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The Comparative Cost of the Armies of Different Nations, and the Loss to a Country by Conscription

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LECTURE.

Friday, March 31st, 1876.

LIEUT-GENERAL SIR LINTORN SIMMONS, K.C.B., R.E., &c., &c.,
in the Chair.

THE COMPARATIVE COST OF THE ARMIES OF DIFFERENT NATIONS, AND THE LOSS TO A COUNTRY BY CONSCRIPTION.

By Captain J. C. ARDAGH, R.E., F.R.G.S., &c.

PART I.

THE subject which I have been asked to investigate depends mainly upon financial statistics, and is consequently dry, but in laying the results before you I shall endeavour, as far as possible, to dispense with superfluous figures, and to confine the numerical statements within narrow limits. Yet, as money questions are inseparable from figures, I must ask you to tolerate the inevitable.

In considering the comparative cost of different armies, the first question to decide, as a preliminary step to the investigation, is—the standard of comparison; and here, at the very outset, there is an extensive field for difference of opinion, apart altogether from the difficulties to be subsequently encountered in obtaining statistics and manipulating them.

A description of some of the more rough methods occasionally employed will somewhat clear the ground.

A favourite plan in England is to divide the amount of the Army Estimates by the number of soldiers on the establishment. It used to be said that our Army cost £100 per head per annum. The home and colonial establishment for this year numbers 127,562, and the Estimates amount to 14 millions. Dividing one by the other will give about £110 per head. From this it would appear that we do not now get as good value for our money as we formerly did; but, notwithstanding the increased cost of articles of consumption, or, what is the same thing, the diminished value of money, this is a transparent fallacy, for we really get so much more for our £110 now, than we did for our £100 fifteen or twenty years ago, when the Militia and Volunteers had not reached their present efficient state, that we have every reason to be gratified. The fallacy lies in this—that the peace establishment of the regular forces is a most inaccurate standard whereby to measure the military strength of the country. The Reserves, the Militia, and

the Volunteers are altogether omitted, and yet they constitute numerically far the more considerable portion of our forces. If we deal with Army Estimates "en gros," there seem to be only two modes which can give reliable results, each in its particular way.

The first is to take the average number of men kept continually under arms as a divisor; this will give a tolerably fair financial result. The second is to take the number of efficiently trained soldiers who could be produced on a sudden mobilisation—the ultimate war strength, in fact; which is the aim and end of our expenditure.

By the average number of men continually under arms is to be understood—

- a. All the Regular forces.
- b. A fraction of the Reserves, dependent on the number of days' training which they are to receive, which is at present somewhat uncertain. Twelve days was spoken of, and on that assumption one-thirtieth of the number may be included.
- c. Under heading c come a fraction of the Militia, who are under arms for a month in the year, and their recruits, something over one-fourth of the total number, for two months. One-eighth of the number attending training may be taken as an average constantly under arms.
- d. A fraction of the Yeomanry and Volunteers, more difficult to estimate from the peculiarity of their training, but one-thirtieth of the efficient may be assumed as a liberal average.

The numbers will then stand as follows—

a. All the Regular forces..	..	..	127,562
b. Reserves, $\frac{1}{30}$ th of 31,000	..	..	1,033
c. Militia, $\frac{1}{8}$ th of 118,000..	..	..	14,750
d. Volunteers, $\frac{1}{30}$ th of 180,750	..	..	6,025
Total average under arms ..			149,370

Dividing the 14 millions of the Estimates by this number, we arrive at the cost per man under arms as £93. It is hardly necessary to remind you that this includes great guns, small arms, military stores, fortifications, barracks, pensions, and everything else appertaining to the maintenance of the Army.

The other basis of calculation suggested, was the war strength of the Army—the number of efficiently trained soldiers who could be produced on sudden mobilisation.

This may be said to comprise, nominally—

a. The Regular Army ..	..	..	127,562
b. The Reserves ..	..	..	31,000
c. The Militia ..	..	..	118,000
d. The Yeomanry ..	..	..	12,000
e. The Volunteers, 168,750 (one-fourth)	..	..	42,188
Total war strength ..			330,750

It is scarcely necessary to point out that this is a maximum limit, and that the numbers actually forthcoming, would be below it. The same is true, but in a less degree, for other countries than England.

Dividing our fourteen millions by three hundred and thirty thousand, we have the cost per head of war strength £42 per annum.

If the Imperial troops on the Indian establishment and their cost, together with the whole of the Volunteers be added, the war strength would be raised to 520,000, and the cost per head diminished to about £36 per annum; but this is mentioned merely incidentally, and is not intended as a comparative statement. The introduction of the native forces in India, numbering 440,000 men, or of the Canadian Militia, whose active strength is 30,000, would only confuse matters still further.

In going so far, the military establishments of this country only have been dealt with, and purposely so, for a single example indicates the process followed in other cases.

The mode in which these figures have been arrived at is altogether empirical, and most of the details involved are matters of opinion. In the case of England, for instance, one critic may consider that the militia should be excluded from our war strength, while another may ask why only one-fourth of the Volunteers have been included, or why the Irish Constabulary are left out, and so forth.

In dealing with the statistics of foreign armies, the same class of difficulties arises. It is true that we possess the most complicated military system in the world:—we have a Home Army, a Colonial Army, and an Indian Army, all more or less interwoven; and we have Regulars, Militia, Volunteers, and native troops, with various terms and systems of enlistment. In other countries there is, in those respects, far more simplicity; but great latitude exists for difference of opinion. Is the French *réserve*, who has only served six months in the ranks, to be reckoned as a trained soldier? Are the hundred and forty thousand Cossacks of Russia to be counted as cavalry? No rigid rule can be laid down; the decision must be left to the discretion of the computer in each case; and it may be broadly assumed that, where the calculations have all been made by the same hand, the results are capable of comparison, which is the ultimate aim of the investigation.

What has been said regarding numbers, applies with still more force to money.

No two countries keep their budget accounts on the same system, and none give *complete* information regarding the cost of their troops in an accessible form. In the French budget, military pensions are borne on the Finance Estimates; while, in America, a very large Survey and Meteorological Department is charged in the Army Estimates. Russia maintains, perhaps, a judicious reticence. Austria gives most detail. France nearly as much. Germany less. England, America, and Italy, supply a very great number of figures, and a very small amount of information.

I have gone into them all except Russia, and I may say that

America gives no information at all, and in the very wide gap between America and the great Continental Powers, our budget comes in as a link—containing very much more than the one, and very much less than the others.

Before going further into details, it will be interesting to consider some other general relations between military expenditure in various countries. Table I has been prepared with a view of illustrating the incidence of the military burden on the purse and person of the inhabitants; and here it must be pointed out that, in different countries, the extent to which expenditure from general revenue reaches in local, county, or provincial matters, varies very widely. The county police in England, for instance, are paid from local rates; while the Italian carabinieri, who are, in fact, a gendarmerie, are really the *élite* of the regular army, and are of course paid by the State. The railways are, in some cases, in the hands of the state, and, in others, of private companies.

A great number of the roads and canals, and public works, in France, involving an annual expenditure of above six millions of pounds sterling, are administered by the State; while, with us, these are all matters of private enterprise. And to complicate affairs still further, the amount or proportion of the National Debt, and its charge on revenue, in various States, differs very widely.

The result is that the annual budget is not a very good comparative standard of the cost of government and administration. This, however, is not the place to remodel the financial systems of the world; and the discrepancies are only alluded to in order to avoid misconception.

Turning to the tabular statement of statistics, on line 3 will be found the amount of annual taxation per head of population obtained by dividing the budget by the population. The figures are tolerably uniform, with the exception of Russia and America. The proportionately small amount of taxation in Russia, 18s. per head, is accounted for by the fact, that there are several local governments within the Empire, which administer their own finances. The Grand-Duchy of Finland, the Kingdom of Poland, the Province of Courland, and others, have special local administrations and taxation apart from that of the Empire.

In America, as is well known, each State of the Union provides for its own internal administration, and the amounts voted by Congress are therefore correspondingly diminished.

France also labours at the present moment under the pressure of her new and enormous debt and the re-organisation of her Army; while, as already mentioned, the ordinary budget is swelled by Algeria and the Public Works sections.

The average taxation per head in the principal European States is about forty-five shillings per annum. England and France are above. Germany, Austria, and Russia, are below this average.

Passing to the amounts in line 5, obtained by dividing the Army Estimates by the population, the cost of the Army per head of population is arrived at.

The small sum of four shillings per head in America is very simply accounted for by the very insignificant force maintained. Russia, Austria, and Italy, stand at six shillings per head; England and Germany at nine shillings per head; and France at the top of the list with eleven shillings, mainly due to re-organisation.

The proportion of revenue spent on the Army varies from 13 per cent. in Italy, to 21 per cent. in Germany.

The next group of figures relates to the peace strength of the Armies. The average number under arms, computed in the manner already mentioned, varies between exceedingly wide limits. America has only 28,000, while Russia has 675,000.

The incidence of personal military service on the population in time of peace is illustrated by the next line of figures:—

In France, there is one man under arms for every 82 persons of the population. In Germany, 1 in 98. Then follow Italy, 1 in 124; Russia, 1 in 127; and Austria, 1 in 150. England follows with 1 in 212; but if the 63,000 regular troops employed in India be reckoned, we have one man under arms for 148 persons of population, or much the same as Austria, where strict economy is necessarily observed.

In America, finally, the proportion is only 1 in 1,500.

The next figure has already been mentioned. It represents the cost per head of the average force under arms in time of peace. The lowest cost appears in Russia and Italy, at £37 and £38 per man; then come three great European Powers, at substantially the same amount, viz., France, £43, and Germany and Austria, £45, per head under arms.

In England, the amount is more than double these last, viz., £93; and in America it rises to the enormous figure of £278 per man per annum. It is strikingly apparent that, even when every allowance is made for the costliness of the necessities and luxuries of life in England and in the United States, the forces raised in those countries by voluntary enlistment are more expensive by far, if we are to judge by the estimates, than the armies of conscripts raised by the great European Powers: and we must conclude that, if the remuneration offered to the Anglo-Saxon soldier in the open labour market be fair, that which the conscripts are compelled to accept, is *inadequate*; and the balance which is withheld from them, although it does not appear on the face of any budget or estimate, is a virtual tax on the country;—but that bearing of the calculations will be discussed in the second portion of this paper.

The next group of figures gives the corresponding statistics for the war-strength of the various countries, the final line giving the cost in expectation or anticipation, not that of the war strength when fully embodied. These figures are very instructive. The war-strengths show the relative military power of the nations. The number of population per head of war-strength is an index of the pressure of conscription on the population.

