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THE ORGANISATION OF THE VOLUNTEER FORCE.

By Colonel T. STURMY CAVE, 1st V.B. Hampshire Regiment.

Thursday, 22nd February, 1900.

Colonel the Rt. Hon. the Earl of WEMYSS, A.D.C., in the Chair.

MUCH time and thought are usually wasted by the essayist who treats of an army for home defence. He tries to determine to his own satisfaction, and to convince his readers, what are the exact requirements of the case; he indulges in a long preamble as to the part the Navy is to play, and speculates on the possibilities of its success, or what we all hope is but a very remote contingency—its failure.

All this is entirely unnecessary. What is wanted for home defence, in addition to the Navy, is an efficient military force, and the larger it is the better will it fulfil its purpose. That purpose is not only to resist any attempt at invasion, but to inspire such respect on the part of possible enemies that they will be unlikely to make the attempt. The more this result is attained the freer will be the fleet for the exercise of its enormous responsibilities over the whole surface of the sea, which the interest of our vast Empire requires us to dominate. It may seem a paradox, yet it is a fact that the readiest means to ensure our naval supremacy is to organise our military forces for home defence.

At the present moment we have over 400,000 troops at home, as well as the field force in South Africa, and the garrisons in India, Egypt, and elsewhere. Yet we have nothing resembling a field force for home defence. Regulars, Militia, Yeomanry; and Volunteers alike lack the organisation which constitutes any efficient army. Half the force we are relying on consists of men whose training as well as enrolment is voluntary. It is with the organisation of these 230,000 Yeomanry and Volunteers, and their possible increase to 300,000 that I am asked to treat. If I do so without alluding to Regulars and Militia, or attempting to construct one scheme for the whole, it is not because I am convinced that each should be organised on a separate basis, but because I am limited, by the terms of the invitation of the Council, to the Volunteers, which I hold to include the Yeomanry.

No military force can be efficient unless it is organised into a field army. Mr. Wyndham stated in the House that "regret had been expressed that we have not attempted to form an army corps of auxiliary forces," and he went on to say it was not a practical proposal at this moment. To form an army corps out of the auxiliary forces is hardly an adequate way of expressing the problem, it should be rather to construct out of the Volunteer force a field army; and regret may indeed be expressed if this cannot be done, for that would be tantamount to stating that the Volunteer force is not capable of becoming an efficient military machine. We are told that nearly every battalion and artillery unit has an allotted place in the scheme for home defence, that is to say, the passive defence of London, by the occupation of selected positions. Such a scheme is foredoomed to failure; however long an immobile force can hold out in a prepared position, its end is certain to be defeat; it may repulse the most desperate attacks and assaults, but if it cannot pursue it can never gain a real victory. All history tends to prove that whatever the weapons or the circumstances, mobility is necessary to make a military force efficient.

I venture to affirm that the task of creating a field army out of the Volunteer force is not only possible but is not by any means difficult. Organisation is what is necessary, and to determine the details of a sound scheme it may be as well to state categorically what are the objects to be achieved by organisation. They are:—

1. The co-operation of all arms.
2. Mutual confidence.
3. Mobility.
4. Supply and distribution.

A careful study of the first item in the catalogue is an educating process for the officer by itself. The co-operation of the three arms on the battle-field is called tactics, on which subject there is ample literature; but however well officers may know their books, they are likely to fail in practice unless they are accustomed to work in the field, which makes them familiar with the actual conditions of which they read. Hence an organisation is necessary which should constantly bring together in the field for manœuvres artillery, cavalry, and infantry.

The organisation to effect this must be permanent, so that it associates, together time after time the same units. With the haphazard system indulged in even in the Regular Army, when units are brought from all quarters without any organic association, there may be scientific combination, but there will not be that mutual confidence which is begotten of comradeship, and which on the battle-field gives a strength and a sense of security to everyone engaged.

It is the habit of some critics to sneer at Continental systems, but it was the permanent association and constant peace practice of the details forming the several army corps of the Germans that gave them the mastery over the French in 1870. The generals in each corps knew each other, they knew the personal equation of their subordinate commanders, the regiments, squadrons, and batteries were accustomed to act together,

and knew what to expect of each other; this engendered in the brigade, the division, and the army corps that mutual confidence amongst the battalions, batteries, and squadrons, that existing amongst the men in a battalion gives it its immense superiority over an armed mob.

Mobility at once on the call to arms cannot be insured without permanent organisation. Our difficulties in every campaign are invariably that the forces brought together lack mobility, and while general officers (who are not always equal to the task) are seeking to invest their force with this indispensable qualification, valuable time is lost, reverses are not unknown, a bad beginning is made, the situation has to be saved by the heroic devotion of the soldier, many lives are lost, and nothing is left but to "muddle through." All this could be avoided if organisation were permanently established in time of peace, and immediate mobility provided for on the outbreak of war.

For that mobility, so far as home defence is concerned, there is no necessity to maintain a complete establishment of draught animals and special carriages—certainly in England civilian horses and conveyances exist in ample quantities—the problem is simply one of training the necessary *personnel* and the borrowing or hire of teams for occasional practice. It is just with strictly territorial forces that this is not only possible but comparatively simple.

Obviously, the first thing to do is to take stock of materials and adjust the proportion required for organisation. There exist for the purpose something over 200 infantry battalions, and encouragement is to be given to bring the strength of them all up to 1,000. It would be better to have said war strength, which is 1,300. But let this pass, and let us assume that we have, or shall soon possess, 200,000 Volunteer infantry. For these the scientific proportion of field or mobile guns would be 1,200. Something under 300 actually exist, but the attempt to make them efficient has been starved by false economy; they have obsolete guns, and have been denied the means for efficient training. In the estimate of cost it will be better not to take them into consideration. The first thing to do in order to create the artillery necessary for a Volunteer field army is to inform the officers commanding artillery corps that henceforth the annual allowance, in addition to the capitation grants and contributions towards camp and other expenses, will be £100 per mobile gun, and to assign to each O.C. a proportion of the 1,200, for which they should at once proceed to provide the *personnel*, either from their existing Volunteers or recruits. The guns should be issued to them as soon as they can be obtained. The existing Yeomanry, about 10,000, would provide from three to four squadrons for each 10,000 infantry, which would be an adequate number for divisional details, but if a few brigades for independent cavalry could as well be raised so much the better. And in view of this it is rather doubtful whether the encouragement suggested for Volunteer battalions to raise mounted infantry companies is altogether wise.

For a more mobile infantry in countries provided with good roads like England and the Continent, the cycle is a most excellent means of locomotion, and for every battalion to have one or more companies of

cyclists would be a very valuable addition. These Companies can be brigaded when out for permanent training with first-rate effect.

