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NOTES ON ORGANIZATION AND TRAINING, BY A REGIMENTAL OFFICER.

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Stafford Regiment.

QUESTIONS of organization and training are now so much before the military public, and are so vitally connected with the efficiency of our Army for its unique Colonial and Imperial duties, that perhaps a few simple remarks about them, from the view-point of an infantry regimental Officer, may not be out of place in a Service magazine.

But as without an assured flow of men, enlisted for such terms of service as will admit of our home and foreign garrisons being maintained at full strength on the voluntary system, neither subject can be effectively treated, it is not easy to avoid some prefatory observations on the initial difficulty which hampers the many capable organizers the Army now possesses, viz., the recruiting problem. There has, apparently, been confusion in some quarters between cause and effect, and Officers, when suggesting desirable reforms, are apt to magnify the particular reform they urge into the one thing needed, to secure a plentiful and regular supply of recruits.

Unquestionably, free groceries, improved messing and cooking, juster clothing regulations, and other kindred much needed changes must better the condition and increase the comfort of the soldier, thus raising the entire status of the Army, as every good Officer exerts himself to do; but it is only indirectly such improvements influence recruiting through Reservists and discharged men, and by gradually lessening the prejudice against soldiers, which, unhappily, still exists in many parts of the country. The direct causes which operate on the recruiting market lie deeper, and the proportionate strength of their separate roots can less easily be traced; they are never constant, but vary with the social, industrial, educational, wage-earning conditions of the country, and so are of wider scope than to be seriously affected by details of Army life, unless the profession, as a whole, by its present advantages, prospective inducements, or social prestige, rises superior in a marked degree to most

callings followed by the classes from which recruits are ordinarily drawn. Possibly loss of independence is one of the most powerful factors which tells against enlistment in the existing state of feeling among the working classes, and this is not met by small improvements in Army régime, however desirable these latter may be in themselves.

We must look to the nation to meet its own recruiting troubles. It is the country, through its representatives in Parliament, which authorizes the existence of the Army, appoints its numbers, decrees its maintenance by voluntary enlistment, and limits the terms of original enlistment; hence it is for the country, not for soldiers, to secure enough recruits to keep up the Army under the conditions it has imposed, and soldiers can no more be held responsible for any failure on these points than they can for any occasional sacrifice of Army efficiency to the requirements of party—that fruitful source of costly mismanagement in every State Department!

However much one might like to see the nation rise to a higher conception of patriotism, and substitute some form of personal service for the present monetary bargain on which the ranks of the Army are provided, it seems certain that the great body of electors are not yet roused to the pressing nature of the recruiting problem, that each Government, *more suo*, parleys with and minimizes its urgency, and that Parliament is indifferent, if not blind, to its national aspect, and to the preliminary reform needed to place Army administration on a sensible, workable footing. When this first necessary step of administering the Army under a sound, business-like system of single control¹ has been taken, responsible military experts will be called on to point out clearly the minimum requirements of the Army, as a fighting machine, so that the country may know its liabilities, exact an equivalent efficiency for its outlay, and be in a position to choose between more, or wiser, expenditure in money or men. Most soldiers would prefer the latter, and it is quite on the cards that either party in power would rather attempt to introduce a modified form of compulsion by applying the Ballot Act than ask assent to any large addition to the Budget. The former would be the logical outcome of territorialism, though, owing to the tendency of the country labourers to gravitate towards large towns, considerable re-adjustment of districts, on the basis of a numerical unit of the male population, would, under ballot pressure, be necessary.

Belief that some such solution of the recruiting question may soon come within the range of practical politics has led to the suggestion that, for supplying the ranks of the Army, and keeping them stiffened with seasoned soldiers, as well as for maintaining and training an efficient Reserve, the Militia seems the readiest available, if not the best, basis to work upon; and without going over oft-trodden

¹ The above words were penned months before recent correspondence on the subject appeared in the "Times;" indeed the bulk of this paper, except a few sentences inserted in re-copying for the R.U.S.I. Journal, dates from last May.—A. G. R.

ground, the following outlines for so utilizing the old constitutional force of the country are humbly indicated:—

(1.) Maintain the Militia at a high fixed establishment (if necessary by ballot): allow and encourage men, as now, to enlist from it for the Line; but after colour service make all Reservists complete their term of engagement in the Militia, and assemble for annual training, when they should receive pay and 1*l.* bounty at the end of the training. At other times, Reservists to receive no pay. These Reservists to be supernumerary to the fixed Militia establishments.

