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On the Employment of the Reserve Forces in Case of an Expeditionary Force Being Sent Abroad

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LECTURE

Friday March 29th, 1878.

LIEUT.-GENERAL W. M. SCOTT McMURDO, C.B., in the

ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE RESERVE FORCES OF AN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE BEING SENT A

By Colonel H. C. FLETCHER, C.M.G., Commanding 2nd
Scots Guards.

THERE is a well-known proverb, *qui s'excuse s'accuse*, and as having it applied to myself, I must preface this paper by saying I can put forward little that is new, or that has not been considered by those whose duty it is to make the necessary preparations for war, on paper, if not in a more practical manner. The subject, which relates to the defence of Great Britain, has been dealt with in books and pamphlets and formularised into plans more or less complete, and little remains for me except to lay before you a digest of the people's thoughts, and to endeavour to present a picture of the probable affairs that would arise if England were engaged in serious

Let us therefore endeavour to realise the condition of the country soon after war had been declared with a powerful European nation for the sake of argument and without prejudice let us suppose the nation to be Russia. Two army corps, comprising the whole of the regular forces of England and Ireland, excepting the skeleton battalions, including six battalions of Guards, and a regiment of Household Cavalry, and made up of the Army reserve, and a portion of what is called the Militia reserve, have left for the Crimea. There are 10,000 men on their way from Canada, and the advance force of 80,000 native Indian troops are passing through the country. The country is denuded of regular troops, and their ordinary work, as the task of providing reinforcements, is falling on the Reserve and on those who are left in charge of the various districts in the country. The country has been divided. Little or no analogy can be drawn between what was done during the Crimean war. At that time we had a state of hostilities after a long peace, with but little or :

ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE RESERVE FORCES, ET

tion, and without recognising the latent power which possessing the population and wealth of England, can. We fought our battles with a small body of regular troops, directly by the Militia, who garrisoned the fortresses in the mean, maintained a respectable armed force at home, and who worked nobly and unselfishly in providing recruits to repair of the regular troops. As the war went on we had recourse and expedients which I scarcely think creditable to a great nation. We sent to Germany, Switzerland, and Italy to hire men, whilst we neglected to utilize the large and I may say warlike population of our own Isles, not apparently imagining that soldiers could be procured by other methods than those which obtained during wars in Spain and in America. In thus acting we, however, followed former precedents. Indeed, to quote from "Clode's Forces of the Crown," no Continental war was ever previous to 1793 on with so small a number of foreign troops. The idea seems to have been that armies were to be recruited solely from the lower classes, and soldiers should be purchased in the cheapest market, and—proceeded to a fixed and certainly not high standard of physical condition, that it was a matter of indifference whether they were fighting in which they were interested, or merely for their pay. Happily the brunt of the struggle fell on our own brave national troops, notwithstanding the many disadvantages under which they laboured, owing to the neglect of the Army by the nation during the century. They followed the fall of Napoleon, they manfully upheld the renownd, and brought us out of difficulties that it would be unwise to incur again.

The ideas of the scale on which war can be conducted have changed since the Crimean days. Nations have learnt that by proper organization, and by the use of the many mechanical means of the nineteenth century has produced, armies of a size unknown in former Europe can be brought rapidly from distant points to the scene of action, and can be maintained with little reference to the season of the year, or to the resources of the country which may be the theatre of the campaign. War is no longer the affair of the upper classes alone, and of the lower as soldiers—all ranks and all conditions must part in it, whether forced to do so by the iron rule of consequence, or propelled by the influences that free countries like England and America should know how to exert when a great national crisis stirs to the depths the patriotic feelings of the citizens. If we wish to imitate the practice of continental nations, we may still learn a lesson from the gigantic efforts made by the Northern and Southern States during the Civil War of America, and we may gather from those campaigns, examples, or rather warnings, of the necessity of realizing at the commencement of a struggle the efforts required in conducting it to its ultimate end, and the losses in men, money, and honour, that will flow from neglecting to put forth the nation's resources at the outset of a war.