There is one item in the schedule required for an efficient field army, of which there is at the present time no available stock. That is the corps on which the responsibility of supply and distribution depends. The designation of this corps is constantly being altered; at the present time it is called the Army Service Corps. The class from which Volunteers are drawn is well calculated to make an efficient corps of this nature. For the officers are wanted men of business, owners of wagons and horses, and principals of great carrying firms. For the non-commissioned officers tradespeople and those connected with retail supply stores. The men can and would be drawn from the *employés* of both.

No attempt to "tell off" Volunteers from existing infantry, cavalry, or artillery units will ever make a success of the transport and supply department. Even the officer, sergeant, and drivers for the regimental transport should be men specially commissioned and enrolled for the purpose, and, as the war establishment regulations provide, supernumerary to the company strength.

An attempt to constitute brigade bearer companies on the "tell off" system has broken down; if a similar one be made to create supply columns on existing establishments it will as surely fail. As this appears to be difficult for the organiser, whose work is done at the desk, to appreciate, it may be as well to explain the reason. Recruiting and all the labour of administration devolves in most corps—it should in all—on the company officer, who, being endowed only with the instincts common to human nature, prefers to claim for his own every man whom he has the trouble to enlist, to equip, to instruct, and to admonish; and if the man be called away from the ranks of his company to perform some other duty in which he personally is not interested, he will resent it and, what is worse, soon allow the man to degenerate into a non-efficient or strike him off. Even were it possible to find company officers of such perfection that their altruistic devotion would make them willing to furnish the men, the plan would again fail; in the consolidated corps where the infantry captain and the departmental detail were always on the spot, the man would be in the position of him who had two masters, with the proverbial result; but where in a scattered country corps the man only came under his departmental chief for the brief period of camp, he could neither be properly instructed in his special duties, nor would the mutual confidence between officer and man develop so as to promote efficiency.

Every encouragement should be given immediately for the formation of the necessary Army Service Corps companies. Again, the means must be furnished and a fair estimate of the cost for hire must be promised, £200 per annum in addition to the capitation grant and usual allowances would probably be found sufficient. The Volunteer brigadiers are the right men to entrust with the task. The bearer companies should be also placed on the basis of a completely separate establishment, or made supernumerary to existing battalions. In country brigades the supernumerary

system would certainly be best in reference to the Army Service Corps, as it would remain for disciplinary and financial purposes with the O.C. and the adjutant, and not involve the cost of a separate chain of responsibility and control. Many adjutants have also been through a course of instruction in supply and transport; in future it should be a condition to the appointment of anyone to a battalion having attached to it an A.S.C. company. To which battalions of a brigade these A.S.C. companies should be attached, would be governed, at the discretion of the brigadier, by local circumstances. In London and large centres of population corps of several companies might be formed, with adjutants from the Regular A.S.C., and without any affiliation to battalions. The officers and N.C.O.'s should be encouraged to go through courses of special instruction, and the conditions of efficiency and proficiency should also be laid down suitable to the particular service they would be called on to render.

The formation of Volunteer Army Service Corps companies is one of the most feasible, and should be initiated without a single day's delay.

There is one argument that, however, possesses little weight, which is sometimes used to support the theory that it is not a practical proposal to make Volunteers into a field army, namely, that the men are not of sufficient stamina to undertake the marches, nor is discipline sufficiently strict. Indeed, many are content with no more than a dogmatic assertion that it cannot be done, because they are only Volunteers. It is difficult, however, to believe that such critics can ever have read of the prodigies of mobility performed by the Volunteer army corps of Stonewall Jackson. The Confederate troops both mounted and foot constituted one of the most mobile armies of modern days, they marched incredible distances, fought with desperate valour, and the remnants of the blood-stained battle-fields marched and fought again.

Our own Volunteer force has at peace manœuvres been tested from time to time, and its marching capabilities have not been found wanting. It has ever been my ambition to show, with the battalion I have the honour to command, that Volunteers are fully capable of taking their place in a mobile field force. In 1898, together with the other battalions of the brigade, we carried out manœuvres with two opposing flying columns, striking camp, and marching day by day as the directing staff ordained. Last year, after three days' hard work, we started on the fourth, marched forty-three miles in thirty-four hours, bivouacked in the open for five hours, marched again at two a.m., carried out a night attack and an embarkation. The whole operation involved just upon fifty miles, and was accomplished with ease in less than forty-eight hours. Troops that can do this without exhaustion, and maintain good discipline are surely capable of taking their place in a field force. All that is wanted is the necessary proportion of mobile artillery, the Army Service Corps, the organisation, and the staffs. To effect this, it is a mere matter of providing the means; half a million per annum in addition to the present cost will probably be found ample.

The distribution of this sum may be taken as follows:—

ESTIMATE OF COSTS FOR CONVERTING THE YEOMANRY AND
VOLUNTEERS INTO A FIELD ARMY.

	£
Increase of capitation, grants for training, etc., existing establishments, and pro- vision for Staffs	178,000

Increase of establishments and cost of same:—

Infantry and cyclists, say 30,000

Artillery 20,000

Army Service Corps .. 10,000

Total 60,000 men at £3=180,000

Special Grants in addition to capitation:—

For each field or mobile gun, 1,200 at
£100 120,000

For each Volunteer Army Service Corps
Company, 60 at £200 12,000

For regimental transport for each
infantry battalion, 200 at £50 10,000

£500,000

For this increased annual charge, after providing the modern guns and necessary ranges, the Volunteer force, at present a useless institution, could be turned into a valuable and efficient military machine, which would practically be available at forty-eight hours' notice for the defence of the country; and in saying this it must not be forgotten that the very best possible defence is such a one as the Germans conducted thirty years ago, namely, an offensive defence, when all the miseries of war were experienced in the enemy's country. I do not suggest that the terms of service of Volunteers should be altered, except so far, perhaps, as to render them liable to serve in Ireland; but I have very little doubt that if the emergency arose whole divisions would volunteer for service in any part of the globe, and with the organisation of a field army such services would be accepted on the sound basis of intact units, and the necessity of scratch companies, provisional battalions, haphazard brigades, and chance divisions would be obviated. In the place of this there would be the organised mobile unit of the three arms. The leaders would be known to their men, the men would be understood by their leaders, there would be the co-operation of the integral parts of the machine already fitted together, and made to work smoothly by peace practice. The prospect appears worth the price.

And now to deal in detail with the scheme indicated, first as to the increase of numbers, it may be said at once that without organisation an increase of numbers will only add to the bulk and uselessness of an inefficient force, but with organisation the greater the number the more effective the army.

