoubtedly applauded by the whole of this large and representative audience, viz., that, whatever the ultimate issue of the campaign, although we may confer on our generals and our troops the honours which are justly their due, the lessons of this war should not be lost sight of. I am not quite sure whether there is not a disposition on the part of the people, if not on the part of the Government, to hush up all defects in the pleasure of the successful results. I will not mention individual instances, because they are so easy for everybody here to understand, but there is one instance which is very much to the front in these present days—without mentioning any names at all anybody can understand exactly what I mean—that the lessons to be learned by the defence of Ladysmith should not be lost in the general jubilation in the relief of that beleaguered city. We are all greatly indebted to my right hon. friends Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. Arnold-Forster for having come here to-day. They have given great attention to all military matters, and whenever it is possible to push them home in the House of Commons I can bear personal testimony to the undoubted fact that they do everything they possibly can to fix the attention of the nation upon the urgent need of a more unified military system. Sir Charles Dilke spoke of the pay of the soldier. If my paper serves no other purpose than to call his valuable attention to that matter I think it will not have been prepared in vain. The pay of the soldier in the field, I am convinced, is not sufficient. The expenses to which he is subjected have been perfectly colossal. I am not going to repeat the figures, but I have the figures as to my personal expenses, which show the extreme difficulty which our soldiers have met with in purchasing any comforts whatever from the enterprising Germans who accompany the Army, and show you how very little he can obtain for his 1s. or 1s. 3d. a day. It is not 5s. that we pay the South African volunteers, but 10s. —2s. 6d. for rations, and 2s. 6d. for horse. Those volunteers should not consist of gentlemen who are possessed of very fine physique, but who have left this country for their country's good in some cases. I do not mean colonials, of course; do not misunderstand me. Some young men whom we have in our midst, and whom we are always anxious to obtain suitable employment for, but find very considerable difficulty in doing so, have had the good sense to obtain from their friends the necessary passage, and instead of joining the Volunteers here they joined them in Cape Town or Natal, and within half-an-hour of the ship arriving have been taken on at 10s. a day instead of 1s. 3d. I am sure they are rendering very good service indeed, but they are not quite that admirable material which I think we might obtain for that high rate of pay, and I am very glad indeed that Sir Charles Dilke's attention has been called to it. Then there is this matter of entrenchment. I do not know whether there is anybody in this room who has not read the article in to-day's *Times* on the entrenchments at Spion Kop. I do hope everybody will read it. It is the most remarkable example for the defective character of British entrenchments and the effective character of the Boer entrenchments it is possible to conceive. Every word of that article is absolutely true—I did not write it—every word I can absolutely corroborate of the extraordinary character of the Boer entrenchments, the rapidity with which they make them up, the labour they expend upon them in the most difficult ground, the most rocky ground. We do

not know whether they were blasted or how they were done. You would not conceive it possible they could be done, but they were done, and our troops face to face with these Boer entrenchments are in miserable trenches, unable to shelter effectively a single soldier, and I believe very largely indeed because our troops will not do it. A great general, now in the field, said to me, "I believe if they were here for a month they would never entrench."

A MEMBER :—According to the *Times* to-day there is a large amount of Kaffir labour, slave labour, used by the Boers in making the entrenchments.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT :—I have never said how they did it, but there it was. This general said to me, "I believe if our people were here for a month they would never entrench." He had sent them out to entrench, and they had not done so at all. We had no practice whatever in entrenching. Our entrenching tools are of the most flimsy and wretched character it is possible to conceive. I think at some manœuvres they have a piece of tape to represent a trench, or something of that sort. That is the ridiculous farce which is played, and all because we cannot compensate some farmer or must not disturb some squire's game, or something of that kind. Sir Charles Dilke spoke of the carbine and the rifle for mounted infantry. I agree with him, but I must honestly say there is a great deal of difficulty, especially with inferior horsemen, managing their rifles when mounted. It is a curious thing, and I have noticed it a great deal. A great many mounted infantry are extremely bad horsemen, and the worse horsemen they are the worse they manage their rifle. The carbine is certainly very much handier, and if somebody would invent something not quite so unwieldy as the rifle it would be a much more useful arm than the present rifle or carbine.