Before proceeding further, it will be well to come to some conclusion as to the land forces on which England would have

We have at home, according to returns based on the Arn

Standing army	90,000
Army and militia reserves ..	38,000
Militia	85,000
Effective volunteers ..	180,000
Second class army reserves ..	23,500
Yeomanry.. ..	10,000
<hr/>	
Total ..	426,500

And we learn from Mr. Gathorne Hardy in his speech on Army estimates that he looks upon 400,000 men as the military establishment. It will, therefore, be allowable to figures as representing approximately the home forces which should commence war. In India we have 63,000 European 120,000 native troops, besides contingents, which (paid independent Princes) might be attracted to our service also the resources of our great colonies, who, if England were committed to war, would not be content to be mere lookers on in the struggle of the parent State. From Canada we might, I believe, obtain 10,000 infantry, a regiment of cavalry, and two batteries of artillery, and at least a company of engineers, as a first instalment. Our own warlike population, supplemented by the many recruits from English birth from the adjoining great Republic, would easily be increased if they did not increase.

As the actual commencement of hostile operations on land will depend on us, and as even the theatre of the campaign will be open to our selection, the strength, composition, and time of departure of an expeditionary force would in great measure be determined by England's preparation for war. Efforts are now being made to get ready for the field two army corps of 74,000 men each. To do this, thirty-nine battalions of the Line, and three of the Guards, would have to be sent, and these battalions, after 18 months of youths who have not completed eight months' service, would require, to bring them up to war strength, about 18,500 men, who would have to be drawn from the Army reserves, the Militia reserves, and from the ranks of Guards and Line who would still remain after the departure of the two corps. These home battalions would consequently be attenuated in numbers, even although they had received recruits from the younger soldiers of the war battalions. There would, therefore, be required, whilst, to bring the Militia battalions to war strength, 50,700 would have to be recruited, all, without counting India and the Colonies, nearly 74,000 recruits and 4,000 cavalry and artillery recruits would have to be found with as little delay as possible. But these numbers represent the strain that would be put on the outbreak of hostilities immediately on the population. The losses of war would be met, and our Indian Army supplied. For the former 75

the number in the field is considered to be a fair annual provision therefore to maintain in the field 60,000 men, an annual strength of 45,000 becomes requisite, whilst the average number for India Colonies would be 8,000. Considerably more than 100,000 would therefore have to be obtained in the first year, in order to complete and keep up two *corps d'armée*, and to maintain the reserve (which would be the reserve as well as the training school of the field), and to afford the ordinary drafts to India and the Colonies. We must therefore imagine our quiet and somewhat sleepy depôts in full working order, recruits constantly pouring in, provided with arms, clothing, and accoutrements, and then placed in the affiliated Militia battalions, who would probably occupy the barracks and quarters of the absent troops of the Line. A great training school of the country, would afford permanent accommodation for a large number, whilst during the summer months the troops would be placed under canvas. Other stations would be provided for camps of instruction, their localities being fixed in great accordance with reference to the enemy with whom we might be engaged. In the event of any possibility of invasion, our Southern and Eastern frontiers would necessarily monopolize the larger portion of our home Army. The conveniences of localities for training local troops would give way to the general scheme of defence.

The memorandum on Mobilization drawn up for the Government divides the home Army into six corps for England, one for Ireland, and one for Scotland; four of these corps being allotted to the counties of England. These corps comprise regular troops, Militia, Volunteers, and Pensioners, who would be stationed in permanent camps, in our fortresses, and in the case of the coast volunteers as near as possible to the localities to which they belong; while an entrenched camp near London would probably be the headquarters of the Metropolitan forces.¹ If the war were between England and an enemy not possessed of naval power, the necessities of preparation for invasion might give way to the advantages of local defence. The loss of labour consequent on the withdrawal of men from their ordinary pursuits would entail much inconvenience, and if military training could be so arranged as to permit of a small proportion of the force being on leave during the seasons of agricultural labour, considerable saving in the waste of the wealth of the country might be effected. In the case of the Volunteers: The embodiment of portions of the force would be necessary, not only that garrison duties should be carried on, but for purposes of discipline, as men must be kept together somewhat permanently under their Officers and non-commissioned officers in order to acquire the cohesion requisite for a force.