In Austria 1 in 30 of the whole population can be placed under arms on mobilisation. France and Germany can produce 1 in 31, Italy 1 in 34, Russia at present is content with 1 in 50, while we have

in England and the colonies, except India, 331,000 available men, or 1 in 96 of the population of the United Kingdom.

It would appear from this that about one-thirtieth of the population is about the maximum force which the great military Powers can place under arms in time of war. If, however, America be an exception under ordinary circumstances, it must be recollected that during the war of secession there were above three and a half millions of men recruited or drafted into the armies on both sides, or one-ninth of the entire population.

The next lines—giving the cost per man in time of peace, of the war-strength; and the ratio which the war-strength bears to the peace-strength—afford a general idea of the economy and efficiency of the military administration.

At this point I have introduced statistics relative to the cost of a private soldier, but the consideration of them will be treated subsequently.

Another group of statistics relative to recruiting is subjoined, giving—The number of males annually attaining the age for military service, which, roughly speaking, is about one-hundredth part of the population, of whom it may be added but one-half are generally found available, the rest being unfit or exempted from one reason or another:—

The number of recruits taken and trained annually, divided into first and second portions of the contingent, the latter receiving only partial training:—

The proportion which the annual contingent bears to the whole population; and the *percentage* of those who come to the military age, who are trained.

And here some explanation is necessary. In England it is assumed that the recruits for the regular Army constitute the first portion of the contingent, and the Militia recruits the second. The volunteer recruits have not been accounted for, nor is the number annually entering the Royal Navy and Marines included. The recruits requisite to maintain the regular forces in India are, however, comprised as a set off. It must also be borne in mind that the recruits passed from the Militia into the line; 4,000 to 5,000 are counted twice.

In other countries the naval contingent has been excluded.

The number of recruits taken in the annual contingent is one of the best standards whereby to gauge the military training of a country, bearing in mind that the first portion are efficiently trained, and the second inefficiently; for the real military strength depends on the number of persons trained, however they may be classified, and by whatever name they may be called. Once a man is made a soldier of, he forms a unit in the military strength of his country as long as he can handle a musket, even though he may be temporarily lost sight of in the civil population. For if an emergency arises, that man can be induced to come forward again, and if the country be in danger there *should* be means, and there always *have been* means on such occasions to compel him.

We enlist annually 20,000 men for the Army (a number which

must be augmented annually in proportion as the new short-service men are passed into the Reserve, and which must ultimately exceed 30,000). The Militia takes 30,000 recruits, of whom 3,000 re-enrol, and 5,000 pass on into the regular Army. There is further a regular loss throughout from desertion, amounting to 15 per cent. in the regular service, or 3,000 per annum, but this is quite certain to diminish from the effect of short service and deferred pay.

It may be assumed that of the whole 50,000 recruits, at least 35,000 may be considered new and reliable, and if we can reckon on the services of those men, whether in the ranks or in the Reserve, for twelve years (Militia as well as regulars) we ought to be in a position to lay our hands on 400,000 trained soldiers in case of emergency, independent of the Volunteers. Those *fish* exist—what we want is a *net* to catch them.

The Militia.

In the tables which I have prepared, the Militia men are not specially dealt with, inasmuch as they have no complete analogy in any foreign State. The cost of a Militia man is easy to arrive at from the data already before us.

The total strength—Officers and men—cost, on the average, £10 per annum, as you may see from the Army Estimates. The private is, perhaps, not so well off as a Line soldier during the period of embodiment: but you must recollect that, under ordinary circumstances, he is far less subject practically to military law and to petty restraints than the Line soldier: he is among his friends and in his own county, and, on the whole, he regards his month's training in the light of an outing.

He is in these respects better off, but it is hardly necessary to say more; as, if the Militia is embodied for any long period, its conditions of service become almost identical with those of the Regulars.

The £10 per head, which has been mentioned as the cost of a Militia soldier, is merely a net sum from the Estimates, and will not compare with the £93 in line 9, Table I. It includes no share of administrative or non-effective services.

There is, however, a financial question regarding the Militia which I shall bring to your notice.

It has sometimes been said, that the same money which is now spent on the Militia would give better results if applied to increase the regular Army and Reserves; and I shall endeavour to show what you can have for your money in other ways. I shall assume that the substitutes are to be *bonâ fide* short service regiments, consisting of a cadre of old soldiers, and the rest enlisted for three years with the colours and nine years in the Reserve, forming four-fifths of the whole.

The cadre of an infantry regiment might consist of 26 Officers, 58 non-commissioned Officers, 40 corporals, and 80 long-service privates—in all 204—with 400 short-service men, coming in at the rate of 133 per annum, and being passed into the Reserve at something

less than that rate, and forming, with their nine contingents, about 1,000 men, when the system was fully at work.

I will not trouble you with calculations, but simply say that, for the £1,200,000 which we pay for 118,000 Militia, you could have 31 such regiments of 600 strong, or 18,600 men and 31,000 reserves, making in all 50,000.

This force of 18,600 men could not, of course, be sent abroad.

Now how does the comparison stand?

You could not have more than 30 or 40 cadres of regiments, whereas now you have 160 in the Militia, and that is a very serious drawback. Would your 50,000 men, of whom three-fifths would be reserves, be so much better than 118,000 Militia? Would they, in short, be more than twice as good?

I believe you will agree with me in voting for the old constitutional force, with the power of the ballot (unfair as it is) behind it.

And here it is well to draw attention to the division of all armies into two classes:—1st. The cadre, formed of the administrative, executive, and instructional portion, and the old soldiers; and, 2nd. The contingent—the recruits—or the rank and file, who are drilled, instructed, and moulded into soldiers by the others; and as soon as they are so trained, they ought at once to be passed into the Reserve. You can have a large cadre and a small contingent of recruits, or a small cadre and a large contingent, for the same strength, and about the same money. In the former case, you have a large number of trained reserves, and in the latter, you may have none at all.

An example will show how this bears on the cost and efficiency of an army.

In France, after the Crimean war, there was a nominal contingent of 100,000 men, which, however, was reduced to 79,000, by those taken for the Navy, those unfit for service, &c., before they became disposable. There were in force all kinds of ingenious systems for evading conscription, by purchase, substitution, replacement, &c. The nation would not submit to the improvements proposed by their rulers. The system of replacement or exoneration was profoundly rooted in the customs of the people. The first portion, 43,000 of the contingent, served for seven years, and the second portion, 36,000, for five months. Of the 43,000 taken annually to keep up the Army, at a nominal strength of 400,000, no fewer than 20,000 at one time used to obtain exonérations, most of them being replaced by the re-enlistment of old soldiers, who received a considerable bounty. The price of a substitute rose in fact to over £80. The consequence was, that the Army was really kept up by only 23,000 conscripts annually at one time, most of whom re-enlisted for term after term, becoming veritable “vieux grognards,” while there was no reserve at all.

It may be mentioned in comparison, that the number of recruits which we have taken in England for the regular Army has often surpassed that figure, and that too without a bounty.

They had then in France no reserve whatever of trained troops, and the result was—the disaster of 1870.

Now, instead of taking 23,000 only into the regular Army, they take

103,000, nearly five times as many, to keep up a strength of 440,000, or about 10 per cent. more than in the time alluded to.

That, it must be allowed, is a forcible example of how the number of recruits trained annually indicates the true strength of a nation, and will make it clear how desirable it is to have small cadres and large reserves, instead of old soldiers and nothing behind them.

Yet another instance of the applicability of the same principle of small cadres and large reserves will not be out of place.

The peace establishment of a battery of field artillery in most continental countries consists of 4 guns to a war strength of 6 or 8. When mobilisation is ordered the reserves come in, horses are requisitioned, and the reserve guns and waggons are paraded with the battery. The number of cadres is the same, but the number of guns is increased by half, or even doubled.

Now turn to our own Royal Artillery. They have an establishment in peace and in war of 6 guns, and the number of guns which we can put into the field can only be increased by increasing the number of batteries—by creating fresh cadres in fact. These new cadres can only be obtained by subtracting men and Officers from the existing batteries. If this *must* be done in war, it *ought* to be done in peace. A battery with a peace establishment of 3 or 4 guns may be raised to 6 or 8, and filled up with trained reserves, without losing its efficiency; but if you take one of the 6-gun batteries, split it in two, and make each half up to full strength with recruits, can you expect these new and unorganised cadres, and these untrained men to drop into their places at once, and be equal to batteries raised on the other system?

It all points to the moral, that to combine economy and efficiency you must have Small Cadres and Large Reserves, and this has a most material effect both on the apparent and on the real cost of an armed force.

The Cost of an Infantry Soldier in different Countries.

Hitherto only general figures have been dealt with; direct and indirect charges accounted for in the Army Estimates have all been massed together; and no distinction is drawn between Officers and men. I have endeavoured to work out the cost of an *army* in different countries, and I shall now try to lay before you the cost of a *soldier*. *Vide* Tables II—VIII.

As it would have been extremely complex to form an average including all ranks below Officers, and all branches of the service, the infantry of the line has been selected as being the backbone and numerical majority of all armies, and I have tried to put a monetary value on the advantages and inducements held out to the recruit on joining. (Table II.) These advantages are of a various character, and may be classed under three heads:—

1st. Immediate and direct advantages.

2nd. Prospective advantages.

3rd. Indirect considerations.

The *immediate and direct advantages* comprise:—

1. *Pay*, ordinary extra pay, and marching money.

2. *Food*, including rations of bread, meat, groceries, liquors, &c., and allowances in lieu thereof.

3. *Clothing*, including uniform, necessaries, boots, &c., and allowances for that purpose.

4. *Barrack accommodation*, and lodging allowances.

5. *Bedding*, furniture and utensils.

6. *Fuel*, for warming and cooking.

7. *Lighting*—candles, oil, or gas.

The *prospective advantages* include:—

8. *Good conduct pay*.

9. Prospect of increased *pay on promotion*.

10. *Gratuities* and presents.

11. Prospect of *deferred pay*.

12. Prospect of *pension*.

13. *Hospital and medical attendance*.

14. *Education*.

The *indirect considerations* are:—

15. Opportunity of earning in private employment while serving.

16. Diminished cost of amusement and travelling.

17. Alteration in social status of the Army.

18. Attractions and drawbacks incidental to military service, especially abroad, including loss of civil freedom, subjection to military law, and restrictions on marriage.

