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The Intelligence Duties of the Staff Abroad and at Home

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LECTURE.

Friday, February 19th, 1875.

FIELD-MARSHAL H.R.H. the DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, K.G.,
G.C.H., &c., &c., &c., &c., Commanding-in-Chief, President of the
Institution, in the Chair.

THE INTELLIGENCE DUTIES OF THE STAFF ABROAD AND AT HOME.

By Major C. B. BRACKENBURY, R.A., D.A.Q.M.G.

BEFORE entering upon the main subject of the lecture which the Council of this Institution has called upon me to deliver to-day, it appears necessary to define the meaning of the term "Intelligence duties of the Staff," and to show why attention to them has of late become especially necessary. That "Intelligence" is not used in the sense of quick understanding, but in that of information, is, I believe, sufficiently understood; but the character of the information is not yet entirely plain to all minds. For instance, letters occasionally arrive from anxious persons who desire to know why John Smith or Thomas Atkinson has ceased to write to his affectionate but afflicted relatives. To take no notice of such communications would be simple but cruel, and valuable time is spent in referring the questions to commanding officers, who alone can deal with them properly.

Again, a paragraph appeared a few weeks ago in a morning paper, speaking of a class having been formed at Woolwich by the Intelligence Branch, for the instruction of officers in reconnaissance duties. Really the Intelligence Branch must not be supposed to be in competition with the able departments for military education.

By the "Intelligence duties of the Staff" are to be understood:—

Firstly, the collection, sifting, and arrangement of all information required by Governments and military authorities to enable them to take such measures in peace as will insure the rapid commencement and vigorous prosecution of any war whether at home or abroad.

Secondly, the diffusion of necessary or useful military information through the army and the country during peace or war.

Now, in proportion to the advancement of civilization, the machinery of war becomes more complicated, more costly, and swifter in its work. The necessity for readiness becomes every day more absolute, while the means for obtaining the latest information grow with the growth of armies and with those helps to swift action, roads, railways, and telegraphs. Let us spare a moment to compare the wars of ancient and modern times.

Herodotus relates that Cræsus, desiring to check the growing power of Persia, set about preparing for war. First of all, with laudable caution, he put no less than seven oracles in different places,

through a competitive examination, by asking them what he himself was doing on a certain day. Having selected the Pythian Apollo at Delphi and another, he offered as a propitiatory sacrifice three thousand victims, together with much gold and silver, on one flaming pile. Out of the metal so melted he made certain images, amongst them a lion of pure gold. These and other offerings he sent to the temples, and asked whether he might attack Persia, and, if so, whether he should seek the help of allies. Both oracles said that if he marched against Persia he would "overthrow a mighty empire," and they concurred in the practical advice that he should form alliances with the strongest States in Greece. Upon this he made presents to all the inhabitants of Delphi, and sent a third time to ask if his power would be perpetual. The answer was, yes, till a mule should reign over the Medes. Then he had to find out which were the most powerful States in Greece. Satisfied on this point, he sought their alliance, gained it, prepared an army, and at last marched—to his ruin. When he, a prisoner in the hands of Cyrus, sent to reproach the oracle which had lured him to his destruction, he was told that he had been in too great a hurry, for if he had further asked what empire it was that he would destroy, he might have learnt that it was his own. Such was the Intelligence Department consulted in the old days, and such the leisurely preparation for war.

As for the speed of carrying out a campaign in ancient times, we will take only take one instance also from Herodotus. Cyrus, advancing upon Babylon, came to a river. In crossing it, one of the sacred white horses was drowned. The enraged warrior swore that he would make the river so insignificant that women should be able to cross it without wetting their knees. He carried out his purpose by diverting the stream into 180 trenches, but he spent a whole summer in the operation. Fancy the Germans stopping to bully the Saar or Mozello in 1870, because the then King of Prussia had lost a favourite horse, or even a clergyman, in the passage.

In the middle ages war was a chronic disease, never ceasing, never entirely exhausting. There was no general staff, no maps nor statistics to be studied. Later on came the Thirty Years' War, slow and barbarous. An idle and oppressive soldiery lived luxuriously on the fruits of the people's industry, and were, in truth, little better than organized robbers. The Seven Years' War was more scientific, but still slow, and was rather a king's game than an international struggle.

The French Revolution produced enthusiastic soldiers and brilliant commanders, but it was reserved for Napoleon I to show what could be done by a man of genius, aided by a staff trained under his own eye. It was a grand achievement when, in 1805, he marched a large army from Boulogne to the Rhine in 26 days; but that army had been long in forming, and had been worked as an army for a considerable period. The same military genius arrived in Paris on the 19th March, 1815, found an army of 155,000 men ready to his hand, and by the 1st of June had raised it to 250,000 of whom 128,000 were on the Belgian frontier. The constitution of the French Army of Italy, in 1859, was commenced early in February, war was declared

on 23rd April, and, 37 days after, 104,000 French soldiers were collected on the river Po, with 12,000 more in Italy, but behind them. At no time did the French Army of Italy exceed 130,000 men and 432 guns, and this army bore but a small proportion to the force France was supposed to possess on paper. We see here, however, an extraordinary advance in the possible rapidity of making war. But what is this to 1866 and 1870? In 1866, Prussian armies, numbering 220,000 men were placed on the frontiers of Saxony and Silesia in a fortnight; and in 1870, Germany, taken by surprise, mobilized her enormous forces in nine days, and had on the French frontier in eight days more, about 400,000 fighting men and 1,200 guns. The labours of the German Staff have since been directed towards arriving at still greater rapidity; and it may be confidently expected that a future campaign would see the mobilization and concentration performed in a period shorter by some days. The French are aiming at the same mark, and it is no extravagant supposition to conceive the face of Europe signally changed within a month from the outbreak of another war. For, in future, not armies, but nations, will meet in the first shock of battle.

It is vain for us to quote the experience of Wellington's Peninsular campaigns or the Crimean war; for, in the former, there were no railways nor telegraphs, and, in the latter, Russia had none that were of any use to her. Now she has many, and they are all designed with a view to military requirements. Surely this extraordinary development of speed in making war, demands some further preparation than used to be sufficient. Surely it demands that we should watch more carefully, and prepare ourselves more assiduously than has been the custom heretofore.

Let it not be supposed that there is some occult means by which neglect in peace could be atoned for in war. If the required information be not ready, it cannot be suddenly obtained.

Mr. Kinglake quotes Lord Raglan's despatch to the Duke of Newcastle, announcing his and Marshal St. Arnaud's acquiescence in the wish of the Home Governments that the Crimea should be invaded. In the despatch the English General says, "The fact must not be concealed, that neither the English nor the French Admirals have been able to obtain any intelligence on which they can rely with respect to the army which the Russians may destine for operations in the field, or to the number of troops allotted for the defence of Sebastopol; and Marshal St. Arnaud and myself are equally deficient in information upon these all-important questions, and there would seem to be no chance of our acquiring it."

At the time when this despatch was written, the Prussian organization, presently to be described, had been in existence for nearly forty years.

Supposing it granted that previous knowledge and preparation are growing more and more necessary for success in war, let us see what sort of knowledge is required by any country; for instance, our own.