Arrangements might doubtless be made for the garrison duties.

¹ The mobilization scheme provides for the full employment of the Volunteers. In addition to the garrisons which would have to be furnished for the coast places, the coast volunteers organized into brigades would oppose the enemy's landing, falling back on the positions selected for defence.

performed week about by certain regiments or companies of as it is most important that the young troops who are being reinforcements for the Army in the field should not waste and injure their health by performing the routine of what *sentry go*. They require their days for military exercises, for shooting, for outpost duties, and for instruction in the variousments of a soldier on service; and, consequently, they must be removed from garrison duty, and not be expected to be trained, like the Guards' regiments, during the Crimean War, in the great city and with *three nights in bed*. The volunteers of our garrison towns might be most useful in affording to the young soldiers of the regular Army and of the Militia, to the drill and exercises which those not on duty might daily by a proper distribution of time. For it must be that a serious war will change ideas in regard to relaxation and amusement will have to give way to the relief which an hour of work affords. Many of our clerks, shopkeepers, and citizens, an hour daily after the termination of their ordinary work, if of training were sufficiently near; whilst a well organized Sunday parades would not only give fifty-two additional days a year, but would often tend to the better keeping of the day.

Thus, whilst our garrisons in the Mediterranean are Militia to be fed from their depôts; whilst our fortified places have also received Militia and local Volunteers in place of regular troops, whilst large camps have been established at convenient places for the receipt of recruits from the brigade depôts, and for the better of temporarily embodied regiments of Volunteers, every place must be taken to find places and to arrange time so that the Volunteers in the great cities should have the advantage of drill *pari passu* with regular work. It will be in the recollection of many who are now living, that the fear of invasion at the commencement of the nineteenth century gave rise to a similar state of affairs. Then the gentry raised, trained, and officered companies of Men did their work in life like the Jews described in the Book of Judges, with their weapons ready at hand. Besides Militia permanently embodied, and which possessed the qualities of regular troops, there were in England alone, in 1805, 350,000 Volunteers, comprising cavalry, artillery, and infantry. These were regulated by the Generals of the districts, and on the whole their organization was very favourable—"fit to take their place with troops of the regular Army." The usual observation in the columns of remarks.

It will not be out of place if we glance at the work performed by what are now termed the Reserve forces, during the close of the eighteenth and the commencement of the present century. To quote from the "Reserve Forces," out of 80,626 militiamen, in the year 1805, 10,414 volunteered to serve under Sir Ralph Abercrombie, and 30,888 joined the regular Army. In 1808, 30,888 obtained for the Army from the Militia, whilst in 1813, the men of the Militia were allowed to volunteer into the Army as Militia with the Army abroad, the battalions and r

Militia being under their own field officers. In 1800, as my father is said to have been paid at Plymouth for a substitute, whilst he went on condition of receiving four shillings a day, and an allowance for himself for seven and threepence a pound. A general Militia Bill passed in 1802, by which men between the ages of 18 and 45 were to be raised by ballot, and to pay a fine of 10*l.* to be exempted from service for years. In 1808, a local militia was raised, and 214,000 men obtained by ballot, no substitutes being allowed. During the Peninsular War, besides furnishing Officers and men to the Army, the Militia furnished militia in Portugal, whilst they sent large quotas to the Army fought at Waterloo. At the time of the Crimean War, the Militia furnished from 25,000 to 30,000 men for the line, whilst 50 regiments representing nearly 41,000 men, volunteered for foreign service. Of these ten regiments were selected to serve at Mediterranean during the Indian Mutiny also, 18 regiments offered them service abroad.