The Government has indicated that it does not desire to set any limit to the enrolling of volunteers, but rather that it wishes to take advantage of the splendid spirit which is manifest all over the country. Sanction has been given to make up every battalion to 1,000, and, if still more are forthcoming, to make one battalion into two. This does not seem altogether a scientific method. A far better plan would be to issue an order which would substitute the war establishment tables for the establishment tables now in the Volunteer Regulations. That would immediately give scope for the addition of some 30 or 40 per cent. to the force where they were forthcoming without in any way upsetting the administrative arrangements. It would not involve the appointment of additional adjutants, which is a very important matter, for good men can ill be spared from the Regular battalions at the present moment. The war establishment gives a company of 116 for the front, and 10 per cent. at the base, say 127, with all regimental details, band, transport, etc., supernumerary to this figure, and to this should be added as many cyclists as can be obtained. The Government suggests mounted infantry, but there are few places where this could be done without interfering with the Yeomanry and the mobile artillery. It would be better to leave all the horse-mounted force in the hands of these two organisations. As a means of rapid locomotion for infantry in a country like England and in most parts of the Continent there is nothing like a cycle, and if every company could obtain a section of not less than twelve cyclists, a splendid force of mobile infantry would be at hand.

In reference to making battalions of over a 1,000 into two, it is not quite clear what is intended; but if it be that they continue as one organisation under a commandant, there is much to be said in its favour, only it should be aimed at making these double battalions sixteen companies strong. In this paper it was not intended to touch on the training, but here, in my opinion, the question of training turns somewhat on the organisation, as it relates to the strength of the battalion.

The suggestion has been made that the force should this year be trained in camp for one month. One month, two months, or any other period, are possible if it be called out in accordance with the terms and intention of the Act, as a preliminary step to a possible invasion; but as a mere peace-training one month is not possible. As the voluntary system of training is to be adhered to this year, the better plan would be to adopt brigade training for a fortnight before harvest and a week's manœuvres after harvest when the organisation would have been completed. For the ordinary annual training for times of peace it would be best to aspire to one fortnight only, and this turns much on the question of strong battalions. It is useless to attempt to train effectively with a mere skeleton force. One of the most important elements in training is to practise officers in handling a force approaching in strength what would be at their disposal in case of war. This applies to battalion commanders, and still more to the unmounted captain. I have often wondered how far it would assist a company officer to keep in hand his 115 on the field of battle, that he had obtained a distinguished

certificate at the school of verbal accuracy at Chelsea, where, by repeating the exact form of words in the Red Book, he had set in motion, or brought to a standstill, six guardsmen pipeclayed to perfection, and who can no more help slapping the slings of their rifles with instantaneous exactitude when they hear the mystic words "Present Arms" than can an engine avoid starting when the steam lever is turned on.

It is really necessary that if the training is to be of the best value there shall be a fair muster all the time. Now, from the nature of their employment—which is almost always with the Volunteer rank and file, constant employment—some men absolutely cannot be away from their civil work for more than a week; though officers and non-commissioned officers are often more their own masters. It is, moreover, the officer and non-commissioned officer that require the most training, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that not only for one occasional year, but, as the usual thing, these would be able to manage a fortnight in camp, especially if it were possible to go home for one day about the middle of the time. A double battalion of sixteen companies might then encamp for a fortnight, retain all its officers and most of its non-commissioned officers all the time, and keep up a strength of 1,000 by a judicious system of reliefs. It could stand eight strong companies on parade, have plenty of officers to receive and give instruction in the details of field training apart from drill, and officers commanding and captains would be able to practise handling strong battalions and companies. No doubt it would throw much work on the officer commanding and adjutant to have so large a force throughout the year under their care. The officer commanding, however, would be assisted by the second lieutenant-colonel, as is now the case with all battalions twelve companies strong, and to assist the adjutant a Volunteer officer should be appointed; he should be given £100 a year for his services, and entitled to allowances. This appointment should only be conferred on competent officers who had passed all the promotion examinations, and obtained a Hythe certificate. It would set a premium on these attainments, be looked on as an honour, and could not fail to produce an excellent effect on all company officers, for many of them would certainly aspire to the post. When such a double battalion mustered for inspection, or if it were called out for service, it would of course parade as two battalions under the two lieutenant-colonels. The system has much to be said in its favour.

We now come to the strength and composition of a brigade. These should undoubtedly consist of from four to six battalions, and some reconstruction is desirable in the present grouping; each, of course, should have a M.G. section, its bearer company, and Army Service Corps company.

It has always seemed strange to me that in all Armies there should be but two brigades to a division: these, even with the divisional artillery, only give the divisional general three units to control, and he might, I should think, very well do more. It is true with Continental organisations that the regiment of three battalions more nearly represents our brigade, so that with two regiments to a brigade and two brigades to a division the foreign divisional commander has twelve battalions under him. I would

suggest that Volunteer divisions be composed of three brigades, and nine six-gun batteries, and four, or if possible, six squadrons, with engineer, medical, and army service corps details.

We now come to the vexed question as to whether the divisions should be further grouped. I know that the term "army corps" exercises an influence over many critics much as the red flag is supposed to exercise over the bull; but I am not discussing terms and phrases. The difficulty of stopping short at the division is that no great battle can or will in future be fought with less than 150,000 or 200,000 men in the field. Now, even if divisions are made up to the strength I suggest, such a force must consist of ten to fifteen divisions, and it seems to me no general could possibly direct as many separate units as this in the field; hence a grouping of divisions is necessary. Moreover, if one is to believe the records of artillery fighting, such a grouping is desirable for the proper control of that arm. Call it an army corps or what you like, a grouping of divisions is necessary that the control of not less than three or four should be under one general officer, who should have on his staff an officer who would be in command of all the guns, to control their united energy in action, and to insure their proper training and efficiency in peace. Indeed, that this grouping should be a permanent organisation in peace is to my mind as essential as that the battalion or brigade should be similarly permanent.

Promotion should, as much as possible, be in the division and in the army corps—I cannot find another name for it—so that the same officers would be associated with the same men. The test of efficiency should be results. The corps command should be filled by the promotion of the most successful divisional general, the divisional command by the promotion of the brigadier whose brigade was the most efficient; if there were in some instances Volunteer commanding officers who had produced conspicuously efficient battalions, they should be invited to accept the position of brigadiers. But one principle should be the invariable rule—the best man, whether he be Regular or Volunteer, should be selected. Where Regular general officers were in command there should always be associated with them on their staff one or more officers of Volunteers. Where a Volunteer is promoted to command of a brigade, his senior staff officer should be one who had the main of his experience in the Regulars.

We now come to the question as to whether this is the right time to set about the organisation of the Volunteer force into a field army. It undoubtedly is. Not a single day should be allowed to pass without the work being taken in hand. The public mind is now prepared for any scheme which will increase the military strength of the country. Now the purse strings are unloosed, enthusiasm is kindled in the breast of the would-be recruit—the soldier, be he Regular or Auxiliary, is the hero of the moment. If it is allowed to wait till the war is over the opportunity will be lost, perhaps never to return, till we are overtaken with an Imperial disaster, to which total defeat in South Africa would be as a flea-bite.

When wars are rife and danger nigh,
 "God and the soldier" is the nation's cry;
 When peace is made, and all things righted,
 God is forgotten, and the soldier slighted.

But there is yet another reason why no time should be lost: no one can tell but that the circumstances may not arise to require another field army before the one fighting in South Africa has returned.