Sir CHARLES DILKE :—I said the carbine for all mounted men who carry a rifle or carbine at all.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT :—With regard to the point which was taken by Captain James as to the Railway Department, enormous credit is due to the Railway Department. It is not only Colonel Girouard. Colonel Girouard had the extremely good taste to leave things as much as he possibly could in the civil departments, and the debt of this country to the Cape Railway and the Natal Government Railway cannot possibly be conceived. Captain James said that no protection was possible. I do not say protection is possible, but I do say that protection for stomach wounds, head wounds, and spine wounds comes into the same category as entrenchments. Entrenchments mean carrying pick-axes, spades, etc., and I think we must try and do something to protect the soldiers against these wounds which so very often prove fatal. A great deal of the same sort of criticism was applied to ships at sea, that with the enormous weight of armour which was applied to turrets, and so on, the ship would never float, or, if it got one shot, it would collapse, and things of that sort. But all that has been knocked on the head, and our ships float very well. I do not say anything can be done, but I think we should try and devise something. I entirely agree with Colonel Cave as to the non-homogeneity of our army corps. It is a ludicrous thing our having a small paper army corps. I have always contended in the House of Commons and everywhere else that the forces at Aldershot ought to be an army corps ready to embark in a week with all its provisions. The transport and regiments and everything should be complete ready to start off, and when the Government has decided on the embarkation of the troops the only thing they would have to do would be to send a telegram to Aldershot, "Transports are being prepared; be ready to embark your forces on Monday morning next." With Captain Macdonnell I am in most cordial agreement. We ought to do everything that we can to insist that our boys should be trained to drill and shoot. As I say here in my paper, it is much more important than the Seventh Standard of the Board Schools. We can do it if we put our minds to it; but I am disappointed and grieved beyond measure to see no serious signs of efforts being made in this direction, no signs on the part of the

Government or the people to acquire rifle ranges as they might be acquired. In a few years we shall not be able to acquire them at all. I do hope that anybody with influence will direct matters if possible into this channel. I am greatly indebted to my friend Mr. Arnold-Forster, whose labours in this matter have been Herculean, for the kind way in which he spoke of this paper. I am not going to trespass longer on you, except to invite all who are students of this matter to read and re-read this interesting book of Mr. Bloch, "Modern Weapons and Modern War." A great deal of what has happened in this war is really foretold in this book. Some hint has been directed as regards the slowness with which our Army is at present advancing, but we must not forget the enormous lines of communication which have to be protected. I am very much struck with the passage in this book where Mr. Bloch says that Napoleon entered Russia with 400,000 men, and although he only fought one battle, he had only 180,000 men with him when he entered Moscow. When we speak of our highly-trained troops—220,000 of them, and at the outside only 60,000 Boers, we must remember the enormous effect of modern weapons. Mr. Bloch may be only a theoretical student, but a great deal of what he says is absolutely true. I do not think he is far out when he says that one hundred men in a trench should be able to put out of action 336 out of 400 who attack them while they are crossing a zone of fire only 300 yards wide. That is rather a wide statement, and he should not be held to those figures; but there can be no doubt whatever that this campaign shows how few men, if they are good shots and hold their fire, if they play the game of "hide and shoot," may be effective against an attacking force operating without sufficient command of fire and without sufficient entrenchments, and across the open. I do not think anything more occurs to me to say. I wish I could comply with Mr. Arnold-Forster's wish and give more information. I may have some other opportunity of doing so, but I do not think I can do so now. I have been often asked how it is that the Boers have managed to keep their horses fit for work, and we cannot. That is an extremely difficult question to answer. I can only say we are so humane that we do not work our horses under conditions that the Boers do not hesitate to work them, and work them until they drop. I honestly say, however, that it is an extremely difficult question to answer. I have been much struck with the fact that was mentioned just now, viz., the insufficient advantage taken by the outposts on the occasion of the Boer attack in entrenching their positions. One of the most curious things of this campaign has been that peculiarity. On 6th January our men were completely surprised, and although they had been in front of Ladysmith for two months they had not thrown up any entrenchments at all or taken any means of protecting themselves. I am grateful to the Council and members of this Institution for their kindness in allowing me to read the paper here and for the attention given to it. If, as one speaker said, it gives food to the thoughtful, that is the only object I have in view, and perhaps it may not terminate with the discussion here this afternoon. To you yourself, General Maurice, I am very grateful indeed for having given the lecture your countenance.