(2.) Enlist as now, for 12 years: 7 with colours, 5 in Reserve (Militia). At any time after 5 years' service, men of good character to be eligible to extend to 12, or re-engage to complete 15 years with colours, receiving extra pay of 2*d.* or 3*d.* per diem during such extended or re-engaged service. After 15 years' service, to be allowed, if physically fit, to complete 21 years for pension, either with colours or in Militia—in the former case, the pension to be somewhat higher.

(3.) Men under 40 who have completed their original engagement to be retained (voluntarily) in a 1st Class Reserve, receiving 6*d.* per diem pay: to be called up biennially for 14 days' training (portion of which to be devoted to ball firing), when they should receive 1*s.* 6*d.* extra daily, and a 2*l.* bounty at the end of it. A 2nd Class Militia Reserve to be maintained as now from Militiamen only and on same terms, but neither class should be reckoned as forming part of the effective fixed Militia establishment.

(4.) Every colour service man of good character, after 12 years' service (with colours and Reserve combined), to have a preferential right to employment in Government departments and offices. This is very important, in order to attract good men to the colours, and to raise the whole status of the Army in the estimation of civilians.

(5.) Permit men who have quitted colours to return at any time, if eligible, to complete term with colours, losing time absent for term service, but reckoning it for pension if they subsequently re-engage.

(It would probably be desirable to let men in special cases go to Reserve after 5 years with colours, or re-engaged men at any time during their re-engaged service; but in either case a sum of money on a graduated scale should be required of them for changing their conditions of service. This suggestion is unimportant, and is only made with a view of making conditions of service as elastic as possible to suit all cases.)

(6.) Abolish deferred pay, which has long been condemned by the entire sense of the Army, and in lieu issue a free grocery ration.

With the admirably improved system of cooking now being worked out at Aldershot, 2*d.* per diem would almost suffice for this, if a few improvements were made in out-station cook-houses.

(7.) Return to sensible clothing regulations—allowing men to retain time-expired articles—and give a really smart dress for walking out and full dress, which men can take pride in wearing before their friends and the public. Introduce a sensible, serviceable, working

dress for ordinary drills and parades, no matter what colour, though khaki serge would be best and available for foreign service. Recruits on joining should receive *new* clothing, and during their first twelve months' service an additional pair of boots.

This being a bare outline, other minor desirable improvements are omitted.

The large sum now paid, as a retaining fee, to 60,000 untrained Reservists at 6*d.* per diem, would suffice to keep 60,000 Reserve men in the Militia, with pay during training and 1*l.* bounty, in addition to 35,000 1st Class Reservists at 6*d.* per diem, with pay during fourteen days' training biennially and 2*l.* bounty, and leave a surplus of upwards of 20,000*l.* towards the free grocery ration, as a set-off against the number of men who would receive free groceries, but would never reach deferred pay under its present conditions of issue. If twenty-eight days' training, each year, would really prove as serious a hindrance to the employment of Reservists as is asserted in some quarters, fourteen days might suffice, and in special cases arrangements be made for men to be trained at times least inconvenient to employers, in military stations near their work.

These proposals might appear at first sight to weaken or injure the Reserve by retaining more men with the colours, but it may be doubted if they would do so in reality, as many existing Reservists, at the age of thirty, and at the conclusion of their twelve years' engagement, would probably consent to join the proposed 1st Class paid Reserve, and so more than equal the numbers retained with the colours; while the gain to the Regular Army of more seasoned soldiers in the ranks and fewer men required to pass to and from India and the Colonies would be enormous; and in point of cost the money saved on the latter head would probably far exceed the increased expenditure on the proposed re-engaged pay, and allow a margin to aid the small increase suggested on clothing.

Considerations of cost must naturally influence and limit any proposals designed for practical adoption, and it may be observed that the above involve neither outlay nor enlarged annual expenditure, are equally feasible with or without ballot pressure, and are capable of immediate introduction without prejudice to the strength of the existing Reserve, or Militia Reserve. These ideas, with others of a similar tenor, were roughly sketched last June before Lord Wantage's Committee in explanation of the writer's evidence, but as the Committee would have the advantage of hearing many proposals from abler and more experienced Officers, and could not possibly publish *in extenso* all the schemes they received, or incorporate in their Appendix half the suggestions made to them, one of the members advised my offering them to a Service publication. There would seem, therefore, to be no breach of etiquette in having repeated here such portion of the same ideas as are necessary to explain the remarks which follow on the subject of:—