Our difficulties are our would-be enemies' opportunities. If the regular salvage corps is deeply engaged in an effort to extinguish a formidable conflagration in the suburb, let us at least organise the volunteer fire brigade ere the citadel be burned down.

Colonel LONSDALE HALE (late R.E.) opened the discussion by stating that in time past military men, even in high positions, had used speech, and certainly in that theatre, to conceal their real thoughts about the Volunteer Force as a factor in home defence. The matter, which hitherto had been somewhat treated as a subject for academic discussion, had suddenly become a very practical question, and, therefore, military men should use speech to express their real opinions about the Force. He was opposed to the scheme propounded by the lecturer, because the needs of 1900 were entirely different from those of past or future years, and the scheme did not comply with the needs of the present pressing emergency. An army for home defence has now to be improvised as rapidly as possible; and all military history teaches that the soundest method is to utilise as a nucleus the best trained troops still available, and to graft on them the less trained troops; but in this scheme the least trained are to be formed into an army by themselves, without any regard to the existence of better trained troops available in the country. The lecturer had rightly laid stress on "Mobility to call to arms." For organising purposes, battalions of the Regular Army and of the Militia are mobile battalions, as battalions. The authorities know the numerical strength of each, and can avail themselves of the whole of that strength; therefore, the battalion as a whole is mobile. But with the Volunteers, the authorities cannot treat the whole of each battalion as mobile in the same sense of the word. The Volunteers are in private life part of our existing working social system, from which they cannot be detached without affecting the working of that system. The taking a Volunteer battalion *en masse* from some quiet, commercial, business or shipping centre would probably lead to a great disruption of business. A battalion taken from Elswick would disturb the supply of armament. When all work except fighting is suspended in the kingdom every battalion is mobile in its entirety. The Volunteer Force should be classified in two or more "bans," the first consisting of men available at any moment, either for fighting or for training; the second, those which can be less easily spared from civil employment; the third, those whose services can be utilised only as a last resource. The practical and numerical value of the force cannot at any moment be determined until the number of men of each "ban" in each individual Volunteer unit has been ascertained. Colonel Hale said that he regarded the Volunteers as soldiers, and not as they had been spoken of in another place by the Under Secretary of State for War, as "Citizens who kindly give some of their time to the service of their country." The same high authority has asked, "Could there be anything worse in the world than to discourage the Volunteers by telling them that unless they gave a certain amount of time to their work they would be useless as soldiers"? As the Volunteers are men, not children, it is just as well to tell them the truth, irrespective of any risk of discouraging them, and that is, that unless the great mass of the individual Volunteers do not give more time to their work they will be useless as soldiers.

Captain R. J. MACDONNELL (late 81st Regiment):—The discussions which take place in this Institution are always interesting and instructive, and the lectures must always call for a large amount of time and attention on the part of those who deliver them. Therefore, for that reason, if for no other, I should like to preface the observations I make on this, one of the few occasions I address the members here, by offering my congratulations and praise to the gallant lecturer for the paper which he has contributed to the Institution. This question of the Volunteer

forces is a very difficult one to discuss, unless it is taken in connection with the Regular forces and the Militia; but as the question put before us relates solely to the Volunteers, I shall endeavour to do my best to keep to the subject before us. But I say again that it is impossible to discuss the question of the future organisation, or even this year's organisation, of the Volunteer Force without taking a view of the whole question in connection with the Regulars and the Militia. I take it that the old lines of organisation must always exist—the Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers. Those forces make up a very large and considerable body, something amounting to 640,000 men. They exist, I presume. In addition to that—I do not know whether I am right in saying in addition, or whether I should say included in that—there is the Army Reserve, a body of 80,000 men. I observe that the lecturer takes to himself the Yeomanry; but I think that will never be; the Yeomanry will never, in my opinion, be attached to the Volunteers. I think they are in organisation and in position more closely allied to the Militia, and, probably, in the future, with the Regular Army. It seems to me to be beyond doubt that there must be a disturbance, and even an entire break-up, of the system which we have hitherto had with regard to our forces. It seems to me, also, that we have at the present time a remarkably strong body of men available for the defence of our Empire and of our country; but I regret to say that, as far as I am able to see, there is no organisation at present. The great heads that control all these various systems are not located in the systems themselves, but are generally located in the Cabinet, or in the Houses of Lords and Commons. They control them. There is no doubt that these forces at present exist. With regard to the Volunteer Force, there is one matter in the lecture which I should be sorry to see carried out. The original intention, and I hope the present intention, of the Volunteer Force is that it should be a defensive force, and a defensive force alone. The object, if I may make the observation, the primary object, of the Volunteer Force is, as its motto implies, *Defencio non Provocacio* (Defence not Defiance). No one is better aware of this than the distinguished Chairman, who himself has borne in the past such a high position in the organisation of the Volunteer Force. It may be forgotten by some of the younger men, or overlooked by the older men; but Lord Wemyss has rendered great service in the past, beginning with the year 1859, and devoted a large amount of time, attention, and money to the subject. You Volunteers are a defensive force, you are resident in this country. You are—may I use the expression?—a citizen force, a commercial force; your duties and your obligations to the country are for making money to pay taxes. You cannot be asked to go abroad, but in the lecture which the gallant colonel has delivered I see he says: “I do not suggest that the terms of service of Volunteers should be altered, except so far, perhaps, as to render them liable to serve in Ireland”; (I thought they were liable to serve in Ireland now.) “but I have very little doubt that if the emergency arose whole divisions would volunteer for service in any part of the globe.” I have very little doubt also that they would volunteer. But I should like it to be clearly understood, in the interests of the Volunteers and of the country, that the Volunteer Force is meant for defence, and for defence alone. We have been assured by the Prime Minister that there is no nation willing to attack us. I agree with the last speaker that now is the time to endeavour to organise the Volunteers in such a way that they may be of immediate benefit if they are called upon. One word more. Just recently Her Gracious Majesty has ordered the calling up of all the old soldiers. The limits of age fixed are from 22 up to 45. I do not know whether there is any use in talking about it, but I extremely regret that limit of 45. There are many men over the age of 45 capable of defending their own homes, although they may not be capable of going on foreign service; and I think, if I may say so, it would have been better and wiser if those who are over 45 had been given a chance of showing their desire to serve their country, and that the limits of the order had been extended to another ten years. I think we have

very good examples of men considerably over 55 doing good work. Our distinguished Field-Marshal himself in command is 68. Therefore, I think if a man is in health and strength, at 55 he is well able, if the emergency arose, to take his place in the ranks again and defend his country.