In addition to the Militia, large numbers of volunteers were raised under the Defence Act of 1802, which was subsequently amended by the Levy en Masse Act, when 420,000 men volunteered partly by ballot for the Militia. In 1804 and in the four subsequent years the number of volunteers in Great Britain averaged about 400,000, Ireland furnishing 70,000. A portion of this force received arms in 1806, after which date, arms only were issued, as it was found that those who ought to have been serving in the regular Army or the Militia enrolled themselves in the Volunteers. It is difficult to ascertain the exact numbers, as they of course varied from year to year. To quote from statistics compiled by General T. B. Macdonald from records in the Quartermaster-General's office, and under the notice of this Institution in his admirable paper "Another Warning Voice from 1805," it appears that in 1803, there were 327,286 volunteers under arms, whilst in 1804 (and the numbers were probably nearly the same in 1803) there was a force of 9,622 regular artillery, 47,116 infantry, 56,316 militia, making a total of 113,054 regulars and militia, or a grand total of upwards of 120,000 men under arms in Great Britain alone, of which the population was less than half what it is at the present time. I mention these figures as giving an idea of what this country can do under the present serious crisis and of a great war, although I cannot help agree with Mr. Burke, who, denouncing this timid policy, says, "Who would credit that 200,000 men were kept in England and 80,000 in Ireland for the mere purpose of an inert and passive defence, and that the very constitution the greater part of this force was disarmed, and defending us against the enemy by one preventive stroke of hostility?"

It is partly with the view of directing attention, not only to the effort this country is capable of, but also to the blot in a system which keeps so large a portion of the Army from fighting beyond the shores of Great Britain, that I have brought the subject of the efficiency of the Reserve forces under your notice.

There is no more false economy than that of stinting military preparations at the commencement of war, or of failing thoroughly to realise the gravity of the occasion and the necessity of sacrificing preconceived notions and individual interests to a mighty and effort.

In well ordered and systematically governed countries it is a difficult matter to induce departments to take broad accustomed views of subjects, the details of which engross daily attention. The very excellence of the organization of Government Departments, and the very zeal of the employés, may even result from their ability to meet an unexpected strain. There is a tendency to lose sight of great objects and to work for narrow aims only for the general good. The heads of departments are free from prejudices, and are anxious to push the coachmen and those who grease the wheels do not work heartily without repairing the harness, whilst the road makers, intent on the extension of their roads, cannot be induced to prepare rough-and-ready for temporary and exceptional use. In England there are abundant resources for war, but these resources cannot be utilized without changes in the organization of our military establishments, doubtless suited for dealing with the frequent small wars of the Continent. England is engaged, but which require elasticity to meet a general war. Napoleon's system, which in the height of his career he certainly carried too far, of refusing to recognise any difficulties, and requiring his subordinates to carry out his plans without putting forward objections, has many merits, and might be copied with advantage in the management of our military affairs. Boldness is essential not only in the conduct of armies in the field, but in the adoption of plans of change, and a departure from the accustomed grooves.

I hope, however, that if war break out, we should fully utilize our resources in position and that the end of the first month would see England converted into a great camp, recruits pouring into the depôts, instruction in full swing, and the volunteer regiments, with higher standards of efficiency than at present, taking their turn at regular military duties of the towns and garrisons, and large quotas in rotation for periodical training at the camps. Those who had left their ranks would rejoin the several regiments in which they previously belonged, and active and energetic Officers of the Army would offer their services as instructors in the new additional battalions and companies that would speedily be formed. The Yeomanry—converted in most instances into mounted rifles—would give an outlet to the military instinct of the farmers, and form no mean reserve to the cavalry, whilst it would be found impossible to check the formation of field batteries, and a confident might be sufficiently trained to act with infantry in the event of an invasion. The strain on society would at first be great, but gradually we should accommodate ourselves to the new condition of affairs, and would be able to show foreign Governments an example of the latent energy possessed by a free country. The principal difficulty would be that of discovering the best

raising the number of men to fill the ranks of the regim Line, and of the embodied Militia. If the country could be acknowledge the necessity of a modified conscription, t recruiting would be greatly diminished. Once get the m scription into the Militia, and the Line could easily be f source, whilst, as has been pointed out by Lord Elcho and standard of efficiency of the Volunteers, supposing them to from the ballot, might be considerably raised. Merely inducements, whether given in the shape of pay, pension, or would be a hard matter to raise the requisite numbers. States nearly succeeded in doing so, but towards the close a man was worth £200; and the demoralization and abuses on the offer of high bounties are so lamentable that almost would be preferable to such a method of procuring recruit be impossible to face this difficulty until the nation and the G are brought face to face with it, but no pains should be s preparation of some scheme that could readily and quick into operation. If high bounties be once given, or if th expected, it will be a hard matter to withdraw this bribe t who would benefit by them, and a check to recruiting occasioned at the very time men were required. Far better a of hostilities to place the whole matter fairly before the cou put in force the law now in abeyance of ballot for the Militi

