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### Thoughts on the Organisation of the British Army

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# THOUGHTS ON THE ORGANISATION OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

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Colonel Commandant Royal Engineers.*

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Thursday, 19th October, 1905.

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR  
(the Earl of DONOUGHMORE) in the Chair.

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## *Introduction.*

MOST people think that our Army methods are open to improvement; but, when the question arises how best to effect a change, the differences of opinion that arise on every side are somewhat bewildering.

Some years' consideration of the subject leads me to the conclusion that these differences are chiefly caused by the various aspects from which the problem is approached. To judge of it properly, a comprehensive view must be taken. And so in the following lecture I intend to formulate a complete scheme—maybe a skeleton, but one in which no bone will be left out.

I will treat the subject under the following heads:—

1. How to get men;
2. How best to equip them;
3. How to organise them in units;
4. How to distribute them in time of peace;
5. How to train them;
6. And how to mobilise, or, in other words, put them in a condition to take the field in time of war.

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<sup>1</sup> Written originally, by request, as an article for the *War Office Journal*, in the autumn of 1904.

*How to Get Men.*

Speaking generally, there are only two ways, viz., some form of conscription, or voluntary enlistment.

Much has been written and much said on this subject. There are advantages and disadvantages in both systems; but it may be taken for granted that, as long as there are any good advocates for the system with which they are familiar, the voters of this country will not change it for the one adopted abroad. So I shall only take up the subject of voluntary enlistment, and consider how it can be worked with the best chance of success.

Assuming that we retain the Regulars, the Militia, the Yeomanry and the Volunteers, we must so treat them that each shall tap certain classes of the population, and that they don't clash one with another.

The Regular Service takes the young men who want to see something of the world, or are tired of their own homes, or of the immediate prospect presented to them in their own town or village. They are not prepared to devote their whole life to the Army, at all events until they have had a trial of it. But they require a wage above what they can earn in civil life. Then, too, it will be an additional inducement to them to join the ranks if there is a prospect of increased pay for increased proficiency, and a good chance of getting employment when they return to civil life.

The Militia Service takes men who have started in some occupation, but can arrange to get away for certain periods of the year. As a rule they like the change; and, as long as service does not destroy their means of livelihood, and does not interfere with their power to marry if they so wish, they will join, in limited numbers, for an amount of pay that will meet their expenses. More would join if the pay were increased, and if their military employment were more considerably worked than it is now; that is to say, if their training were carried out at times when they could be spared from their permanent civil work. In this connection it may be remarked that by taking men for recruit training when they can best be spared—usually in the winter—not only could more good men be got for this branch of the Army, but the labour market would be helped all round. Employers would benefit as well as those employed, and the whole country would gain.

The Volunteer and the Yeomanry Services take men who would not otherwise join the Army voluntarily. If certain conditions of physique and knowledge were laid down for their recruits, and if their training was more carefully arranged than is the case at present, they might easily be made the finest Force in the world. Nearly all of them are employed, and consequently they can only come out for training in the evenings, or when they can get a holiday. If they are to be kept up in an efficient condition, it is absolutely necessary that all the officers should pass a special examination for each rank, and that officers and men should receive sufficient pay to cover their expenses.

Now the Regulars are required to guard our over-sea possessions—notably India—and the coaling stations of our Fleet; while the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers are required primarily for Home Defence, but also to support the Regulars should the Empire ever be in danger. The numbers that might be required in time of war can only be assumed; but an assumption of this sort is necessary

before anyone can work out properly what force must be maintained in peace, in the ranks, and in the Reserve, and how that peace force can be transformed into a war one.

I will deal later on with this part of the subject under the headings Distribution and Mobilisation. Meantime, let us consider what should be the conditions of service for each one of the branches into which the British Army is divided; that is to say, what should the Government offer them, and what should they be expected to do in return. While on this subject, I wish to say that, *for their own sakes*, every officer and soldier should have a small parchment book which should contain the conditions of his service, and also a record made up from time to time how that service has been performed. This should be compared occasionally with a duplicate kept at the dépôt at home.

The conditions for recruits for the Regular Army should, I think, be as follows:—Enlistment between the ages of 18 and 20 for a period of eight years with the colours and four years in the Reserve, but with powers of purchase at two and four years. The pay should be sufficient to induce these young men to enlist, and there should be an increase of 2d. a day with a badge after one year, and again after two years, and again after four years, making 6d. and three badges in all. The recruits' training (which will be described later on) should be carried out usually at special dépôts.

The normal period for a recruit's course at a dépôt should be two years, which is necessary if he enlists at 18 and is joining a battalion in India, because he is not allowed to serve in that country until he is 20.

Enlistment should only be allowed when applicants pass a certain physical and mental test, and produce a certificate of birth and one of education. The latter will eventually include the physical course which every boy will have to go through in an elementary school. The increase of pay and the badge should only be given for proved qualifications.

From the above it will be seen that I contemplate three classes of soldiers; viz.: the recruit (or 3rd class soldier), the trained soldier (2nd class), and the 1st class soldier.

The first badge should be given to the recruit, as an encouragement, after a year's satisfactory service, and on passing a theoretical and practical examination. The second badge should be given on passing the examination required by a 2nd class or trained soldier; and the third badge on passing as a 1st class soldier. What they would be required to know in each class will be dealt with under the head of Training.

Service abroad should not, as a rule, be longer than 5 years, with an interval of not less than 3 years at home.

Six months before the completion of his 8 years' service a man should be allowed to say if he wishes to continue in the ranks. If he is a good soldier, and if there are vacancies, he should be allowed to do so for a second period of 8 years, of which not more than 5 should be abroad. After this, he might have the option of being employed either in the Home Army, or in the General Service Army, until he obtains a pension. This, I think, should be for 6 years in the latter, making 22 in all, or for 12 years in the former, making 28 in all. Should he not wish to continue in the ranks after 8 years he would complete his 12 years in the Reserve.

Officers for the Regulars should all, I think, be obtained from Military Colleges, or from Universities.

The conditions for recruits for the Militia should be enlistment between the ages of 19 and 24, for a period of 3 years in the ranks and 5 years in a First Reserve. An option might be given to serve on for four years more in a Second Reserve.

The Militia should be strictly localised, as they are now, and their Infantry should take charge of the county depôts. At each depôt, besides the work incidental to enlistment, and records, and storing military equipment, there should be a thoroughly up to date military school for recruits, which I will describe more at length later on. Here the Militia recruits should be trained for a period of four to six months during the winter; and in the summer of the second year they should join their battalion in a camp of exercise. The battalion should be out every year for from 4 to 6 weeks, made up of second and third year recruits and of the permanent staff.

Militia Reserves, whether of the first or second quota, should come out once in three years and train with their battalions.

Officers for the Militia should go through the same training as recruits for two years, and then be subject to an examination, after which they might be posted as second lieutenants. All subsequent promotion should be subject to practical and theoretical examinations. Schools for Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteer officers, and non-commissioned officers, should be provided at our principal military stations to assist them in passing the required tests.

Under certain conditions officers of Regulars should be allowed to join the Militia, and qualify for a pension.

The conditions for Yeomanry might, I think, be left as they are. They have been very much improved since the South African War.

The conditions for Volunteers require careful consideration. We need not go into their past history. We know how the movement started, and to what dimensions it has grown, and we have a vivid recollection what it did for us in the early days of the Boer War. Surely we ought to do our best to preserve an organisation that has restored to our country the popularity of the military profession, that has done so much to keep up military enthusiasm, that has been ready to take a foremost place in the defence of the Empire, and has in the hour of need provided *personnel* for the very forefront of the battle. How can we do so? I think as follows.

First by ascertaining our home needs, which can be done by making a scheme of defence for the British Isles. Then by calculating what number of efficient Volunteers of all arms are required, in addition to Militia and Yeomanry, to make that scheme complete; and, when we have done this, by grouping the various corps together in so-called battalions and brigades, taking care that their strength shall be equal to three times the numbers actually required by the scheme of defence. Besides this, every corps should maintain a service section ready to reinforce, in time of war, the Regular unit to which it is affiliated.

It is in the power of Army government to impose whatever conditions it chooses on recruits enlisting into the Volunteers, and to lay down what shall be their pay and what their allowances under various circumstances. But it is obvious that in proportion as it requires efficiency, it must be ready to meet all the legitimate costs of the Force, so that officers and men shall not be required to put

their hands into their pockets. It is enough if the Volunteers give their spare time and the best of their energy to military work—they should not be asked to give their savings too.

It may be remarked that I have fixed 18 to 20 as the age for enlistment into the Regulars, because this is the period when the boy is becoming a man, when he expects the boy's wage to be increased, and when he is more or less doubtful what profession he will take up; and I have fixed 19 to 24 as the age for enlistment into the Militia so that it may not interfere with enlistment into the Regulars. The Militiaman, as I have already stated, can have civil employment concurrently with his military training.

I have not proposed any changes in the terms of enlistment for Yeomanry and Volunteers because they don't conflict with Regulars.

### *Personal Equipment.*

Having stated briefly how I think it may be possible under a voluntary system to obtain men for the British Army, I turn to the next question, how best to equip them.

Army authorities in England have arrived at the conclusion that a soldier of the Empire requires two distinct dresses, a show dress and a working-dress. The show dress is, as a rule, of the traditional scarlet colour, and the pattern follows the fashion of the day. The service dress is intended for use all over the world. It is of the khaki or mud colour, that has, in one shade or another, been used by our soldiers in all the wars we have undertaken since the Indian Mutiny.

I am not going to involve this lecture in questions of dress pattern; nor will I deal with the show dress except to remark, in passing, that it must not be treated as a matter of no importance, because it is a strong factor in the recruiting question. But I will pass at once to the soldier's war kit, assuming that the service dress is of the present approved pattern.

The articles in possession of a soldier in time of war can be divided into three categories, viz.:

*1st*, Those that should accompany him on the march, being carried either on his own or his horse's back, or in transport which is always close at hand;—

*2nd*, Those that can be left at an advanced depôt or on the line of communications, to be drawn on from to time as required;—

*3rd*, Those that can be left at a permanent base, to be sent for when troops go into standing camps or cantonments.

In regard to the first, the more a man, or horse, carries on his back, the less there will be to be brought along by transport. But the man must not be so overburdened that he cannot march with ease, and so a mean must be struck. But it must never be forgotten that, given sufficient strength to last through an ordinary campaign, and given adaptability to the purpose for which it is provided, every article of a soldier's equipment should be as light as possible (See Appendix I.)

I know that many officers in the war in South Africa, and also in previous ones, experienced great difficulties in campaigning because of the unsuitability of various articles of our dress and equipment for war purposes, and had to resort to all sorts of expedients to lighten the loads on men and horses.

And I know that, for many years, committees of practical officers have investigated and reported on the subject.

Certainly here and there improvements have been made, such as lightening the saddle, as recommended by Sir Frederick Fitz Wygram, or improving the general service wagon, as advised by Sir Redvers Buller. But there is still much to do.

Before going into details, I must observe that a soldier ought to be so familiar with every article of his war kit, that it should be like a part of himself. Now the only way to effect this is to familiarise him with their use, and let him constantly carry them in time of peace. The old system of "marching order" for Guards had a very real meaning. It was intended to secure that everything essential to a soldier's efficiency was existent and in good order, and that the carrying arrangements fitted properly, so that men might march out of any guard room straight on to the field of battle.

And now a few words in regard to details of personal equipment. I will not touch on mounted troops, because the question in their case has been more carefully gone into by experts than has been done for dismounted ones; and a committee composed of any good cavalry, artillery, or Army Service Corps officers, who have served in recent wars, could soon settle any questions that may still be pending.

Take an infantry soldier as representing the dismounted men of our Army. What is his marching order kit? that is to say, what are the articles that he must take with him when he goes to fight? and how does he carry them?

First there are the clothes he wears, which should consist of a suit of khaki, a helmet, a flannel shirt, a pair of drawers, a pair of socks, boots, etc. Next there are his arms and ammunition, and lastly there are the few indispensable articles that he requires at hand to keep him in health and strength during a campaign, assuming that he may frequently be separated from the baggage train, and have to depend on his own resources.

The infantry soldier's arms consist of a rifle, which he carries in his hand, and a bayonet, which is fastened to his waist-belt.

A rifle is no good without ammunition, and, notwithstanding the most careful arrangements for the supply of rounds from transport accompanying the troops, and trains following behind, a considerable amount has to be carried by the man himself.