19. Prospect of obtaining a civil appointment on leaving the Army.

20. Risk and mortality in the Army, from war and bad climates.

It is at once apparent that many of these items are of such a nature as to render a monetary appreciation of their value impossible, and yet they cannot be omitted from consideration. The direct and prospective advantages can be calculated, and I have given the results in the table (II) appended to this paper, but only propose to call your attention to the general figures, and these amounts are, I beg you to observe, *absolute* and not *comparative*. It would be absurd, for instance, to conclude that, as a Russian soldier gets £10 per annum, and an American soldier £100, the latter is therefore ten times better off. In order to arrive at a comparative result, the condition of the soldier must be contrasted with that of the class from which he is drawn in his own country.

And here again there is wide scope for differences of opinion. What grades of the social scale are to be included? What are their earnings? Do they pay for their medical attendance and education, and provide for their poor, aged, and infirm? How are they affected by taxation? Are the necessaries of life cheap or dear? Is the climate hot or cold, equable or extreme? What do the inhabitants eat and drink? Are they frugal or luxurious in their mode of living? Is the population engaged mainly in agriculture or in manufactures? What is the value of money?—and a hundred other questions which are quite as difficult to answer as it is to discount the prospective advantage of getting into a theatre at half-price, or deciding whether that privilege is a fair set-off against the chance of having to wear a wooden leg.

¹ I have taken into account the additional inducements brought forward by the Secretary of State for War, when introducing the Army Estimates this year.

It is impossible to integrate all these considerations, many of them trifling in themselves, yet forming an important whole. You can only draw broad comparisons.

The principal is, that voluntary recruiting is apparently expensive. America and England pay respectively more than twice and four times as much for their rank and file as the countries where universal liability to military service is in force. In Russia, a soldier is fed, clothed, and housed, but his pay is so small—about a farthing a-day—that it is hardly worth taking into consideration. He has to serve simply for the necessaries of life. And this is the case to a great degree in the other continental countries—it takes a man his whole pay merely to live; and he is dependent on extra employment, in a civil capacity, on assistance from his family, or on the bounty of his friends, for anything he may have in the way of comfort and luxury.

These contributions form in many countries no inconsiderable part of the income of the soldier.

But the most important point to observe is—that the economy of conscription is not real. If a soldier is worth £40 per annum in the open market, and you only give him £20, you are robbing him of his time and labour to the extent of the £20 you withhold, and you thus impose an additional tax on the State by exacting that sum annually from every soldier you employ, instead of distributing it over the population generally, by an equitable system of taxation.

PART II.

Loss to a country by Conscription.

I shall now proceed to the second portion of the subject, viz., the loss to a country by conscription. It may be urged that there is no loss; but that objection will be incidentally disposed of in endeavouring to assess it. The question is one of evidence, and much of the evidence is based on opinion or even on prejudice. The general effect of conscription is so well described in a memorandum handed in to the Recruiting Commission of 1861, by Mr. Godley, then Assistant Under Secretary of State for War, a gentleman who was well known and highly esteemed by many now in this room, that an extract from that document requires no apology. Mr. Godley says:—

Mr. Godley's Memorandum on the Means of Recruiting the Army.

(Royal Commission on Recruiting, 1861, par. 1796).

“Conscription, which is at first sight and superficially a cheap mode of recruiting armies, is, in reality, the most expensive that can be adopted. It is a tax by lot, confessedly the very worst tax that a Government can impose. Where substitutes are allowed and provided, the tax is paid in money, and consists of the price paid for the substitute, the only difference between such substitutes and recruits, provided as ours are, being that in the former case the

"bounty is paid by the unfortunate individual on whom the lot has fallen, in the latter case by the public.

"The case is still harder with those who cannot afford to purchase substitutes; on them the conscription is a tax which takes at one swoop their whole capital, *i.e.*, their labour and their time. It matters not what the value of that capital may be—whether they be skilled or unskilled, educated or ignorant, earning high or low wages, producing largely or producing nothing, down comes the relentless conscription, takes possession of them for the best part of their lives, and gives them in return hardly more than clothing and food. In these cases the pecuniary amount of the tax is represented by the difference between the value of the conscript's labour at his own calling and his pay as a soldier. But no pecuniary expression can represent the full amount of individual suffering and public inconvenience which must be the result of so extensive and violent a dislocation of labour. Compulsory service of any kind would be peculiarly injurious to a country inhabited by an enterprising and colonising people like the English. Such a people always sits loosely to the soil, and the prospect of a conscription would infallibly lead to a regular and large emigration of our best workmen, a class of whom we already lose too many. Of course if there is no other way of getting an army, we must have a conscription; but surely everything else ought to be tried before we have recourse to it."

This is the general view, and a very sound one; but it deals only with the hardships of the system of substitutes on the poor—the system of substitutes, an iniquitous injustice, devised to relieve the rich of their share of the burden.

A substitute is a voluntary recruit, whose bounty, as Mr. Godley points out, is paid—not by the State—but by the unlucky individual who is drawn in the ballot. The fine is the same, whether it be paid by a prosperous millionaire or a struggling artisan. The general practice has been an uniform rate of exemption, based on supply and demand. £40 was not an uncommon price for a substitute for the Militia in the beginning of this century. In France, it ranged up to £150, and the regulation price fixed by the Government was £80. In America, during the late war, the cost of a substitute rose as high as £100 or £200 above the £100 paid as bounty by the State; and if a ballot, with substitution, were resorted to in this country for the Army, it is certain that even these high figures would be exceeded. Now can anything be more unjust than this lottery of fines?

The system admits, it is true, of being improved, by introducing a sliding scale, based, for instance, on income, but the administration of such a method presents immense difficulty, and what after all is the difference between a system of graduated fines, and an item in the budget, for the provision of the sums required, in the annual Estimates? Substitution, then, at its best, is only equivalent to recruiting by large State bounties, a mode universally recognised as vicious.

Let the system of conscription without substitution, be now considered—universal personal service. There is a kind of abstract ideal

justice in it, but in practice it is a mere chimera. No nation ever has, or ever will arrive at the point of insisting on personal service to the last bitter drop.

The law of conscription in these countries which we refer to, invariably begins by declaring universal liability in the most emphatic way, and immediately proceeds to enumerate exceptions, giving privileges or immunities on one pretext or another, to at least half the people who are liable.

The exemptions are grounded on:—

1. Physical causes—as insufficient height or chest measurement, deformity or disease. These are inevitable.

2. Family reasons—as being the support of the family, an only son, having a brother already in the ranks, &c. These are also unobjectionable.

3. Social reasons—as being a minister of religion, a student in specified establishments, a doctor, or professor, &c. This is where the stumbling-blocks commence, I will give you an example. It would be *impolitic* to draft a Cabinet Minister, and it would be *absurd* to impress a bishop. Yet the extension of immunities to such classes as these distinguished persons may be the exponents of—when pushed to the other extreme—is equally ridiculous, for you come down to the postman and the parish-clerk, who, although their absence might be more felt in their respective spheres than that of the higher functionaries in their offices, could bring no equitable or valid reason for exemption on the ground of the duties performed.

These are types of the difficulties which have occurred. I believe the postman, or even any one whom he might employ to carry a letter, evaded the draft in the United States, on the ground of his being a Government servant; and certainly in Italy the embryo ecclesiastics managed to escape until within the last few years.

4. Voluntary service, combined with an educational test.

In Germany, a volunteer for one year passes a high test examination, the number of volunteers being limited; and the system has a most beneficial effect in stimulating advancement in education. In France, however, the spirit of the law regarding one year volunteers has been most disgracefully evaded. The Civil Commissions charged with the examinations, have admitted boys who could do little more than read and write; but this can, of course, be remedied.

In Russia, there is a system which, at first sight, is rather attractive. Those who have received certificates from a first class educational establishment only serve three months. Those with a certificate of the second class serve for six months; and those who can pass a special examination serve for two years. This applies to volunteers only, but conscripts have similar, though not so extensive privileges. The volunteers generally support themselves. Now, this admission of volunteers on an educational test, and on condition of self-support, is really, in a country like Russia, simply in favour of the rich and well to do, and consequently against the poor, who have to make up the numbers.

In Russia, only one-tenth of the contingent can read and write;

so the educated few practically get off altogether, or are made non-commissioned officers after a few months. In Italy, 43 per cent. can read and write; but education there is advancing with rapid strides. Austria is about the same. In France, 60 per cent. can read and write. In England, about 90; but we, too, are improving. Germany is at the head of Europe, with 96 per cent.

Then it must be considered that a great number of the men who are liable for conscription do not put in an appearance, and cannot be found; and of those who are mustered, many are put back temporarily for immaturity, or other reasons; so that the number dwindles down to something very far below what may be expected. In Germany about one-third are found available, in Italy nearly one-half. As an instance of how conscription affects the upper classes, about one-eleventh of the total contingent in Italy were proprietors, merchants, professional men, and students, whose enrolment must be considered as a very large pecuniary loss both to themselves and their country. In Austria, the persons exempted, from whatever cause, pay a fine instead of serving. In Italy, the one year volunteer pays £31 to receive the pay and rations of the soldier. In France, the volunteer pays £36, and the total amount paid by them to the State is 18 millions of francs, or £720,000 in the Estimates for 1876. That gives an idea of the value attached to a reduction of service to one year.

But the real way of ascertaining the cost of conscription is to calculate what recruits could be obtained for in the open market, as volunteers, and to consider the difference between this sum and what they actually receive as the indirect taxation representing what the nation pays in this unjust and unequal manner for submitting to conscription. In France a labourer earns about £29 per annum, and an artisan £37 and upwards. Taking £33 as an average rate to compare with the soldier's £20, we find that the State appropriates £13 from the earning power of each private soldier, and a higher sum from the non-commissioned officers. But it is enough to take the smaller sum.

368,000 men¹ at £13 each, make £4,784,000; and I have already told you that a fine of £720,000 is exacted from the volunteers; so the lowest estimate of the cost of conscription in France, regarded in this point of view, is £5½ millions, or 22 per cent. of the Army Estimates. Let us look at it from another point of view. A substitute used to cost 2,000 francs, or £80, that was the regulation price before the war, but it has often been higher. There were 164,789 recruits to be incorporated in 1876, of whom only 108,000 are to be taken as first portion. Suppose that one-third of these were voluntary recruits, the remaining two-thirds—72,000 men—were fined £80 a head by the

¹ Total	410,000	
Gendarmerie	27,000	
Officers	19,000	
Staff	26,000	
Permanent.....	72,000	72,000
Leaves rank and file.....		368,000

State, or something about £5 $\frac{3}{4}$ millions, materially the same figure as the last, or about one-quarter of the whole cost of the army.