To return to the subject of the Reserve forces: it wil have been observed, that throughout this paper the des expeditionary force of only two army corps has been co whereas England, with her population and wealth, or able to keep in the field more than double that numl analogy is to be furnished from the efforts made by othe believe it would be impossible as war went on, and as men the work, to check the enthusiasm of the Reserve fo would not be content to see their comrades of the line eng field, and they themselves kept in garrison and in camp. Crimean War, the regiments of militia at Corfu and Malta willingly volunteered to join the army before Sebastopol. now, when military knowledge and military feeling have throughout the country, and when all classes, even in peace bear a portion of the burden which soldiering entails. It that these regiments could send recruits to the Line; do would do so; but if their services were accepted as regiment numbers would volunteer; and if universal conscription is t every channel must be thrown open by which troops are cured. Doubtless there are difficulties to be overcome and to be rooted up; but it would be a bitter satire on free in it were said that England would not bear the burden of c or show sufficient intelligence to adapt existing regulations abnormal condition of affairs. In the same way, the vol form the outlet for the military energies of our middle cl to have opportunities given them for service before the en motto is, "Defence, not Defiance;" but Heaven forbid th

should ever wage wars of defiance; she merely fights to dispossessions, although to do so she must fight beyond the seas.

It is said that several regiments have already placed themselves at the disposal of the Secretary of State for War, and it would be possible to raise from the effective volunteers a considerable force, and one which any Officer would be proud to command. A difficulty might arise in maintaining it without trenching on the resources of the Army and the Militia; but if there were compensation for the latter, with inducements to enter the regular Army, exemption only in favour of efficient volunteers, the latter might maintain as well as furnish a representative force in the field.

As the war went on, much that appears now to be complicated might disappear, and a system once organized would either simplify or develop its impracticability. In the meantime, a force formed of present efficient volunteers, and well officered, would not only add considerably to the strength of our army, but would be of political importance as evincing the earnestness of the people, and the real classes not usually found in the ranks of the English Army, in their part in the dangers of war.

A clear recognition of the distinct duties of the Reserve might prevent mistaken ideas, and lead to a simplification of the system. Their first duty, as has been pointed out, is to provide for the reinforcement of the troops in the field. From this, the volunteer troops, will be exempt, unless they were prepared to do so. The second duty of the reserve forces, is to be in readiness to take their place in the field in the event of additional *corps d'armée* being required, depôts must be provided for them, as well as for the regular troops. The system would remain the same, viz., recruits for the regular troops joining at the several depôts, and being transferred from the depôts to the camps of instruction, previous to their embarkation for service abroad; the work of garrisoning England would be done exclusively on the troops retained permanently for home service, and provided from the classes who could not devote their whole time to military work.

Thus the advice given by Mr. Pitt in his speech in Parliament on the Volunteer Act of 1803 would be followed:—"I was formerly of opinion, Mr. Pitt, "and still am, of opinion that to a regular army, however superior, however excellent, even aided by the militia, we ought not solely to trust, but that in a moment so eventful, in which the country is so singular in its character, and which perhaps may be tedious in its duration, we ought to superadd to the regular army some portion of a militia system of national defence, either to a certain degree composed of the voluntary zeal and patriotism of the country. This ought to be resorted to as the grand source of domestic defence. The army must be the rallying point; the army must furnish the nucleus of instruction, must give the principles on which the system of defence must be formed, and by which the volunteer troops must be trained. The country, in a military view, inferior to the regular army, would, fighting on their own soil, for everything dear to them, and important to the State, be invincible."