Besides ammunition, a small quantity of food has also to be carried by the soldier; usually a water-bottle with tea in it, a reserve ration, and at least enough bread and meat to last him through the day, until the ordinary ration is issued at the end of the march or the battle. Meat and groceries are usually carried in the canteen, and bread or biscuit in the haversack. The other indispensable articles are an overcoat,<sup>1</sup> a holdall, a towel, two foot bandages, a wound bandage, a pocket ledger, a clasp knife, a woollen nightcap, and a pot of grease. Besides these, there are the necessary belts and pouches, called accoutrements, to enable the whole kit to be easily borne.

In addition to what is carried by the soldier, the baggage train, which accompanies the troops, should have in it a small valise for each man, with a carefully selected change of clothes, and also spare ammu-

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix II.



nition, one or two days' rations, intrenching tools, and tents or blankets if specially ordered.

The most important articles in a soldier's kit, next to his arms, are, I think, his accoutrements, because on their efficiency for the purpose for which they are intended depend in a great measure the man's comfort, and his power to march, and endure privations. For some years an excellent committee, under General Eyre, worked at these accoutrements, and produced what used to be known as the Valise Equipment. This is out of date now, because it contemplated carrying a number of articles which have been obliged to be thrust aside in favour of ammunition. But the principles which guided the committee in adopting this equipment—principles which were unfortunately overlooked by those who invented most of the equipments of a later date—remain good to the present day. They consisted mainly in so distributing the load, that it should be thrown on the centre of gravity of the soldier when marching. This was done by a combination of yoke and brace, so arranged that the weights, more or less evenly distributed before and behind, were carried on the shoulders, and no tight strap was required anywhere to keep them in position.

Whatever means of carriage may be adopted in the future, that is to say, whether the articles that have to be carried by the soldier are placed on a bandolier or suspended by braces, the principles alluded to above should be borne in mind.

I will not go into further detail. It is sufficient for my present purpose if I have shown that the really essential matter in fitting out a soldier is to provide him with an equipment suitable for war; and that the accoutrements given to him to enable him to carry such articles as are necessary should be carefully and scientifically made; and lastly that, in order to get thoroughly at home with his war kit, he should always have it in his possession, and carry it in all marching drills and manœuvres.

### *Organisation in Units.*

Having enlisted a certain number of men, and provided them with the necessary equipment to enable them to do duty as soldiers, the next process is to group them together in bodies such as troops and companies.

The business of the construction of these bodies, and then of putting them together so that the various "arms" may be properly proportioned, is called Organisation.

It will not, I think, be denied that organisation should follow tactics. In other words, that the units which make up an army should be so organised as to facilitate to the utmost extent possible the employment of modern tactics.

The object of all tactics is to get the greatest advantage out of the arms in use, which, in these days, are chiefly the long-range rapidly worked fire-arm, backed up by the bayonet in the hands of infantry and the sword or lance in the hands of cavalry.

The practical result of modern tactics is, that troops can defend a position with fewer men in the front line than formerly. This means a greater extension of the line of battle, the necessity of more careful preparation for attack, longer and more elaborate flank movements, and the frequent employment of night fighting.

To facilitate the employment of these tactical changes, which have been going on ever since the adoption of the breechloader and quickfirer, but never so fast as in the last few years, I don't know that we have made any material changes in our organisation.

I would ask, does our existing organisation admit of sufficient decentralisation when local circumstances require it? Does it provide for all the wants of the men in a long-drawn-out modern battle? I don't think it does; and, if I am right, surely every endeavour should be made in time of peace to carry out any required improvement.

It is frequently stated by theorists that individual responsibility is required to enable modern tactics to be used with effect. This is all very well, but it is only practicable if every individual soldier put into the field can be fully trained in the art of war; and it is doubtful if this can be done by any nation even at the commencement of a campaign, still less when the ravages of war take effect; and the ranks have to be filled up by more or less untrained reinforcements.

I can't help thinking that, while endeavouring to train every man as fully as possible, we should at the same time so organise our forces as to be ready to meet all circumstances. So I propose to make the basis of our organisation the group of seven, that is to say, a leader and three double sentries. The leader should have all the training of a scout, and should be a junior non-commissioned officer or, at all events, a first-class soldier.

Taking first the infantry; four groups under a sergeant would make a section of 29, and four sections besides 1 captain, 1 lieutenant, and 2 soldier servants would make a company of 120.

Two of these companies should form a double-company under a major, who should be mounted. This would be the unit for training in peace, and also for fighting in war.

Four double-companies, together with a headquarter detachment, would form a battalion, and four battalions would form a brigade.

Under this organisation every officer and non-commissioned officer would have in the field a distinct responsibility. The brigadier, having received the instructions of the divisional general in regard to the situation, would make all the arrangements for the supply of his command, and would dispose of his four battalions for attack or defence according to circumstances. Similarly, the lieutenant-colonel of a battalion would deal with his headquarter detachment and his four double-companies—the fighting units.

The actual fighting of infantry would be under the major, who, having received the instructions of the lieutenant-colonel, and made himself acquainted as far as possible with the situation, would dispose of his command to the best advantage. His success or failure would then depend in a great measure on the training that he had given his officers and men in time of peace.

The organisation of cavalry would be similar to that of infantry. Four squadrons, under majors, would form a regiment, and three regiments would form a brigade.

In artillery, three batteries of field artillery or two batteries of horse artillery would form a brigade division. A battery is commanded by a major and a brigade division by a lieutenant-colonel.

In engineers, a field company, under a major, is the present unit to accompany infantry. But the experience of the South African War seems to indicate that it is too small for the work it has to do, and

that a proportion of the men should be mounted. Its organisation, however, can best be considered in connection with the division.

The division is the unit that combines all arms, and is thus capable of carrying out, alone, or in company with others, all the phases of a modern battle.

As at present constituted, a British infantry division consists of

- 2 infantry brigades (8 battalions);
- A squadron of cavalry ( $\frac{1}{4}$  regiment);
- 2 brigade divisions of artillery (6 batteries);
- A field company of engineers.

The total (approximately) of bayonets is 8,000.

A British army corps consists of 3 infantry divisions and certain corps troops, not included in divisions, such as more artillery; pontoon, telegraph, and balloon units of engineers; ammunition and tool parks; army signallers; bakery columns; extra medical units; an extra battalion of infantry; and a squadron of cavalry, etc.

Now there is no absolute need to have either division or army corps organised as above. Many think that, for the requirements of Great Britain, which are a large Navy and a small Army, the division should be somewhat larger and more complete, and the army corps should be simply an aggregation of divisions;—say three infantry divisions and a cavalry division, with line of communication troops according to the estimated length of country to be held behind the moving army.

But, apart from this, it seems to me that the division is not at present organised to make the fullest possible use of modern tactics.

I alluded above to the changes caused in tactics by the far-reaching, rapidly-working fire-arm of modern days; and stated how, while the line of battle is extended, there is, at the same time, more need than ever of flanking movements. Now the best way, if not the only one of carrying out such movements is to have a portion of the infantry with every division mounted.

Again, I have pointed out that more careful preparation than ever is required previous to an attack; and one of the ways to carry out such preparation is to make a reconnaissance with mounted men, and to furnish a report on the ground to be passed over by the attacking forces, as well as on the general dispositions of the enemy for defence. This reconnaissance and report must be made by men who are intimately associated with and working alongside of the attacking infantry. It could, I think, be best done by mounted scouts belonging to the battalions.

Lastly, I said that night fighting in modern war is as essential as ever. Now this branch of the military art requires frequent practice beforehand, and most careful arrangement previous to execution; and I believe it might be made more reliable by associating with the troops detailed to carry it out, a force of engineers. If this were the custom, these latter soldiers would make a *spécialité* of the business, and would bring into play their scientific instruments, such as telegraph lines to keep up communication, guide posts and illuminated paint at certain points on the line of approach, and searchlights where considered useful to disclose what the enemy was doing or to bewilder them with their glare.

So I propose that every double-company of infantry shall have, as part of its organisation, 4 scouts; and that there shall also be 4 in

the headquarter detachment, one of which would be the sergeant in command. This would make 20 scouts in a battalion. They would be trained in time of peace, but mounted only on mobilisation for war.

I propose also that, besides the 2 infantry brigades now detailed to a division of infantry, there should be a third brigade of two or three battalions of mounted infantry. The cavalry squadron could then be dispensed with. The mounted infantry assigned to this work need only have a few horses in peace time, sufficient for training purposes. They would, of course, be fully horsed on mobilisation for war.

And finally I propose that the engineer organisation for an infantry division should be a battalion of four companies. The lieutenant-colonel commanding the battalion should be the commanding Royal Engineer of the division. The companies would be commanded by majors. A proportion of each company should be mounted, so that they might get rapidly from one place to another, to carry out any special work. Pontoons to a limited extent, and telegraphs, and electric lights, and balloons should be provided with the battalion. Reserves of these and of intrenching tools and other special engineer tools should be carried in field parks on the lines of communication; and the units now detailed to army corps might be done away with. Arrangements should be made to attach a corps of local labourers to the engineer battalion, to assist in heavy field works or in the construction of roads, etc.

A division of infantry would then be formed as follows:—

- 2 infantry brigades;
- 1 brigade of mounted infantry;
- 2 brigade divisions of field artillery;
- 1 battalion of field engineers;
- Ammunition columns, transport and supply, and medical columns as required.

A division of cavalry would consist of:—

- 2 brigades (6 regiments) of cavalry;
- 2 brigade divisions (4 batteries) of horse artillery;
- A mounted company of engineers;
- Ammunition columns, transport and supply, and medical columns as required.

An army corps would consist of (as before stated) 2 or 3 infantry divisions and a cavalry division, and of line of communication troops (with the latter there would be batteries of position, for use as required).

It is thought that in working out the above in detail, considerable saving in transport might be effected by cutting out everything not actually required at the front. All *surplus* men and horses should be kept at depôts at or near the base, and all reserve stores in field parks on the lines of communication.

#### *Distribution in Time of Peace.*

Troops are required to be maintained by Great Britain in time of peace for the following purposes:—

- a. In concert with a local native army to protect India.
- b. In concert with such local troops as can be found at each place to garrison the coaling and repairing stations of our Fleet.

- c. To form, with or without the Reserves, a field force that can be held available for rapidly conducted expeditions in concert with the Navy.
- d. To defend Great Britain, and at the same time be prepared to support the above-mentioned (c) field force in any prolonged operations.

To do this we have now, and I think we should be content to have, if they are sufficiently well organised and trained, the Regulars, the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers.

The Regulars supply the white troops of all arms that are required for the protection of India, in addition to the native army. A portion of that supply, that is to say, a fixed number of battalions of infantry, regiments of cavalry, and batteries of artillery, made up of trained soldiers of at least two years' service, are distributed throughout that country under the orders of its Government; and a portion, chiefly recruits under instruction, are retained in England for the purpose of furnishing drafts, or sending out reinforcements. The Regulars also supply the white troops required to garrison, in addition to the local forces, the naval coaling and repairing stations abroad, in the same way as in India, except that the men sent out need not be 20 years of age.

They also form the nucleus of a force held available in the British Isles for use, at short notice, in any part of the world where Imperial interests require their presence; at present some of them are in Egypt and some in South Africa.

The Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers should form the Home Defence Army. They are also available, under an organisation which I will explain, under the heading of mobilisation, to strengthen and support the Regular Army in any prolonged operations abroad.

In planning the distribution of troops in a country, two points should be considered: first, what will best facilitate their training, and secondly, how will the arrangement answer in time of war. There is another element that comes in when the matter is taken in hand practically: viz., where are the existing barracks? and how far will their situation enable a proper scheme to be elaborated?

Modern training requires rifle ranges, and open commons in the neighbourhood of barracks, and these are not easy to obtain in the close vicinity of towns where many of the old buildings are located.

Again, the requirements of training must be considered under two aspects. There is the training of the recruit, which has to be carried out continuously all the year round, and can be done to a great extent on barrack squares and in gymnasia, and with miniature ranges; and there is the training of the soldier for the field, which requires open spaces and full sized ranges.

The only way in which the question of distribution can be properly considered in Great Britain is to go into it in some detail. But if the matter is to be settled with any finality it is absolutely necessary that principles should be laid down for the guidance of those who have to carry it out.