First of all we ought to know our resources in men, arms, horses, and money. We ought to know, exactly, what troops, reserve or other-

wise, must be retained at home for the defence of the country, and such troops should be always assigned to the places they are to occupy. They should be definitely organized, as they must be in war, for why should we leave such simple, but tedious questions, to a time when all our energies should be free? Next, we must know the military features of our own country, and have thought over them so much, and turned them over in our minds so often in connection with the disposable force, that there can be no difficulty in deciding upon the plan of the defence; no hurry or indecision at the last moment. Garrisons having already been told off to their places, the great bulk of the remaining troops will form a field army. Its strength, organization, and means of supply may all be arranged at leisure during peace; and, finally, we must know what expeditionary force is available for a counter-stroke against the enemy's territory.

This expeditionary force should be told off now in time of peace, so that nothing will remain to be done but the periodical substitution of regiments, as they relieve each other in the ordinary course. The force should be definitely organized on paper with all its material and transport. The railways or roads by which it will move to concentrate on the coast should be specified, and the exact number of trains or days marches should be settled. The amount of tonnage required for its sea transport should be calculated, and the character of the various ships decided while there is plenty of time to think the subject out quietly. Even the boats required for embarking and disembarking should not be forgotten, nor the means of supply for the first few days. In short, the Staff ought always to be prepared with a definite answer to the questions—"How many troops are available for a movement on such a country (perhaps to the assistance of one of the colonies), and how soon can they be landed at the point of disembarkation, ready to commence a campaign?" This is no more and no less than all continental nations are prepared to do. They call the work, so far, "Mobilization" and "Concentration."

Arrived on the enemy's territory, or our own colony which is to be defended—the commander of the expeditionary force should not be like a stranger in a forest, nor as our gallant comrades were when they arrived on the Gold Coast. The information required for the successful and economical prosecution of war is obtained with comparatively little difficulty during peace, and should be ready in a concentrated form when war breaks out. It is of exactly the same character as that needed at home for home defence; only we must have also knowledge of the enemy's preparations, and such information is obtained more easily by the invader than the invaded, because the invader chooses his own time. This is one great advantage of the offensive in war. Finally, the commander should have his plan of campaign in readiness, so that his first blows may be struck at once. All these preparations may be so made at leisure, in peace, as to await only the last touch according to circumstances when war is imminent. The Army should be well supplied with maps, and carefully compiled military handbooks of the country. In Prussia, Austria, France, the minor States of Germany, and, I believe, in almost all other European countries, the

work above sketched is done by the "General Staff," and I now proceed to describe how they do it.

PRUSSIA.

The Prussian "Great General Staff" is the first to engage our attention, both because it has existed almost in its present form since the beginning of the great peace, having been organized in 1816, and because those of other countries have been formed on its model though with slight modifications.

The principles on which its founders and successive chiefs have acted, are, that the Officers composing it must be the very cream of the Army in talent, conduct, education, and physical as well as mental power, and that all arms must be represented. There is an excellent school for the development of the higher qualifications of Officers called the War Academy, which is, in many respects, like our Staff College; but neither does it furnish the whole of the candidates for Staff employment, nor is the successful accomplishment of its course considered to give any claim whatever to appointment. It is true that some of the best scholars of the War Academy, are annually chosen to work under Count Moltke, but with them there are always other Officers recommended by Colonels of regiments. No pupil, leaving the War Academy, knows whether he will be one of the chosen. All return to their regiments, and those selected are afterwards summoned to Berlin, where, together with the Officers sent up from regiments by their Colonels, they are placed for a year under the immediate eye of Count Moltke, who tests their abilities by giving them tasks to perform such as are the usual work of the Great General Staff. After the year they all return to their regiments. A few months elapse and then the best of them receive the rank of Captain on the Staff, putting on Staff uniform for the first time. Some of them are allotted to the corps or divisions, others to the Great General Staff at Berlin. In all cases the chosen ones are employed on real Staff duties, and the greatest care is taken, in the case of all Staff Officers, *not to cloud their faculties by too much routine labour at the desk*. Such routine work as is necessary is performed by a class of Officers called Adjutants, who form a corps distinct from that of the Staff though recruited to a great extent from the Officers who have passed through the Staff course. Bear in mind, if you please, this question of Adjutants for office work. We shall meet with it again hereafter.

The Staff Captains, whether attached to the Great General Staff at Berlin, or to corps and divisions, are kept perpetually engaged either in surveying, reconnaissance, acquisition and arrangement of information, or in duties having direct reference to the conduct of troops in the field.

After four or five years of Staff service they return to regimental duty; and, later on, part of them only are selected as Majors on the Staff. These fortunate ones have, by this time, gained some seven or eight years' promotion above their regimental comrades. But there is little or no jealousy, for their tests have been severe, and everyone has confidence in Count Moltke.

Promotion to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel goes in the Staff, and the successful Staff Officer thus reaches the command of a regiment some years before he would have done so if he had remained what is, by a strange misnomer, sometimes called amongst us "at his duty." Surely a hardworking Staff Officer is as much "at his duty" as he is who has remained with his regiment. The latter has doubtless done his duty in his sphere of action. So has the former, and his sphere has been a wider one, his work more severe.

Thus it may be said that the only passport to the Prussian Staff is hard work, the only admitted claim to remain in it is that of approved power. The system has found such favour in the eyes of other nations that it is likely to be adopted with very little alteration by both France and Austria.

Having thus watched the accumulation of a large body of highly qualified Staff Officers, let us now see how they are employed in peace. The first great fact is that all their labours are directed to one end—preparation for war—and that so thoroughly that there is nothing left unprepared when the time of trial comes. Prussia, and therefore, Germany, can never be caught unawares. She is always and absolutely ready. It has been said that when war is declared, Count Moltke has only to touch a bell and the machine is set in motion. If for Count Moltke's name we substitute that of the War Minister, and for the bell a few telegraphic messages, the metaphor becomes a simple fact. Nor is there anything secret or incomprehensible about the means. The only wonder is that all nations did not know the fact and prepare themselves in like manner long ago. You know that each detail of mobilization is arranged beforehand so that the Army Corps are immediately raised to their war strength by their Commanders. The rest of the preparation is worked out by the Great General Staff at Berlin. What are its organization and action?

Great General Staff at Berlin.

At its head is Count Moltke, whose name will shine the brighter as history grows older. He and his subordinates have nothing to do with the War Office, except to supply it with any information it may require. Nor have they anything to do with the troops except the Railway battalion, a sort of nucleus for railway studies in peace. Of this battalion Count Moltke is Inspector. The celebrated chief and his band of workers occupy a magnificent palace lately built outside the Brandenburg Gate, at Berlin. Bearing in mind that Bavaria and other German States have similar establishments, it is not a little remarkable that Count Moltke has under his hand, exclusive of all Staff Officers doing duty with the troops; exclusive of Officers permanently employed on the survey of the country; exclusive also of the establishment of the Minister of War,—no less than from 91 to 101 trained Officers always at work on the studies considered necessary as preparation for war. The number is made up by 61 chiefs of sections, Field Officers and Captains actually on the Staff, and 30 to 40 Officers who have been trained at the War Academy or recommended by their Colonels. There are, besides, 115 employés such as

registrars, draughtsmen, printers, &c., but I think that, for the purposes of this lecture, we had better confine ourselves to the Officers.