Organization.—These proceed on the assumptions (1) that a method has been found to secure enough Recruits to keep the Regular Army

up to a given, carefully estimated, establishment (say roughly, 210,000 men, exclusive of Officers) and to provide for a reliable, regularly trained, and easily mobilized Reserve; (2) that the distribution of the Army has, on political and military grounds, been decided to be much as at present, viz., about half in India and the Colonies, and half at home; (3) that the reinforcement in war of the foreign garrisons, including India, has been recognized as the duty of the home establishment. It would then become essentially the business of the military administration to organize the Army into cadres of such number and strength as will keep the home and foreign garrisons efficient, arrange for the regular relief of the same, and provide a thoroughly trained complete force ready for immediate field service and instant offence whether in reinforcement abroad, or in repelling attacks at home. Thorough organization in every detail during peace-time is the foundation of success in war; without it victory is heavily discounted, defeat liberally subsidized; this is an accepted truism, and it is superfluous to adduce in illustration the outbreak of the 1870 War—recently so powerfully attested by the evidence of Germany's chief organizer. Our existing units of organization—companies, batteries, battalions, &c., seem well suited to national characteristics as well as to colonial and field requirements. Companies can now be varied in strength from 50 to 150; i.e., a battalion from 400 to 1,200 bayonets, and the advocates of large companies (250 strong) do not appear to have made out even a fairly good case, either on administrative or tactical grounds, for a change which would upset the proportions of Officers in each rank, cause further unrest in the commissioned grades, and revolutionize our whole regimental system. We cannot do better than hold to our battalion and company units and encourage that regimental "*morale*" which is the one link in our military chain that has never yet failed, however sorely tried, and never will so long as soldierly instincts and *esprit de corps* of the true stamp are allowed to remain the back-bone of the Army. Our much abused regimental Officers, non-commissioned officers, and men are ready and willing to work hard, and are quite able to attain any standard of military efficiency required of them; probably, too, those most keen as sportsmen will make the best Officers in the field, for these are the very men whose energies, properly directed, will combine professional study with its most practical application in war.

Regarding the strength of the force to be kept in readiness for immediate action, we have no occasion to vie in numbers with Continental nations whose frontiers are contiguous to probable foes, nor need we contemplate having to place more than a small contingent in the field against any great Power on the Continent of Europe, and, without entering on any technical niceties about first and second lines, it is sufficient for my purpose to state, as is indisputably the fact, that our seaboard and Navy form our main defence, though the latter may, perhaps, not be nearly as strong as a prudential insurance of our commerce, food supply, and raw material imperatively demands. But it is admitted by all military writers that passive defence, without

the means of a vigorous offensive, is ineffective and is not war—also that for powers of offence in action, the Navy is limited to the range of its guns. So long, therefore, as we aspire to remain an Imperial Power, we ought to have, at the lowest computation—and it is a modest demand—one Army Corps always ready for instant offence, whether away from our shores or within them, for immediate and vigorous attack of any possible invader.

In order to meet the above demands, which we are not yet in a position to do—

1st. Keep in peace-time all corps detailed for the 1st Army Corps apart from, and not within two years of their turn for, the foreign roster, which, with upwards of seventy infantry battalions always at home, it should be easy to do; maintain them at war strength; concentrate them at certain fixed camps or stations in complete brigades (or divisions) under specially selected Staffs, who would accompany them on service; equip them fully in every detail (during the manœuvre season at any rate) as for war, and apportion them accessory departments for supply, transport, &c., with every other field service requirement, or at least sufficient to make them independent mobile brigades. The importance of thus uniting troops, both for organization and training, under the Staffs which would work with them in war can hardly be over-estimated, and is fully recognized both in France and Germany. Stations like Aldershot, the Curragh, Colchester, Shorncliffe, Portsmouth, Plymouth (with a camp for exercise formed on Dartmoor), Dublin, &c., may be indicated as almost ready-made for such brigades, at a cost little in excess of normal expenditure, if the money voted for barracks is judiciously laid out with a view to their accommodation. Where practicable, as at the first three above-named places, a proportion of cavalry and artillery should be attached, though it is desirable both the latter arms should be annually massed for “mass tactics” and manœuvre, if we can find enough men and horses of either arm for the word “mass” to be reasonably applied to. Naturally the battalions composing this army corps would change from time to time, in order to take their turn on the foreign roster, and similarly their Staffs would change in the usual way on the expiration of each Officer's term of service, &c.