The CHAIRMAN (Major-General J. F. Maurice):—I shall say little at the end of this very interesting discussion, because I am anxious not to keep you longer. There are a very large number of points raised by the lecture which one feels tempted to touch upon. But as it is getting late I shall limit myself to certain remarks that seem to me to need adding to what has been said. In the first place, when we talk about the "lessons of the war," I venture to think that there is a danger in our assuming that we can, from this one war, deduce all the lessons which will be applicable to the work of the British Army. Napoleon used to say that tactics had to be changed every ten years. I am afraid that the British Army must change their tactics every year—almost literally every year. During the past fifty years we have had fifty wars. If we don't get one every year, we make up for it by having three in one year, as we have done

during the last twelve months. In each one of those wars the conditions have been different from almost every other. I do not mean to trouble you with them, but I have been showing to the lecturer—as he justly says that he prefers prophecies delivered before the event rather than those after it—deductions made thirty years ago, directly from the experiences of 1870 and of the then condition of weapons. They include nearly everything, I think, that has been said with regard to the necessities of fighting methods shown by our present war. They refer to the necessity of not attacking in close formation, and the necessities of scouting, and all matters of that kind, almost in the words which now reach us from the front. What has happened to us in the meantime? We have been fighting, whether on the Nile or in South Africa, against magnificent savages—Mahdists or Zulus—whose one grandeur was that, without modern weapons they charged in close order against us with the most splendid heroism and sacrifice of life. The tactics that you deduced from the 1870 campaign, or from any great modern war, or from fighting against men with the weapons used by the Boers, would be wholly inapplicable to meet savages under those conditions. Therefore, if you began to establish, as we did begin to establish, immediately after the experiences of 1870 were upon us, a system of pure skirmishing as a necessity forced upon us by the then condition of weapons, and one that is enormously more stringent with the present condition of weapons, you would find that if you had crystallised that system as the only one applicable to all conditions, you would almost certainly in your very next war suffer because you applied it. It is a very delicate subject to touch, because in mentioning it one may seem to be blaming particular individuals, but actually we went into the Zulu war, where we were fighting against savages with no modern weapons, with the tactics deduced from the 1870 campaign. We adopted against the Zulus an excessively extended skirmishing order. Isandula was the result. Therefore, I maintain that the British Army is under a condition of difficulty in those respects that exists for no other Army in the world, and we must face and recognise the fact that we cannot attempt to stereotype our tactics. It is possible for either France or Germany to determine absolutely what they intend to do when they enter upon the one kind of war for which all their preparations are made. The energies of the nation are devoted to prepare for fighting against a European foe. What will happen, as surely as the sun rises, or the course of history runs, will be this: We shall, because of our experience in this war, which has merely reinforced and expanded more fully the previous experience of modern weapons as they existed in 1870, adopt all the tactics necessary for meeting those weapons. During the next four years we shall have four wars—unless the whole history of England changes in the meantime—in which the tactics on which the popular outcry will insist will be wholly inapplicable. As soon as the experiences of this war have been forgotten we shall begin to change again accordingly, and to stereotype some new form. If we are to avoid that danger we must keep our eyes open to the condition under which we are in each case about to fight, and apply our tactics to the actual facts before us in each case. We must realise that certain tactics are applicable because of the nature of the fighting that we have to deal with against the Boers, and that when we come to meet our next enemy we must have tactics suitable to fighting against them. We cannot make all wars fit into one Procrustean bed. With regard to scouting, I must say that I absolutely disbelieve, from the evidence before us, that the failure to see is due to the officers. All their sports, all their training in the hunting field, or elsewhere, tend to give them eyes. It is not so with Tommy. The last time I was in this room I had occasion to speak on behalf of Tommy Atkins. My language was taken up so warmly that it was copied into many local papers in different parts of the country, and was even put into verse. I happened to use the expression, “Give me Tommy Atkins to lead, and you may lead anybody you like.” I am therefore, perhaps, now free to say that, with all his virtues, Tommy Atkins is “an absent-minded