In these two calculations you will observe that only the labouring classes have been taken into account; and that the losses suffered by men of business, merchants, manufacturers, and persons of large property, have not been considered at all.

This limitation has been adhered to, mainly because the one-year volunteer system affords to those classes a loophole of escape. Yet the damage done to them and to the material prosperity of the country is far greater than is shown in the not inconsiderable sum I have mentioned.

But I must observe that universal liability has undoubtedly an excellent effect on the Officers, for it drives into the Army a number of young men of fortune and high position, who would otherwise perhaps do nothing, but who are glad to become Officers in order to avoid being conscripts. This inducement has hitherto been sadly wanting in France, but I venture to predict that thirty years hence the social status of the French Officer will have materially altered. In Germany the effect has long since been produced. To return, however, to the cost of conscription, I trust that I have made it clear that this 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ millions in France is not the value of a mere sentimental grievance, but an actual taxation by lot, and a sum which ought to appear on the estimates, which, instead of being as they are 20 millions, should be 26 millions or more, the balance being made up by compelling men to work for three-quarter wages, the State appropriating the remaining quarter.

It is unnecessary to go through the same process for other States; suffice to say that France pays the best, and Russia the worst, that is to say that France appropriates the smallest percentage of the fair earnings of the soldier, and Russia the greatest.

It is a broad fact that all these nations pay their conscripts vastly less than the market rate of their service, and that the difference is made up by indirect means which equally bear upon the country, and are capable to a certain extent of evaluation.

It is urged by the advocates of conscription that it is a cheaper system than voluntary enlistment. Nothing can be more fallacious than to suppose so. If we adopted conscription to-morrow, and only paid men a farthing a day (as is done in Russia), giving them, besides, the mere necessities of life, there would be an apparent saving of £15 to £20 per man per annum; but that apparent saving is no real gain to the country, it is only a capitation tax on the conscripts which ought to be levied on the country in general. But they say: "You get better men." Undoubtedly you do, but at a loss to the community at large. You take a man who is earning a pound a day, and you give him a shilling or a farthing, and the gross earnings of the country are decreased by the difference between what pittance you choose to accord to him, and the fair remuneration of his skill or talent. There is no economy in robbing Peter to pay Paul, and there is no justice in compelling Paul to work for one-twentieth part of the wages he can obtain in the open market.

Conscription is only justifiable when the necessities of the country compel its Government to develop its military resources to the fullest extent—when it becomes necessary to train the great bulk of the able-bodied population to arms—as is now the case with most of the great Powers. If every available man is taken at a certain age, there is at least no injustice to individuals, although the higher classes suffer far more than the lower.

If even a moiety of the available men are taken, there is but small ground for complaint. But it is entirely different when you only want, as we do, a very small proportion of them, and that small portion for exceptionally arduous duties, which they are quite ready to insure themselves against if the premium is small, as it would be in England.

I am sure that the notion of sending a conscript to the West Coast of Africa, or even to India, can never be seriously entertained. In short, we never ought, and never will, apply conscription to recruiting except for the Militia, and then only as a *dernier ressort*.

The question of economy in military administration, as a consequence of conscription, can never come into operation in this country. We must raise the wages and inducements to enlist voluntarily, *pari passu* with the cost of living and the demand for labour; and when the moment comes for enforcing conscription, it will be impossible to turn round and say to your conscripts—we do not intend to pay you as much as a volunteer, although we admit you are worth more. There can be no saving then in that way.

On the contrary, it is most probable that every reasonable addition will have been made to the inducements to enlist, previous to conscription, and these cannot be immediately withdrawn.

As the question of conscription for our own Army has been already ventilated within these walls, I shall only remind you that, in addition to the objections and injustices which surround it in other countries we should have to superadd our Indian and Colonial service—banishment, most likely to an unhealthy climate. That single condition is sufficient to render conscription for the regular Army, as now constituted, impossible. No minister could venture to propose a measure which would render the population liable to exile as well as to compulsory service, for it is beyond a doubt that we have never had a difficulty in obtaining men for those arduous duties, which could not have been avoided by some foresight and a little money; and which was in fact got over, without even the suggestion of resorting to such an iniquitous injustice as conscription for Indian and Colonial service would be.

I must remind you, moreover, that during the struggle for existence in America, during which 3,700,000 men were under arms on both sides (about one-ninth of the entire population), there was no time that substitute could not be procured, although the price sometimes ran very high. It was enthusiasm and patriotism which brought the best men in America into the army, and not the compulsion of the draft and I venture to say that those motives are by no means extinct in this country.

Conscription may in some cases be an inevitable necessity, but viewed in any aspect is a costly injustice, and the fewer the men required in proportion to those liable, the greater is the unfairness to the unfortunates who are drawn. As we have no intention of training the whole population to arms, the necessity for resorting to conscription for the Army seems remote; but our previous experience of the working of the existing law for militia-ballot ought to be a warning to us to advocate such alterations in the Act as will make it really efficient if it ever has to be put into operation, for it is now lamentably out of date, and is universally admitted to be unsuitable.

I shall only add a hope that the system of *small* cadres and *large* reserves may render a resort to conscription unnecessary. There are plenty of men to be had at the market price, and if John Bull wants more, it will be cheaper for him to put his hand in his pocket in time of peace and maintain a reserve, than to resort to a levy of raw recruits on the outbreak of a war.

APPENDIX.

TABLE I.—Statistics relating to the Cost of Armies in different Countries.

	England. 1876.	France. 1876.	Germany. 1876.	Russia. 1874.	Austria. 1872.	Italy. 1873.	America. 1876.
1 Population	31,623,339	36,102,921	41,000,000	85,635,915	35,901,435	26,801,154	42,000,000
2 Gross annual expenditure	£76,906,310	£103,000,000	£87,000,000	£79,000,000	£73,000,000	£60,000,000	54,000,000
3 Taxation per head of population	£2 7 0	£2 17 0	£2 2 0	£0 18 0	£2 0 0	£2 5 0	£1 6 0
4 Gross Army estimates	£14,485,300	£20,000,000	£19,000,000	£25,000,000	£11,000,000	£12,000,000	7,600,000
5 Cost of Army per head of population	£0 9 0	£0 11 0	£0 9 0	£0 6 0	£0 6 0	£0 6 0	£0 4 0
6 Percentage of total taxation spent on Army	19	19	21	16	15	13	15
7 Average number under arms—peace establish- ment	150,000	440,000	419,000	675,000	239,000	217,000	28,000
8 Head of population to one man under arms—ditto	212	82	98	127	150	124	1,500
9 Cost of Army, all ranks, per head—ditto	£03 0 0	£13 0 0	£45 0 0	£37 0 0	£45 0 0	£38 0 0	£278 0 0
10 Average number under arms—war strength	331,000	1,150,000	1,315,000	1,636,000	1,137,000	770,000	
	ex. 3 volunteers.	ex territorial army.	ex Landsturm.	ex irregulars.			
11 Head of population to one man under arms—ditto	95	31	31	50	30	34	
12 Cost of war strength in time of peace, per head	£42 0 0	£17 0 0	£14 0 0	£15 0 0	£9 0 0	£10 0 0	
13 Ratio of numbers — peace strength to war strength	2-20	2-61	3-14	2-50	4-77	3-55	
14 Ratio of cost—peace strength to war strength	45	39	31	40	20	26	
15 Pay, rations, clothing and housing a private of Infantry	£37 10 0	£21 0 0	£17 16 0	£10 4 0	£13 1 4	£15 8 3	£57 5 0
16 Prospective advantages enjoyed by a private of Infantry	£18 11 0	£5 1 0	£7 7 5	£1 5 0	£7 11 2	£5 2 6	£11 8 8
17 Total cost of an Infantry soldier to the State	£56 1 0	£26 1 0	£25 3 5	£11 9 0	£20 12 6	£20 10 9	£103 13 8
18 Wages of a labourer	£10 0 0	£29 0 0	£30 0 0				
19 Wages of a tradesman, artisan, or mechanic	£65 0 0	£37 0 0					
20 Number of males attaining military age each year	280,000	300,000	480,000	800,000	337,000	250,000	400,000
21 Annual contingent of recruits, 1st portion— Regulars	20,000	108,000	..	..	80,000	50,000	
22 2nd portion, or Militia	30,000	156,000	..	..	58,000	27,000	
23 Total recruits	50,000	164,000	149,000	100,000	147,000	87,000	4,000
24 Proportion of annual draft to population	1 in 632	1 in 209	1 in 275	1 in 506	1 in 241	1 in 316.	1 in 19,500
25 Percentage of men attaining military age who are trained	18	55	31	19	43	31	01

TABLE II.—*Estimate of the Pay and Allowances, Direct and Prospective Advantages, of a Private Soldier in the Infantry of the Line in various Countries.*

IMMEDIATE AND DIRECT ADVANTAGES.		England.	France.	Germany.	Russia.	Austria.	Italy.	America.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1	Pay—Ordinary extra pay and marching money	18 10 0	7 4 7	9 7 1	0 10 10	2 3 10	..	33 10 0
2	Food—Rations of bread, meat, groceries, and liquor	11 3 2	7 19 9	2 16 0	6 3 8	6 14 7	14 0 0	37 15 0
3	Clothing—Uniform, books, necessaries, and allowances	4 2 5	3 11 8	3 0 4	1 14 6	1 13 10	..	12 0 0
4	Barracks—Lodging or allowance	2 12 0	1 8 7	..	..	1 10 0	..	..
5	Bedding—Blankets, sheets, straw, furniture, utensils	0 2 5	0 8 6	2 12 7	1 5 0	0 8 7	1 8 3	14 0 0
6	Fuel—For warming and cooking	1 0 0	0 6 11	..	..	0 2 6	..	..
7	Lighting—Candles, oil, or gas	..	..	..	..	0 3 0	..	..
	Total A	37 10 0	21 0 0	17 16 0	10 4 0	13 1 4	15 8 3	97 5 0
PROSPECTIVE ADVANTAGES.								
8	Good conduct pay	1 4 9	1 18 0	1 0 0	..	0 16 9	..	..
9	Increased pay on promotion	5 10 0	1 6 0	1 6 0	0 2 0	0 11 0	0 0 0	..
10	Gratuities and presents	0 5 0	..	..	0 2 6	..	..	..
11	Deferred pay	2 10 0	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	2 5 0
12	Pension	7 4 3	0 19 7	4 0 0	..	4 14 9	4 5 4	1 0 0
13	Hospitals and medical attendance	1 7 0	0 14 9	0 19 4	1 0 0	1 8 0	0 8 2	1 13 8
14	Education	0 10 0	0 2 8	0 2 0	0 0 0	0 0 8	..	0 10 0
	Total B	18 11 0	5 1 0	7 7 5	1 5 0	7 11 2	5 2 6	11 8 8
	A + B	56 1 0	26 1 0	25 3 5	11 9 0	20 12 6	20 10 9	103 13 8
INDIRECT CONSIDERATIONS.								
15	Opportunity of earning in private employment	Insignificant.	Moderate.	Good.	Very considerable.	Fair.	Fair.	..
16	Diminished cost of amusement and travelling	Nil.	Improved.	Greatly improved.	Improved.	Improved.	Improved.	Nil.
17	Alteration in social status	Negative.	..	small in all these countries.	..	Fair.	Fair.	..
18	Attractions of an adventurous career	Considerable.	Good.	Very good.	..	..	..	..
19	Prospect of civil employment	Nil.	..	Very small.	..	..	..	..
20	Risk and mortality from war and bad climates	Considerable.	..	..	except in great national wars.	..	..	Small.