Captain A. H. EAST (late 1st V.B. Hampshire Regiment):—Being one of those who are, as it were, down at the roots of the tree, I feel a great deal of diffidence in speaking after those gentlemen who are up in the higher branches. At the same time, however, people who are right at the bottom of things get a different view from those who are looking down from above. On that account, therefore, I have one or two things to say which may not have occurred to the other gentlemen who have spoken. First of all, there is a remark in the lecture which I most emphatically object to, viz., that the Volunteers with their present qualifications are a useless institution. Why I object to it is this—that it either implies a good deal too much, or it does not imply enough. In the matter of the defence of this Empire, any institution which is not useful must of necessity be pernicious, because it takes away the men, the money, and the attention from other institutions which might be of some use; and I should be sorry to think that under the active instigation of the lecturer I have been employed for twenty years of my life in perpetuating a useless institution. I have been greatly relieved on this point by Colonel Lonsdale Hale, who has shown the way in which the Volunteer Force may be of some use, and I still hope, therefore, that the Volunteers are not a useless institution altogether. With regard to the remark in the lecture that (the terms of service being left unaltered) whole brigades and divisions, such as the lecturer proposes, might possibly volunteer as formed bodies for service abroad. That, I know, would be an utter impossibility. Volunteers are composed of men, as the lecturer says, mostly in regular employment. Of these men some, as we have seen, are able to leave their employment and volunteer on war occurring abroad. As the pressure on this country gets greater, and the disorganisation of business increases, more and more men would be free to volunteer for service abroad. But there are a great many men in the Volunteers who would not be able to volunteer for service abroad at all, although in the case of an invasion taking place—the original purpose for which the Volunteer Force was constituted—then the whole Volunteer Force would come out; but you cannot take any Volunteer battalion and expect it to go abroad as a whole. An illustration of that case is happening now. A Volunteer battalion was asked to supply a company for its Regular battalion. There was one town with some three and a half companies in it, and I imagine that the total Volunteers there amounted to about two hundred and fifty. Out of those there were only four men who volunteered for service abroad. There was another company in a little country town belonging to the same battalion with about seventy men, and out of those seventy men thirty-five volunteered for service abroad. You will wonder why it was that out of two hundred and fifty men only four volunteered, whereas out of seventy thirty-five volunteered to go. The answer is very simple. The three companies were in a town where most of the men were clerks or in shops, earning from 40s. to 50s. and 60s. a week, whereas the other company were composed of men a great many of whom were agricultural labourers, earning from 11s. to 15s. a week. The 11s. to 15s. a week man was very glad to go abroad, but the 50s. or 60s. a week man could not afford to give up his job. You will find that all over the place. If you want to constitute battalions or brigades to go abroad as formed bodies, you will have to divide your Volunteers into two or three classes. If you are going to divide the Volunteers into two or three different classes in that way, one class to form a battalion for service abroad and another for service at home, I expect it will strike some that those people who are free and willing to go on foreign service are not in their proper place at all as Volunteers. As Colonel Lonsdale Hale has said, we are here to say what we think, and I therefore do not hesitate to say what I think about these things. I agree with the lecture in regard to what has

been said as to training in camp. I am not talking about the year 1899 or 1900, but I am talking generally. I think if we have a sixteen-company battalion with all the officers and sergeants in camp for a fortnight, and the men not less than seven days each, then all could be instructed in their work. I think that is about as much as you can get, unless we are going to have an entire alteration in the Volunteer Force. I entirely agree with the lecturer about the possibility of the commanding officers of the Volunteers being selected to command a brigade. Of course there are exceptions and special cases, but, as a general rule, I think that no officer is of any use as a subaltern who does not work for and believe that he will some day command his company, and no captain or major will do his duty with zeal and enthusiasm who does not believe that some day he will command a battalion; and I am quite sure that of the commanding officers of battalions who have produced conspicuously efficient battalions, the majority have been spurred on to that result with the hope—I will even say the anticipation—that their efforts will be rewarded in that manner.

Captain L. A. C. SOUTHAM (2nd Middlesex Volunteer Artillery):—The lecturer's views have been most instructive, but he appears to have written his lecture with more attention to his upper floors than to his foundations. Before asking *how* to organise any armed force, whether for land or sea service, I think it is first necessary to go into the question of the purpose for which it is to be used, and *why* it should be organised, otherwise it is very difficult to get a proper sense of proportion. The Under Secretary of State for War stated in the House the other day that home defence meant defence against raid and defence against funk. The latter definition may be at once dismissed, for it is surely simpler to educate the ignorant than to raise a large army to allay their fears, and to keep quiet "the old ladies of both sexes." As for raids, surely, if our field army were beyond the seas, the garrisons of our coast fortresses and men preparing to reinforce the field army would be quite sufficient to repel them. As to invasion on a large scale, say 100,000 men and upwards, our fleet, if in existence, especially in these days of torpedo-boats and destroyers, would be quite competent to prevent any such invasion being prepared; and if the fleet were wiped out the enemy would have no need to risk an army, for free communications on the sea are our life-blood. Where the enemy is, there is our frontier; and it is an anomaly in an Empire like ours to chain down a part of its forces in any one corner of it, however important. The German Landwehr served abroad in 1870, and why should not our reserve formations have a similar liability? Any law to this effect would have to be so drafted that no Government could abuse it; and if men cannot be got voluntarily they must be obtained compulsorily. The fate of the Empire is far more likely to be decided on the plains of Afghanistan than on the Surrey hills, and if we are not strongest at the decisive point any army for home defence only, however organised and constituted, will be of no avail.

The Hon. CONRAD DILLON, M.P.:—I had the honour of serving in the Volunteers, both in the ranks and with a commission, some years since, and I venture to think that the real question we have to face is how we can get the men. Mr. Wyndham, the other day, said he wanted 50,000 more men in the Volunteers, and what we have to do, and what we need only consider to-day, is how we can get men to go into the Volunteers and year after year give up their time to get a thoroughly good training. I contend that the Volunteer practically is a soldier, if he is anything at all. As we have seen, the Volunteers are ready to take their place in the ranks, and if they have experience they will, no doubt, be far more useful than the recruit who has only just come in and never shouldered a rifle or heard a word of command, and he would be able to take his place in the Army whether, it may be, at home or abroad. But what we have to do with our Volunteer Force essentially is to train the young men of this country to use the rifle, train them to move about country, and train them to do all the work that is necessary in the Army—get as much out of them as you can without interfering