The 61 Staff Officers belong to two classes:—

1st. The Active Staff liable to service with corps and divisions in their turn.

2nd. The *Neben Etat*, or accessory establishment, consisting of Officers noted for special scientific acquirements, who are content to relinquish the chances of distinction in the field for the solid advantage of permanent employment at Berlin.

During peace the Great General Staff is thus divided:—

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Central Bureau, and | |
| A. The Three Sections. | |
| B. " Railway Section. | |
| C. " Section for Military History. | |
| D. " Geographical Statistical Section. | |
| E. " Topographical Section | } about to be amalgamated. |
| F. " Office of Land Triangulation | |
| G. " Intelligence Office. | |
| H. " The Map Room. | |

Central Bureau.

Count Moltke has two adjutants who, with a secretary and staff of clerks, conduct the whole of the correspondence of the Great General Staff. The first adjutant makes a daily report to his chief on the progress of business and has charge of all personal affairs.

A.—The Three Sections.

The business of the Three Sections is to collect from all available sources the latest information concerning European Armies, to follow all their changes in organization and to keep up to date systematized information concerning them. They are also bound to issue periodical descriptions of those armies for the use of the General Staff.

The First Section has charge of what is called the Eastern theatre of War, comprising Austria, Russia, Denmark; the Turkish Empire, Greece, Asia.

The Second Section has charge of the Central theatre of War, comprising Germany, Italy, Switzerland.

The Third Section has charge of the Western theatre of War, comprising France, Great Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal and America.

Colonies go with the countries to which they belong.

You will observe that the Three Sections devote their attention especially to foreign armies.

B.—Railway Section.

Collects and arranges systematically all information on railways at home and abroad, especially with regard to their capacity for carrying troops. Upon this information the section works out:—

First. Instructions for the transport of troops and munitions of war.

Second. Plans for transport of the German forces under different suppositions so that the German Army may, in the event of war, be concentrated upon any point likely to be threatened, with the greatest possible speed.

Third. Examination of all projects for new railways.

A short railway line has lately been constructed near Berlin, with the avowed object of practising during peace the military use or destruction of railways during war. Different time tables are compiled by this section and kept up to date, so that, at the moment of war, there is not the slightest doubt as to the day or the hour when particular corps, or parts of corps will arrive at the destined point of concentration. But, like all German military institutions, the work of the Railway Section is so prepared as to be elastic. In 1870, the sudden declaration of war by the French led to the supposition that they would invade and occupy the Palatinate before the German Army could concentrate there. Subsequently the inaction of the French enabled some of the German troops to be carried on by the trains which had at first been ordered to halt on the hither side of the Rhine. The railway battalion is under this section.

C.—*Section for Military History.*

It is unnecessary to point out the practical value of the study of military history. Fully impressed with its importance, a section of the Great General Staff devotes itself to the accumulation and arrangement of historical records, and the preparation of excellent histories of great wars. The annals of Prussia have of late been so rich in materials that the Historical Section has been kept hard at work upon the wars of our own time.

D.—*Geographical Statistical Section.*

The duties of this section are to collect and arrange all information of military value bearing on the topography and statistics of foreign nations, as well as the statistics of Germany. It works in close connection with the Topographical Section, out of which it was developed a few years ago. As the Three Sections devote their attention to armies, so does the Geographical Statistical Section study all other matters of military value relating to foreign countries. The European powers are treated "exhaustively," and you know what exhaustively means when spoken by a German. Non-European nations, such as America and the British colonies, are treated in less detail, but all the principal facts concerning them are recorded. I have reason to know that attention has lately been paid to India. The section is also employed in correcting foreign maps and marking interesting details upon them. For this purpose it has a photographic establishment.

E and F.—*Topographical and Land Triangulation.*

These two sections are about to be amalgamated, as they carry out the same great work—the survey of the country—with special regard to military requirements. The Land Triangulation undertakes the most scientific part of the business, such as the cadastral survey. The Topographical Section works out the details and prepares the maps.

Being myself a gunner, I may perhaps be permitted to remark that the most scientific part of the survey is carried out by artillerymen,¹ who work under the guidance of the Great General Staff.

G.—*Intelligence Office.*

This remarkable institution was organized as a distinct permanent section of the General Staff in 1863, the year before the Danish War. All the information obtained by the other sections is handed over to it, systematically arranged and ready for use, so that it is, in peace, the one office which knows everything, and can answer all questions which Count Moltke may ask. It receives, besides, a considerable amount of secret intelligence even during peace. When we remember that service in the Army is universal in Prussia, and that a large proportion of the German merchants, clerks, and other employes working in other countries have been "one year volunteers," we cannot but be struck by the immense facility for gaining military information possessed by this highly organized and warlike nation.

At the outbreak of war, the principal Intelligence Office remains at Berlin, and uses all means of getting information. Officers, Police, the Diplomatic Corps, spies paid or otherwise, are employed, and money is freely spent for the one great end.

An Intelligence Office is also formed at the head-quarters of each Army and Corps, under the superintendence of the chief of the Staff, who details one of his Staff Officers for the special duty. These minor Intelligence Offices are all in communication with the chief office at Berlin, and thus any information, wherever reported, is, by means of the telegraph, made instantaneously useful to all.

H.—*The Map Room.*

In the Map Room are stored original surveys, and a quantity of maps for distribution. This section also registers all map work produced by the General Staff, and is in charge of the accounts and financial business generally.

Travels of Officers.

In the early part of each year the various chiefs of sections report to Count Moltke what points in the information under their respective charges require addition or elucidation. Acting on their reports, Count Moltke sends Officers to travel, giving them definite instructions as to the information required, and the day on which it must be furnished. All the reports find their way to the Intelligence Office.

The Staff Journeys, as they are called, form a great feature of the work. Under charge of Count Moltke, the Officers of the Great General Staff proceed once in the year to a particular district of the country where they act in all respects as the staff of an army engaged

¹ Oberfeuerwerker. I should be sorry if any mistake were made as to the meaning of this passage. In most continental countries, as in Prussia, the survey of the country is directed by Staff Officers, and it is an axiom that all arms are to be fairly represented on the General Staff. The Artillery *as such* is always a fighting corps.—O. B. B. 26/2/75.

day after day. They have to make reconnaissances and reports, to design manoeuvres, issue orders to imaginary corps and divisions, select quarters or bivouacs, and generally perform all duties of the Staff in the field.

The members of the Great General Staff are available for work in any of the sections, as are also the young Officers attached, after their course at the War Academy, or sent up by the Colonels. Thus, at a critical period of their lives, the aspirants for staff employment are brought in contact with the leading military spirits of their country, and with the great master of modern war. The work of these young Officers consists of preparation of memoirs on geographical or statistical subjects, solution of strategical and tactical problems, descriptions of foreign armies, and historical essays. In fact, the information already acquired is placed at their disposal, to be dealt with by them as Staff Officers would have to deal with it. The best papers are laid before Count Moltke by the chiefs of sections, and some of them are published in the "*Militär Wochen Blatt*." Publication is considered to be one of the special duties of the Staff, and arrangements for the purpose are made with military publishers at Berlin. Thus a constant stream of information flows from the Great General Staff to the Army and the country.