beggar," not because of our training, but because of the circumstances which at present attend the training of the youth of the country. You have the rush from the country into the towns, and in the towns the children, in order to make a little money for their parents, are set to do some minute bit of work, such as making pins' heads, or some minute product of machinery, which gives them no training for eyes or for life. Then the old army training of the past helps to establish these habits. For instance, we set men to do "sentry-go," and make them march up and down, looking straight to their front and seeing nothing. I was so firmly convinced four years ago, when I went to Woolwich, that that was the vital thing we had to watch, and that everything we do must tend to train the eyes of men whom the ordinary education of the country has trained not to see, that the first thing I did was to abolish all garrison guards, every guard I could possibly remove, in order that the men might not get into the habit of thinking that going on duty meant shutting their eyes. I substituted military policemen. I have spent my time over and over again going round trying to find out whether the military policemen could use their eyes. I have over and over again gone up to a man and said to him, "Why did you allow so and so to take place?" and he has replied, "I beg your pardon, sir; I never noticed it." Our men come to us from the country, trained by the habit which the country gives; not with the habit the Boer has of living on the veldt, looking after his horse and looking out for his game; not the kind of practice which comes from living a wild country life, but with the trained habit of the factory; and it takes us our utmost effort, and all our time to get them out of that habit of not seeing what is before them. I am as certain as I am of my own existence that the reason we blundered into that spruit is that the men scouting in front had no eyes. Broadwood is one of the most magnificent scouting officers we have in the Service, as he proved throughout the Nile campaigns, but no officer can be everywhere. He must have under him men who can see. I am as certain as if I had been there that the few men who came right on ahead were simply not able to see round them, because the country has trained them not to see. I have had before my eyes again and again at Woolwich, the Hanna's Post disaster. We cannot compete with the Boer training. The Boer boy is, or used to be, turned out into the veldt, bound to bring home his Polesbok for every cartridge less one that was put into his hand, not allowed to eat any meat from the time he is just able to carry a rifle and cross a horse unless he finds it himself, and sure to get sjamboked if he does not bring it soon enough. With regard to the maps about which there has been some discussion, their non-existence raises the very question of which Mr. Arnold-Forster was speaking—the responsibility of the House of Commons, or the nation behind them. I personally venture to think that Lord Salisbury was absolutely right in his statement that it is not due to anything else but the established habit of the Treasury. You have based the permanent authority on expenditure on a tradition of the past. The Manchester school is enthroned in the Treasury. Their habit is during peace-time to resist every sort of expenditure necessary for the Army. When you talk of "the enormous sums that are spent," that involves an assumption that requires a great deal of careful examination. I believe what was said to me by a great accountant the other day, that the English Army is the cheapest Army in the world for the work you get out of it. You cannot measure the loss of national wealth entailed by the compulsory service of foreign countries. With a Service such as we have, I do not believe that we get the money that is necessary to give efficiency to the Army. I believe that that want of training of which complaint has been made arises from our not having been able to get till last year the adequate manœuvring ground for which we had long asked in vain, and from our not having been able to get every year that varied ground for which we have also been incessantly asking. There have been difficulties of course. Those difficulties are overcome for every foreign Army in the world. These are purely questions of the extent to which Members of Parliament and others are able to persuade the country as to