I will assume certain conditions for the troops that have to be quartered in Great Britain in peace and war, and base my proposals on them. Any change in the conditions will entail a corresponding change in the proposals.

I take it, 1, That a field force of Regular troops sufficient to form at least 6 complete divisions of infantry and 2 of cavalry, with a proper proportion of heavy artillery, and engineers, and line of communication troops for, say, 100 miles of communications, with all the necessary trains, should be kept in constant training for war, so that they could be shipped abroad at any time within a fortnight of an order to move.

2. That a similar field force of Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, should be so organised that they could be rapidly assembled at any time to take the place of the Regulars sent abroad.

3. That the garrisons for all fortified naval bases and coaling and fitting stations at home, and of such commercial harbours as it is considered advisable to fortify, should be carefully arranged, and so organised that they could take up the positions assigned to them in the local schemes of defence at 12 hours' notice.

4. That there should be an organised system of supports to the Naval Coast Guardsmen who keep watch all round our coasts.

5. And that there should be a sufficient balance of all arms to supply drafts for India, and the Colonies, and to send reinforcements wherever likely to be needed; and also to act as a general Imperial Reserve to all forces that may be engaged in war.

How should all these Forces be distributed, and how should they be housed?

Speaking generally, the Regulars are at present put up in existing barracks; the Militia, when embodied, in tents or huts; the Yeomanry in tents or billets; and the Volunteers in tents.

I must say a few words here on the subject of our barracks. The barracks in the United Kingdom, and also abroad, have been built from time to time to suit the military policy of the day. Sometimes they have been located with a view to defence, and, moreover, they have been constructed to meet the requirements of a force that was specially organised for the occasion; sometimes political considerations have settled their whereabouts; sometimes they have formed part of a fortress, and in this case the rooms were made bomb-proof to stand a siege; sometimes they have been built as plainly as possible, to save expense; at other times, architectural effects have been attempted to please local authorities. Ever since they were first inaugurated in England, the changes in occupation and the consequent changes in construction have been incessant; cavalry barracks have had to be converted into infantry depôts, and the stables altered to make indifferent barrack rooms; infantry barracks have had to be used for artillery; artillery barracks for infantry. The numbers to be accommodated have varied still more frequently. Besides all this, modern sanitation, and ideas of comfort, have never ceased in their efforts to bring about improvements, the result varying with the funds placed at disposal for the purpose. Unfortunately, a barrack is not like a carpet bag, which can expand or contract according to what it has to hold. No wonder that military barracks are frequently criticised, and sometimes roundly abused! Of late years, a determined attempt has been made to adopt a barrack policy, which could say what barracks should be done away with, and what should remain. Naturally, this policy is dependent, to a great extent, on how the troops are distributed. I say "to a great extent," for it is not so entirely. Given a good barrack with sufficient exercising ground in the vicinity, and it doesn't very much matter whether the ordinary

routine training carried out in it is under one general or another, especially if the troops it holds can once a year be exercised with others in field-training or manœuvres.

Evidently, the matter can be worked out not only with a due regard to efficiency, but also with a view to economy.

There is no doubt whatever, that if the Scheme of Defence for the British Isles can once for all be settled, and the general distribution of the troops in peace and war be worked out in accordance with it, for the first time in our history the barrack question will be able to be really grappled with, and proper accommodation provided for all our soldiers.

Under the conditions that I have stated above, the Regular troops could, no doubt, all be provided with accommodation in existing barracks, the field force at our camps at Aldershot, Salisbury, and elsewhere, and the dépôts and other troops not included in the list for immediate embarkation at our fortresses, and other stations. When these troops are collected together for summer drills or manœuvres, they can be provided with tents or billets.

The auxiliary forces (*i.e.*, the Militia, the Yeomanry, and the Volunteers), when out for training in time of peace, can usually be encamped on one or other of the Government exercising grounds. Occasionally, they can be put up in barracks or huts when any are available. In time of war, these troops, when first called out, should occupy billets or hired buildings at their places of mobilisation. But when the first (Regular) field force has left the country, those of the Auxiliary Forces, which are detailed to take its place, can occupy the barracks. The garrisons of our naval bases, and the troops supporting the coast-guards, should, in time of war, be provided with accommodation arranged for in the local Schemes of Defence. The same, or tents, can be used for peace-training.

A few words seem necessary regarding the way in which Army Government has to be conducted under any distribution of troops at home. For purposes of recruiting, and of the general administration and training of all our Forces, Regular and Auxiliary, the British Isles are divided into military Districts. Scattered about in these Districts are our training grounds, such as Salisbury Plain and Aldershot, and our Military Schools, such as Hythe, Shoeburyness, and Okehampton. Distributed among them also are the various naval bases and repairing stations, such as Portsmouth, Plymouth, Cork, Pembroke Dock, etc. Now, the most economical arrangement for command, and the one best adapted for keeping generals and staff up to the mark would be to organise districts according to the work that has to be done in them. But in any distribution, the requirements of war must not be forgotten. I think that an arrangement, as follows, would best meet all circumstances:—

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Eastern District,<br/>as at present, under a Major-General.</li> <li>2. The South-Eastern District,<br/>do. do.</li> <li>3. The Home District, including<br/>Woolwich do.</li> <li>4. The Thames District,<br/>do. do.</li> </ol> | } | Grouped under an Inspecting<br>General Officer quartered in<br>London. |
|---|---|--|

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 1. The Portsmouth District,<br>as at present, under a Major-General.                                      | } | Grouped under an Inspecting General Officer quartered at Aldershot.<br><br>N.B.—This officer would be the authority on field matters. |
| 2. The Salisbury Plain District,<br>do. do.   |   |   |
| 3. The Aldershot District,<br>do. do.   |   |   |
| 1. The Plymouth District<br>(Counties of Gloucester, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall) under a Major-General. | } | Grouped under an Inspecting General Officer quartered at Bristol.   |
| 2. South Wales,<br>under a Brigadier.   |   |   |
| Scotland .. .. .  | } | Under an Administrative and Inspecting G.O.C. at Edinburgh.   |
| The N.E. District .. .. .   |   |   |
| The N.W. District .. .. .   |   | do. do. at York.  |
|   |   | do. do. at Chester.   |
| 1. Belfast District,<br>as at present under a Major-General.  | } | Grouped under an Inspecting General Officer quartered at Dublin.  |
| 2. Dublin District,<br>do. do.  |   |   |
| 3. Cork District,<br>do. do.  |   |   |

Each district would be worked administratively by a major-general. In four cases they would be grouped together under an inspecting-general officer, whose duties would be inspection in its highest form, i.e., inspection with suggestions for improvement, not merely finding fault. All *new* proposals in districts, however, and everything entailing expenditure, not provided for in the Annual Estimates, would be referred to him. His staff need only be a small one; probably a military secretary, and two aides-de-camp, with two clerks would be sufficient.

### *Training.*

I have already said that young men enlisting voluntarily into any branch of the British Army should be subjected to certain tests before they are accepted. There is the physical test, which has always existed, and which certainly should not be lessened when physical drill is taught in all our elementary schools; and there should be a mental test, such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and the history of our country. But, whatever test may be established for entering the Army, the after-training should be considered under two aspects: the training of the "recruit," and the training of the "field-soldier." Whenever possible, the first should be completed before the second is begun. The first can be carried out in depôts, and in buildings that can be provided in towns; the latter where exercising grounds and full-sized ranges are available within reach of the barracks. The importance of this distinction is great, for on it depends the whole system that we adopt for the training of our troops at Home.



It is in order to make sure that our training is continuous and progressive, as well as to assist recruiting, that I have proposed making three classes of soldiers, with different rates of pay, and qualifying badges. The 3rd class would consist of recruits; the 2nd of trained soldiers fit to do ordinary duties; and the 1st of superior soldiers, capable of carrying out the duties of scouts, or of commanding a group under all circumstances in the field. All non-commissioned officers should possess the qualifications required by a 1st class soldier.

I have given a year as the time when a recruit might pass his first examination, and win 2d. a day pay, and his first badge; and I have given two years as the time when he might pass a trained soldier's examination, and win his second badge, and another 2d. because, if he enlists at the usual age (18) he can't go to India for two years. But I would give power to relax the rule in the case of a specially quick young man, or one who enlisted at 19. In such special cases I would allow the first examination to take place in from 6 months to a year, and the second in from one year to two. Similarly I would allow the third examination for a 1st class soldier to be held in special cases between three years and four.

Classes similar to those provided for in the General Service Army should also be established for the Auxiliary Forces, but in their case longer periods of service would be necessary before examinations were held, and the pay to accompany a badge need not be so high.

As a rule, the whole of "recruit training" should be conducted in Military Schools established in dépôts or elsewhere. In case where a certain number of recruits had to be trained in regiments or battalions, they should be kept apart, and not be allowed to do ordinary duty until their course was complete.

Eventually, when the system of physical training is adopted as part of the ordinary instruction in elementary Schools in Great Britain, a boy would practically, without knowing it, commence then to learn discipline. This learning he would carry on, at the same time as boy's work, in a Boys' Brigade or the Cadet Corps of a public school; and, when eventually he elected to join one or other of the branches which form the British Army, he would find a recruit's course comparatively easy, and would soon be fit to pass the examination, and win the badges of a trained soldier.

I will not now go into the question of military schools. It is evident that they must be similar to other teaching institutions, and that those who teach must not only know what has got to be learnt, but be able to impart that knowledge to others. But I propose to say a few words in regard to training in battalions and other units, where the 2nd class soldier must be taught theoretically and practically all that is required to enable him to qualify for the 1st class, and where all hands have to keep up the knowledge they have acquired, and maintain themselves in a fit condition for a rapid war.

The question of training, which is really the life of the soldier in time of peace, is so all-important, not only as it affects recruiting, but in its power to produce an efficient Army, and also in its effect on the whole population of the country, that I must say rather more about it than I have said about the other subjects that I have been dealing with.

It must be evident to all who have studied the subject, that for a volunteer Army, the power to obtain recruits will be very much affected by the life that men live in barracks in time of peace. It

is but natural that a young man, thinking of enlisting, should ask those of his "chums," who have already served, what sort of life they lead at home and abroad; what work they do; what amusements they can count on; and what they gain in the way of facility for employment when they return to civil life. A country lad, failing to get a satisfactory answer to these questions, would either cast about again and see if he could not get any advance on the wages he was then receiving, or would migrate to London, or some other big city, with the view of finding out for himself whether the higher wages he could earn there were enough compensation for the country pleasures he would have to give up. But, whether he stays in the country or goes to the town, failure to get on as quickly as he had anticipated, or the love of adventure and the desire to see foreign lands, induce a good many Anglo-Saxon lads to take the shilling, especially when the terms of enlistment are short.

I will now consider briefly his life after he has joined. Of what does it consist? And can it, at the same time, be made sufficiently acceptable to recruits to enable us to fill our ranks? On a satisfactory solution of these questions depends the success or failure of the voluntary system.

But, before going into particulars, let me say a word or two in regard to "work" in the abstract. I have often been met by the argument that the recruit in the British Army objects to work, that his chief object in enlisting is to escape from it, and that if you give him more to do than he likes, he will desert, and prevent others from coming in. Granted that "how to work" is one of the things that you have to teach a recruit, the question seems to be: cannot you do so in an intelligent and methodical manner, so that the young man may appreciate what is being done? And cannot you, at the same time, provide him with sufficient amusement to make his life, on the whole, a pleasanter one than it has been hitherto?

Boys and girls of all temperaments are taught in our elementary schools; and I see no reason why men cannot be taught in Army classes. Again, in regard to work, the most popular regiments are certainly not those in which there is the least to do. The hardest worked ones are notoriously the cavalry, the field artillery, and the engineers, and for these there is seldom or ever any lack of recruits. I believe that work itself is not distasteful to the soldier when it is regulated properly. But what men, old and young, hate, is what they call being "humbugged about"; that is to say, being taken, at uncertain hours, to do unnecessary duties. I have often seen an infantry sergeant-major go into recreation rooms or canteens, after ordinary working hours, in order to sweep up a few men to do some fatigue work, the need for which was not foreseen when orders were given out in the morning. This system, or rather want of system, is particularly distasteful to men, and should never be resorted to except in case of a fire or a riot.

At one time in my Army service, when I was particularly interested in infantry training, I collected some details showing how recruits and trained soldiers were usually occupied throughout an ordinary working day, in an ordinary English barrack, and the information thus acquired was most instructive. (See Appendix III.)