There is still another duty which, though perhaps not directly within the scope of this paper, has so near a relation to the efficiency of an army raised from the body of the population that it may be excused from alluding to it. If our Army and Militia men (many of them being married) were called into the ranks, the militia were to furnish large drafts to fill up the gaps of the army, if the volunteers contribute their quota, there must, owing to the prevalence of early marriages, be a very considerable number of men and children deprived of their natural supporters, and reduced to straits for a livelihood. It is a grievous thing for a fighting man to think that his wife and little ones are in penury and want. It militates greatly against voluntary enlistment if men felt that their absence would entail privations on their families, whilst an equal evil would be occasioned if indiscriminate charity were shown to those who were left at home. There is, therefore, a vast amount of organization and for systematic preparation, if the best means of assisting the wives and families of the men who would fight the battles is to be arranged, and if the opposite evils of neglect and unwise benevolence are to be avoided. Doubtless, much of the work now performed by men might, without undue tax on their strength, fall on the weaker sex, and it would be the duty of employers to endeavour to discover how this arrangement could best be effected, but still there would be plenty of scope for charity, and a wide field in which those who do not actually fight the battles of the country could still labour to contribute to the national weal.¹

In more than one way must the patriotism of the employed labour be appealed to. If conscription is to be avoided, it is well as direct encouragement will have to be given to recruiting the Army (and in this word I include the Reserve force). At present, must some of our principal railways refuse to take men, for fear lest they should be called on in case of any emergency. The education and training of soldiers ought to be a passport to many of the situations where habits of order and discipline are essential. The railways, the police, the county constabulary, the wardships of prisons would furnish employment for large numbers of men who have completed their three or six years in the ranks. In the event of serious war, their places could, after a little time, in many instances be filled by those whom wounds and sickness have incapacitated for active field service, and who would yet be fit for less arduous work. Some sacrifices would doubtless have to be made, the luxury of perfectly performed work, and of a superabundance of labour might have to be foregone, and the public would have to bear with deficiencies which a great national war necessarily entails.

¹ An announcement has just been made of the intention of the Government to call out the Army and Militia Reserves. The difficulty, therefore, of dealing with the wives and families of those who have to join the ranks should at once be met. The evils of affording them parish relief are so obvious that they do not need enumerating, but there are other ways in which assistance can be given, and it is equally with justice, points to the necessity of at once meeting the difficulties of alleviating the distress which the withdrawal from their families of so many men and parents must necessarily cause.

one who travelled through the Confederate States during War, numerous instances will occur of the absence of the use of labour, and of the inconveniences ensuing from such a case of affairs, which were cheerfully borne by a people earnest in the duties to which they were committed.

I have endeavoured in this short paper not so much to lay definite duties for the Reserve forces, as to point out how they may be expected from them if England were to be drawn into a great Power. A prevalent idea among many persons appears to be that,—secure in their island,—they will be able to look on as spectators of the regular army, assisted perhaps by a few of the men of the regiments of the Reserve will take part, and that, beyond an increased income-tax, they will have little personally to do or to suffer from it. To the majority of Englishmen this was the case in which the Crimean War presented itself. There was little to mark that England was engaged in an important struggle; sentries on the palaces and public buildings were perhaps rather more numerous, and younger, and if anyone took the trouble of going to the front he would have seen a large force of embodied militia, and at some German mercenaries, but the ordinary life of the Englishman was not disturbed; everything went on as usual, and few men putting themselves even to inconvenience to assist in the prosecution of a war, waged far from our own shores, and not interfering with the ordinary every-day routine. But if the cloud which is now shading over the European horizon bursts in storm, the work that will be required will have to do will tax all their energies. It is a good sign that in the Regulars, the Militia, and the Volunteers, recruiting is going on, and the reality of active service presents itself. It is encouraging to see the increased efforts which are being made by the volunteers to raise their standard of efficiency, not only in what may be called the eye, but in real essentials which even the regular troops are beginning to recognise. The provision of regimental training, and the best method of using it, together with the formation of reserve corps, are attracting the attention of many of our officers and regiments, whilst the fact alluded to by Mr. Hardy of the necessity of annual encampments is a proof of the zeal with which that tends to the best method of military training is being practised. So far so good, but more will probably be required if the necessity for conscription may have to be faced, and the Government have to show that the sneer against our young men from the Continent from Manchester imputed to Prince Bismarck has no foundation in fact; that true civilization does not lead to effeminacy or to a neglect of dangerous duties. The thought of fighting our battles with the aid of extraneous aid, except merely as supplementary to the National Guard, ought to be put aside. How can we ask Canada for help, or avail ourselves of our own Reserve forces? Is it consistent with our dignity, or even with the safety of our Indian Empire in Asia, when Anglo-Saxons sit at home at ease reading spiced narratives of newspaper war correspondents? We must fight our own battles, or fall as every empire has fallen that evaded the belief that gold can be a substitute for iron.