2nd. Keep battalions next for the foreign roster only at the strength required for the particular Colony or garrison they are destined for.

3rd. Other home battalions might be kept on a lower establishment to admit of the 1st Army Corps being completed to war strength; and if there is any difficulty under the present territorial system in keeping any battalions of the 1st Army Corps up to strength, an infusion of fresh blood from other districts would probably assist discipline, and tend to prevent cliques and other evils of over-localized enlistment.

4th. As regards supplying the foreign linked-battalions of 1st Army Corps with drafts (if the linked system is to continue) see below, under Training (c).

It may be well here briefly to touch on mobilization under the above plan, in order to compare it with the existing system.

To begin with: the 1st Army Corps is *ready* and *complete*, armed, clothed, equipped, drilled, staffed (if I may coin a word), and merely requires moving to the scene of action, or any particular brigade of it is prepared for one of our small wars as soon as naval transport is available: the Officers and non-commissioned officers have had a chance of working with and knowing their men: the Staff know the troops they have to fight with, and each corps and brigade possesses the cohesion, discipline, and power of moving and manœuvring necessary for a field force. There is no confusion, no waiting for, and bringing in of, Reservists piecemeal from every part of the country through their territorial districts; then arming, clothing, equipping, and incorporating them into their proper companies at the risk of disorganizing those units at the critical moment of early collision with an enemy. Surely the experience of the volunteers (not Reservists) called for to complete and send out battalions after the Isandlana disaster was warning enough against such an unsystematic system! Delay and confusion are inseparable from it at the outset; indiscipline and disaster must be its fruit.

The 1st Army Corps, supposing the theatre of war to be abroad, having been instantly set in motion as proposed, other home battalions would be at once completed to war strength from the men still serving (in Militia) on their Line engagements. These Reservists should assemble at the headquarters of their Regimental Districts, whence the requisite arms, clothing, and equipment should be issued to them, so that they could be passed in a body, fully accounted, to their respective battalions. Decentralization on a well thought out plan is desirable on this point, instead of the excessive centralization of the existing scheme. War equipment for these home battalions could be sent to corps direct from the nearest Ordnance Store Depôts, which should always possess sufficient stores to complete the particular corps serving at any given time within their assigned radius. The next to be called out would be the 1st, or paid, Class of Reservists, who could either remain at their territorial depôts or join home battalions, as required, in order to be available to fill gaps in the ranks of the Regular Army. Meanwhile, if occasion required, as many Militia battalions as might be necessary could be embodied, be drilling regularly, and be filling their ranks, either from the Militia Reserve, or by recruiting, or both, to replace men who might volunteer for active service with the colours. The Militia would thus help to make good casualties in the Regular battalions, and be available to garrison towns or fortresses at home or abroad, whither Government should be granted powers by Parliament to order them in case of national need. Regular battalions forming the 2nd Home Army Corps could be concentrated in the stations vacated by the 1st Army Corps, or elsewhere, under staffs pre-arranged at Army Headquarters as "in waiting," and merely requiring orders to proceed to their place of duty. The question of the Staff generally is a very important one in any scheme of organization or mobilization, but the

selection of Officers for Staff employ is a subject in itself far too large to enter on here, beyond remarking that the Staff for the 1st Army Corps should be specially selected for their aptitude for field work, while the Staff in waiting to relieve them should be men chosen for their experience in practical dealing with troops, and in the requirements of corps, and not mere theoretical soldiers, however able; indeed, in order to secure practical men on the Staff, it would be well that, in addition to the most stringent preliminary regimental selection, every Staff College student should be attached, as part of his college course, during two seasons, to the Staffs of Generals at Aldershot (or elsewhere) to be employed under them at the year's drills and manœuvres, and that, unless reported on favourably for practical ability and *savoir faire*, he should not be entitled to record P.S.C. after his name. They might, while employed as suggested, report confidentially, on the practical work they had taken part in, to the Commandant of the Staff College, and otherwise keep up a course of study. This is not intended to interfere with Officers being attached to other arms of the Service, though it might be combined with it. At present it is rare for any Officer who once enters the Staff College not also to pass out, because the curriculum is mainly theoretical, and a man who can read up enough to pass in is almost certain to be able to keep pace with the instruction when there, though his capacities may rather be suited to office than field work. Apology is offered for the above digression.