Let us now consider in detail what a soldier has to do after he has enlisted. It may be said that his life is made up of the work that he has to perform in return for the pay he receives; the relaxation

that he can obtain in out-of-work hours; and the training that he can get to fit him for employment when he returns to civil life. Of course the first business of a young man as soon as he has taken up, whether for a short or long period, the profession of arms, is to make himself fit for the duties of a soldier. To do this, he must be strong and active, able to carry a rifle and ammunition, and such articles of campaigning kit as may be required for a march of 12 to 20 miles, and then be fit either to fight a battle, or to watch the enemy as an outpost sentry through the hours of night. Then he must be a good rifle shot, and proficient in the use of the bayonet; he must know how to handle pick and shovel; and he must be able to carry out without hesitation the military exercises that put him in a position to use his arms with best effect. He should also know those campaigning accomplishments which tend to keep him in health and strength during the stress of war. Finally, he must learn the lessons of implicit obedience to those placed over him, and of cheerful endeavour to do his best in whatever circumstances he may find himself; in fact, the lessons that we call "discipline."

Let us assume that an English lad, living in the suburbs of one of our rapidly growing towns, who has been carefully taught in one of our elementary schools, makes up his mind to enlist in order to see something of the world. In these latter days he would have learned physical exercises, and he would probably have played occasionally in a rough and ready way at cricket and football, so that his sinews would be in good order. His age for enlistment would be eighteen, and he must be qualified to pass the necessary medical examination. In what time can he be made thoroughly efficient so as to take his place in the ranks of a marching regiment? and what should be the process of his military education?

All who know anything of education are aware that the whole time at disposal cannot be devoted to instruction alone in order to get the most out of a student; his interest must be kept up, he must never be allowed to get "stale," and he must continually feel that he is improving. And, in order to effect this, the subjects of instruction must be diversified; no exercise, mental or physical, must be inordinately long; there must be intervals for relaxation; the hours for food and rest must be regulated, and the diet carefully thought out. The same system must be carried out, the same thought given to the subject in the case of the soldier. There must be times for physical work, times for mental instruction, times for amusement, and times for rest and food. Bearing this in mind, and taking into consideration what a soldier should know if he is to be really efficient, I think that two years, as a rule, should be reckoned on as required to turn the country lad of 18 into the trained soldier of 20.

During these two years there would not be time for special instruction in any trade or calling that would be of use to him in after life. Such instruction must be given to men as soon as they have passed an examination as a trained soldier, and are fit to perform ordinary duties.

Under the present system of infantry training, recruits are, in the first instance, sent to regimental depôts. The course laid down there for men that belong to the Regular Army is supposed to take 2½ months. But to do it properly would take about a year. As a matter of fact, at many depôts very little is taught because of the frequent demands to make up the strength of the home battalions.

On joining these latter, young men are usually treated as if they had only just enlisted, quite irrespective of any previous training they may have received, the argument being that they must learn their drill in the way in which it is taught in that particular battalion. Then the great object is to pass them as quickly as possible through such exercises as must be learned before they can take their turn of guard and other duties. The rest of the knowledge that should be acquired by a soldier is picked up, in some battalions well and quickly, in others indifferently and slowly, according to the system that exists in the regiment to which the battalion belongs. When the young soldier reaches the age of 20, he is considered available for service in India, and usually forms part of a draft to replenish the service battalion at that station, or in one of our Colonies.

I feel sure that a great many regimental officers will agree with me that there is plenty of room for improvement in what I have called the "Life of the Soldier," that is to say, his occupation while he is wearing his Majesty's uniform.

I have already indicated what a recruit has to learn in order to turn him into a trained soldier. But, before continuing my remarks on the occupations of a soldier in time of peace, I think I ought to clear away a misconception that I have occasionally found to exist in regard to the meaning of the word "training." When we talk about training a soldier, we mean, no doubt, getting him into the best possible condition for war. But the process is not the same as it is with a racehorse, or even with a prize-fighter. Our soldier must not only be strong in body, and able to stand hardships without losing vigour, but he must be clear-sighted, and able to carry out all military exercises with judgment and decision. Consequently we must take care that his course of training is as continuous and as thorough as possible. I have often seen squads of recruits that were getting on splendidly at their gymnastics and their musketry, broken up in order to swell the ranks of a battalion at brigade and divisional exercises. This may have given some practice to staff and commanding officers, but it did not teach the private in the ranks anything whatever.

I have said that, interspersed with the physical and mental training of the soldier, there must be fixed periods of relaxation. All who know anything of education will agree in this. It remains to consider what it should consist of, and how it can best be provided.

For myself the memory of the healthy exercise and splendid training of mind and body gained in the cricket and football fields at a great public school pre-dispose me in favour of those noble games. No barracks should be considered complete without ground in the close vicinity suitable for this kind of recreation; and it should be the business of military instructors to encourage men to play, rather than simply to look on and bet. Ball games, such as fives and quoits, should also be made possible. Then all barracks should be provided with dining-rooms, shower-baths, and miniature ranges, not to mention sufficient recreation rooms for reading and indoor games. But all these things are already recognised, and no doubt will be provided in full as soon as the distribution of the troops is finally settled.

The hours for meals and for sleep must be carefully thought out, and laid down in the general time-table. They will vary in different climates. In regard to meals, I have always thought that the arrangements in barracks should be as similar as possible to what they must be in the field, *i.e.*, an early breakfast, a light meal in the middle of

the day, and the heavy meal when the day's work is over. There are, I know, many opinions in regard to this. But I can't help thinking that its adoption would keep men from going out too often into the neighbouring town, and would prevent a good deal of drink and its attendant crime.

It remains to say a few words about the occupation, other than military training or relaxation, that should be provided for the trained soldier in time of peace, and I think I can't do better than quote from a private memorandum that I issued in 1892 in the Western District on the training and employment of infantry. The suggestions therein made were very well received at the time, and a good deal of interest was shown by commanding officers and others in trying to carry them out.

The proper training and employment of soldiers is, without doubt, one of the most important military questions that has to be faced. If men are well and profitably employed, crime and disease diminish, pay is economised, a feeling of improvement is set up, and they are contented and happy. Moreover, when they return to civil life, employers are willing to take them with no other recommendation than the record on their discharge certificates—and thus the Service becomes popular in the country.

The most important employment for a soldier, and the first to be considered, is, what will make him fit for the duties of war? To be fit for active service a soldier must be strong and vigorous in body and mind; he must know such exercises as are required to enable him to use his arms with full effect; and he must be properly disciplined. The way in which this result is brought about is by employing him in the exercises that we call drill, in gymnastics and manœuvres, and in barrack room occupation, such as cleaning his arms and accoutrements, etc. Now, it cannot be denied that these employments, vary them as you will, are somewhat monotonous in the infantry. In the cavalry, looking after the horses affords considerable interest, and varies the ordinary routine. In the artillery, the work with the guns and stores gives plenty of occupation, and in the Administrative Services there is usually enough for all hands to do. But in the infantry, when the day's drills are over, in many regiments at one o'clock, nothing remains for the men to do except to walk out in the streets of the nearest town. Now, drills and exercises by themselves are hardly enough to keep a man in condition for war; and they only fit him for civil life in as far as they inculcate in him habits of obedience, tidiness, and cleanliness. Hence it is necessary to try and find something else for him to do. Other occupations can be found in the regimental shops, in gardens, in such work as that of clerks or officers' servants, in what is called garrison "employ," such as labour in the ordnance stores, or the R.E. yard, in orderly work, fatigues, etc.

I am aware that these occupations are much decried. Commanding officers frequently say "they don't know where their men are, they are all on garrison employ or regimental fatigues." But I believe that all these occupations are of advantage if properly controlled and done at regular hours, so as not to interfere with the more military employment first mentioned.

There is room, too, I believe, for occasional sports, and these are beneficial if kept under proper control.

I will now suggest for consideration one or two points in regard to the method of organising employment in a battalion of infantry.

*a.* Establish a *time-table*. Without this it would be impossible to work any of the manufactories or public schools, whose management has made England famous; and without it I am sure it must be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to work such a complicated machine as a regiment.

*b.* Take care that whatever work is done shall be carried out thoroughly, and not in a half-hearted way, otherwise it is of no use as a means of training; and don't let any one occupation last too long.

*c.* Let every man know beforehand what he has got to do throughout the day.

*d.* Establish certain days for particular drills and exercises, as far as possible, and regular hours for payments, inspection of kits, and other routine duties.

*e.* Let only good men, who know their military work, be employed at any special occupation where extra pay or any advantage results.

*f.* Let all men, however employed, take their turn of guards, and such drills and duties as are considered necessary; otherwise, those who do the guards and duties are discontented.

*g.* Let all special fatigues, as far as possible, be done in the afternoons, and then be done regularly under non-commissioned officers detailed for the duty, and supervised by the captain or subaltern on duty. Fatigues to clean empty barrack rooms and accessories, to weed and roll parades, and do other necessary work about the barracks, could, at all events, be always done in the afternoons; and they could be done at regular fixed hours by the balance of men who are not otherwise employed. This occupation would then correspond with evening stables in the cavalry and artillery.

*h.* No one should be allowed to leave barracks until a regular fixed hour—that is to say, until the day's work is supposed to be over.

In regard to the drills and exercises which, as I have already stated, must form the first and most important part of the training of a soldier, I would make the following suggestions:—

Go through the drill books, and lay down in orders, each week, or periodically, what is to be done, and who are to be the instructors. Arrange that all young men shall have one short physical drill or gymnastic exercise daily.

Have a commanding officer's parade at least twice a week, and make it a rule that every man in the battalion, however employed, attends at one or other of them.

When the men parade in marching order, do a few exercises with arms, and at the double, to test the fit of the accoutrements.

Do all possible to obtain suitable ground on which to carry out the various company and battalion exercises; and bear in mind that, on the march to and from any ground at a distance, a good deal can be done in the way of instruction and training. A slack march is worse than useless, but a carefully ordered and well conducted one is a good lesson for all ranks, and a training for mind as well as body. It is no doubt the case, that a good deal of what I have recommended in these remarks is already done in regiments. Still, there may be some points in which improvement is possible, and these are the points that I commend for careful consideration. I should like all officers and non-commissioned officers to be impressed with the feeling that there is no duty so honourable, and at the same time so responsible, as the charge and training of men. There may, now and then, be a sense of monotony in incessantly repeating the same task. But this mono-

tony is nothing to what exists in many other professions, and by a careful arrangement of the time-table, and a proper distribution of responsibility, it may be reduced to a minimum.

### *Mobilisation.*

In the preceding pages I have given my opinion regarding what we should do to obtain men under a voluntary system for the British Army. I have shown how the soldiers of that Army ought to be equipped for war, and how they should be organised to enable them to use their arms with the greatest effect. I have also dealt with the question of the distribution and training of our troops in time of peace so that they may be able to respond at once to any calls that the Empire may make on them in time of war. It now only remains to explain how they can best be prepared when war threatens. But in this connection I may mention that in every phase of the subject I have kept to the fore the all-important question of preparation for war. For I felt that, unless this was done, there was danger that when the machine was wanted it would not work.

In dealing with distribution I have explained how, for purposes of training as well as of administration, the British Isles must be divided into military districts. In these districts will be found the various units that make up the divisions and army corps of a field army, and to the generals and staff of these districts the duty would devolve of seeing that every unit is fit to undergo the hardships of war. The concentration for summer drills of small bodies such as brigades could usually be arranged for in districts. But the concentration of larger bodies which would necessitate the co-operation of two or more districts, would have to be ordered from headquarters. This has its advantages, because it is good practice for our Intelligence Branch at the War Office to have to organise them, and to detail the necessary staff.

While on this subject I may mention that to maintain in districts a larger staff than is necessary, is not only a useless expenditure, but an absolutely harmful one. For it gets officers into the habit of leaning on others instead of thinking for themselves, with the result that there is much writing, and considerable obstruction and delay in carrying on the work. In time of war there are many local duties to perform that are not required in peace, such as the intelligence work, the care of the wounded and sending forward reinforcements, re-organisations rendered necessary by changes in plans, the administration of occupied country, not to mention the arrangements for working railways and telegraph lines, and those incident to the constantly changing requirements of supply and transport. Now all this necessitates a large staff at, or near, army headquarters, and at certain points on the line of communications, and at the base. On the other hand, in districts in time of peace there is the never-ceasing work of looking after the training of the troops.