When war is declared, the main part of the Great General Staff joins the Army, the Officers being used to form the Royal Head-quarter Staff and the Staff of Armies. They are used, in fact, wherever their services are likely to be most useful. Half the *Neben Etat* remains at Berlin, and keeps the machine from rusting, but the chief work of the Department is over, because that for which it was preparing has come.

Such is the organization of the Prussian establishment corresponding with the newly-formed Intelligence Branch in England. We will now pass to the Austrian.

AUSTRIA.

The whole of the Austrian Staff, whether at head-quarters or with the troops in districts, is considered available for Intelligence work, and is employed upon it. But the staff in districts, like our own, has much routine work to do, and there is now a strong cry heard from them for relief from this burden. They ask that it may be transferred, as in the Prussian service, to a separate body of Adjutants. In fact, though the terms may differ, they desire to approach a system in some respects not unlike our own. The duties of their Adjutants would be closely similar to those of our Adjutant-General's Department, and their General Staff would then correspond with our Quartermaster-General's Department, especially since the latter has now an Intelligence Branch.

Time would fail us to describe the changes and experiments which have been made in the organization of the Austrian Staff since 1866. Suffice it to say, that the authorities leapt at one bound from that dangerous institution, a closed Staff whose Officers did no regimental duty and never commanded troops, to one in which the Staff had no advantage at all in promotion, but rose exactly as regimental Officers

rose. The whole scheme is now undergoing revision, and it is almost certain that the Prussian and English principle, of insisting that Staff Officers shall take a turn of regimental duty, will be adopted, and to this will be added, in order to draw the best Officers to the Staff, the further Prussian principle that Staff Officers shall gain considerably in promotion, so that they may have a greater chance of high command in the field.

The Austrian Department corresponding with the Prussian Great General Staff dates, in its present form, from 1871, and is thus organized:—

- A. Directors' Division.
- B. Military Description of the Empire.
- C. Ditto ditto of Foreign Countries.
- D. Railway, Telegraph, Post, and Steam-boat Division.
- E. Military History Division.
- F. Statistics of Foreign Armies.

In these divisions are employed 68 permanent Officers, besides clerks and Half-pay Officers, whom the Chief of the Staff has permission to employ, bringing their pay up to full pay for the time of their employment.

In addition to these strictly intelligence divisions, there are two staff departments, much of whose work is of special use for purposes of information. They are the *Military Archives*, divided into three sections. 1. The Archives. 2. The Library. 3. The Topographical Department, and the *Military Geographical Institute*, which is charged with the survey of the country and the production of maps.

If we were to include the Officers employed in these two departments, the total would be raised from 68 to 154, but we will omit them, because much of their work is for general military, and even civil purposes, only let us remember that the staff can always count upon them.

A.—*Directors' Division*

Conducts the correspondence, acts as a registry, deals with personal questions, and staff regulations. It has always a certain number of extra Officers attached to it, employed in reading and making remarks upon reports which have been sent in. The Director is thus enabled to decide upon the qualifications of Officers employed on reconnaissances or kindred work.

B.—*Military Description of the Empire.*

C.—*Ditto ditto of Foreign Countries.*

These two divisions may be taken together, because they are likely to be amalgamated, and because the character of their work is the same.

Hitherto, "The Empire" and "Foreign Countries" have been divided, for purposes of study, in two different manners. The Empire into seven "Fields of operation," Foreign countries (in Europe) into four "Theatres of War." The same, or almost the same, system has been pursued in arranging the information regarding them; and the

result is a mass of printed matter highly valuable, but difficult to fit together.

It is now in contemplation to amalgamate the two divisions, and to co-ordinate the "Fields of Operation" and "Theatres of War," so that home and foreign territory may be treated as one for military purposes. This seems a practical idea, for it is certain that, when war is declared, frontiers disappear from purely military calculations, and are replaced by natural features of country which may be either within or without the political confines of the State.

The Austrian military description of country is most elaborate, and contains all that can possibly be wanted for the most exhaustive studies. The form in which it is kept is valuable for the office or the barrack-room, but some Officers complain that the books are not strictly pocket-books, and could not conveniently be carried in the field.

The information required for war is brought together and arranged on two different but allied principles, and printed in octavo.

- 1st. General description of theatres of war, giving the peculiarities of countries, their topography, wealth, inhabitants, politics, and even languages; affording, in fact, all the information required for making great strategical decisions.
- 2nd. Description of the routes along which armies will probably march. These give all the information required by troops in movement, and are the results of the logistical studies of the Austrian Staff. Detailed reports on fortresses or strategical points are added, together with a topographical and statistical summary.

To gather this information, all available means must be used. For instance, in Austria all Government Departments receiving intelligence which bears on the military strength or resources of other nations are bound to send it at once to the Minister of War for the use of the Staff. Thus from one Minister, the Staff hears of the development of a mercantile marine, or the opening of a new port, from another, of the growth of some important industry.

Almost the whole of Europe has been thus studied, and the works are printed for use in time of war. There are distinct books for the two different "descriptions."

Corresponding with the books mentioned above are two sets of maps—Operation Maps and Route Maps.

The Operation Maps are produced by photographing the standard maps, and printing them very pale. This faint delineation of country is then worked over by hand, the useful features being accentuated and the rest left indistinct. They illustrate the first set of books.

The Road maps are prepared on a large scale, and then reduced. A small photographic copy is contained in each volume of the "Route Description" books. From these maps are removed all features not bearing upon the science of marches. Roads, railways, bridges, camping grounds, &c., are specially marked. *The roads all over Europe are divided into day's marches, each of which has a number, and*

corresponds with a certain page of the "Route Description," where is to be found, under the same number, a military description of the road and neighbouring positions.

All the maps and descriptions are kept up to date—those referring to the Empire by the Staff of Generals in districts, those embracing foreign countries by the Head-quarters Staff, partly from material collected by the various "Divisions" of the Staff, partly from the reports of Officers who are constantly travelling to collect and verify information.

The 2nd and 3rd Divisions have published a number of works which take a high place among military standard literature.

D.—Railway, Telegraph, Post and Steamboat Division.

Precisely similar in the character of its work to the Prussian Railway Section but, as is shown by its title, its studies have a more extended scope.

E.—Military History.

Similar to the Prussian Historical Section. It has produced some works of the highest value for military students.

F.—Statistics of Foreign Armies.

This division has to collect and classify information relating to foreign armies, and further, to diffuse such information as widely as possible throughout the Austrian Army.

Newspapers and other periodicals are daily read through and marked, so as to call the attention of the other divisions and departments in the War Office, through which the papers circulate, to any paragraphs specially interesting to them.

Cuttings are made from the papers and pasted in books, together with manuscript notes from reports of Military Attachés, &c., on the same subjects. Thus, if the latest information on any subject of more than average interest is required, it is ready to hand at once. The work of this division is excellent.

Maps of foreign countries are kept with the territorial districts marked upon them, and states giving the actual strength of the armies kept up to date are attached to the maps.

From these states and from other information the division compiles a work,¹ the title of which may be translated as "Comparative estimate of the War Strength of European Powers, by Land and Sea." It is not confidential, and is sold in Vienna for about eighteenpence. Other works on foreign armies have been compiled in the division.

FRANCE.

France, the latest country which has had to confess the necessity for reorganising its military institutions, is bringing her staff system under review and making great and radical changes.

¹ "Vergleichende Darstellung der Wehrverhältnisse in Europa zu Land und zur See." 1874.