TABLE III.

ENGLAND.

*Cost of an Infantry Soldier.**Army Estimates, 1876-7.*

		Per diem.	Per annum.
		s. d.	£ s. d.
Vote 1.	Pay	1 0	18 5 0
"	Additional pay (future)	0 2	3 0 10
"	Good conduct pay and skill at arms .. $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{£} \\ 97,000 \\ 70,287 \end{array} \right\}$	0 8	1 4 9
" 10.	Provisions .....	....	11 3 2
"	Paillasse, straw .....	....	0 2 5
"	Fuel and light, half of .....	....	1 0 0
"	Lodging or barracks .....	....	2 12 0
" 11.	Clothing, rank and file .....	....	3 1 5
"	Great coat, leggings, gloves, and neces- $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 131,000 \\ 195,000 \end{array} \right\}$ saries .....	....	0 14 0
Share of free kit on joining .....		....	0 7 0
Vote 4.	Hospital and medical attendance and medicines ..		
	£262,000 total vote. $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{F } 61,400 \\ \text{G } 122,000 \\ \text{H } 122,000 \end{array} \right\}$	....	1 7 0
	195,000 Army and Militia. $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{F } 61,400 \\ \text{G } 122,000 \\ \text{H } 122,000 \end{array} \right\}$	....	0 10 0
	Chelsea and Kilmainham .....	....	0 4 3
	Out-pensions .....	....	7 0 0
			50 11 10

TABLE IV.

FRANCE.

Cost of an Infantry Soldier from French Army Estimates, 1876.

	Francs.	£ s. d.
Pay.....	150 38	6 0 4
Wine, beer, spirit	4 70	0 4 0
Marching money	1	0 0 10
Necessaries' fund	36 50	1 9 2
Supplement	29 20	1 3 5
Gross pay	221 78	8 17 6
Deduct hospital or furlough	22 17	0 17 11
Net pay	199 61	8 0 0
Clothing.....	53	....
Provisions (see below).....	..	2 2 2
Lighting.....	5 36	0 4 3
Hospitals.....	19 70	0 14 9
Bedding	10 62	0 8 6
Maintenance of arms	1 60	0 1 4
Fuel—warming and cooking	8 60	0 6 11
Pensions borne by finance estimate and mainly caused by the war 66,000,000 × £430,000	15 30	0 12 9
Ecoles regimentaires	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1,388,000 \\ 430,000 \\ 696,000 \end{array} \right\}$	3 23 0 2 8
Invalides	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 430 \\ 3,332,000 \end{array} \right\}$	1 62 0 1 4
Secours.....	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 500,000 \end{array} \right\}$	6 66 0 5 6

France, 1876, p. 754, cost of Rations to State.

	c.	Per annum. £ s. d.
750 grm. bread	·22	} 26c. is deducted from pay, leaving extra cost 13c. } 6 19 0
300 grm. meat	·39	
Sugar, coffee	·11 7	

Extraordinary or field rations.

Rice and salt	·02	}	} 1 7 0
Brandy every three days	·07		
One year Volunteer pay 900 francs.			

TABLE V.

GERMANY.

Cost of an Infantry Soldier from Estimates, 1876.

	Marks.	£ s. d.
Pay of a private	126	6 6 0
Allowances in garrison	61	3 1 0
Bread ration	56	2 16 0
Clothing and equipment	60·3	3 0 4
Barracks, fire, and light	30·5	1 10 6
Additional ditto	2·1	0 2 1
Hospitals and medical staff	19·3	0 19 4
	£	
Education of privates, &c..... { 639,000 }	2·05	0 2 1

	Marks.	Marks.
Lowest pay	10·50	per month = 125 0
Mean pay	12·7	„ = 152 4

The daily bread portion is 750 gr. 1·5 pence is deducted daily from the soldier's pay for his mid-day meal. If this is insufficient a supplement is issued calculated on the cost of provisions.

Ration—Small.	Large.
150 gr. raw meat	250
92 rice	118

or certain equivalents in meal, vegetables, potatoes, &c.

A fuel ration is for a room holding from 4 to 8 men. A room for 12 men receives $1\frac{1}{2}$ rations. A ration is $\frac{1}{150}$ th part about of a klafter of wood.

Oil is issued to rooms for the winter months, 12 loth in all per annum.

Privates have 40 lbs. hay or 65 lbs. straw per annum for bedding.

TABLE VI.

AUSTRIA.

*Estimated Cost of Infantry Soldier.**Estimates 1871.*

	Gulden.	£ s. d.
Menage	44.2	4 8 4
Brot	22.21	2 4 5
Kasern-Servis	4.37	0 8 8
Betten Stroh	.73	0 1 5
Zusammen	71.51	7 3 2
Betten Nachschaffung	2.11	0 4 2
„ Ausbesserung u. Reinigung	1.50	0 3 0
Montur und Rüstungs-Gebühr	19.40	1 18 10
Löhnung	21.90	2 3 10
Feuer-Gewehr-Reparatur	.53	0 1 7
According to Estimates	116.95	11 13 11
Sanitätswesen..... { 3,137,106 }	14	1 8 0
(There are 5 per cent. in hospital at a cost of 123 g. per head.) { 224,000 }		
Versorgungswesen { 10,623,183 }	47.4	4 14 9
{ 224,000 }		
Invalid Hospitals and Pensions.		
Unterricht—Ausbildung	.33	0 0 8
Unterofficiers-Dienstes-Prämien	178.68	17 17 4
Prospect of increased pay	8.4	0 16 9
	12.	1 2 0

Bread rations—black bread—875 grammes, costs 1.6 pence.

Meat ration 185 grammes.

Tobacco at reduced price.

TABLE VII.

ITALY.

*Cost of an Infantry Soldier.**Estimates 1874.*

		Lire.	Lire.	£ s. d.
Daily pay (<i>soldo</i>)		43		
Bread money		25		
Service allowance (<i>assegno individuale</i>)		14		
<i>Deconto</i> (includes clothing, boots, &c.)		14		
		96	350 40	14 0 0
Corpo veterani ed invalidi....	1 251 000	....	6 43	0 5 4
	195 000			
	1 907 300			
Servizio sanitario .....		....	9 77	0 8 2
	1 95 000			
	22 713 000			
Pane e viveri (included in pay)		....		
	1 95 000			
	4 247 000			
Letti, legna, lumi, casermaggio		....	21 70	0 18 1
	195 000			
	1 919 000			
Transporti materiali, &c....		....	9 80	0 8 2
	195 000			
	575 000			
Immobili .....		....	3	0 2 6
	195 000			
	195 000 000			
Pensions .....		....	100	4 0 0
	195 000			
			501 10	20 2 3
Arms Accoutrements .....		....	....	0 10 0
Cost of Levy				

A one year Volunteer Infantry pays 620 lire and receives pay, clothing, &c., as a soldier.

The Estimates calculate the average cost per man under arms (not including works and buildings, &c.), at 700 to 900 lire per annum.

Bread ration 941 grammes. Costs 2·2 to 2·4 pence. Meat ration 200 grs.

Tobacco at reduced price.

Levy of 1873, 65,000 (1st.) 35,000 (2nd.)

Total number dealt with 273,751

Rejected under 5' 1" 21,603

Deformed or diseased 49,979 } 141,350

Only male, eldest son of widow, and other family reasons 69,768 }

Remaining to be drawn from..... 132,401

TABLE VIII.

AMERICA.

Cost of an Infantry Soldier.

	Dollars.	£ s. d.
Money pay—average	180	36 0 0
Additional pay \$2 per month after 5 years.		
Bread, meat, and groceries	168	37 15 0
Clothing.....	60	12 0 0
Lodging, fuel, and light—Est.	65	13 0 0
Bedding .....	....	1 0 0
Hospitals free—Est.....	3.40	0 13 8
Medical attendance, say	5	1 0 0
Education, say .....	....	0 10 0
Asylums—Pension, say.....	....	1 0 0
		102 18 8

Reputed cost of a soldier £200 or 1,000 dollars per annum.

One dollar per month is kept back as reserved pay and handed over in a lump at the end of 5 years. 60 dollars = £12. The effect has been to diminish desertion.

No Pensions allowed, except in cases of disabilities from wounds and other causes incurred on duty.

Commodious asylums provided for old and disabled soldiers.