Without doubt a good staff policy should take care that district staffs are not too big. But, at the same time, a considerable number of officers should be attached to our Intelligence Branch at Headquarters, and as many as possible of these should be employed in surveys and other special work under the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office. Others should obtain temporary employment during

the summer at small or big manœuvres, where the staff should be formed as if for war, and perform, as far as possible, war duties. The Intelligence Branch should, of course, keep a careful record of all the officers who might be useful in time of war, so that there would be no delay then in filling up the appointments.

I will now take up the immediate subject of this portion of my article, viz., Mobilisation.

Literally, mobilisation signifies to make movable. But it has been taken to apply to the whole process by which a peace army is changed into a war one, i.e., completing the various existing units with men, horses, and stores, and creating any further units that are not kept up in peace time.

The regulations for mobilisation, issued in 1904, are, to my mind, well suited for the somewhat peculiar circumstances of the British Army. The proposals I have made would not alter them in principle, so I will confine myself to explaining, a little more in detail than I have hitherto done, the Scheme of Defence for the British Isles, and show how the Army can take up with the least possible disturbance of the country's labour-market, the duties of war.

The Scheme of Defence for the British Isles depends on naval considerations.

I have already, under the heading of Distribution, assumed certain conditions to guide the distribution of the troops in the United Kingdom in time of peace. I will assume these same conditions as the basis on which to build a Scheme of Defence. The actual conditions can only be laid down by the Government of the day, on the advice of the Council of Defence, and I am glad to feel that this Council is now really an imperial one, and therefore, one likely to steer clear of party politics.

Briefly, the conditions are:—

1. A field force held ready at short notice for an expedition abroad in concert with the fleet.
2. A similar field force to take the place of the first when it has left the country.
3. Garrisons for our naval stations at home.
4. Supports for the naval coast-guard.
5. Reserves to maintain and reinforce British white troops in India, and in our naval coaling and repairing stations abroad.
6. Troops to maintain and strengthen the field force, or act elsewhere if the Empire is in need of them.

I assume that the field force 1. should be composed entirely of Regulars, and that it should consist of 6 infantry divisions, organised as I have suggested, and 2 cavalry divisions, and line of communication troops for a line of communications by road, railway, and river, of 100 miles in length.

This would be practically 2 army corps. In order to enable it to be used rapidly, before the Reserves were called out, one of these should be maintained at war strength. The other might be of lower strength, to be made up from the Reserves. The staff for this Force should all be named, and the officers warned. They should be called out, and put in their places at the annual exercises, or manœuvres.



The stores should all be ready, located either at the stations of the troops, or at the ports of embarkation, from which they would depart.

It has already been laid down that all war stores in our Army should be of such sizes and shapes that they can be used with pack transport if required. One of the divisions should practise annually with pack transport, to test the fitting of saddles and straps, etc., and to enable the men to become acquainted with their peculiarities. We should thus be prepared, at all events, with patterns, for a war in which pack transport was necessary, as well as one in which wheel transport could be used. The latter, of course, would be used whenever possible, because it is much the most economical.

The second field force should be similar to the first, but it should be taken mainly from the Militia. The stores might at first be on a home scale, but all arrangements for their completion to full war requirements should be thought out beforehand, so that there would be no delay in preparing the force for war, if they were required to go abroad in addition to the first.

The garrisons for our naval stations at home require carefully going into. Each one has to be worked out in accordance with the local Scheme of Defence, when the latter has been modified to agree with the Scheme of Defence of the whole country. I think that, with the exception of a portion of the artillery and engineers, which might be Militia, the whole of these garrisons might be supplied from local Volunteers, especially if the organisation that I have proposed (the company one) be adopted. Volunteer battalions should be organised in multiples of three, and should be prepared to put into garrison, at short notice, and maintain there, a third of their companies. The battalions might be brigaded for administrative purposes, as may be found most convenient locally.

In the earlier part of this lecture, I said that each Volunteer corps should have a "service" section ready to reinforce the Regular battalion, or other unit to which it was affiliated. The strength of the section that could be guaranteed by each corps, and the way in which they could best be grouped together must be carefully considered locally. No doubt the double-company organisation that I have proposed would make the application of the arrangement more satisfactory than it was in the South African War. It will be necessary to settle the extra grant per head of the section, and to lay down the qualifications. The fact of a corps having a certain number of soldiers willing to be formed into a section or company for active service abroad, need not interfere with the Volunteers carrying out the duty of garrisoning our naval fortresses at home, or supporting our naval coast-guardsmen. They would not be called upon to furnish the reinforcements to the Regulars unless the war we were engaged in was a serious one, beyond the power of our ordinary field forces to cope with. When, eventually, the service sections left the country, their places would have to be taken by Volunteer Reserves, or fresh Volunteer enlistments. The staff and other details for each garrison would be worked out in the Scheme of Defence. The equipment for troops in home garrisons could be a modified one. But personal equipment should be the same in garrison as in the field, so that the individual soldier could be made available for any duty that might be required of him.

A few words on the subject of supports for the naval coast-guard. Anyone who has visited the coasts of Great Britain knows that at

every point, guarding every landing-place, there is a small naval force on shore. From morning to night these coast-guardsmen are sweeping the horizon with their glasses. They know what every passing vessel is about, and to what nation it belongs. They are continually on the alert, in peace time to protect us from smugglers, in war time from inimical raiders. But in war time they might require, now and then, some assistance to enable them to carry out their duty; and so I propose to detail supports to them from local Volunteers and local Yeomanry. These troops could be worked in the same way as I have suggested for the home garrisons, viz., by providing one-third of their numbers at a time. The Scheme for the whole coast will have to be worked out in districts, in consultation with the local naval authority, or by a special committee. The result that I would aim at would be to form a series of outposts round our coasts in strength proportionate to the work that might have to be done. In each case the naval coast-guardsmen would be the eyes of the outposts, and upon them it would rest to summon all, or a portion of the supports whenever they thought it necessary. Should a raid ever be made of sufficient strength to drive in an outpost, the latter would have its line of retreat on its Reserve, which would be placed in a central position. The outpost Reserve might then either resist the raid, or, if thought necessary, retire towards the nearest fortress. Any further dealing with the raid would be the business of the field army.

The troops that we require to maintain and reinforce the white troops in India, and in our naval repairing stations abroad, must be Regulars. They can be supplied by drafts from battalions and other units, the latter being made up to war strength when required, by calling out the Reserves; or they can be supplied from special dépôts.

There are advantages and disadvantages in either system. Without going into the arguments, I offer the following as a solution of the difficulty:—

The drafts for all cavalry at home and abroad to be sent direct from dépôts; the regiments at home, except those in the first cavalry division, being maintained at a lower strength, and made up from the Army Reserve on the threat of war. The same plan to be adopted generally for the artillery and the engineers. In the case of the infantry, both systems should, I think, be kept going. Battalions in India which do not take recruits until they are 20 years of age, should be supplied with drafts of trained soldiers from battalions kept at certain stations at home. The same arrangement should be made for battalions at our naval bases abroad, where they might be considered as on their way to or from India. In time of war these training battalions could be made up to war strength from the Reserves, and form the nucleus of a third field force.

Battalions of the first field force, which it is proposed to hold in hand in England for rapid action in connection with the Navy, should be supplied with trained soldiers, or partially trained recruits from specially organised military schools like those of the Guards at Caterham, or of the Rifles at Winchester. The same arrangement should be made for battalions sent temporarily abroad, which is now the case in Egypt and South Africa. These battalions would, for purposes of organisation, be considered to belong to the first field force.

In working out the relief of battalions abroad, the change in the system of supplying drafts will have to be borne in mind.

Lastly, we should have the Militia that we possess, in addition to the second field force, to make up the third, or even, if thought necessary, a fourth field force, similar to those already described. But whatever strength is decided on by the Government for the British Army, the central mobilisation branch must have a scheme for forming the various arms into divisions, and equipping them with all the necessary stores.

There would still be the Militia Reserve to supply drafts, and as a general support to the Army.

### *Conclusion.*

To sum up the recommendations that I have made in this lecture :

1. Physical training, not necessarily for Army purposes, but for the benefit of the race, should be a part of the curriculum at all elementary schools in the British Isles.

Moreover, the history taught in the same schools, with a view to promote and foster feelings of patriotism in the rising generation, should draw special attention to all noble deeds that have tended to make the Empire what it is.

2. Boys' Brigades and Cadet Corps should be encouraged by inspections in military districts, and by a carefully prepared scale of assistance rendered out of War Office funds.

3. Enlistment, as described under the heading *How to Get Men*, should commence at the age of 18. The conditions should be as free as possible; that is to say, the terms should, within limits, be short, so that a man can readily return to civil occupations if he can find employment; but at the same time, if he fails to obtain other employment, or prefers a soldier's life, he should be allowed to continue in military service until he has earned a pension.

4. Personal equipment for war should be designed on scientific principles, and should be frequently worn to accustom men to its use.

It would be well, I think, having settled what articles a soldier should carry in war, and what are the conditions of a good equipment, to offer a prize large enough to attract the constructive ingenuity of the nation. We might then obtain something better than other nations have got, instead of the reverse.

5. Infantry organisation should be modified to enable full advantage to be taken of the changes brought about by improved firearms in modern tactics.

In working out a new organisation, the principal point to observe is to stop duplication of duties, so as to ensure that every officer and non-commissioned officer shall have a distinct responsibility from the time he starts. For thus only can you train men in time of peace, and make it safe to decentralise command in time of war.

6. In working out a system of training, the difference between recruit training and training for a field soldier should be fully recognised.

In order to make training a reality, soldiers should be divided into three classes, viz.:—Recruits or third class, trained soldiers or second class and first class. The latter should include all scouts and non-commissioned officers. A physical and mental examination should be required for promotion in each class, and promotion should carry with it extra pay and a badge.

*Recruit training* should be carried out in military schools at depôts and elsewhere. *Field training* in battalions and other units. The whole routine of education and training in battalions, which is the life of the soldier in peace, must be systematised and made happy and useful.

7. A Scheme of Defence, based on the general Scheme of Defence for the Empire, should be prepared for the British Isles. For only by so doing will the whole business of Army Government be able to be seen in its true proportions. And only then can the machinery for the administration and training of all our various troops, at home and abroad, be properly set up, and efficiently worked.

## APPENDIX I.

### FIELD SERVICE BLANKETS.

For many years, dating from the experience gained in the campaigns under Wellington in the Peninsula, there were two blankets in the British Army: a field service one, which was only made as large as was necessary to keep the soldier warm in camp or bivouac, and a barrack one for use on a barrack bed. The latter was much larger and heavier than the former. But in time of peace it occurred to some would-be reformer that it would tend very much to simplify accounts if there were only one pattern instead of two, and the field service blanket was abolished. I wonder whether the transport officers in South Africa, who had such difficulty in keeping up the supplies of food and ammunition, ever realised the extra amount of weight that this one little "reform" imposed on them, or the cost to the country of all the extra transport that it entailed.

## APPENDIX II.

### THE GREAT-COAT.

A few words in regard to one of the indispensable articles of a soldier's kit, viz., the great-coat, which is required to keep a man warm in camp or bivouac.

The following information regarding it was sent to me during the fighting in South Africa, in answer to the questions: Is the great-coat good, or is it too heavy? Would a lighter one of better material and warmer be an advantage?

*Answer:* "I don't think the great-coat good; it is still too heavy, and men would rather go through the chilly early mornings shivering than have to carry their coats on the march. It is also not large enough, I mean in breadth. It ought to be able to be put on like a cape over everything, accoutrements and all, so that a man on piquet simply throws off his coat and is in fighting kit. I suggest a coat of better material than the present one, and thicker, but shorter. Some of the King's Royal Rifles from India have a very good one; it looks like a covert coat, but is slightly longer; it is lined with flannel, and is very broad."

If ever the Aldershot Dress and Equipment Committee have again to take up the question of the pattern of the great-coat for dismounted men, I recommend them to give up attempting to make one coat answer

for two purposes. It can never be made light enough to be carried easily on the line of march, and yet be a real protection in the night bivouac if it has also to serve as a watch-coat for a sentry on guard over an English palace. Every soldier should be provided with a coat suitable for war, and every guard-room should contain sufficient watch-coats for the sentries that it mounts.