Up to 1869 the French Staff was a closed corps, fed by the Staff School. After leaving the school, the officers had to spend five years doing regimental duty with the different arms of the service; but when this service was completed, and they were actually appointed to the Staff, no further regimental duty was required from them. Hence arose an absence of knowledge of drills, discipline and interior economy, which was said to affect seriously the efficiency of the *Etat Major*. Colonel Stoffel speaks sarcastically of Staff Officers whose time had been so spent in clerical labour that they were unfit to appear before troops, and were even, sometimes, unable to ride!

In 1859, an Imperial Decree of 19th July, placed the competition for the Staff after, instead of before, entrance into the Staff School, and admitted to the hope of future Staff employment a number of officers in excess of those required to fill the Staff Corps. These extra officers were to be called "*Adjoints d'Etat Major*," to serve ordinarily with their regiments, and to be called to fill up the Staff in case of war.

This was a step towards throwing the Staff more open; but in the opinion of most of the best Officers in France, even of those now on the Staff, the measure did not go far enough.

Last month (January 1875), a final change was made. A new school called the "Superior War School" was instituted for Officers who have been some years in the service. But, as in Prussia, only the best pupils will receive commissions as Captains on the Staff. They are to do duty for two years with the arms other than that from which they originally came, then serve two years on the Staff in districts; and, finally, two years with the head-quarter Staff in Paris. Their promotion is afterwards to go in the Staff, but they must do regimental duty for a time in each grade.

Commanders of army corps and divisions will have, besides their regular Staff Officers, certain other assistants called *Officiers d'Ordonnance* who will, if I am not mistaken, perform the same duties as those of the Prussian Adjutants or our own Adjutant-General's Department.

This is as close an approach to the Prussian system as French national habits admit of. The principles are the same, but there is no slavish copy.

Let us now examine the organization of the French departments of the Staff at head-quarters charged with intelligence or information duties. They are specially interesting, as they are not older than our own Intelligence Branch.

A decree of the President of the French Republic, dated 12th March, 1874, organised the department of the Chief of the General Staff as follows:—

"The department of the Chief of the General Ministerial Staff comprises the Ministerial Cabinet and Six Bureaux, namely:—

"1st Bureau. General organization and mobilization of the Army,
"States and Effectives.

"2nd Bureau. Military Statistics: Historical Office.

- " 3rd Bureau. Military Operations; Instruction of the Army; Topo-
graphical Office.
- " 4th Bureau. Etappen and Railway Service; Execution of Move-
ments of Troops; Transport of Troops by Land
or Sea.
- " 5th Bureau. General Correspondence.
- " 6th Bureau (or War Dépôt).—Technical Services; Collections;
Material and Accounts of the General Staff."

Since then experience has suggested several modifications.

The 5th Bureau has been absorbed by the 1st; the distribution of work has been rearranged; and certain changes have been made in the number and duties of the officers employed. Further changes may yet be made; but the present organization represents the result of French experience up to this time, combined with their study of foreign systems, and cannot but be interesting and useful to us who are advancing in the same direction.

All the bureaux are now working hard on exactly the same principles as those adopted at Berlin and Vienna. But their method of carrying out those principles is specially interesting to us because their work, like our own, is yet in its infancy. All arms are represented among the Officers in the bureaux, the same studies as those already described are being carried out and, in addition, they have to work earnestly and steadily upon the numerous arrangements involved in the reconstitution of an army upon new principles. Time and much labour are yet required, but we may be certain that, after her task is completed and the machine properly put together, the power of France for war will be tremendous. Talent has never been wanting to her Officers.

The present organization, which may and probably will be slightly modified when the new military system is in full work, may be set down as follows:—

- A. 1st Bureau. General Organization and Mobilization of the Army. States and Effectives. Distribution of Troops. Correspondence.
- B. 2nd Bureau. All information regarding foreign Armies and Navies.
- C. 3rd Bureau. Military Topography and Statistics. Preparation of Military Operations. Instruction of the Army as a whole—such as Regulations for Service in the Field, &c. Travels of Staff Officers. Grand Manœuvres. Historical.
- D. 4th Bureau. Study of Railways. Execution of Movements of Troops. Lines of Communication.
- E. 5th Bureau. Drawing, engraving and altering Maps. Charge (or War Dépôt). of Maps, Books, and Instruments.

Besides the Chief of the Staff and his aids, the number of Officers permanently employed amounts to 69. They are taken from all arms as well as from the Staff, in order to have specialists to deal with questions as they arise. But, besides the permanent establishments of

the Bureaux, Officers doing duty with their Corps throughout the country, whether on the Staff or not, are called upon to give their services in aid of the Staff studies at Head-quarters. For, indeed, the labour of seeking out the knowledge required is very great, and demands both much time and many hands. The work is being done for the safety of the country and no man can refuse his aid according to his powers. The adoption of this principle gives the Staff the assistance of an immense number of workers, whose labour is at once a benefit to France and an education for themselves.

1ST BUREAU

Is divided into three sections each under a Staff Officer:—

1st Section.—Organization of the active Army; its Distribution; General States; Effectives.

2nd Section.—Organization of the Territorial Army.

3rd Section.—Mobilization.

Little need be said of the work of this Bureau, though the importance of it is great at a moment when Organization and Mobilization are the most stirring military questions. But, consider the power and certainty such help as that of the talented Officers employed, gives to the military authorities during Parliamentary discussions. In fact, the law on the cadres has just now been settled by mutual agreement, although a severe conflict on the question was supposed to be impending, and everybody is satisfied. Is not this better than our plan of Royal Commissions and Parliamentary Committees succeeding each other in a weary series, the members approaching the subject with only one certainty,—that it is perfectly new to them and they must learn its rudiments?

2ND BUREAU.

Foreign Armies and Navies.

Twenty-four Officers are employed in this Bureau alone, and the number is found insufficient.

The studies are precisely similar to those of the Prussian "Three Sections," and the Austrian Section for "Statistics of Foreign Armies." Great Powers are studied separately, small ones in groups. The studies comprise, military institutions, organization, instruction, men, material, establishments. Naval affairs are treated generally in less detail than the land services.

All this information must not only be in the possession of the Bureau, but must be so arranged and co-ordinated as to be at disposal for the immediate enlightenment of the Government or authorities interested.

Moreover, to the 2nd Bureau is confided the task of spreading such information as may be desirable among the Officers and men of the Army generally.

This duty is performed by periodical or special publications, such, for instance, as the "*Revue Militaire de l'Etranger*." The French Government and military authorities have accepted the truth that it is

not enough to have information accumulated at head-quarters, but that it is wise to diffuse a knowledge of foreign military systems as widely as possible. Every encouragement is given to officers to study such subjects, and to travel for the purpose.

This Bureau receives and deals with the reports of the military attachés, and is responsible for bringing any valuable information contained in them to the notice of the authorities specially interested in it. By this course every head of a department knows that nothing interesting will escape him, while he is not burdened with the task of reading a mass of MS. which does not concern him.

The military attachés of French embassies, like those of Prussia and Austria, report directly to the Minister of War or the Chief of the Staff. In any case the Staff receives and deals with the despatches at once. English military attachés report to the ambassadors. Their despatches go to the Foreign Office, and thence through many hands before they reach the Intelligence Branch. Is not this system rather unpractical?