Colonel Lord WAVENEY, A.D.C., F.R.S.: I am quite sure, Sir, that you will not think I am anticipating a very pleasant duty that falls upon you when I express the satisfaction with which we must all have received the statements made by the lecturer on this occasion, and if I take exception to some few of his inferences, and permit myself to supplement some of his statistics, he will, I am sure, believe I do it in an earnest desire to co-operate with him. In the first place as a Militia Officer myself, I thank him for asserting the principle of small cadres and large reserves, as compared with the system of a small concentrated force as alternative to a large expensive body. There are some points of consideration also with regard to that service. The service is capable of much larger expansion than is usually understood, even with the present disqualification of the high price of labour which necessarily draws away so many. Having commanded a Militia-regiment for many years, I have had an opportunity of testing the materials from which we draw our recruits, and I find that in the agricultural districts, to which alone you can look for a permanent supply, the rural population is diminishing to a certain extent, and only that portion who cannot obtain engagements for the whole of the year, come to us in the Militia. There is no doubt an arrangement by which it is possible to have the three months' training of the recruit in the winter months instead of his being called up, as was originally the case, when the men were under arms for training. This expedient was adopted in the brigade I have under my command, and as to the result, it was taken advantage of by a fine body of young men,—the finest I have seen since entering the service—comprising those who could not find subsistence during the whole of the year, and who therefore were presumably more likely, this being an agricultural district, to be out of employment in the winter than in the summer. Those three-month men will be dismissed to-morrow. During the winter, we employ them in drill and in gymnastic exercises, and I must say, after twenty years' service, I never saw a body of soldiers of three months in better trim. There is another point with regard to recruiting for the Militia and the ballot. It is not generally known that in remodeling the Militia Acts of 1853, a power was reserved in supplement of the voluntary enlistment—that is to say, the Militia service is told off for recruiting into divisions and districts in each respective county, and a certain number of recruits is allotted to each. But if this number be not obtained by voluntary enlistment, there is a power to ballot under the Act to raise the determinate number of Militia soldiers. At the present time it is unnecessary that we should revert to that course. Very fortunately the principle of small cadres, well carried out in the Militia-service, is amply sufficient, and indeed I am inclined to think if we came to verify the particular proportions of men enrolled in each Militia regiment, we should find the cadre system was practically and fairly and absolutely adopted. If it be well developed, I will answer, from my own experience, for making up the full strength and establishment of the regiment, so soon as there is prospect of so much of garrison and foreign service as we were permitted to undertake during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny. And now I would go to the point of conscription for the army in the country which has carried it, as I think, most beneficially into effect. I have returned recently from Italy. The conditions of Italy are peculiar. The Army is a necessity of constitutional existence, and to maintaining a place in the European system for the Italian people, so much so, that it has become with them a proverb, "The Army made Italy by its battles; the Army will make the Italians by its education." The conscription in Italy,—and here to a certain extent I venture to differ with the lecturer—is carried out absolutely without exemption, except of course such as are necessary and consistent, that is to say, not to take the widow's son, or the support of the family, or professional men. A very remarkable occurrence has recently taken place. The Italian government has met with exceeding obloquy because it insisted that the pupils at the universities or seminaries for educational purposes should not be exempt from service in the ranks. It was discovered that this was evaded, and that Italians passed off into the foreign universities without serving. At last it was decided that what we should call an undergraduate must take his turn of service in the ranks, but there was the means of shortening the period by joining the one-year engaged soldiers. Therefore they are as much subject to conscription, only they have to learn their duty in

a shorter time, saving the money of the State, but in a term which probably, considering their superior education, will be quite sufficient to enable them to acquire the habits of the soldier, amongst whom they live in barracks, whether in separate "chambres" I do not know, but they do duty as private sentinels. With regard to figures, I am not inclined quite to agree with the lecturer, either as regards America or Italy. The most clear, definite and accurate detail of the operations of any army that I have the good fortune to know, was that which was presented by the War Minister for America—I think Secretary Stanton—the year after the close of the great struggle. It has also this advantage, that it was not a collection of estimates and figures, but of results, and of expenditure. With regard to Italy, through the kindness of the Parliamentary authorities, I obtained a larger amount of Parliamentary information presented on the part of the War Minister to the Committees of Parliament, and from Committees sent back to the Chamber of Deputies than those of any country, not excepting the English Blue Books which have puzzled so many of us. The Italian has a natural genius for analysis; he has a power of diving to the very bottom of a subject, which is perfectly marvellous; and inasmuch as the great question for Italy is for the present her army, the government has gone deep in research into military subjects; they have accumulated every historical fact that can bear upon the question, and have thrown light on a great many points of which we were ignorant. For instance, is any student of German history acquainted with the principle on which the great Frederick paid his officers? He sought them far and wide in whatever country, and for their speciality; he employed and paid them highly, and this is exceedingly remarkable,—he seems to have made separate payments to the individual, and in cases of artillery and cavalry officers he gave pay in those days to the troop officer in those arms equivalent to the double pay of a captain in the British service in India at the present moment. A remark has been made as regards the proportion of revenue expended on the army, varying from 13 per cent. in Italy to 20 per cent. in Germany. In these cases I think the revenue should be set against expenditure generally and subdivided afterwards, attributing so much to the different arms, so much to fortification, so much to office expenses, and so on. I have tables on these matters in my hand, and they are quite at the command of the lecturer in case of discrepancy.

Now with regard to the conscription itself. An army is a constitutional necessity in Italy, because Italy says thus:—"We will have no invasion on our frontiers; we will invade none; we will be drawn into no entangling alliances. Italy for the Italians! The Army made Italy; the Army will make the Italians." The Army has thus become a necessity, and the most permanent arrangements have been made for the purpose of giving Italy an Army such as she desires. And here is the fair side of conscription. When I discussed conscription with the highest military officer in the country and those nearest the throne, the remark made was, "A conscription is possible for us, but it would be unfair for you, because with your Indian and Colonial service you could not send a conscript out of the country." That shows the principle on which conscription is understood in Italy. The country is divided into districts so that the soldier is as it were amongst his fellow provincials, and is not harshly thrust amongst those with whom he may have no affinities; but the regiments are kept separate in the districts, and when the soldier is once placed in the regiment he is sent to any part that may be necessary. The soldier is taken as a youth, and this is the difference between the conscription of this Italian country and others, that he is taken as a youth, he is worked as a youth, he is sent back immediately his work is over to his parish (I am speaking of the infantry soldier), and is not then drawn upon for the period during which he is liable to conscription, unless in case of war. What is that period? Twelve years, during which he is liable to conscription, and three years, or, practically, two years and eight months, during which he is with the colours, and he is then returned to his own home. Being taken as a very young soldier indeed, he comes into the condition of my militiaman of whom I spoke, who has not obtained a position in trade or business, from which being displaced, he encounters a serious loss. A scale has been made for the force that can be calculated upon from 1872 to 1885. I take three decennial periods, and I find 90,000 men; 65,000 immediately join the colours, 25,000 are sent home and drawn upon during the three years to repair the loss

which is rather under 10 per cent.; consequently, at the end of three years the 90,000 are exhausted, and this is the result:—in 1872, 381,300 with the colours, and 250,960 at home, and in 1884, 576,000 with the colours and 191,000 at home, making 767,000, which is to be the normal state of the future available army of Italy, and which may be mobilized in a fortnight.

Colonel ROBERTSON, late 8th King's Regt.: I never heard read in this Hall, I have never saw reported in the Journal of this Institution a more able and instructive paper than that which we have just had the pleasure of hearing Captain Ardagh read to us. The facts he has collected are most valuable; I may say they are indispensable for any one who wishes to investigate thoroughly the problems of military organization. Very few Officers wishing to obtain such information as is contained in Captain Ardagh's paper, would know where to find it, still fewer, if they knew where to search for it, would have the perseverance and the analytical skill to extract from voluminous official documents, the data required for such exhaustive summaries of results as Captain Ardagh has not only tabulated for us, but which he has also commented upon with a masterly clearness of statement which could not be surpassed. For in the long paper with which he has favoured us, I do not think there is a single ambiguous sentence which requires explanation, or a single obscurely stated fact, respecting the significance of which, any gentleman present will feel it necessary to ask a question.

As regards the conclusions of Captain Ardagh, I regret very much to find that an Officer whose opinions are certain to be regarded as authoritative, is an opponent of the policy of exacting military training, and the liability to military service as a duty.

I entirely differ from Captain Ardagh, and from all those who think that compulsory military training would be hurtful either to the private interests of the individual citizens of this country, or to the political and industrial interests of the state. I say compulsory military training, not compulsory service, because the effect on individual and political interest of exacting the performance of military duties for a short period is totally different from the effect of exacting this duty for a long period. I regard military duty exacted for a short period (say one year) as a highly beneficial educational training, but if exacted for a long period (say five or even three years), I regard it as a most onerous and pernicious servitude.¹ In considering the question,—is, or is not compulsory military service beneficial? the answer altogether depends on the length of the period for which the recruit is required to serve. If for a short period, it will be beneficial, if for a long period it will be injurious both to the interests of the recruit and of the State. Conscription, that is military servitude for a long term of years, may, perhaps, without much exaggeration with reference to individual interests, be described, as it is described, in the words of the late Mr. Godley, quoted by Captain Ardagh,—“A tax by lot, which takes from the “conscript at one fell swoop his whole capital, *i.e.*, his labour and his time.”

But a short term of compulsory training has a very different effect. A law imposing such a duty so far from diminishing the capital of a labourer would increase it, for, although during the year of training the pay he would receive from the State would be less than the wages he might have earned, I do not consider it correct to describe this difference between the recruit's pay and the labourer's earnings as a pecuniary loss and an unjust tax imposed on the recruit. On the contrary, I look upon the sum representing this difference as capital very profitably invested, as money laid out in an educational training, the equivalent and much more than the equivalent of which will be increased vigour both of body and

¹ I regret that Captain Ardagh did not include in his paper some statistics respecting the military organization of Switzerland. Should the Government of that country ever consider it expedient or necessary to render compulsory the performance of some part of the military duties required for national defence, I am inclined to think that some modification of the military institutions of Switzerland would be found better suited to the social and political condition of England, and therefore better adapted to serve as our model, than the military institutions of Germany, France, or Italy.—A. C. R.

mind, increase of money-earning power, increased chances of obtaining profitable employment.

This view of the effect of a short term of military service is in accordance with the views of General Trochu,¹ and of Sir Charles Trevelyan.

Sir Charles considers that to a young labourer military training is as great, even a greater advantage than university training to a young man intended for a professional or political career. If this be so then, that statesmen who shall pass a law exacting from every Englishman the duty of one year's military training, so far from imposing an unjust tax or an intolerable burden on the people, will confer on every labouring man in England a most valuable boon, a benefit of very real and practical kind. Time will not permit me to say more respecting the manner in which a law rendering military training compulsory would affect the social and individual interests of the community, but I shall endeavour to indicate in a very few words what I think would be the effect of such a law on the political interests of the State.

During long periods of peace, influences are at work which give an undue predominance to the special selfish interests of individuals, and which are often adverse to the general interests of the community.

These influences have a disintegrating effect on that combination of political forces, which constitutes a vigorous national life. They are inimical to all institutions and organisations requiring the sacrifice of private interests for the public good; and having for their object to render the individual will and all the abilities of every citizen subservient to the purposes of the State, and instrumental in carrying out its policy. As an extreme and almost ludicrous instance of the sacrifice of the interests of the public (or at least what the Government believe to be the interests of the public) to the selfish interests of a few individuals, I may mention the successful resistance of the insignificant section of the community engaged in the manufacture of lucifer matches to the financial schemes of a minister remarkable for the determination of his character, and belonging to a Government which commanded a large Parliamentary majority and the confidence and support of a powerful party in the State. Another striking instance of great political power, entirely under the control of individual interests, is afforded by the very effective, though not entirely successful, resistance of the publicans and brewers to the recent legislation for regulating the liquor traffic. The political effect of a measure rendering military service compulsory would be antagonistic to the predominance of selfish feelings and interests as motives of action, and to those tendencies of the existing condition of political forces in England, which are opposed to national organisation, to the centralisation of the powers of Government, and in general to the attainment of all objects which require unity of purpose and combined action.