5th. In the event of attack at home, it is taken for granted plans exist for meeting an invasion at any probable landing-place along our coast line, together with schemes in detail for concentrating not only the 1st Army Corps, but other home battalions, as well as a proportion of the Militia and Volunteers, at given points for a vigorous assault on any enemy who had succeeded in landing, before he could get a strong foothold. By concentrating the 1st Army Corps in brigades, by grouping other home stations according to position, and by secret but thoroughly worked out schemes with the main railway companies, this should not be difficult, and a pre-arranged *ordre de bataille* for two Army Corps to assemble rapidly at any point likely to be threatened is an essential preliminary to any plan of action in the field which the circumstances of the moment might dictate, just as Von Moltke says the German advance to the frontier only was "pre-ordained in every detail."

6th. *Militia*.—By the system here outlined, the Militia is prominently brought forward as the true Reserve of the home Army, and it may be objected that recruiting from Militia to the Line would be robbing Peter to pay Paul; but if the Militia establishment be kept up, *exclusive of the three classes of Reserve men*, viz.: (a) men still on Line engagements, (b) paid Reservists who have completed their twelve years' original engagement, and (c) Militia Reserve men, the strength of the objection is reduced so as barely to hold, while the close welding of Militia with Line battalions would give a great impetus to the former force, and necessitate greater attention being paid to its real efficiency. For this purpose good Officers must be

secured, and their capacity thoroughly tested. It is probable that, owing to social changes of the period, gentlemen of influence in counties, or large employers of labour, who are willing to devote their energies to upholding their county Militia battalions, will be a decreasing quantity in the future, and, though it is most desirable to secure as many Officers as possible of these classes, some infusion of thoroughly professional Officers will become a necessity, and surely Government could find means without extra expenditure to utilize the services of the many retired Army Officers who now throng the country in Militia work. It is the fear of expenses connected with Militia training and messes which deters many valuable men from serving in Militia corps.

7th. *The Volunteers*.—With regard to the Volunteers, admirable as their spirit is, and valuable as their support has been in its moral weight with foreign nations, in saving the country millions of money, and in warding off conscription—so partially wiping out the reproach that we are a nation of shopkeepers—great, too, as is the efficiency many corps attain, with few opportunities for drill, it must be admitted they are not, by their constitution, adapted for prolonged field operations away from their homes. Their rôle and place in our organization would therefore, as a rule, seem to be to act chiefly in their own counties, to know every yard of the surrounding country, so as to be ready to guard communications, &c., to maintain order, to hold particular posts. At the same time, they should be prepared to take their place, side by side with the Regulars, in home army corps for defence at a distance from their homes; they should be brigaded annually for manœuvre (with Regulars, if possible), under a competent Staff, and be encouraged by Government in every possible way. The standard of their shooting as a body should be raised; their fire discipline should be improved; their place on mobilization should be assigned in the Headquarter scheme, and, to assist this, they should be carefully inspected and fully reported on, so that the Headquarter Staff may know the really reliable corps and those which they could best move to any given rendezvous in case of invasion; their services would then be invaluable, especially if assisted, as Sir C. Dilke recommends, by a well-trained mobile artillery, and if their place in the different schemes for meeting invasion from various points were so arranged (secretly, by Headquarter Staff) that at their annual gatherings they could be exercised on the lines of the duties they would probably have to undertake. Government, if authorized by the sitting Parliament, should have the power of calling them out at any time for the preservation of order. With the possibility of our food supply or raw material being cut short, and thousands of operatives suddenly thrown out of work, perhaps wanting bread, at a time when some naval reverse might induce an invasion panic, this latter duty for the Volunteers might prove most important, and save the nation from a vast calamity.

Not long since the Adjutant of an administrative battalion assured me that, on receipt of telegraphic orders, his battalion could assemble and be railed to Aldershot—a five hours' run—within twelve hours,

which he truly observed was more than any Regular battalion which had to be made up of Reservists could possibly do. This is merely quoted to illustrate what (allowing for pardonable exaggeration, and for a longer time to assemble scattered corps) in a national emergency, with the railway staffs working under Government, and assisted by military Staff Officers, could be done in the way of concentration of certain selected Volunteer corps, provided only good pre-arranged schemes are worked out in the Headquarter bureau secretly.

A French writer truly observes, "In the *ensemble* of the military machine, everyone ought clearly to know his proper place, his special duty, his manner and share of action." It is the province of organization to assign each his proper place, and his special duty; while to fit each to fill his place and do his duty in it belongs to training.