Before the late war, and its remarkable lessons, the French system was highly unpractical. Not only Colonel Stoffel's despatches, but the reports of numerous Officers sent to travel in Germany, called attention in the strongest terms to the superiority of the German organization for war, and to the extraordinary development of the military art in the country of Frederick the Great. Nay more, the inferiority of the French system was frequently insisted on. The reports were received, docketed, and carefully pigeon-holed in the War Dépôt, but, from the want of a department responsible for utilizing the information contained in them, those important documents were suffered to lie unread and unknown by the great officials in whose hands had been placed the safety and honour of the French nation.

The lesson has been a severe one, and the result is that at the present moment the chief anxiety is not to hide, but to diffuse information as widely as possible. Not only does the 2nd Bureau publish its papers, but Government money has been granted for the encouragement of the "*Réunion des Officiers*," an institution first established by private members, but now recognized as a means of bringing to the light of day, opinions, often crude enough, held by individuals concerning home or foreign military affairs. The publications of the *Réunion* are sometimes valuable to the authorities, always a safety valve for that intellectual energy so characteristic of the French. Thus a former source of bitterness and grumbling against authority has been turned into a well spring of information and contentment.

3RD BUREAU.

This Bureau is at present one of the most important and active in France, though many of its functions are of a temporary character, and will cease when the epoch of change ceases, when the Army is fairly reorganized, and the studies which must precede modern campaigns are completed so far as only to need periodical revision.

It is divided into four sections—

1st Section.

Preparation of Military Operations.—Study of probable theatres of operations at home and abroad. Travels of the Staff Officers. Grand manœuvres.

2nd Section.

Instruction of the Army as a whole.—Questions relating to general instruction of the Army. Preparations of rules applicable to all arms—*e.g.*, regulations for service in the field.

3rd Section.

Study and Arrangement of Documents necessary for Armies taking the Field.—Such as maps, statistics, military topography.

4th Section.

Histories.—Assembly of historical documents relative to the last campaign. Study of these documents with the object of extracting useful information from them, especially the modifications which should be introduced into the tactics of the different arms.

Think for a moment what this Office has to do. No less than to plan the defence of the country and the best means of attacking other countries. The same studies are pursued by Prussia, Austria, and other Powers. Surely we had better keep our eyes open to this fact. Now, strategical studies such as these, must be based upon accurate and detailed knowledge, or they will not be worth the paper they are written upon. To gather the accurate details, all the army is at work. No less than 80 Officers of the garrison of Paris have been occupied in studying the surrounding country with a view to the thoroughly scientific defence of the place. Let me earnestly beg you to turn over in your minds this necessity for employing Officers outside any new Intelligence Department. Without such aid, facts must be wanting, and all calculations must be baseless and delusive. Whoever has good will and common sense can assist in some part of the work. Neither are great talents required nor high education, but the work in itself is full of interest and instruction.

Officers belonging to the 3rd Bureau attend Autumn Manœuvres, and report on various interesting points for the information of their chief.

4TH BUREAU.

Railway Service and Movements of Troops. Lines of Communications.

Divided into two Sections.

1st Section, Railway Service.

Duties.—Work indicated by the "Superior Committee on Railways." (explained hereafter). Studies relative to the execution of this work. Relation with the railway companies.

2nd Section.

Execution of the Movements of Troops.—Sending the detailed orders required to carry out Ministerial decisions. Correspondence relative to all the movements of troops at home, and to or within Africa.

In November, 1872, a Committee was appointed to consider the whole question of railway transport and lines of communication. Its Report was adopted last July, and is now the basis for the work of the 4th Bureau. The scheme recommended and adopted is most interesting and instructive. The Report has been translated for the Intelligence Branch and would be published at once but for that terrible bugbear, the cost of printing.

There is no time to enter here into the details of the Report. Suffice it to say that all sorts of contingences in war and peace are provided for, even flying trains to be always kept packed full of provisions not far in the rear of operating armies.

The great principle is to combine the labours of Staff Officers who know what is wanted, with that of railway officials who know how best to supply the thing required.

France is divided into six great railway systems, each of which is placed under a Staff Officer who is called the "*Commissaire d'Etude*" for the line and its tributaries. Attached to him is a "superior agent," and the two form a committee with very definite duties and powers. They have to carry out the instructions contained in the Report, and they have legal power to do so. Provision is made for experiments and for practice of the troops. The Report can be bought in Paris, and is well worth reading, even by those whose duties are not likely to place them in charge of railways or lines of communication.

5TH BUREAU (War Depôt).

The War Depôt is chiefly concerned with the care of maps, books, and instruments, and with alterations to be made in the maps and statistics of the country.

It employs 16 Officers, 12 of whom are on the Staff, and a number of other employés.

GENERAL REMARKS.

If we now look back for a moment on the ground we have passed over, we shall see that the strictly Intelligence Duties of the Staff in Prussia, Austria, and France are directed and performed by Staff Officers devoted to that particular work, aided by the whole of the Staff of corps, divisions, and brigades, and, in France, where the work has hitherto been more or less neglected, by all the available talent of the Army.

We see further a general agreement as to the facts which ought to be known, and the manner of getting at the information. The work required may be shortly stated as follows:—

1st. A thorough military acquaintance with the topography and re-

sources of all lands belonging to the nation and its neighbourhood.

- 2nd. An intimate acquaintance with the armies and military institutions of foreign powers as well of the home army and institutions.
- 3rd. A scheme for movement of troops by railway, road, or water, according to probable eventualities. This is based on a study of home and foreign means of communication.
- 4th. Military history, which is always a mine of information if honestly drawn up according to official knowledge.
- 5th. Selections from the above items of knowledge carefully drawn up and published for the information of the Army. This requires frequent use of the printing press.
- 6th. In the three countries the Staff is charged with the issue of the requisite maps in case of war; and, for this purpose, is in close intimacy with the great map-making establishments represented by our Ordnance Survey, which is a civil branch, though conducted by Officers of the Royal Engineers.

This kind of preparation for war is considered quite as necessary as the provision of arms or the drilling of men. It ensures the absence of delay and confusion—those sure fore-runners of defeat—at the beginning of a war, and enables the nation to make the best of its resources whether they are large or small. A military power neglecting these Staff duties in peace may as well put its neck under the feet of its enemies. A portion of the Staff must be set apart for intelligence duties during peace by any nation which does not desire to be utterly confounded when overtaken by war. But it now becomes necessary to anticipate an objection sure to be made by those persons whose minds are under the dominion of fashion. They will recognise the value of such studies for foreign nations, but deny that England has any need of them. Or they will say, as has been said to me more than once, that an Intelligence Branch of the Staff is only needful on the supposition that England is likely to enter into a Continental struggle.

Let us for a moment, and for the sake of argument, grant that we are no longer a Great European Power, that we have no duties which may force us to draw the sword for a principle involving our own general interest, and that our name as a nation may be effaced from the books wherein are reckoned up by the remaining Great Powers, the forces they may have to deal with if they declare war. At least there remain upon our hands certain territories, not so very limited in extent, called the British colonies.

The colonies spend upward of half a million annually on their militia or volunteers; and have, not counting India, about 70,000 men ready for fighting, to say nothing of the legal powers possessed by the Canadian Government of calling out all the able-bodied men in the country, about 740,000.