I have to apologise for the length of these observations, but I trust they will not be considered as either superfluous or irrelevant. The considerations I have endeavoured to present have not been discussed by Captain Ardagh; perhaps the scope of his paper did not require him to notice them. It might, however, have been expected that either the author of the admirable essay on "recruiting," to which the prize medal of the Institution was awarded, or else some of the Officers who took part in the discussion which followed, would have pointed out that the institution of a system of compulsory military training would be attended with great social and political, as well as with very great military advantages. As, however, this was not done either by Captain Hime or by any of the speakers, whose observations are reported in the Journal of this Institution, I have availed myself of this opportunity to direct attention to those considerations, which, if ably advocated and thoroughly discussed, will, I feel convinced, lead to the conclusion, not merely that we must be prepared to accept as an inevitable military necessity, a measure rendering compulsory a universal training to arms; but much more than this, that we should recommend and endeavour to promote by every means in our power its voluntary adoption, because we confidently believe that with

¹ *Vide* the chapter headed "Jeunes et Vieux Soldats" in *l'Armée Française* en 1867.

reference to the civil and political, as well as to the military interests of the nation, such a measure is in all respects expedient and very desirable to establish this conclusion, and if possible to render it popularly acceptable. This is a task which I hope will be undertaken by some member of this Institution who has more authority to command attention, and more ability to convince and persuade than I have. Captain Hime is reported to have said, "I am not in favour of conscription, I only point out that whether we like it or not, it is inevitable." I am by no means sure that conscription is inevitable, but I am quite sure that conscription, if adopted, whether from necessity or from choice, will certainly be very beneficial; that if once established among us, it will be cherished as one of the most valuable of our national institutions.

Captain FEATHERSTONEHAUGH, R.E.: I only wish to say two words. There appeared to me to be an inconsistency in Captain Ardagh's argument. He says, "If you have voluntary enlistment you have to pay the market price; if you have compulsory enlistment you do not actually pay to the man, but the State loses it in another way, so that it is six of one and half a dozen of the other." I do not see that the argument has any weight. I do not agree with the second conclusion that the State has to pay that difference between the market value and the wages of the soldier indirectly. It is often said there is nothing so fallacious as figures. I believe that is true. The real question is, can the State afford to have 100,000 men idle every year? and if you look at it in that point of view I think it can. The labour market is over-stocked; men are emigrating; if there were 100,000 soldiers idle every year besides those who go abroad, wages would only rise slightly, and I consider a thickly populated country like England can afford to have a number of men idle every year. I shall be glad to hear any more explanation of Captain Ardagh's theory, because it is to me a stumbling-block I cannot get over.

Mr. RALPH KNOX, War Office: I do not wish to enter upon a discussion as to whether conscription is the best course for this country to adopt, but rather to congratulate the lecturer upon the delivery of this most important and interesting lecture. I do not think he has really raised the question as to whether conscription is advisable or not. He has wished to inform this Institution, and through this Institution the public, for which I feel certain that this Institution and the public will feel very grateful, what he has found after most elaborate inquiry and study, to be the relative cost in money of the soldier in the various countries of Europe, and what he considers to be in money the cost of conscription to the individuals who are conscribed. I think he has stated with remarkable clearness in his lecture, and with even more clearness in the Tables attached to it, the facts as to these matters, and I can only say that I thank him very much for the information which he has prepared. The department to which he belongs may congratulate itself as bringing forth this very excellent fruit as one of the results of its institution. The lecturer has been enabled from the position which he holds, to analyse many facts and figures, which, until very recent years, were hardly accessible to one individual; he has studied them thoroughly and has laid them most clearly before us. He has, in the course of his lecture, criticised in a very small degree, and therefore I am not inclined to join issue with him, the way in which some statements are made in the statistics which are laid before the House of Commons in this country. But I may say in explanation, that these departments are not able to do as they like in laying figures before Parliament; there are rules that guide them, rules that restrict them, which they in many cases would be willing to cut through. This is not possible, as the rules in many cases are of great value to secure the objects in view. The figures in the estimates state in the most clear and accurate manner all that can be stated as a forecast of the expenditure to be incurred for the Army in this country. It is quite true other nations go into more elaborate details in their figures, but those figures are by no means exact. What we do want, however, in this country is a clear and exact return of past facts. We want clear and exact statements as to what has been done with our money. We do not seem to take an interest in these things, but such statements are really at the root of all true economy. Very few people know it but nevertheless it is the fact, and if more care were taken in laying the monetary facts of the past before the country, I am sure it would tend to vast saving of military expenditure. I do not wish to occupy your time any further, but

conclude by thanking Captain Ardagh very much indeed for the very elaborate and clear statement of the cost of the armies of Europe which he has laid before us.

General Sir WILLIAM CODRINGTON, G.C.B.: Every nation has its own characteristics, and one of the characteristics of the English nation is a desire for the absence of compulsion. With regard to conscription, it is my impression that it is the most expensive, the most tyrannical proceeding with regard to families and to individuals, that can be adopted by any nation. Look at the extreme detail of supervision that goes on—I do not know whether in France it is to the same extent—but which is enforced in Prussia; not only is the individual taken, but I think I am right in my impression, that the family is made answerable for the man being forthcoming in his village when he is wanted. I ask you to carry that into the detail of English life and judge what it would include. There is another consequence in Prussia which shows the extent to which it is necessary to go in this extreme of compulsion, viz., that if a man is lame and not fit for service, they make him pay in money as they naturally say “It is not the fault of the State that you are lame, we cannot admit that you should be freed from the necessities of conscription except by paying.” That is another result of rigorous conscription. My general impression certainly is, that unless you are under the pressure of invasion, or of such an attack elsewhere that your last defence would be by fighting abroad, you will never get conscription in England; I believe it would be better worth while paying to the utmost, than it would be to take every individual of every class to do that, for which I believe you will get men better suited to your purpose by volunteering. With regard to a proposal for conscription in England, it was said by a Secretary of State for War, “that the Government preferred paying for the labour they required.” If we really did so pay for the labour we required, we certainly should get the men. It might be a very costly business, but I believe in the end it would be more economical to the nation generally than that extreme compulsion which would be necessary for conscription.

E. B. DE FONBLANQUE, Esq.: I entirely agree with the last speaker, that the English instinct is so completely against conscription that it would be almost impossible to introduce it in this country. The tendency of the Essay has been to establish that, upon financial as well as upon political grounds; but I think Captain Ardagh has rather lost sight of the differences in the institutions of other States, owing to which the system which is not admissible by us, is perfectly admissible in other countries.

Captain ARDAGH: I only spoke of England as regards conscription; I offered no opinion whatever about conscription in other countries.

Mr. DE FONBLANQUE: You gave illustrations on the subject.

The CHAIRMAN: Illustrations as to cost—as to the working of it.

Mr. DE FONBLANQUE: Well, as to the working of it. The lecturer spoke of the exemptions under the law of prescription as being very unfair. Now, in some countries these exemptions are next to nothing. In Switzerland, for instance, there are hardly any exemptions whatever. Then, by way of contrasting the advantages of voluntary enlistment with conscription, he has quoted the civil war in America, and has alluded to the patriotic feelings that induced them to come forward, until almost the whole population may be said to have been absorbed into the Army. But the fact is, nearly one-half of those Armies consisted of foreigners, principally of Germans. (Captain ARDAGH: No, no.) Probably I exaggerate when I say one-half, but I do not think I am very far wrong. As I said before, however, I entirely agree with the lecturer, so far as the question is confined to England, and as to conscription not being capable of defence on financial grounds, which the lecturer has fully and ably established.

Captain GURDON, R.N.: I just wish to speak a few words to confirm the last speaker. Fully one-third of the men in the Northern Army were foreigners—either Germans or Irish, and if the Southern States had been able to have blockaded the North, the North would not have been able to have kept up the war the length of time they did. One whole division of General Sherman's Army were Germans, and so far Germans that they could not even speak one word of English. About one-third of the Army of the Potomac were Irish and Germans. I beg to state, I have

got my information in the United States itself, where I was travelling and residing for two years and a-half; and I got my information, not only from Southerners, but from United States Officers as well.

The CHAIRMAN: Were they naturalised Germans?

Captain GURDON: They were not; they were men who came over during the war. There were special agents from the United States in Germany, and also in Ireland, and these men were ostensibly sent over for railway works, but, in reality, they were all, when they arrived at New York, enlisted, given large bounties, and took the place of Northerners who ought to have served in the Northern Army, but could not be got to serve. I would also beg to state, with reference to Captain Ardagh's statement that the cost of the American Army is so enormous and its pay so large, is perfectly correct, and, notwithstanding that very high pay, it is not possible to find sufficient native-born Americans to enter the ranks; nearly one-half (which you will admit is a very large proportion for the Army of any country) consists of foreigners, German and Irish chiefly, at the present moment.¹ I think that fact will dispose of one of the subsequent speaker's remarks that, if you pay your men very highly you would *always* get them, because in this case the American Government cannot get a sufficient number of their own citizens to serve in the ranks of the Army. That depends, indeed, on what opening there is for the civil population. If the civil population can make a great deal more money by civilian pursuits than they can in the Army, and there are greater openings, of course naturally, in countries like America or England, you cannot get your men. The same thing was apparent here during the Crimean War, when we could not get sufficient recruits, although we were offering high bounties, and we had to raise a German legion, an Italian legion, and a Swiss legion;² and, if the war had gone on two years longer, half our actual Army in the field would have been foreigners. My remarks were caused by Captain Ardagh's statement that, in his opinion, both this country and the United States could rely on voluntary enlistment to sustain the strain of a serious war; I do not think that actual facts tend to confirm that statement.

Captain ARDAGH: I expected to have thrown an apple of discord among the audience in raising this question of conscription, and am very much obliged for the remarks which have been made on the paper, and in particular for the statistics which Lord Waveney has given with regard to the Italian Army. But I must say, with reference to his remarks, that he drew his statistics from a prospective table, whereas I took mine from actual facts and returns, which the Italian Government gave. There is really no material difference. As regards exemption on educational grounds in Italy, the principle on which it is carried out is very little different from that which is enforced in Germany; the test is somewhat more severe than in France, but the principle is much the same in all. Colonel Robertson has called attention to the advantage of military training as compared with an university education, for which, he suggests (it may be considered) a fair equivalent.