with their civil employment. To make a mobile force, and to take men away for a long time from their homes, is, as has been said, an utter impossibility. I have known Volunteers in London who have given 80 or 100 nights during the year to drill. But the real difficulty that we should have in training the Volunteers is the waste of time in taking people to and from some place where they have never been before and where they will never be again. It is all very well to do this once. I was out in the manœuvres of 1871, and I was also at the manœuvres of 1873. During the latter it was wet. I know you will not get men to go out year after year into places where they are exposed to wet and knocked about, when they have not the enthusiasm of war going on. Sir Charles Dilke pointed out in the House, the other day, that we could get these men this year, but he said what we want is in times of peace to train a man, and you must give him something for it. I contend the one thing we shall have to do in this country is not to provide conscription, because I do not believe in it, and I hope, please God, we shall never have any such thing. I do not see how anybody brought up as an Englishman could wish to have a number of conscripts put into the field of battle with him. I believe going in as with a team of football players, every man willing to do the utmost he can for the honour of the body to which he belongs. That is the way we have fought in the past, and I hope that is the way we shall fight in the future. But we must train our men as much as possible. There is one condition absolutely necessary, and I believe it will be realised both for the Army and for the Volunteers, viz., that we must change the conditions under which the men serve. I am speaking of the physical conditions. At the present moment the accommodation which is provided for soldiers is inferior to what is provided in civil life for men of the same class. People are accustomed to have baths. I heard an old soldier laugh at the idea of baths. But I contend it was clearly shown in the Salisbury manœuvres that the men were very keen to have more accommodation for cleanliness than would have been thought at all necessary in past times. I contend that what we must do in the Volunteer Army is to have camps which are within easy distance of London, or of the large towns, where men can go out and where they will find huts which will keep their clothes dry. Here they will not waste time in going to and from the ranges, but can have them at hand, made in cuttings (like railway cuttings) 300 yards long, where men can have a great deal of target practice under cover, so that they can fire every day. By all means, if you like, take them out for manœuvres and work them together. Let the camps be sufficiently large so as to increase their size in the summer. I contend it is folly to waste time in making your men learn to cook, and do all those things which are of a domestic character, and which take up time. You will be better utilising that time in teaching men real soldiering, and teaching them to use their rifles, which is, after all, one of the most important things a man has to do. When the time comes for the men to go abroad, they must, of course, fall into the ranks of the other forces. If it comes to defence at home, then battalions of Volunteers will be able to hold together. But the present need is to have, as the Secretary of War said the other day, 50,000 more men. Where are you going to get them? You will get men to come out once, but you will not get men to be trained soldiers and to be of any use at all; if you want men to be trained soldiers they must come out two, three, four, or five years; they must have easy access to the places where they can do their drill and shooting, and thus you will be able to take and deal with them in brigades, if you have small camps where a brigade could be dealt with, one brigade against another. You can teach them marching and all those things, but until you take them to a place where the men can learn their work within easy distance of their ordinary working occupations you will not be able to get anything like a force that will be mobile. When you have these men out in battalions or in brigades in one of these small camps, and they are trained, I will undertake to say there will be no difficulty in getting those men to move off quite as quickly as Militia regiments.

We do not want everybody to volunteer for the front ; we want the men to be well trained. It is in the time of peace that we want to train our young men and make them efficient, so that when the pinch comes, and they have to take their place in the ranks, they will be of use instead of being an incumbrance.

Lieut.-Colonel F. N. MAUDE (1st V.B. Hants R.E.) :—I think, Sir, that the discussion has got rather away from the point. As I understand it, the title of the lecture is "The Organisation of the Volunteer Force," and the question really is, between Colonel Hale and Colonel Cave, namely, whether it is to be altogether a Volunteer Army, or whether it is a case where we are all to do our best—sink all differences and distinctions, all be soldiers together, and make together a strong united Army with the best of both. That seems, to me to be the real question which for the moment we have to consider. Our difficulty at the present seems to me really to lie in this, that the difficulty and danger to the country are not great enough. It is too great for a small war, but there is no very great emergency. If we had an emergency which involved anything like mobilising the fleet, or calling the Volunteers up, from that moment all our troubles would more or less cease. We would simply embody regiment by regiment, each in its own district; Colonel Cave's regiment would take the place of the next one in barracks, in Hampshire, just as the Militia take the place of the Regulars when they go. We should be under military law, and in a very few days the transformation would be extraordinary. I entirely agree there with Colonel Cave, that the essential point is that the moment war is declared every Volunteer is under military law, and has to go, whether he likes it or not. If not, he would be a deserter, and would be treated as such. That point is sometimes forgotten. At the immediate moment what we really want is a force which will impose on our friends on the Continent to such a degree that they will think twice before they attack us. It is certain that the average well-educated German or French staff officer, who really knows his history, has a very high opinion of Volunteer soldiers. He knows that our Volunteers are a different thing altogether from the raw "mobiles" of 1870. He is aware of that; but still, he does not respect bodies made up throughout of the same material. It is exactly what Colonel Hale said is the case—that if you want to make these people respect us, you must have battalions with a backbone of training—steady, seven-years' trained soldiers; and to my mind nothing could be easier than to arrange that now. Instead of forming reserve battalions, as I regret to see is going to be done, all we have to do is to post a proportion of 20 per cent. of these really splendid men—none of them much under 30 and none of them over 45—into our Volunteer battalions. Let them live in our drill halls, if you like; we could easily arrange for that. Let them serve as the nucleus around which the others are to form, and it would be a transformation scene. They would help us. The spirit between Volunteers and Regulars, particularly in the ranks, is exceedingly good; and if people would only consent, for a short time, to drop all jealousies, titles, and gold and silver lace, we could do very well, I think, in the case of a really great emergency coming. We often talk of the need of compulsory service, but I think there would be no need for any such law at all, because the fact exists. Within ten days of the outbreak of a war the insurance rates would be up so high that I should say, practically speaking, all the smaller employers in this country would be ruined. There would be no raw material to work up, there would be no money to pay wages, and it has been carefully estimated that there will be close on 4,000,000 people out of work. What are we going to do with those 4,000,000? If you enrol 2,000,000 of them on the nucleus already given us by the Army system, which is an Army system and not a system of purely Militia, Volunteers, and Regulars, we can absorb these 2,000,000 in a very short time, and they will be very glad to come. I think, as a permanent organisation all we really need do is to draw a few lines, almost on paper, and arrange that each battalion in turn should be supplied with a backbone of trained

soldiers, and the men who will be driven into it can be absorbed each in turn and sent on to the front.