Lord Bacon, in his essay on the True Greatness of Kingdoms and States, gives the following counsel: "Walled towns, stored with armories, goodly races of horse chariots of war, elephants of artillery and the like—all this is like a sheep in a lion's skin; if the breed and disposition of the people be stout and warlike, they will number itself in armies importeth not much where the people be of weak courage." Therefore, he continues, "let any Prince think soberly of his forces, except the militia of natives be composed of valiant soldiers; and let Princes on their side, that have martial dispositions, know their own strength, unless they be otherwise wanting in themselves. As for mercenary forces, ample show that, whatsoever Estate or Prince doth rest upon them, they may spread his feathers for a time, but he will mow them as grass." I should like to conclude this paper with one practical suggestion.

If a volunteer brigade could be raised for service in the field, it would be well for those who would comprise it to place their services at the disposal of the Government for the forthcoming summer. They would then be seen of what good stuff such a body of men is composed, whilst a fortnight's peace campaigning, and the acquaintance with the staff under whom they would act, and with the officers alongside of whom they would serve and fight, would work in welding the heterogeneous elements of which such a brigade necessarily be composed, into a concrete and solid mass, fit for the duty to which it might be put.

In foreign countries the impulse of action has to come from the Government. In England and America it is the people who push on the Government, and therefore at the present crisis, when war and peace are in the balance, there is an opportunity for our Reserve Force to show those who command them, to systematize schemes of improvement, to organize plans for the employment of the vast latent power which England possesses, and which she ought to be able to utilize.

Colonel Lord WAVENEY, F.R.S. : I rise to address this meeting at this juncture on the discussion on a special ground. It was my fortune to hear yesterday the assembled Legislature of England the necessity of placing the Reserve Force on arms, an event which probably will be one of the most remarkable of this century; and I find to day by an extraordinary coincidence that my gallant friend the lecturer has given us an insight into what the use of the Reserve Force may be. In both cases there is an identity that is gratifying, and who respects the self-restraint of the English people. The announcement of the Reserve Force was received in respectful silence, but certainly with reference to enormous results that might be the consequence; and when we had read and as I will in a few words show, for an excellent purpose, what has been the Reserve Force, that announcement was also received with the silence of those who are not carried away by sudden floods of impulse or sentiment on such occasions. I said it was of importance, because you may depend upon it that at the present moment every eye in Europe is fixed on the proceedings of public opinion in England, and this meeting in which the representatives of the two Houses are gathered together, will have its comment in every newspaper on the Continent. I speak with certainty, and for this reason, that I have observed in the press for some time past a desire to depreciate the motive power, in military matters, of England; a misconception, but one which generally prevails, and

proportion to the business-like, soldierlike, calm way in which the qu laid before us, and in which it will be treated, will be the new light borne in upon those who are disposed to undervalue the military country. And I say it is of importance also because you must bring mathematical foundation in military matters. Genius in a chief, ze obedience in a soldier we may expect, but after all, the innate forces are those which are to be consulted. To illustrate this I am bold to Imperial purposes, the military forces of this country put in action spirit and genius of British war makes us as formidable a military in the world. What is the genius of British war? Expeditions fleets, maintaining a communication with the home country, and so by Reserves. And there is a double preparation of Reserve which I referred to in this lecture, that is to say, the Reserve of supply for the field, or the army of operation, and the reserve of resistance, which for home purposes. With regard to the Reserve I have a very strong opinion as to the means by which the general subject may best be treated it is better on all occasions to avoid a confusion of supply, so to speak drawing men from one regiment into another, as has been recent extent of 4,000 men in order to make up the first army corps. It would be better if each could be prepared in its own way and in its own line, for service. This brings me to this point, that the principle of conscription or another is one which we shall be compelled to adopt, and in us make it consentaneous with our spirit of aggregation in individuals called so happily the *esprit de corps*. Let the Army have its own and that during the Indian Mutiny, militia regiments volunteered for for which I understand for India.