Colonel ROBERTSON: It was Sir Charles Trevelyan's opinion.

Captain ARDAGH: I think Sir Charles Trevelyan has rather over-estimated the advantage of a year's training in the ranks.

Colonel ROBERTSON: I quite agree with him, but I quoted him.

Captain ARDAGH: One might set-off against that advantage, supposing it is an advantage, the great loss which persons who earn large sums in private employment would be subjected to in being withdrawn from their occupation for a year: and I really think if you appeal to the country, that any notions entertained as regards the advantage which the youth of the nation might derive from compulsory military training would never meet with the slightest response from the great bulk of the population, and it is quite useless to propose such a thing. The objections that Captain Featherstonehaugh has raised with regard to conscription have been virtually

¹ This is excluding the negro troops, my observations only applying to whites throughout. There were about 60,000 negroes during the war in the Northern Army; at the present moment, I believe, there are about 4,000 in the United States Army.

² Not to mention the Turkish contingent.

answered in the paper. I do not allege conscription is not cheap; if you judge by the annual Estimates, it is cheap according to this standard. You have in France 20 millions as the nominal cost of the army, but I have shown you it costs that country at least 26 millions, and I believe it costs over 30 millions. It is unreasonable to say that because they only pay 20 millions for what costs the country 30 millions, they are gainers thereby. I am deeply obliged for the compliment which Mr. Knox has paid to these statistics. No one is better able to offer an opinion on that subject than he is; but I must beg him to consider that in criticising the form in which the British Army Estimates are presented to the country, I only intended to impugn them in so far as that they make it impossible for any one to discover, except by the most minute investigation, what a soldier really does cost; and if I were to ask Mr. Knox now what would be the cost of adding a new division to the British Army, I venture to say he would find it almost impossible to procure data to answer the question. Sir William Codrington, I am glad to hear, adds the weight of his authority in opposing conscription. As regards Mr. De Fonblanque's observation with reference to service in Switzerland, I venture to submit that it can hardly be brought in as an example. Military service in Switzerland is merely an amusement: the great bulk of people who go out for their short annual training in Switzerland regard it much in the light of a picnic. There is hardly such a thing as military law in Switzerland; they are subject to but slight restraints and no hardships. With regard to America, it has been asserted that one-third of the whole armies in America were not naturalised American citizens. From the returns that are published, it appears that one-ninth of the population of America were under arms during that war, and I ask you if it is possible that one-third of that one-ninth could have been foreigners? It is simply preposterous; the thing is disposed of by the mere fact that one-ninth of the whole population were under arms. To tell me that 3,700,000 men were one-third composed of foreigners in America during the war is to make an assertion that won't bear any inquiry at all.¹

In conclusion, I beg to thank the meeting for the interest with which this comparatively dry subject has been received.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I think you will all agree with me that we are greatly indebted to Captain Ardagh for this most valuable contribution to the records of this Institution. It is by papers such as these that the character of the Institution stands, and will rise. Before sitting down, I would venture to make a few observations, as the subject of the paper is one which, as Captain Ardagh has said, I have studied a great deal, and it is one also concerning which I have before spoken in this room. I quite agree with Sir William Codrington, that you must take into consideration, in debating this question, the circumstances of the country to which it refers. What is a necessity—an absolute necessity—on the Continent, is happily for us not a necessity. Foreign Governments have to deal with the necessity which has been imposed upon them, and they deal with it according to their respective lights, and in that way in which they consider it will be least onerous upon the populations they govern. The latest law, at any rate, the last that has come to my knowledge, with regard to conscription, is the new law of service in Russia. It is based on the same principles as the German law—that all the population, including now the nobles who were formerly exempt, are liable to

¹ The annual number of able-bodied male emigrants (about one-fifth of the entire number) was, during the period 1860-70, 90,000. If every available man of these had been drafted into the army on landing in the country, the four years of the war could, as a maximum, have only produced 360,000, or one-tenth of the number mentioned, instead of one-third as alleged. The estimated number of naturalised citizens residing in the United States is 4,136,000, of whom 3,100,000 are Irish or Germans, the total population being 38,558,371. The number of able-bodied men would amount to about one-eighth of the whole, or 500,000, so that both sources of supply would fail to make up one-third of the whole. As a matter of fact, the largest proportion of recruits was furnished by the Western States, which had no means of procuring immigrants as substitutes. Kansas sent 36 per cent. of her men to the field, Iowa 30 per cent., Indiana and Illinois over 25 per cent. The Confederate States had, of course, no means of recruiting by immigration, in consequence of the blockade.

military service, and therefore to conscription. The Emperor, in the Edict in which he publishes this law to the country, congratulates himself and the country on the readiness with which those classes who were previously exempt from conscription have fallen into his views, and accepted this law; but when you come to look into the operation of the law, you find exemptions of the most marvellous character; all people who have properties to manage are exempted; all people who are in the Government service, and not only those in Government service, but those even who are in the service of any corporation are exempt, and have their names registered as such. In fact, the exemptions are countless; and as if they were not sufficient to accommodate the favoured classes, there is a clause under which the military authorities may give to every man who has not acquired the honourable position of a non-commissioned Officer a furlough, or, in other words, may place him at once in the Reserve, which is tantamount to exemption. Having lived in Russia for some years, I conceive the practical working of this law will not tend to promote high morality in the country. With regard to conscription, notwithstanding the many objections attending it, one cannot help admitting it has some great advantages. Germany has reaped the benefit of those advantages to the full extent, because it has been in operation for many years: and amongst them, perhaps, the greatest benefit that has accrued to Germany is that of having promoted education. I have myself seen on the frontier, as you cross from the German provinces into the Russian, the most marked difference between the state of the people on different sides of the conventional line which divides these provinces, for in many places it is merely a line, and not a river nor a geographical boundary; on one side you will find people in the grossest ignorance, and on the other side they have already arrived at a fairly high state of education; you see it in the better cultivation of farms, and in the manufactures which are to be found along the frontier. I have heard intelligent people in that country attribute this difference to the effects of conscription; the population—labourers, artisans, and poor farmers, and that class of people—know, on being drawn into the Army, that they have to come back to cultivate their farms, and earn their livelihoods in their own country, after their three years' service in the ranks. They therefore use their wits, and, acquiring enlightened ideas among a much more civilized people than themselves, bring the knowledge they have attained in those provinces where they have served, chiefly the Rhine provinces, to their own. And so, I conceive, practical education has been equalized to a very great extent over Germany; that is one advantage gained by conscription, as it has been worked in Germany, and as has been proved by the figures adduced by Captain Ardagh, who stated that 96 per cent. of the population read and write, whereas we stand next on the list of educated people at 90 per cent.

I think we are greatly indebted to Captain Ardagh for a point which he has proved most convincingly in this paper, that the cost of an army to a country is not to be estimated by the pay that is given to the soldier, but by the value of the labour that is lost to the country. This being the case, if your army is 200,000 strong, it matters not whether you give the men a farthing a day, as the Russians do, or a shilling a day, as we do, the cost to the country is the same; it is the labour of 200,000 pairs of hands lost to the productive energies of the country. The 200,000 men may be labourers or artisans, the only difference is, that the higher you go in the social scale, the greater the cost to the country. I think we are greatly indebted to Captain Ardagh for having brought this fact out so strongly and convincingly. But while the cost of conscription is the same to the country, it is very different to the individuals who bear that cost. Instead of conscription being an equal tax—I coincide with every word of that valuable extract from a report by Mr. Godley, which was read by the lecturer—it is, I believe, the most iniquitous tax that can be in its working and in its incidence upon individuals; and although on the Continent it is a necessity, I should be exceedingly sorry to see it introduced into this country. I also think the ballot for the Militia very nearly as objectionable as it would be for the Army. For what is the ballot? It means conscription; it is merely the method of selection by which the conscript is drawn into the Militia. If, as would be necessary if the ballot were to be enforced, the Government of this country were to attempt to pass a law by which the infant

would be watched from the cradle up to manhood, and never lost sight of, there is not a mother in England who would stand it. Then you have the total denial of all liberty to transfer oneself from one place to another, or to travel abroad. For the last year before the age of conscription arrived, you would almost want to place a sentry over every man who had to be conscribed; that is my belief. Such being the case, I should like to make an observation upon a remark that dropped from Colonel Robertson, and I allude to it because it contains a fallacy which is very common in this country on the part of those who admire compulsory service, who say, "Why 'not take a man for a year.'" Colonel Robertson said, he should like to see all the able-bodied men in England under arms for one year. Of course, that would involve our keeping up a separate standing Army for the Colonies and India. The number of males attaining military age each year upon whom this duty would fall, is 280,000; now if you make a liberal deduction, say 30,000, there would remain a standing Army—mind, it would be a standing Army, because they would be so for each year in succession—of 250,000, in addition to our Colonial and Indian Armies.

Colonel ROBERTSON:—I think the lecturer estimated the number actually available at about one-half.

The CHAIRMAN: That is available after exemption as practised on the Continent, but of course if you call men for a year and keep them at home, you will have to get rid of the law of exemption, and I think if you had the power and were to apply the law of exemption in this country, with all our liberal ideas and inconvenient questionings in our Houses of Parliament, you would never be able to carry it into effect. The law of exemption very often degenerates into a means of getting exemption by interest, or possibly some other means, not only most objectionable, but most demoralizing. I think it is a point which some people often lose sight of, that short service for everybody involves a very large standing Army; and, as the lecturer has shown, 250,000 men, whatever their pay might be, would cause an equal deduction from the productive labour of the country. There is only one other point upon which I wish to make some observation, because I do not quite coincide with the lecturer, and that is his calculations and deductions as to the effect of men being drafted from the Army into the Militia, from which he infers that it would be necessary to reduce our cadres. I do not think that is at all necessary. My idea is that men should be drafted from the regular service into the reserves, and after keeping in those reserves enough men to fill up your service battalions, the balance, as well as those who have served their full time in the reserves, may be drafted into the Militia. The result would be that, instead of having partly and imperfectly trained soldiers in the Militia, you would still have the same number of cadres, but composed of men who had passed through the regular Army and been trained for a certain period, had acquired habits of discipline, and been instructed in their duties.

It only remains for me to ask you to give your thanks to Captain Ardagh for his very valuable and interesting Lecture.