To this the objectors will reply—"Oh! but we don't want to keep the colonies. We should be stronger if they were cut loose from us, and we

should trade with them all the same." Now, Gentlemen, we soldiers have no business with politics. If an English Government should ever, in the name of Her Gracious Majesty, cast the colonies adrift, our business will be loyally and humbly to carry out the orders we may receive. But we have every right to state plainly the military arguments for retaining a footing where we have it, that is, wherever the sun shines. Let me state the argument in its skeleton form.

Such a trade as that of Great Britain is based upon the safety of our merchant ships.

The safety of merchant ships depends upon their protection by a fleet of war-ships.

War-ships depend upon coal, ammunition, and provisions, which are, none of them, found among the waves, but in depôts on shore.

Therefore the security of our world-wide trade obliges us to keep territory all over the world, for the supply of our Navy.

If this argument be of any value at all, it proves that no nation can, in modern times, keep the command of the sea without colonies, and, that command failing, England's fair palace of commerce would vanish like a dream before the first rude shock of war.

Whatever may be the ultimate fate of the colonies, there are no present signs of their leaving us; and, meanwhile, we surely ought to know something about them from a military point of view. We ought to study them at least generally, if not "exhaustively," as the Germans say. We are trying to do so now, and the attempt shows more plainly, day by day, how much we do not know and need to know. Yet, short as is the time since we began to work on the colonies, and few as are the workers, our labours have already borne some fruit. Foreseeing that Natal might become interesting from a military point of view, we prepared a *précis* of all information to be found in this country with regard to the colony Sir Garnet Wolseley has been suddenly ordered to go out to. Our *précis* was placed in the hands of the printers to-day, and when Sir Garnet starts on Monday next, he and each of the Officers of his staff will have in their hands an octavo volume of some 90 or 100 pages, containing systematized information on all the subjects likely to be valuable to him, from the history, geography, and statistics of the colony, down to such small details as the money, weights and measures in use, not forgetting the nature of the native races with whom he may possibly have to deal. Then our own home islands, Great Britain and Ireland, are by no means completely studied as yet, and all men will grant that we ought to be thoroughly informed as to the measures necessary for home defence.

The attitude of certain Englishmen, ultra-peaceable in talk, reminds me of that immortal member of the Society of Friends who once found himself on board a ship about to be attacked by an enemy. The Captain, needing every stout arm he could find, appealed to him to lend a hand in the defence. But no! "his principles would not allow him to fight." The enemy closed, and began to board. The Quaker shook his head, and, advancing to the bulwarks, pitched one of the assailments into the sea, exclaiming "Friend, thou hast no business here." I fancy that any nation which should aim at stripping England of

her colonial possessions, invading our soil, or taking from us the command of the sea, would soon hear from our most peaceable mouths "Friend, thou hast no business here."

But may we not go a step farther, and ask whether it is so absolutely certain that our swords will never again flash in the brighter rays of a continental sun? Never for the sake of conquest or from lust of territory. Such ideas are altogether dead in our minds. It is, however conceivable (to say the least of it), that we may be called upon to interfere in defence of a principle necessary to our national life. For after all, "Man doth not live by bread alone." A foreign writer has lately said, "scratch the British morality and you find a savage underneath." Let us rather say, "scratch the crust of British conventional talk and you find as bold and adventurous a spirit as ever moved our forefathers to the great deeds on the memory of which we feed our children."

Do you remember that the cry for perpetual peace was far stronger before the Crimean War than it is now? At that time public consent had gone so far that an ill-advised person could write a pamphlet proposing that, if England were invaded, we should receive our guests with open arms and win them by tenderness to offer us an indemnity instead of exacting one. Since then, we do not seem to have come much nearer the Millennium, and may fairly say—"scratch civilization and you find men and women with all their hopes and fears, pride and passion." But there is no need for argument. Mr. Disraeli in his place in the House of Commons, Mr. Gladstone in his late writings, and that great exponent of public educated opinion, the *Times*, have lately told us that England can no longer count on exemption from the common lot of mankind and of nations, a struggle for life, and, let me add, gentlemen—the survival of the fittest. Should such a struggle be forced upon us the country will turn to its soldiers and ask—"Are you ready?"

That time will not find us vicing with other nations in the ostentation of our armaments, but it ought to find us knowing at least exactly what we can or cannot do. An army of 100,000 British troops kept up as it might be from home, is a force by no means to be despised. In 1871 it would have raised the siege of Paris, or crushed Faidherbe or Chanzy according as we had taken one side or the other. Such an army must, however, be ready to act at any moment or half its value is gone. When the time for action comes it will be too late to commence our studies of the means of moving our force or keeping it in the field. All that should be done now, when such studies would be a menace to nobody, not hereafter when the undertaking would be one of the signs of "drifting into war."

There is another important reason for the formation of such a department of the staff. General Todleben remarks, in his book on the defence of Sebastopol, that England has in peace no proper "service of the Quartermaster-General," and he adds, "All this so important part of the military administration is only constituted at the very moment when the troops take the field; thus, much time passes before the staff of the army can be completely organized." The

criticism is just, and still applicable to us. We have our classes and examinations for the staff at the Staff College, and, having got our officers, we scarcely ever again set them to do real staff work till war comes. Were it only for this reason the staff organization which I have just described as existing in foreign countries, would be of equal value in our own.

Theoretically, such work has always formed a part of the duties of the Quartermaster-General's Department, but practically, the few officers he has, are absorbed in office duties, so that he has had none to spare for geographical, statistical, and historical studies, or for calculation of strategical and tactical probabilities, based upon a known system of moving troops in war.

It is a significant fact that the proportion of Staff Officers to regimental Officers in the English army is less than that existing in Prussia, Austria and France.

In Prussia the proportion is	2.06
Austria	2.06
France	2.36
England	1.85

This state of things exists because the public mind does not understand what is the proper employment of staff officers, and, therefore, cuts the staff down as closely as possible. The popular idea is that the staff have to carry messages in the field, and be agreeable to their partners at balls, instead of being as they should be, an Argus-eyed and Hydra-headed giant, ever providing the information on which a General must needs base his plans, and working out the details necessary to give effect to his orders.

Then there is that terrible word of power before which we all tremble,—the Estimates. Let us make a little estimate of our own. At this moment, it is estimated that Europe could put something like ten millions of men under arms. Everywhere arsenals and dockyards resound with the clang of hammers. We ourselves are driving a roaring trade in war ships and arms. It is impossible to believe that an English Parliament will grudge the trifling sum necessary to keep us informed of the position in which we stand, and of the means necessary to keep us secure. It would be as if a rich man of indifferent eyesight, knowing that he would shortly be placed in the presence of savage animals, should grudge the money to buy a pair of spectacles. Nor should we forget that the work to be done is not in proportion to the strength of an army, but to the extent of territory, the number of souls to be defended and the wealth to be secured.

Turn your eyes towards this table, and say whether we have much or little to do in comparison with other European nations.

In round numbers :—

Germany ..	has 212,000 square miles of territory and	41,000,000 of people.
Austro-Hungary	„ 240,000 „ „	36,000,000 „
France with	„ 926,000 „ „	43,000,000 „
Colonies ..	„ 5,400,000 „ „	290,000,000 „
*Great Britain and Colonies	„ 5,400,000 „ „	290,000,000 „

* Not including the Hudson's Bay Territory.