Training.—It requires no quotation from foreign authorities to convince any sensible man that training and discipline are more than ever essential to the efficiency of armies under modern conditions, and that our Army, small as it is for its world-wide duties, should at all times be maintained in the highest possible state of training. On this point, Captain Benson, R.A., in his recent prize essay (under "Conclusion," in the part on "Higher Tactics"), makes some terse and most apt remarks, which are worth pondering over.¹

To compare our system of training with that of foreign Powers is difficult, for three main reasons:—

1st. That we have not the men to train.

Speaking of the Prussian system prior to 1870, Boguslawski says it "provides a number of cadres of Officers and non-commissioned officers, in which are incorporated the young soldiers of from two to three years' service, of whom a fixed number are always present. The strength of the cadres thus renders it possible to carry on instruction of all kinds throughout the year." (The italics are mine.) This is not so with us.

2nd. In very few of our home stations have we the ground requisite for practical field training and manœuvre of even small bodies of men.

3rd. Ours is both a foreign service and so far a standing Army, that men serve for longer periods than they do on the Continent.

This last reason may sound a paradoxical one to give as a hindrance to training, but, in a sense, it is a true one, and contains grounds more cogent than are often admitted for distinguishing between systems of training. Man—even soldier man—is a sentient animal, not an insensate machine, and the human element is a potent factor to reckon with, either for peace training or in actual battle. That a soldier who has to live several years of his life, as such, under continuous disciplinary restraints, always performing routine duties, and liable to be ordered to any part of the world at any moment, can stand the high pressure instruction which bodies of men assembled for short periods, like our Militia or Volunteers can, or even men under training for two or three years, with a view to complete military fitness before returning to civil life, is simply not in the nature of man.

¹ *I*de "Journal," No. 158, p. 454.

Moreover, to the majority of soldiers, the Army is unlike a trade or profession, in that it lacks the motive power for a man to make his whole livelihood by it; but it is, instead, a constant, and often monotonous, training for an eventuality which *may* never come, viz., a campaign and fighting in earnest.

Now as regards want of men, the complaint of Commanding Officers of home battalions (especially in garrison towns) is that they can never get their men. Between recruits, companies detached for musketry and military training, gymnastic squads, working parties, garrison orderlies, garrison guards, garrison fatigues, mounted infantry, signalling classes, telegraphists, fieldwork classes, *et hoc genus omne*, not to mention men in hospital and employed on necessary regimental duties, a Commanding Officer seldom sees his battalion on parade except once a year, for General Officer Commanding's inspection, when all are expected to be perfectly trained in the most recent methods of everything; indeed the Commanding Officer often appears to be about the last man who has a lien on his men, and is driven to all sorts of shifts to catch the men to teach them necessary changes in elementary drill. Also company Officers (who cannot see too much of their men) are seldom able to get hold of them, and indoor instruction, which might be made such a valuable vehicle of training to all—for nobody can teach others clearly without first teaching himself well—is very rarely possible. This ought not so to be; but, while it remains the case, neither the high individual training under the fathers of the company, nor the subordination of massed individual units to one controlling will, nor lessons in delegation of responsibility by giving subordinates an entirely free hand—all so necessary for the higher tactics of the day—can be practicable. For the 1st Army Corps this evil would be lessened by strength and concentration.

Confined ground in our thickly populated and closely cultivated land is a real difficulty, but here, too, a partial remedy might be found.

The monotony of a soldier's life may also be varied, and the following small remedies are suggested. For the first evil:—

(a.) Rigidly cut down garrison permanently employed men. Orderlies are often simply servants to staff and departmental clerks—sometimes to Officers.

For all necessary station (and some regimental) duties attach to each home battalion a limited number of pensioners, supernumerary to effective establishments of corps, care being taken that they are never employed for any work in which a battalion should be self-supporting, either in the field or quarters, *e.g.*, cooks, signallers, tailors, shoemakers, &c. Such pensioners (or, if necessary, paid Reservists) to draw either their pension or soldier's pay and good-conduct pay, whichever is highest, be treated for allowances, &c., just like soldiers—only non-combatant and not armed.

Where practicable connect all garrison and corps offices by telephones, and make orderlies use cycles.

(b.) Reduce to a necessary minimum all garrison guards and duties: this is already done in most garrisons. Abolish all depart-

mental working parties (during drill season at any rate), and employ unskilled civilian labour, which would be quite as cheap in the long run.