Colonel H. H. A. STEWART (late the Norfolk Regiment):—On looking at the title of this lecture, besides thinking that we have been a little discursive in going into conscription, and so on, I cannot help thinking that Colonel Hale has been, in his vigorous speech, a little too hard on the lecturer. The title of the lecture is not "The Organisation of the Volunteer Force in the year 1900," but "The Organisation of the Volunteer Force in the Future." As conscription has been spoken of, although I consider it is beside the question to-day, I am of opinion (as I have frequently said in the theatre of this Institution) that the voluntary system has never been given a fair chance of success. The soldier has never been offered what he is worth. An able lecture was delivered in this theatre early in 1893, and in the equally able summing up, the Rt. Hon. Colonel J. H. A. Macdonald (the chairman) said—*à propos* of an observation that was made by a speaker in regard to the increased offer of pay to the soldier in order to raise 25,000 men then recently voted, viz., that the increase of pay really worked out at an extra halfpenny per day per man—the chairman said, "What is the use of tinkering with halfpence?"¹ The first point I wish to refer to is where the lecturer says that some men absolutely cannot be away from their civil work for more than a week (in the year). I quite believe that is correct. On the principle that the strength of a cable is the strength of the weakest link, I submit that if you cannot get the men for more than a week, a week only should they be continuously trained. I have observed the Volunteers in several parts of England in assembling and going down after their week's training, and I cannot help saying that it appears to me a great deal of time is wasted. Another thing, the number of men in a Volunteer regiment who escape drill (during the week's training) is absolutely portentous. I saw a brigade at drill in the eastern counties a couple of years ago, and I sat down with a number of the men and asked them how it was that they were not in the ranks with their battalions. They gave me as reasons: "Coming off guard," "going on guard," "on picket," "cooks" and "cook's mates," etc. It was just as long a list as the bill of fare of the king in "Bombastes Furioso." They seemed to be getting through their work uncommonly easy in sitting down and criticising their comrades in the ranks. Another point. The lecturer states his bi-battalions, or double battalions of sixteen companies, might then incorporate and so keep up the strength to a thousand. Well, I am inclined to think that he has taken his notion of bi-battalions possibly from his being a bimetallist. We have been told on high authority that a bimetallist is a man who wants to put silver into a melting pot and turn all into gold. Colonel Cave, having got them, wants to put his bi-battalions into the crucible and melt each of them down into a single battalion, and he says that it is a great thing to handle strong battalions. I can only say that from many years' experience at home and abroad—as adjutant of a Line regiment and as colonel of a Militia regiment—I defy any commanding officer to handle singly and efficiently a battalion of more than 700 men (rank and file) in the field. Moreover, a celebrated French general in the Crimea gave this as his opinion.² The lecturer speaks, and I think very properly, about an officer in a regiment of Volunteers being appointed to assist the adjutant. My observation as commanding officer of a Militia regiment for many years has led me firmly to believe that the Volunteers as well as the Militia could well furnish excellent officers from their ranks as a proportion of the adjutants of the battalions. I should be very glad to see it tried. One good effect it must have would be to arouse or evoke emulation between the Volunteer and Militia adjutants, and those appointed from the Regular

¹ The Chairman's words were:—"It is no use tinkering away with halfpence . . . giving him [the soldier] what corresponds to the wages of men . . . seventy years ago. . . —JOURNAL, August, 1893.

² Bourbaki, I think.—H. H. A. S.

Service, who (the latter), to my knowledge, are not always as good as they might be. The lecturer says that promotion should, as much as possible, be in the division and in the army corps. I submit that is rather academic. You would want four or five different cadres, and I do not think it would act well. As to the test of efficiency in results, I want to know who would be the tester of the efficiency. He would have a most invidious task to fulfil. The last observation I will make is on this—where Regular general officers are in command there should always be associated with them officers of Volunteers. I entirely concur with that. The pity, I think, is that on the Headquarters Staff of the Army at the War Office, the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, all three are not represented by a deputy-adjutant-general from their own forces.¹ These forces will never be properly administered until that is carried out. And surely the talent and ability are readily to be found, because we have got, from the Prime Minister downwards, the very best blood and the highest intellects of the country serving as officers of the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers.

Colonel STURMY CAVE, in reply, said :—First, I have to apologise to Colonel Lonsdale Hale, and then I have to ask him to apologise to me. I admit that when I was asked to write a paper, the title was to be "The Future of the Volunteer Force." Now, my opinion is that the immediate future of the Volunteer Force ought to be the organisation of it into mobile units of the three arms; but I am by no means persuaded that these mobile units should exclusively consist of Volunteers, and therefore, I asked the Council, in the person of Colonel Lonsdale Hale himself, if I might make the lecture "The Organisation for Home Defence," to which he demurred, and I understood him to say that I must confine myself to the Volunteer Force. I, therefore, suggested a modification of the title "The Organisation of the Volunteer Force." I have stated in the third paragraph :—"If I treat the subject without alluding to Regulars and Militia, or attempting to construct one scheme for the whole, it is not because I am convinced that each should be organised on a separate basis, but because I am limited, by the terms of the invitation of the Council, to the Volunteers, which I hold to include the Yeomanry," who are, strictly speaking, mounted Volunteers. I should be very well pleased to see in these mobile units, of which I speak, a brigade of Militia and a brigade of Regulars. I should most distinctly like some Regular batteries in each division; but as I had to confine myself to the Volunteers, I suggested wholly and solely Volunteer battalions, squadrons (Yeomanry), and batteries. Colonel Lonsdale Hale then talked about mobility. The application of the term I do not quite see, but at the same time I see what he means. He says that the Militia is a force and the Regulars are a force that you can lay your hand upon, and, therefore, they are mobile, that is to say, they will come out when you call upon them. So will the Volunteers, every man of them.

Colonel LONSDALE HALE :—May I explain? I will take the corps of Elswick, furnished by Armstrong. I say they are not mobile, for the reason that the firm, just when the threat of invasion came on, would be working hard. It is not a question of the willingness of the Volunteers to come out, but it would be better for this corps to continue the national work of making guns than to stop making guns and come out into the field.

Colonel CAVE :—I say that every man will come out at once, and must come out, for he becomes a Regular soldier when the 17th Section of the Volunteer Act is put into force. Therefore I say that from the point of view of coming to the colours when called out the Volunteer Force is absolutely as mobile as a brigade of Guards. I regret most extremely that the Government have not got the courage to call us out to-morrow, and I know perfectly well that every man, from the senior colonel down to the junior drummer-boy, would put in an appearance at once. But I want to go on and make them more mobile after they are called out.

so that we can move them hither and thither as a fighting force, scientifically and properly organised, with their cavalry, their artillery, and all the details that make up an efficient fighting army. That is the idea I have endeavoured to set forth in my paper. That is an idea which I am positive is perfectly feasible if we only had authorities with the courage to undertake the task. Colonel Lonsdale Hale says the question is, What is to be done at the present time? But why on earth put it off? I say it is now that we want it. I say that this field army may be wanted before August, or as soon as the Paris Exhibition is over. We are all now depending on the glories of the Paris Exhibition to keep the peace of Europe. I should not be the least surprised to see that the French may find it convenient to have their autumn manœuvres in their northern province, and if six or seven army corps are mobilised there, I am perfectly certain there will be a good deal of excitement on this side of the Channel. Colonel Lonsdale Hale goes on to talk about differences in the value of battalions, and I rather gather from him that some of those battalions he thought were efficient. He named four. One, I think, he meant us to understand was efficient, two only indifferently so, and one absolutely inefficient. He said, "What would you do with those?" Well, my very essence of organisation is that you may have a permanent brigadier or divisional general who will know where the efficient battalion is. I should say to the commanding officer of that battalion, "Come up higher, and exercise the same influence over the whole brigade or division that you have exercised over the one battalion to make that efficient." With regard to the man who failed, I should see if there was not a second in command or another field officer in the same brigade that I could transfer to the inefficient battalion, and quietly retire the gentleman who had not an efficient battalion under his control. I say that one of the chief, one of the principal, and one of the best objects of a proper organisation is to produce a levelling up to the standard of the rest. Under the present arrangement the man who has control is the inspecting officer, who sees a battalion for two hours in the year. He is a bird of passage, holding that particular birth only for five years. Directly he begins to know anything about the relative efficiency of the units under his command he gets another berth, or is retired altogether from the Army. If he were gifted with the intelligence of a god he could not find out in two hours what was really the state of the case in any particular unit he had to inspect. That is one reason why I want permanent organisations into divisions, as well as to insist on the necessity of practising them in the manœuvres of the three arms, so that they can co-operate altogether properly in the field.