### APPENDIX III.

I will take an instance from the notes I made at the time, because it shows what the soldier means when he says he is "humbugged about." A battalion, the name of which I forget, returned from foreign service, and came to take up its quarters in one of the Devonport barracks, when I was in command of the Western District. This battalion was not in as good order as the others at the station, and it was specially watched by the staff.

Among other peculiarities, it was noticed that the men were roused from their beds two hours earlier than there was any occasion for; and, having nothing to do, they used to sit shivering on the edges of their bedsteads (for it was the depth of winter), and no doubt cursing pretty freely the system that allowed them to undergo such useless discomfort. I need hardly add that it did not take long to abolish this custom, and turn the curse into a blessing.

Colonel W. T. DOONER (Late Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers):—The time at the disposal of each speaker is so short that I must go to my points at once, and therefore I will not lose a moment in making any preliminary observations. I think we are all deeply indebted to Sir Richard Harrison for coming here to-day and giving us this excellent lecture, and I hope I am voicing your opinions when I say that he has probably done well in looking at any future organisation of the Army from the stand-point of the voluntary system and not from any compulsory method of enlistment. Sir Richard Harrison recognises apparently, as I do, that any form of compulsory service, even for home defence, has not as yet come within the range of practical politics. I think if you study any address made by any Member of Parliament to his constituents, you will find that the subject is never referred to. No candidate for Parliament ever ventures to touch on this subject of conscription, and I think the people of these islands are against it. Sir Richard Harrison apparently does not think that any form of compulsion is necessary at present. He says: "Let us first do what we can to train all the men we get under the voluntary system, and let us do everything possible to encourage the patriotic spirit of the country." I think if we do that it will accomplish all we require. In any consideration of this question of compulsory service, it is necessary also to consider the extra expense. The Secretary of State for War, as you are probably all aware, said in Parliament that he wondered if any gentleman who argued in favour of conscription had considered what the extra expense to the State would be, and then made the calculation that it would cost an extra sum of 26 millions a year. This calculation was incorrect; Mr. Arnold-Forster seems to have made his calculation on the principle of giving every conscript a clear shilling a day, but our present soldiers do not receive a clear shilling a day on enlistment; and that is the reason, I think, that the voluntary system has never been

given a fair and proper trial. I had much to do with recruiting as a commanding officer for ten years, so I hope you will recognise that I probably know something about what I am saying. When the men go up to the pay table for their first payment (and Mr. Arnold-Forster has pointed it out many times, and the greatest credit is due to him for having done so), they only receive some four shillings weekly. Do you think that the voluntary system, when the men are given such pay and emoluments as that, has been given a fair trial? I do not. There are many other arguments against compulsory service which should be borne in mind. Volunteers for active service are always to be preferred to pressed men, and we have all read of what went on in Russia, in connection with the mobilisation of reservists. In Russia any man who volunteers to serve his country is looked upon with suspicion; happily with us it is different, and the volunteer is looked upon, I hope, as one of the most patriotic men in the country. It is the same in Japan. The first point that Sir Richard mentioned, to which I wish to refer, was with regard to the terms of enlistment. It is not of very great importance within reason what the terms are, whether eight years with the colours and four with the reserve, or, as Mr. Arnold-Forster changed it, to nine with the colours and three with the reserve. Of the two, what Sir Richard Harrison proposes is the better, and for this reason, that eight years with the colours will give a man four years in the reserve, and the reserve will not be depleted; but if the men run to nine years, as they do now, there will possibly be a grave deficiency hereafter in the reserve. The men who are enlisting now for nine years will only have three years in the reserve when they leave the colours, if they leave the colours at all, about which I have some doubt. Hereafter very many of them will be tempted to stay, and will stay. When they fully realise that they have given up nine years of their life to the Army, they will naturally say:—"I will try and go on for pension," and the reserves will be decreased very much thereby. Eight years with the colours and four years in the reserve, proposed by Sir Richard Harrison, is probably the best plan; seven years with the colours and five years with the reserve, proposed by Lord Cardwell, was, perhaps, better still, but in that case there was always a clause in the Attestation Paper that a man could be kept an extra year if, at the completion of his service, he was serving abroad. As practically ninety-nine men out of every hundred were serving abroad when they completed their service, they were kept for the extra year. Therefore, what really happened was, that all the men served eight years with the colours and four years with the reserve, the term proposed by the lecturer. Sir Richard Harrison has suggested several different classes of soldiers, but I think with our system it would be an impossibility for the officers, to really do justice to the men, because the latter first serve at the depot and are then transferred to the home battalion, and before we could probably classify them fairly they are sent on to the foreign battalion, and then it would devolve on the officers of their new battalion to classify those men without knowing very much about them. Having different classes of soldiers with our system is, I venture to think, a mistake. Sir Richard Harrison mentioned that the men should be kept only five years abroad. That would be an improvement, but will cause expense. If, however, it is adopted, a system of seven years' service with the colours would be sufficient. The regulations already lay down that all men who wish to return home can register their names and return home on the completion of six years; but as the term of enlistment up to quite recently

was only seven years, this regulation could seldom take effect as the great majority of men enlist at eighteen, and cannot be sent to India till they are 20 years of age. It would only apply in the case of men who had extended their service; the others came home as a matter of course for transfer to the reserve. There is one proposal mentioned in the paper we have heard read, which I hope I shall be able to enlist your sympathies to prevent its being carried out. I gather that Sir Richard is in favour of large special depôts for the infantry. I think he mentioned that the recruits were to be kept there for two years, and then went on to say that the present small depôts could not possibly keep the men for so long, and therefore I conclude large depôts must be intended. There are so many arguments against this system for the infantry that I fear I shall not have time to touch upon them all. I do not think, however, there is one officer who has ever commanded a regiment and regimental district who would be in favour of having large depôts—depôts of five or six territorial regiments put together into one barracks. Sir Richard Harrison belongs to that distinguished corps, the Royal Engineers. He goes down to Brompton, Chatham, and sees his corps together in one barracks; a very excellent and proper arrangement. Similarly the Secretary of State goes to Walmer or Eastney, and sees the Royal Marine Light Infantry and the Royal Marine Artillery each in one barracks. Or, perhaps, he goes to the Guards at Caterham, or to the Rifles at Winchester. But these depôts all belong to distinct corps, they are not mixed one with the other. The Green Jackets have been practically always a corps; so are also the Royal Engineers and the Guards; but with regard to the rest of the infantry, what is the proposal? Let us take the West Kent Regiment at Maidstone; the Buffs at Canterbury; the Queen's at Guildford; the Sussex at Chichester; and the Royal Fusiliers at Hounslow. It is suggested to put them together into one barracks at the latter place, and if this is done, I can only say that the *esprit de corps* of the Army will be set at naught and ruined. Or, let us cross to Ireland and take a case from there. The Inniskilling Fusiliers; the Irish Fusiliers; the Irish Rifles; and the Dublin Fusiliers, green coats and red coats, would all be moved up to Belfast and quartered together, if this scheme of large depôts is persisted in; and as Mr. Arnold-Forster said yesterday evening at Croydon, he had not changed his opinions one iota, it is presumed that this unwise scheme will be carried out. All who have served in and love their regiment, and know what *esprit de corps* means, will shudder to think of such a system. It would be only a return to what was in force forty years ago at Chatham, when there were depôt battalions, as some officers before me may remember—I remember it well, because I served with one—when there were some eight or ten depôts in one barracks. I am, perhaps, addressing some parents here who have sons who are contemplating entering the Army. May I recommend to you, if your son is successful in his examination, to see that he is not led into joining one of these mixed depôts, but take care that he gets to the home battalion at once. In this connection I would like to quote the opinion of those two distinguished field-marsals, Lord Wolseley and Sir Evelyn Wood. They were both against these large depôts that Sir Richard Harrison is apparently in favour of; they said they were not satisfactory training schools, and that the linked battalion system had been our salvation. There is one other point against these large depôts, and in favour of our present system, which is most important. I think the brightest spot

in our arrangements in the autumn of 1899 was the facility and quickness with which the Army was mobilised. The order for mobilisation allowed the men ten days to report themselves. I thought at the time that ten days was too long; but the result was, that the men in almost all cases reported themselves at their depôts on the ninth or tenth day. They were then transferred in batches of 100 to their battalion that was going out to South Africa, and within seven days they were on board ship, and on their way to the seat of war. Could any system be better or quicker? I venture to maintain that to interfere with an arrangement which produced such excellent results would be altogether wrong. The present territorial depôt system for mobilisation purposes is a splendid arrangement, and those who instituted it and brought it to such perfection deserve the thanks of their country. It was a great feat for the men to be transferred so quickly to the different battalions, clothed and equipped, and on board ship within one week of reporting themselves. What would happen now if these large depôts are established, say at Hounslow for the Buffs; the West Kents; the 2nd Queen's; the Sussex Regiment; and the Royal Fusiliers; or if the example I mentioned in Ireland was adopted, and that mobilisation was ordered? The reservists would be coming in, not in hundreds but in crowds, and it would be an impossibility to deal with them satisfactorily, and send them away to their home battalions. The mobilisation could not be efficiently carried out, and the cost of building suitable barracks would be enormous. Regarding the Militia, I would like to refer to Sir Richard Harrison's proposal, that the officers of the Regular Army should all join from the Military Colleges or the Universities. That is a very excellent idea if it can be carried out with due regard to the Militia, but many commanding officers of Regulars will agree with me that the officers who join their regiments from the Militia are very well educated. I venture to maintain that they run the Sandhurst cadet very close indeed. They are taught by men who are doing it to earn their bread—well-known instructors and tutors—and these Militia officers have to go through a most severe competitive examination before they can gain a commission. They, therefore, come to their battalions fit, or almost fit, to at once take their places. I should also like to ask what would have happened in 1899 if we had not had these Militia officers to fall back upon? The Regular battalions were very short of officers for active service—in some cases wanting nine or ten officers to complete them to war strength. Letters were sent round calling on the commanding officers of the Militia to recommend candidates for commissions in the Line. The candidates were officers who had failed possibly by a few marks in their examinations, but they came and took their places in the Regular battalions proceeding to South Africa, and I consider the Militia rendered us a noble service on that occasion. If I am not wearying you I would ask for a moment to refer to the Volunteers. Sir Richard has said that in the scheme of defence for the United Kingdom, the Volunteers should be three times the strength which will be required. I think it would be better if it was four times, and for this reason: that there are four battalions in a brigade, and I do not think the organisation should be different to the Line organisation. With regard to the expenses of the Volunteers, I suppose there are few in this room who are aware how the Volunteers are paid for the noble and patriotic service they give to the country. I came to learn this accidentally. The command of a battalion fell vacant, and there was some difficulty in finding a new C.O. The trouble was this, that every



battalion is paid the capitation grant yearly in arrear for their services. At the commencement of every financial year, on the 3rd or 4th April, they are paid the money for the year preceding, and the War Office sends them a cheque for services rendered during the previous year, ending the 31st March. They then have to pay all their expenses for the previous twelve months. The question then arises, how is the work to be carried on during the following year, on which they are just entering? Some corps have rich men who most liberally come forward and assist them, but the majority of corps have to go to their bankers and get an advance of £1,500 or £2,000, paying a considerable sum for the accommodation. So that an officer when he meditates assuming the command of a battalion, and finds he has to do all this, declines to accept the position. It is within my knowledge that many efficient officers have been lost to the Volunteers owing to this financial difficulty. Why cannot Volunteers be paid quarterly in arrear? Any over-payment can be easily remedied, as if a battalion was paid more than was justified by its strength the matter could be adjusted the following quarter, or at the end of the year when the returns are furnished. I beg to urge that the Volunteers should be treated with the greatest sympathy, and that this monetary anxiety should not be placed on the shoulders of commanding and senior officers. There are many other subjects I would like to refer to in the excellent lecture we have listened to, such as that organisation must give way to tactics, and not the reverse; also the number of officers in each double company proposed by Sir Richard Harrison appears to me too few. Do not forget what occurred to the Bavarians in 1870, when they had to be withdrawn from the fighting line owing to the lack of officers. In South Africa also the Inniskilling Fusiliers came out of action near Reiters Hill with only five officers. Many now lie on the Tugela Heights. My time has, however, expired, and I therefore conclude by thanking you for the very kind way in which you have listened to me.