the necessities which are before us. For those things we have been struggling for years. Thirty years ago we were fighting for the principle that it was an absolute necessity for us to have the power of getting an Army effectively put together. We always pressed it as strongly as we possibly could. Printed words do not so perish but that I can produce in evidence of what I say what was printed by the ream thirty years ago. From that day to this we have not been able to get it in perfection solely on account of money, and nothing else. Much has been done. Much remains to be done. Mr. Arnold-Forster says that you do not take the blame on yourself if your bootmaker does not make you a pair of boots properly. If, as might be the case in an Eastern bazaar, he is solely dependent on you for his material, your responsibility must depend on whether you have given him what he asked for, for making them properly or not. If you do not give the builder the amount necessary to build your house properly, he cannot build it for you. There is another point I am very anxious to touch upon: the question of who was responsible for only asking for infantry instead of for mounted men from the Colonies in the first instance. Before I say who it was, I will tell you why he did it, and why I with his experience should have done exactly the same if I had been in his place. There are Volunteers and Volunteers, and especially is that the case in South Africa. During one of the campaigns in which I was engaged there, I can answer for it that the Volunteers we obtained were of the type of whom there are many in South Africa, who just hang round the public-houses. They gave their little corps of twenty or thirty men each all sorts of savage and magnificent titles: "Shlingaum's Blazers," "Snookem's Dare-devils," and the like. They cultivated fierce and magnificent moustaches; they put on a gorgeous swagger, but they were absolutely valueless in action. The difference in this war has been that the real farming Colonial, the man of grit and active habit, has been stirred up to give you his services, and he is just as good as, or better than, the Boer, both in his shooting, his riding, his knowledge of the country, and knowledge of life. He is very different from the persons whom we had with us as our Schlombaggie Blazers. It has been said over and over again—and why anybody should doubt it I do not know—that it was left in the hands of the general in command in the field at the time to determine these questions. I know General Buller has had my own experience of the type of Volunteers we had when acting in certain previous campaigns. You have now at your service, among others not so good, some of the most splendid fellows you can possibly have. It does not follow that Sir Redvers was wrong, from his previous experience, in saying "I shall be glad to have somebody I can put in a safe post to look after the lines of communication, but I prefer not to have men of the useless type I had before." In England also there are Volunteers and Volunteers. No one knows that better than the best Volunteer officers. Thirty years ago I ventured to put it in this way in regard to the Volunteers in England: "Some will be fit to join any troops of the Line and to become the sharpshooters selected on each occasion, or the mounted riflemen who become the eyes of the Army. Others may be able to act, if properly incorporated, as the Dutch-Belgians were incorporated in Wellington's Army, with good troops. Others will only be fit to be thrown into a fortress, there to learn discipline and drill." That is as true at the present moment as it was thirty years ago. I may say that I am entirely with Sir Charles Dilke and against Captain James, in their respective views of cavalry and mounted infantry. I almost think, when we get to the end of this war, evidence will entirely establish the truth of what Sir Charles Dilke has said. I have just been talking with Colonel Henderson, invalided home from being the head of the Intelligence Department of Lord Roberts's Staff. He has had better means than anybody of knowing what was going on during the time he was there. He has come back very strongly impressed with the fact that mounted infantry is not of much account. As he is an infantry officer you will admit that that evidence is valuable. I believe firmly in mounted infantry in their own proper place. I believe them to be, as Napoleon said of the dragoons in his day,

necessary to the support of the cavalry, both on outposts, and wherever they may be, mainly in order to save the cavalry from the necessity of fighting on foot. But I think what we have seen of General French's use of the cavalry has taught us that the cavalry is the arm which will best enable us to have the better of the Boers, with all their mobility. Captain James said he did not believe in the cavalry charge, but the cavalry acting as charging cavalry against the Boer infantry when mounted has put the fear of God into them with a vengeance. The most brilliantly successful stroke of actual tactics during the whole war was General French's charge just before he entered Kimberley. All who saw it speak of its decisive effect with enthusiasm. Coming to the question which Mr. Arnold-Forster raised, why such small bodies are able to keep us in check, I can only say that it is the direct deduction which was made thirty years ago from the 1870 campaign as to what must happen when fighting with these improved weapons. Wellington at Waterloo had 69,000 men on two miles of ground. During the 1870 campaign, somewhere about 5,000 men were quite ample to hold any mile of ground. Obviously, if that proportion is carried on as the weapons improve in rate, range, and severity of fire, a very much smaller body of men will be able with our modern weapons to resist a frontal attack. It was the deduction we all made on previous experience, that that would be the case; that a frontal attack against men armed with the weapons of to-day is, as Bloch has worked out in his book in a most exhaustive manner, one of the most difficult of attempts. Therefore, from the time Ladysmith was fairly surrounded by Boers entrenched in strong positions, I doubt very much whether it was possible to break through. At any rate, those are questions the possibilities of which there is no time to discuss at the present moment. I think we shall all agree that we have had a most valuable and interesting discussion, and in your name, before you go, I beg to offer a vote of thanks to Sir Howard Vincent for his lecture.