To achieve the work necessary for the study of all this country, and the military statistics of this huge population, we have now, including the Topographical Branch,

7 Permanent Staff Officers,

4 Officers attached after course at Staff College.

Comparing like with like, permanent with permanent Officers, attached with attached, and remembering the world-wide interests of our country, it may be said that the English Intelligence Branch undertakes much more than the work of any General Staff, with a tenth of the number of Officers. If, then, there should happen a Colonial or European war, and complete information should not be forthcoming, let not the country be too severe on the seven Officers on whom this more than Herculean labour has been laid. I am not at liberty to say exactly what is being done. We are doing our best, and have no opponents that we know of.

Indeed, it is difficult to see whence opposition should spring. The essence of an Intelligence Department is, that it is in no sense executive. It robs no one of freedom or power; it must be the servant of all, ask for information from all, and be ready to supply information in return. It is a worker for Queen, Lords, Commons, civil and military departments of the State. It neither adds to nor takes away from the number of the standing army, though it may be said now-a-days, that if there are any individuals so far in rear of public opinion as to fear the small standing army of England, their voices are but the last faint echo of a far-off cry. The pursuit of information has not, like swollen armaments, any tendency to bring about war. An Intelligence Branch of the Staff has nothing to do with classes or politics, no business except to be ever on the watch to gain, to arrange and to distribute knowledge. To perform its work honestly, in other words, to be a real serviceable institution free from all suspicion of pretence, it must have more workers, and considerable freedom in the use of the printing press. While no confidence should ever be betrayed, there can be no possible objection to publishing in English what is published in all other languages. To lock up from English Officers information which is freely distributed to foreign armies, would be to put our own service at a dangerous disadvantage. And it seems to me that no harm could, and much good must, arise from direct personal and official communication between the Intelligence Branch and those great State Departments which have all to be consulted upon warlike measures, the Admiralty, the Colonial, the Foreign and the India Offices.

Up to this time there has never been a department of the kind definitely established in England; but alas! there has never been in the history of the world any such terrible activity and earnestness in military preparations as exist at present. A very small band of officers, called the Topographical Department, were hidden in a street not far from here working, as Englishmen will work, for duty, without hope of praise or renown. All honour to them, they did what was possible, and kept up the pursuit of information during the time

when the nation was most careless about military affairs. They now form a part of the seven permanent Officers shown upon that table as the existing means of work of the Intelligence Branch.

But now, everybody who has any information to give should help us through the first difficulties, as we shall be ready to help them in theirs. Let not the novelty of the idea turn the minds of the most conservative against us. The French ought to know something about the necessities of modern war by this time, and the verdict of their Committee on Army Reorganization is contained in these words of their report. "We were beaten by want of preparation, organization, and direction, and by the weakness of our effective, rather than by the arms of our enemies." That is to say, they had done just as some few people would persuade us to do now. They had lived in a blind confidence, and refused to recognise the altered conditions of modern war. France is indeed a great and glorious nation. She is rising like the Phoenix from her ashes, but we Englishmen are a sober people, and do not love catastrophes. Ours be the natural life of reality, not the immortality of fables and dreams. As all natural life exists by perpetual death and renewal of worn-out parts, so let us live as a nation; not trembling to move because every step consumes and kills some atom or other, but by vigorous exercise and cleanly habits, pass through the natural process of renewal and improvement while retaining the grand old individuality. Or, if there must be dreamers amongst us, let their visions be of a future when, united by common sympathies and common interests, as well as by blood, Great Britain and all her colonies shall join in a bond for self-protection; when free-born men, carrying arms as an honour, shall pace the shores of the islands and continents which own the gentle sway of our Gracious Queen, and at every moment of the twenty-four hours the sun shall somewhere look down on a sentinel who cries in the English tongue—"All is well in the Empire of Peace."

The CHAIRMAN: I presume that I shall be only expressing the feeling of this meeting, as I am only expressing my own feeling, if I assure the Lecturer that we have been extremely interested by the valuable information which is contained in the hour of conversational lecture which he has just given us. As he himself has observed, there was neither time nor opportunity for going into the details which were so essential to understand so great a subject thoroughly and efficiently. I, however, think it right just to point out—because to a certain extent, perhaps, it will be assumed that I have some responsibility in this matter—that the subject now brought to our notice is one that has been brought more especially before us of late years, since the great contests which we have seen carried on in various parts of the world, and because this country has always decidedly stood in this position, that it did not mean, on any occasion, to make any aggressive war, but that anything that happened would be accidental, and, to a great extent, unexpected. I must also point out that the estimates, though alluded to very cursorily, form a very large item in the every-day consideration of Englishmen, and that everything that is spent on the Army is always scanned with the greatest care and no very favourable eye. Under these circumstances it may be very easily understood that however desirable it may be largely to add to the General Staff of the Army for the purposes so very ably brought forward by Major Brackenbury, I must candidly state that it is not very easy to convince others that such is the case. I do hope the lecture we have heard this morning may tend very much in the direction of persuading others, as it certainly did not require to persuade me, that a great deal more

requires to be done in this respect. On the other hand, I think it only right, as occupying the chair on this occasion, to say that I for one, and most others who have attended to this subject, are perfectly alive to the necessity of the points that have been brought before us to-day, but that the difficulties we have to contend with have been hitherto so insuperable that nothing more has been effected than the appointment of the small number of Officers of which you have heard. I also wish to mention—and I hope the Lecturer will forgive me for so doing—(I have no doubt that in his place I should have referred to it) another matter, namely, that the survey in Prussia has been in the hands, very much, of Artillery Officers. I am very glad to hear that the Artillery Officers of Prussia have occupations of that description and time to attend to them, and not to Artillery work. I can only say, in this country, we have been in the habit of placing the survey in the hands of Engineers, and I am not aware that hitherto that survey has not been very well performed. As to the Artillery, I for one admire as much as any man in this country, our Artillery Service. I do not believe there is anything so perfect elsewhere; but they have such very important occupations to attend to, and such vast subjects of interest from day to day (now more than ever) come before them, that I should think that if these Artillery Officers, of whom we have heard, turned their minds to their own avocation they would be more usefully and more beneficially employed than in surveying a country which may very well be left to the very able hands in which it is placed in our country. I hope you will not suppose that I wish to give the slightest offensive meaning to the remark I have made, I merely wished, incidentally, to show that the cheer with which that observation was received might admit of being re-considered after hearing the observations I had to make upon it. I wish to state, most frankly, that, whilst I should be fully prepared to deal with many of the valuable subjects, and to entirely concur in the great bulk of the observations which have been made; there are, nevertheless, points which, if I had time, I might explain to this meeting in a somewhat different light. Of course it would not be either right, proper, or in good taste on my part, or possible, as regards time, to deal with these matters on the present occasion. I feel satisfied you will all wish, as I wish most cordially, to express our sense of the very able manner in which Major Brackenbury has brought this subject to our notice; and I state with the greatest pleasure, that there is not an Officer in the Intelligence Department which has just been established and is performing its work most efficiently—for example, in this little incident with reference to Natal—in whom the Army and myself have more confidence, than the Officer who has just given us this valuable lecture.