(c.) Cease to make the home battalion the feeder of the foreign battalion, but supply the latter with drafts direct from its own *depôt*, increasing foreign, decreasing home, *depôts* for the purpose; or, if the *depôt* accommodation does not permit of this, *attach* men of foreign battalion to the home battalion, as was at one time done with *depôts* in their transition stage. The present plan ruins the efficiency of home battalions as regards numbers, physique, and training, and turns them into mere drill-squads for the foreign battalion; by employing the home battalion as a second foreign *depôt* it degrades the duties of both, and breaks the hearts of Officers; it interrupts the relations of Officers and non-commissioned officers with their men, so weakens discipline, strains *esprit de corps*, and destroys the best elements of regimental *morale*, just when young soldiers are most susceptible to its moulding influence; and all this quite needlessly, since the depot exists, and should be something more than a receiving room for recruits. It is always well to have men trained by their own battalion Officers and non-commissioned officers. These should have a fairly free hand, and manage their discipline, interior economy, and drill on the exact lines of their own battalion system, subject to the general supervision of the Officer Commanding the Regimental District, or home battalion if attached. Here more delegation of power to Officers Commanding *depôts* is desirable.

(d.) Gymnastic (and other similar) instruction should be arranged for drilled soldiers in the afternoons only. Gymnastics form an important and integral part of every soldier's training, and should always be kept up as enjoined by regulation. Assaults of arms (station and battalion) might be encouraged, and the sporting instincts of the soldier enlisted to excel in feats of arms, as well as in athletics, football, cricket, &c.

(e.) The system of company military training being excellent, but too long (especially as on all wet days throughout the year company Officers should lecture to, catechise, and instruct their men in campaigning duties), reduce it to a fortnight, and extend the system to battalion training, *i.e.*, where practicable strike a whole battalion off duty for a month, so as to give Commanding Officers a real opportunity of instructing their battalions in drill, manœuvre, and battle formations. Steady drill should not be slighted: it is an important element in discipline, and on service men easily become loose without being encouraged in loose habits during peace; our discipline is not so rigid as that of the Germans—hence our need of inculcating *habits* of discipline in field evolutions. At the same time, the training required to make each man an intelligent fighting unit, and to mould these units into well-controlled groups (great or small) for battle action, takes much longer than it does to make battalions move steadily at evolutions—indeed, the former is the true groundwork of the latter. A battalion Commanding Officer should have the chance

of perfecting his men in both. From the 1st March to 31st October, there would be time to train eight companies for a fortnight each under their Captains, the battalion for a month under its Commanding Officer, and to reserve a month for brigade drills or manœuvres, as well as to complete the musketry course—especially if at least two companies at a time could be struck off duty for military training, in addition to one company at musketry.

(f.) Make inspection of field duties a reality. Regiments will always take pride in working up to inspection level, whatever the standard may be, and the standard should aim at delegated responsibility and a ready initiative by subordinates, suited to any given circumstances. The General Officers Commanding of our large districts have so much work thrown upon them they can seldom spare time for thoroughly testing field knowledge. Much of the interior economy part of inspection could be made from the experience General Officers Commanding and their Staffs gain of corps throughout the year, and not occupy more than a day or so at inspection time, but to estimate the results of the Captains, and Commanding Officers, instruction in outdoor training requires time and patience.

Whether any recognized form of attack is to be retained or not, the mere precise execution of any normal system is not sufficient test of the capacity of Officers or the training of men in field duties. Perhaps one may be excused speaking of a senior's duty from the subordinate's view-point, and saying that an Inspecting Officer should pre-suppose conditions where a recognized form would be difficult if not impracticable; and, similarly, should select positions and outline ideas for outpost duty, &c., &c., but great clearness on the part of an Inspecting Officer is requisite to explain what he means, as well as great patience in estimating how far ideas have been carried out from the subordinate's grasp of the situation.

Who has not seen Officers, slow to take in an *imaginary* condition, who were most practical men of quick judgment, ready resource, and rapid decision, if they saw troops before them? Again, an Inspecting Officer can hardly help having his own preconceived idea of the situation, which may not be grasped by, or be that of, the subordinate, who yet from the grasp he does get of it could give such a sound explanation of his object, plans, and method as would satisfy the superior he was an intelligent, practical Officer.

(g.) Lectures to Officers and non-commissioned officers, by Artillery Officers, on artillery fire, &c., in its various forms, would be both helpful and interesting if a few could be given in most garrisons from time to time. It is very necessary to impress on all Officers that complete unison between the two arms is absolutely essential for success in future wars, also to teach Officers of the other arms the effects of shrapnel fire, and how it influences tactics, so arousing discussion and thought on these matters.