Lieut.-Colonel ALSAGER POLLOCK (late Somersetshire Light Infantry):—Colonel Dooner has devoted himself principally to matters on which I had intended to speak, but as I have been called upon I will endeavour to say a few words, partly with reference to some of Colonel Dooner's remarks, and partly with reference to general questions involved by the subject of the lecture. I came here prepared to hear a great deal which would not only interest but instruct, and I think you will all agree that none of us have any reason to be disappointed on that score with the lecture which has been given to us. It was my privilege in years past to serve under Sir Richard Harrison's command, and I well recollect what a lively interest he always took in a subject which has always been a special hobby of my own, company training, though I need hardly say that his familiarity with the profession of which he has been for so long an ornament was not limited to such comparatively small affairs as that. In this lecture, however, I think a point has been omitted which is of very great importance. The Militia question has been alluded to but not dealt with. We have heard from Colonel Dooner that this country will not accept compulsory service. I think it may reasonably be assumed that nobody, unless compelled to do so, by duty or necessity, would accept anything that is disagreeable. I quite agree with Colonel Dooner that the voluntary system has not yet had every opportunity it might have had, and I am very willing to grant that it is possible to arrange for an

Army, upon a voluntary system of enlistment, which may be found large enough and good enough for our needs; but at the same time, I think we should be prepared to admit that if upon the contrary it be proved that we cannot get a satisfactory Army by voluntary methods, then unless we are to depart from our estate amongst the nations we must swallow the pill of compulsory service as best as we can. There are, as the lecturer has told us, two ways of getting soldiers, the one by voluntary enlistment, and the other by compulsory enlistment. I suppose we may take it as certain that for what Sir Edward Hutton has called the "Police of the Empire," that is to say, the Regular Army, we cannot for a moment dream of exercising compulsory recruitment. But if, on the other hand, it should be necessary, we can undeniably put in force the present law of the land now merely suspended, the Ballot Act; or adopt some other means of compelling the citizen to service his country in the Militia. I think there would be one very satisfactory feature connected with the adoption of compulsory service in this country, namely, that it would at least get hold of the "sleek citizen," who has never done a hand's turn in either the winning or the keeping of the Empire since this England was a nation. Why should the Empire be defended by the top and bottom strata of the social mass? Let the great middle classes take their turn, and shoulder their rifles. The Militia appears to me to provide, if it were properly treated, just that means of expansion for the purpose of a great war that we require. It is perfectly evident that the Army which must do the normal police work of the Empire, is the Regular Army, and we all know that for the recruitment of that Army compulsion is out of the question, for the simple reason that universal service, the only tolerable form of compulsion, would involve a vast amount of quite needless expense. Were we to exchange our military system for that of Germany or France, we should have a great many more soldiers than, in any circumstances, we could possibly require, and at the same time we should not have an Army to do that which everyday our Regular forces are required to do. Thus we come, I think, to this, that if we cannot provide for the expansion upon a Regular basis, we must provide for it by means of the Militia. If only we would make the conditions of service such that men in regular work could afford to join the ranks of the Militia, and that men practising in regular professions could afford to be officers in it, we could fill the Militia hand over fist in a very few months. How can you expect a man in regular work, in whatever position of life, to turn out upon a particular date for twenty-seven days' training at a stretch? It cannot be done. A militia-man, moreover, is never properly trained from the start to the finish of his service. He is "messed about," not *trained* at the dépôt for only six weeks, and the Regulations say that as soon as he has been there for one week he knows so much, and when he has been there two weeks so much more, and so on to the end of the chapter. Eventually he leaves, having learned thoroughly nothing whatever. The same objection applies to a great extent to the training of the Line recruit. In the majority of dépôts, not a vestige of real training is even attempted. I think I know something about it; I have had some experience. There are exceptions, of course. It is not the fault of the officers; the work has been nobody's business in particular. You could not expect the colonel to be in the square all day; and unless the major was made fully responsible, I am afraid that in the majority of regimental dépôts the work was neglected, what little was done consisting of drill only. There is a wide difference between drill and training,

and yet, at the same time, the two require to be dove-tailed, so that you may not bore the men by sticking for too long at a time to the one or the other. We should arrange our enlistment for the Militia on a system which will allow that when you get your recruit he shall forthwith be trained thoroughly, which, in my opinion, can be done in six months. Afterwards, adopt the Volunteer plan; let the men be trained locally—by companies—so many drills in the winter in the Corn Exchange or the Drill Hall, and in the summer months exercises on Saturday afternoons and during the long evenings. Pay the men for their attendances, and then we shall readily fill the ranks. But so long as we expect men to turn out on a fixed day for twenty-seven days, so long we will never get officers or men, except the few of the higher classes who have nothing to do, and the “wasters” and casual labourers of the lower.

General Sir R. BIDDULPH, G.C.B., G.C.M.G. (Colonel Commandant Royal Artillery) :—My object in rising is to say a few words with regard to the Militia, with which I have had something to do during my past career. The point to which I wish to draw attention is not so much the matter of enlistment referred to by the previous speakers, but the question which has been raised by the lecturer, of the formation of a field force of Militia for foreign service. The second field force, I think he said, which was to go abroad was to be Militia. If the Militia were an embodied force it would be another matter; but under their present organisation how could an effective field force be formed of Militia alone for foreign service? Have they got the training? Have they got the officers. That is the great difficulty. We must look back on the history of the Militia, which has been the backbone in many ways of the Army and of the defensive forces of the country. It is well known that in the Peninsular War the Militia were of the greatest service. The Duke of Wellington, in the last speech he made in the House of Lords, drew attention to the great value of the services they rendered to him in enabling him to carry out the policy of the country during the Peninsular War. But they did not serve in the war as Militia; militia-men were taken into the Line regiments. I ought perhaps to say that three provisional battalions of Militia were sent abroad in 1814. They landed at Bordeaux in May, were re-embarked there in June, and were disbanded two or three months later. If you will read Sir John Moore's “Life,” you will find that his celebrated Light Division, which he trained at Shorncliffe, was composed very largely of militia-men, who were drafted into the Regular regiments of the Line which formed the Light Division which he took abroad. In the same way, when we hear of so many militia-men being at Waterloo, that is perfectly true, but they were serving in the regiments of the Line. During the Crimean War an Act was passed authorising Militia regiments to serve in the Mediterranean with their own consent. They were again during the South African War sent abroad, but that was during a time of very great stress. From what I have been told, however—I was not in South Africa myself—the experience gained in connection with them was not such as would encourage the formation of a field force of Militia alone. Even at the time when the Militia was looked to for the defence of England, at the time when there was a threat of invasion, when the Duke of Wellington was alive, and when he wrote his famous letter to Sir John Burgoyne, the whole idea then was to raise 80,000 militia-men, but they were to be mixed with the Line for the field force in England. A field force in England is very different from a field force abroad; it is impossible to

compare a defensive field force in England with an offensive field force abroad. I therefore think it would be conveying a false impression to the people of this country if we let it go forth that we think a field force could be wisely formed of the Militia alone as it at present stands. It is not fair to the country to advocate such a policy. The great value of the Militia ought to be as a reserve to the Line; they should support the Line, and that was intended in the organisation of 1870. The report of General MacDougall's Committee is well worth reading. It is an excellent report, and the Committee pointed out clearly that our policy in war would be to decide what number of men we are able to put in the field; and secondly, to keep that number of men up to fighting strength the whole time; that you must put your best men into the field first—the very best men you have—because a success at the beginning shortens the war, and may possibly end it. Therefore, that point ought not to be lost sight of. It seems to me that, looking at the organisation of the Militia as it is at present, especially in connection with the officers, many of whom are professional men and cannot leave their work permanently, that something should be done in that connection. You remember what occurred in the Crimean War, how many of the officers of Militia had to resign their commissions because they could not get away from their business for two years, and were obliged to resign on that account. You cannot expect that in these days you will get a force adequately officered from such men. I therefore think the Militia should be looked upon as being a force which should be mixed with the Line regiments, and supply them with both officers and men as the occasion demands. I feel sure they would be most valuable and useful in that way. The question of the Militia I do not think has been sufficiently taken into consideration. People now talk about forming Militia divisions for the purpose of going abroad. I do not think that is an economic or satisfactory way of using the Militia. We should try and keep our forces abroad up to the highest possible state of efficiency; but we have to fill their ranks, and we also have to supply officers. The Duke of Wellington never fought in the Peninsular War without every battalion in the field being worked in that manner; that is to say, we had 2,000 trained officers and men to fight a battalion abroad of 1,000 men. When Lord Hardinge was examined before the Committee of the House of Commons in 1855, after the Crimean War, he stated in his evidence that the reason for all our difficulties was because we only had single battalions to send abroad, and no battalions at home to support them. In a memorandum written in 1851, he referred to the greater efficiency of the Guards because they were formed on a double battalion system. We had no difficulty with the Artillery, also because they were formed into one regiment, and we could select the men and officers for field service without restriction. During the war we could only supply the Infantry of the Line with recruits from the depôts, and that is the reason they are no good. Lord Raglan, when he was told he could have some more recruits, said he would rather be without them, because they only filled his hospitals. General MacDougall's Committee proposed in 1870, that directly a war broke out, the Militia should be embodied and should be continually supplying the battalions abroad, because the great object is to keep the Army in the field thoroughly supplied with men.

Colonel H. H. A. STEWART (late Donegal Artillery Militia):—The lecturer in his very able remarks spoke of the Militia recruit being trained during the winter months. As we are to have a voluntary Army—at all

events for the present—I think that if you train militia-men or any other men during the winter months they will get a very cold reception. I retain to this day the memory of the misery I endured as a young ensign in my regiment in the winter of 1860-61<sup>1</sup> at Devonport. The lecturer has written most excellently on individual soldiers being allowed to serve abroad for only five years. I think the principle might be extended to units; that is, batteries of Artillery, battalions of Infantry, and regiments of Cavalry should not be allowed to serve abroad for more than six years. We saw in the papers the other day that a battalion had come home after twenty years of foreign service. I think that is a scandal, and especially so in these days when the ends of the earth have been brought together. There is one observation of the gallant lecturer that seems to me a little obscure. He says that candidates for appointment as officers in the Militia should first have two years' training. If I correctly interpret the lecturer, I think that would be impossible of adoption. How are they going to be trained—as civilians, or what? I speak as having commanded a Militia regiment for seven or eight years, and I say it would be impossible to get gentlemen to serve two years' training simply to obtain an appointment as second lieutenant in a Militia regiment. I know the difficulty of getting officers when they have no training at all to do beforehand, and I do not think there are any militia-men here who will contradict me.

Lieut.-Colonel E. GUNTER (late East Lancashire Regiment):—I will not pay compliments to so well-known an officer as Sir Richard Harrison for his admirable lecture. He begins his lecture very properly, if I may venture respectfully to say so, with how to get the men. That, I submit, is the crux of the whole question. Sir Richard has said that that can only be accomplished either by conscription or by voluntary enlistment. I venture respectfully to say that the system adopted abroad is no longer conscription—it is a minor point perhaps—but it has a different meaning. It is universal military service. There are a great many people in this country who favour universal military service, including a great many officers, some of whom occupy the very highest positions. I think that is a question which cannot possibly be left out of a discussion of this kind; but, if universal military service cannot be accepted, then I beg to bring before the meeting the proposals of the National Service League for universal military training, which is not to be confused with universal military service. It is a different thing. It appeals to the sporting element, and a great many of the young men of this country, especially the working men, are fully prepared to accept it. I cannot, on the present occasion, go into the details of the scheme. It is well known that the National Service League proposes, broadly speaking, that every young man between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five shall undergo a course of training, either for the naval or military service, to fit them for service in case of a great national emergency. This course of training can be easily arranged without disorganising the Regular forces, the Militia, or the Volunteers. Whether it should be carried out in connection with the Militia or the Volunteers, there is no doubt that every man should be trained. That, I think, is an acknowledged principle. We of the National Service League submit for your consideration that, if this were done, a certain number of men would automatically over-flow into the Line; a large number of men would

<sup>1</sup>An extremely severe one.—H.H.A.S.