The CHAIRMAN (Colonel the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Wemyss):—It is a comfort to find where one thinks there has been a great difference of opinion that when two sensible men come to explain what they mean, there is really little difference of opinion at all; and so it is between Colonel Lonsdale Hale and the lecturer. Thus I gather from what we have heard in reply that the lecturer does not wish the Volunteer forces to be kept separate from either the Militia or the Regular Army, but that you should have field forces combining the two. That is what I gather, and Colonel Cave admits it is so. Now with regard to myself, I labour under a great disadvantage in a discussion of this kind—I am almost stone-deaf. I heard to a certain extent Colonel Lonsdale Hale when he did not make a tactical movement to the rear, and I think the word "conscription" caught my ear from the Hon. Mr. Dillon. Beyond that I really have not heard the discussion. Further, I think that the subject being the better organisation of the Volunteer forces, my last words in Parliament were such that I am hardly the man to take the Chair on such an occasion as this. What were my words last Tuesday at the close of a rather long speech addressed to the House of Lords? I said:—"I could not but look at the Volunteer Force—looking to the way our military system was now administered—as other than a chronic danger,

and not a source of safety, to the State." Why did I say that? Colonel Cave, in his excellent address, pointed out certain defects in the Volunteer Force, and said that at present it is a "useless institution." Do you think that Her Majesty's Government at present, or at any time in the last forty years, have thought it a "useless institution"? Far from it. It is the shelter trench in which they shelter and save themselves from doing what is their first duty, viz., to administer our existing military system. That cannot be denied. What is our military system? It rests not on "conscription"—that is not the proper word—but upon the fact that every free-born Briton is bound by law to take his chance through the Militia ballot of compulsory military service for home defence, and for home defence only. I ask you, then, as sensible men, whether it is right, if that is the law of the land, for anybody to get up like the Hon. Mr. Dillon and say he repudiates conscription. We all do—everyone of us. But Militia ballot is not conscription. Now, knowing as we do what public spirit there is in this country, and how the Volunteers have for forty years come forward and taken upon themselves a universal public duty, to tell me that if the Government had a little courage—which no Government has on this question—and required every youth of twenty years of age not already serving in the Auxiliary forces to take his chance of the Militia ballot once in his life, and if struck serve compulsorily for two or three years for home defence—to tell me that such a demand as that would be refused by the people of this country is simply a libel on our nation. But if they were to refuse, the sooner we are wiped out by a Boer or a French sponge the better; for we should show ourselves unworthy of our traditions and inheritance. So much for that. But at the present time our whole energies should be given to making our country safe. This war we hope will not last, but there are dangers behind the Boer war. As pointed out by Colonel Cave, the French may have their autumn manœuvres in the north of France, and I have heard from one who is acquainted with an official Englishman on the Continent who knows a good deal about these things, that there is danger ahead; for this gentleman said to me "I am glad you are going in for a large Volunteer reserve, for depend upon it it is essential that England should be as strong as possible in the month of November, after the French Exhibition." Therefore, gentlemen, I think Colonel Cave has done great good in calling attention to the necessity at the present time of organising the Volunteer Force. But when this war is over, and the present anxious time is past, I firmly believe that the best and most patriotic thing the Volunteers could do would be to send in their resignations. That shelter trench would then be gone; the Government would have to do their duty, we should have the Militia ballot, and within six months the Volunteers would come back greatly increased in numbers and in a position to be fully trained up to any standard of efficiency, because they would be under the screw of the ballot for the Militia. I believe, then, honestly and patriotically, that when all these troubles are over that is the only solution and the only way, when we are once more at peace and our troubles are over, to force upon the Government the necessity of the ballot for the Militia in the modified form I have suggested. With regard to our organisation now, let us do everything that is possible in every way. You are wanting in what? In organisation for the field. Thirty or more years ago we had big Armstrong 40-pounder guns of position drawn by agricultural horses, driven by agricultural teamsters. They existed then; you have none now. Why? Because they became obsolete through the great improvement in the ordinary field guns, and no attempt has been made by the War Office military advisers to get a relatively improved big field gun of position. Further, as regards Volunteer artillery, Colonel Creed and Colonel Shakespeare organised at one time batteries of artillery which were most effective, using hired horses and their own artillery drivers, and so efficient were they that on one occasion at Wimbledon I got Colonel Shakespeare to take his battery across a boggy ravine, and when he had successfully accomplished this feat I said to him: "I am certain that at the coming

Dartmoor manœuvres with the Regular troops the Regular field artillery will not go through a worse bit of ground than that." Now, what followed? All Volunteer artillery was suppressed. Why? Aye! Why? Further, as said, an improved big field gun of position has never been made. We have none either for the Regular artillery or for the Volunteers, and we are told with regard to them that the Germans and other nations have them not. That is poor comfort indeed. If the Germans have them not—but, in fact, I know they have—is that any reason why we should not have these big guns? I am all for going ahead of foreign nations, not taking their caps, or their bayonets, or their way of marching, or anything of that kind, but sticking to our own ways, and being ahead of them in armaments. Now, in guns and all things needful for all our forces let us hope we may see improved and perfected organisation for home defence. Take, again, the matter of transport. Every cart and conveyance in a district, every means of transport should be registered and should be at the disposal of the military authorities when required in each military district. I know not to what extent this has been done—if done at all—but it would be a good thing, as a test, if what Colonel Cave has suggested could be done. Do not call out the whole force, but take one district, take it by lottery if you like, and call out the Volunteer force of that district, and see how it is organised for the field. And *à propos* to our want of military organisation, let me say that we are not so well organised now as we were in the days of Queen Elizabeth, at the time of the Armada. Everything then with reference to men, material, transport, food and all things needful, was cut and dried. The number of picks, shovels, nails, hammers, the amount of war stores, guns, food, etc., duly apportioned to each division or company, with suitable and sufficient transport, the whole male population from 16 years upwards being commandeered. All this is in a paper that an old friend of mine, Colonel Riley, found in the library at Althorp—Lord Spencer's—of which he availed himself in drawing up a paper on national defence. This Elizabethan document is a most valuable paper, and I should like it, if possible, to be printed and appended to this discussion, for it will show you how very much more in advance as regards preparation against the contingencies of a hostile invasion they were in the time of Elizabeth than we are in the time of Queen Victoria. I have really nothing more to say, save to express a hope that the result of this discussion will be that Governments and military authorities will turn their attention to the organisation of the Volunteer Force which the lecturer has said is absolutely and entirely wanting at the present moment.