(h.) In the four winter and furlough months (*home training* is exclusively spoken of throughout as in India, &c., battalions can manage their training work much more effectively), the present customs seem suitable. Marches of different kinds can be practised,

combined with outpost duty and night signalling; minor war-games for Officers; battalion indoor classes for non-commissioned officers; reconnaissance schemes for Officers and non-commissioned officers; gymnastics for men—though these are desirable as much as possible throughout the year. Still, if real hard work is carried on through eight months, training in the four “dead” months should not be overdone, and the reins of the coach generally might with advantage be loosened.

As regards the second difficulty:—

(a.) If possible encamp out every battalion annually for manœuvre, concentrating battalions where practicable in brigades, to work with and against each other. Even where battalions cannot, on the score of expense, join a camp, much might be done by a long day's work during September, when the hay and corn is chiefly down, by working out schemes, though in close country, against a skeleton enemy. If rightly approached the farmers will usually allow men over fields not in crop, provided they don't injure fences. It is always important, when feasible, to have an enemy, as it gives reality to outpost and other work, enlists *amour-propre* not to be “bested,” and is certain to lead to arguments among all ranks, which promote thought and inquiry.

(b.) Field firing ground is a crying need for proper inculcation of fire discipline, and accurate group shooting under company and section leaders, as well as for effective battalion working under circumstances approximating reality as much as may be. The authorities are fully alive to the importance of spending money to procure suitable ground for the purpose within a reasonable distance of each large military centre. Cool, steady, well-directed shooting of different kinds is an essential for battle training—not attainable by volleys of blank.

It is probably due to praiseworthy anxiety for progress that recent musketry courses have a tendency to try and make men run before they can walk. Many men, who are very shaky at hitting anything at short distances in individual practice, are pushed on to difficult field practices. Until a man feels he is tolerably certain of hitting a 6-foot square target every shot at 500 yards, he has no confidence in himself or his rifle, and is not able to profit by higher field practices. In this connection it is hard to refrain from observing that, for field shooting, our pouches are quite unsuitable and useless, whether for expense purposes or for the lying position.

On the third point:—(a.) It is held by many that three hours' instruction, as an average, daily, on purely military subjects (except during courses or manœuvres) is as much as soldiers can digest with advantage, and this could, as a rule, be given in the mornings and forenoons before the men's dinners. For afternoon work, when men are not at special courses, schools for technical instruction in trades, with competent paid instructors, might be established in most stations, and the men obliged to attend, so that soldiers could learn not to be idle during their time with the colours: they could not, of course, in most cases acquire an artisan's skill, but

they might at least learn to be "handy" men, who would be in a better position to obtain employment on return to civil life. Compare soldiers with sailors, and it will be found that, while the latter learn to be both handy and industrious, the former, as a rule, are helpless and averse to steady, regular work. The existing rules about artificers, workshops, pioneers, &c., are usually inoperative for several reasons, chiefly for want of men to teach, of instructors able to teach, and of shops to work in. It is here supposed that home battalions will have more trained men, fewer recruits, and less fiddling routine duties under these ideas.

(b.) Form schools, or squads of boys at the depôts of each territorial regiment; educate, drill, and instruct them in trades most likely to benefit battalions, viz., as tailors, shoemakers, carpenters, &c., also in signalling and telegraphy: or the existing schools at Chelsea and Dublin might be enlarged for the purpose, and certain boys retained there longer—from 14 to 17 or 18. By this means, hundreds of sons of deserving non-commissioned officers might be secured for the Service, and trained to supply a need much felt in every corps, of men instructed in trades, signalling, &c., as well as capable of becoming good clerks and non-commissioned officers.

A system on the lines indicated in these later proposals would mean outlay, but if the result promotes recruiting, if, by inculcating habits of industry and self-control, the Army is made a training school for civil work, so breaking down the lingering prejudice against soldiers, and identifying the Army more closely with the nation, would not expenditure be justified?

Well-trained soldiers make an efficient Army; soldiers taught to be industrious make a contented Army; well-fed and well-cared-for soldiers mean a sober, healthy Army, and each would more than compensate the cost of its creation, because the united whole would form a popular, and therefore a cheap, Army.

It remains to apologize for these crude jottings, so little worthy of record, but, when subjects are under discussion, the simplest ideas sometimes supplement abler contributions. While serving, it is an Officer's duty to make the most of the material given him without question, though, when forced to stand aside from active work, he may perhaps be pardoned for seeking to further, and keep touch with, practical soldiering.