automatically over-flow into the Militia; and a great many more still would, perhaps, over-flow into the Volunteers; and so without any absolute compulsion, excepting the obligation to train, the forces at the disposal of the Empire would be very largely increased. It would also form a reservoir of partially trained men, who could be called upon to fill the ranks in any case of national emergency. There are one or two other points that I should like to touch upon. First of all I should like to support Colonel Dooner in what he said with regard to the Militia officers. I am sorry Sir Richard Harrison excluded the Militia officers from the Regulars, as he said they should be obtained either from the Military Colleges or the Universities. I think the Militia officers during the time of the South African War came forward in a most gallant manner, and many of them to my knowledge, served for two years without commissions, and did very good service indeed. I cannot understand why Sir Richard Harrison suggests that Militia officers should require the same length of training as recruits, namely, two years. I would venture to submit that an intelligent officer would hardly require two years' training, although a recruit might. I should think one year or less would be quite enough before he presents himself for his examination. The next point that strikes me is with regard to the organisation. I do not want to take up too much time in regard to it. I think the double-company system which Sir Richard Harrison has brought forward may be a very economical one. Whether it would work, I and a great many others have our doubts. During thirty-three years' service I commanded a company for a long time. I do not think a double-company answers in this way, that, if you put two captains under a major, they are not in the same position of responsibility that a captain of a single company is in; they cannot be held responsible for the training of their men in the same way that captains of single companies would be. It would come to this, that the captains would have to refer almost everything to the major, which I think would very much impair their independence. If a larger company must be formed, I think it would be better to have six companies of 160 men each, each commanded by a captain or a major according to his seniority. It has been said that that is too large a company to command. I do not think it is. I have commanded a company of 160 men, and I found it very little more difficult to command a company of that size than one composed of only 100 men. A good company organisation is required in sections, each under an officer, there being four subalterns and one captain to each company of 160. As far as I understand it, Sir Richard's proposal is that there shall be one captain and one lieutenant to 120 men. I ask those officers who have had experience in the field, is one officer to sixty men enough? because that is what it comes to. Can one officer manage sixty men in the field or properly train them? I am quite aware that a proposal has been made to substitute warrant officers for officers, to make up for the deficiency of officers; but it is not quite the same thing. Nobody values the warrant officer or the splendid non-commissioned officers that we have more than I do, because we owe so much to them; but warrant officers are not quite the same as commissioned officers, and to diminish the number of officers to that extent would be a fatal thing. Incidentally I may mention that if a large number of young men were compelled to train, a great many of these young men from the University and others would very soon qualify themselves for commissions, and I think that would go a good way towards solving the difficulty in regard to the dearth of officers.

With regard to the organisation of the higher units, as I myself ventured to propose in 1895, that every division should have three brigades as always giving the brigadier a solid compact force wherewith to make a flank attack or to keep as a reserve, I cordially support Sir Richard Harrison's suggestion that we should have three brigades, and if the third brigade could be a mounted brigade, so much the better; it will enable flank movements and attacks to be carried out. With regard to the question of scouts, the scouts are said to be mounted. Has Sir Richard considered the great difficulty of mounted men reconnoitring a position in the present day? I think it was found in the Japanese war, that it was almost impossible. With regard to the divisional organisation, I should very much like to see the divisions increased to a strength of 12,000 men. Our divisions are too small. If a German general can command 12,000 men, why should not an English general? I cordially support the lecturer in his desire to have the number of Field Engineers increased.

Captain T. H. FALKNER (late Connaught Rangers):—Unlike Colonel Dooner, I would like to be allowed to make one preliminary observation. As a soldier, I have been a member of this Institution for ten years. I address it to-day for the first time in a treble capacity: In the first place; that of a civilian; in the second place, as a candidate for Parliament; and in the third place, as a member of the Army League. I do not propose to go into the questions which have been dealt with at great length by preceding speakers, but I will endeavour to give to the meeting one, or possibly two, thoughts which I have come here to invite discussion upon. It seems to me that the whole question of Army reorganisation turns on the point of what we require our Army for. If you read the books on the subject by Mr. Amery, of the *Times*, Mr. Gwynne, Reuter's able correspondent, and the late much-lamented author of "The Absent-minded War," you will find that they all ask that question, which remains still unanswered, as far as I know, and to which I would humbly venture to give a reply. We require to organise our Army according to its strategical and tactical requirements, and I venture to suggest that the strategical and tactical requirements depend upon the conditions, that we require our Army to enable us as a nation to bring a superiority of force to bear at the decisive point. Then comes the question: What is the decisive point? The decisive point depends on the number of nations who are likely to oppose us; I therefore suggest that we reorganise our Army on the understanding that we have to oppose ourselves to the greatest conceivable combination. We then have to consider how we are to make our skeleton. I suggest that we make our skeleton—in other words, draw up our Army reorganisation—on the one principle that it should be capable of automatic expansion. That is to say, that we should be able to build it up storey upon storey *ad infinitum*. A previous speaker mentioned the question of conscription, and stated that it was a question that candidates for Parliament would not dare to approach. For myself, when going amongst those whom I hope will be my future constituents, I venture to say this, in reply to those who advocate conscription because other nations have adopted it: England refuses to adopt conscription, because amongst the nations of this universe England does not follow; she always takes the lead.

General Sir RICHARD HARRISON, G.C.B., C.M.G., in reply said:—I have just a few words to say in explanation. My chief object in reading

this lecture to-day was to deal with the subject as a whole. I wished to put the whole question down in black and white before the members of this Institution, and in doing so I think it is very probable that I have omitted certain points of detail which I could have gone more into if I had not had such a very big subject before me. But even if I had gone into questions of detail very carefully, one cannot expect that in a big subject like this there should not be certain points on which we are not all agreed. I do not think there is anybody who could produce a scheme to which everyone would entirely agree. It is absolutely necessary, if this great question is ever to be tackled, that the best men the country can produce should come together and formulate a scheme that the country would have confidence in. Private opinions should then be put on one side, and all should agree to pull together and do their best to carry out the scheme that the Government provided. I will just say one word in regard to the remarks which have been made. Colonel Dooner agrees that, for the present at all events, the voluntary system ought to be tried and made the best of. Colonel Dooner then went on to refer to large depôts. I cannot go into this question and argue it out with him now; but I shall be very happy to meet him and talk it over some other time. In that part of my lecture that deals with training, I went into the question of depôts. What I said generally was that there are two systems of depôts, viz.: that of feeding one battalion from another, or that of having a separate depôt. There are advantages and disadvantages in both systems. The system of feeding battalions from one central depôt has succeeded extremely well with the Guards and the Rifles. I do not know that it has ever been tried in other regiments; I have never heard of it yet. Colonel Pollock agrees also, I think, generally with what I said. Sir Robert Biddulph made some remarks in regard to the Militia. He has his opinion about it; but my opinion has always been that it is rather hard for a fine force like the Militia to act simply as a recruit supplier to the Line. I have always thought, and still think, that the Militia could be so organised and so improved that it could form a fighting defensive force of its own, and also be available to go abroad if wanted. Other nations have a force really very little different to a Militia one. The Swiss have a force which is almost nearer a Volunteer than a Militia system, and many foreign Armies have little if more training than the force that I propose we should have.

Lieut.-Colonel E. GUNTER, *p.s.c.* (late East Lancashire Regiment):—In foreign Armies, all the old soldiers are in the Militia; they pass through the ranks.

Colonel H. H. A. STEWART (late Donegal Artillery, Mil.):—I should also like to ask the gallant General what the Swiss Army has ever done in the field.

General Sir RICHARD HARRISON:—At any rate we know this, that it has defended its country for a good many years. Colonel Gunter talked about universal military training, and I do not think I have said a word against that in my lecture; I alluded to it to a certain extent under the head of Training. I do not think I have anything more to say, except to thank you for the cordial manner in which you have received my lecture, and especially to thank those who have criticised it.

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<sup>1</sup>A dopôt battalion is not a depôt in this sense.—R.H.



The CHAIRMAN (the Earl of Donoughmore):—The very pleasant duty devolves upon me as Chairman to propose a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer for his most interesting lecture. What little I intended to say has more or less been covered by previous speakers. Sir Richard Harrison set himself a very agreeable task. He started with a mind imagining a blank sheet as regards Army organisation, and he proceeded to build up that organisation step by step and place it before us; and I think we can all congratulate ourselves that the result of the building up has been an organisation very similar to the British Army as it is at the present day, and it will be much more similar to the Army at the present day when certain modifications which are immediately projected are carried out. This being the condition of affairs, it naturally follows that except perhaps for a detail here and there, it has not fallen to the lot of any speaker to fall very much foul of the scheme put forward by the lecturer. I myself wish for a few minutes to refer to two points which have not been touched upon by previous speakers—one in a spirit of agreement, and one in a spirit of perfect disagreement. Sir Richard Harrison has advocated what is known as the special service section of the Volunteers. I hope he will not take it unkindly when I say that I hope the idea of a special service section in any part of the Auxiliary Forces is dead and buried for ever. And why? What does the special service section mean? It means a collection in a regiment of all the best men of the regiment; and the minute you want that regiment to take its share in active warfare, you take the special service section away to the Regular Army. You take all the best men out of the regiment and leave the regiment without its best men during the most important part of its life, when it has to carry out the duties of actual warfare. It has always seemed to me that that has been a bad theory in the past. The same theory applied in the old Militia Reserve, by which the best men of the Militia were drafted into the Line immediately the Army went to war, and I sincerely hope we shall not go back to that system again. On the other hand, I was extremely glad to hear what Sir Richard Harrison said on the other point to which I wish to direct attention, viz.: that with regard to the organisation of the Royal Engineers, his own distinguished corps. There is no doubt that the Russo-Japanese War has taught us—even more than we learned in South Africa—that it is almost impossible to contemplate the development which will undoubtedly occur in the future, with regard to military engineering. There is undoubtedly a tremendous future before military engineering such as we never dreamed of in the past, and equally there will have to be a tremendous reorganisation in our methods of dealing with the Royal Engineers. We do not know yet the exact lines upon which that reorganisation will take place, but I am glad to know that so distinguished a member of the Corps of the Royal Engineers recognises already that that reorganisation has got to take place; and with that spirit existing in the corps it will make the reorganisation very much easier to carry out. Before I sit down I think it is my duty to take up one challenge which has been thrown out with reference to the subject of compulsory service. The old figure with which we are all so familiar, the 26 millions, was mentioned, and it does not seem to be realised what that 26 millions was meant to illustrate. The question was asked: What would be the cost of training 340,000 men for one year in the same way as we now train the Regular Army at home? And the answer was: "26 millions, if you give them a shilling a day." Now our friends, the advocates of compulsory service, say: "Pay them

nothing." Very well, pay them nothing, and do you know how much you reduce the sum by? The soldier's pay is, roughly, one-third of his cost, and that still leaves you with about 16 or 17 millions as the cost. Again, 340,000 I admit might be too large a number, a larger number than we might want. Halve it, and you still have an increase of 8 millions in the Army Estimates.

Lieut.-Colonel E. GUNTER :—Half the number that came forward would be unfit; that has been proved over and over again.

The CHAIRMAN :—There are 340,000 young men in the country who attain the age of eighteen every year. Allow half as being unfit and for the few who go into the Navy, and that leaves you 170,000. Take it at 150,000, the very least it would cost you for that number for barracks for them, for proper officers to train them all the year round, including non-commissioned officers, would be 7 millions a year—the figures have been very carefully gone into—which would mean 3½d. on the income-tax, and I do not think any Government would face that yet.

Lieut.-Colonel E. GUNTER :—It would not cost so much to train them as it would to train Regular troops.

The CHAIRMAN :—Then will they be good enough to face foreign soldiers?

Lieut.-Colonel E. GUNTER :—I think if they were trained for six months in the first year and two months in successive years that would be enough.

The CHAIRMAN :—I am taking the report of the Royal Commission, which recommended one year, and which the figures that have been quoted were meant to illustrate. You must also remember that if the men were given only six months' training it would not simply halve the estimate, because I do not think you would get officers to train men for six months and do nothing for the remaining six months.

Lieut.-Colonel E. GUNTER :—Have you taken into consideration that you could reduce your Regular Army?

The CHAIRMAN :—Certainly you could not take 3½ millions off what you spend on the Regular Army. That I absolutely deny; 3½ millions is a very large sum, and the Army even now has not got all it wants. I only mentioned this point because I thought it was my duty to do so, and because I think it has not always been quite realised what the 26 millions was meant to illustrate. It was not meant as an estimate of the cost of all the schemes of compulsory service that have been put forward; it was mentioned in connection with the particular one which was under consideration at the time, which is not the general scheme which is put forward by all advocates of compulsory service. I merely ask you now to pass a hearty vote of thanks to the lecturer for his exceedingly interesting lecture.