To show the effect of the organization of the Militia Service so ready to volunteer for foreign service, let me state this, that during the Indian Mutiny my old soldiers came to me and said, "Sir, can't you take the 'scopys?" I said "No, I can't." Then they said, "What are we to do?" "Why, there is the recruiting sergeant, you can go and join the regular Army." "No," they said, "we will go with our Officers and our old comrad." "not go in the regular Army." I was very glad to hear what was said. The Volunteers are men of whom none can speak too highly, their spirit, their intelligence, or for the way in which they take to have not been a colonel of Volunteer Artillery, but I know the hardships they have led for the short period that they were under canvas. I remember on special occasions the Essex brigade had an excessively wearisome duty; they marched into camp for their four days' drill. The weather was bad, they pitched wet, they remained wet, the weather was bad the whole course they were not provided with the same means of resisting regular troops would have been. However, in spite of all these difficulties, the men did their work thoroughly well. Still a trial of great strain for men who are not accustomed to rough service is therefore I lay great stress upon their having the opportunity of accustoming themselves to the service of war. I was very much struck with the conduct shown with regard to the provision for women and children. Nobody as the commanding Officers of Militia, the numbers of women and children in my brigade when we were about to leave the district garrison during the Crimean War. I endeavoured to persuade them to remain at home with their families, knowing what, under such circumstances, garrison life must be for them. The difficulty has to be met both in regard to militia regiments moved from and in regard to the regular service in the same way. At any rate, this, that when the time comes, there will be one voice at least before the Government the suggestions that have been made by our

Major WETHERHEAD, Paymaster, R.A.: I must apologise for trespassing as a non-combatant, but in times like these every Englishman doing what he can to forward suggestions. I quite agree with what

but I should like to understand more clearly our plan of defence in the threatened invasion. It appears to be generally admitted that there are points on our shores upon which an enemy could throw a large force if he landed in the Channel from the attack of our fleet. The idea, if I am rightly informed, is so much to defend those vulnerable points as to collect our forces within a few days converging on these points, where they might meet an enemy that has landed. This is a vital and important matter, and I consider that all our efforts should be taxed to prevent the possibility of hostile forces disembarking on our shores. If there are vulnerable points upon our coast, surely we might mean to concentrate a large force of Volunteers or Reserves at these points, so that the concentration of troops takes a considerable time. We see the difficulty there is on Easter Monday in conveying a few thousand Volunteers to a point on the coast. There is also this danger to be considered, that the enemy might make a feint to land at one particular spot, and as we were collecting our troops on the lines of rail converging at that point, the enemy might run for another point on our coast to which our assembled forces could not be transferred by rail, passing through the small and dangerous artery of the Metropolis; but the enemy might take greater advantage of the facilities which our insular position and our railway system might afford for concentrating on those given points an overwhelming force of artillery. I won't say very heavy guns, but large long-range guns of the kind of being fought on the railway metals, which might be brought to bear on disembarking troops so as to prevent the near approach of the enemy, and check the landing of the force while our Volunteers and Reserves were in the process of concentrating. There are many other points which may be considered in connection with this subject. If possible, in case of threatened invasion, I should like to see the enemy blockading all the enemy's ports, and under certain combinations, our wireless telegraph system would be interrupted, and it is a matter worth considering how to keep up communication with our fleet in case of war. At present I have no provision, and I should like one simple experiment to be tried. Our ships at a distance would have no means of communicating with our shore, and sending fast steamers between our coast and the fleet; but I would suggest that it would not be practicable to have the means of sending out from certain points on our coast, steamers fitted with telegraphic apparatus which could run telegraph wires and anchor some thirty or forty miles or upwards from the coast, so that when our ships wished to communicate with home, all they would have to do would be for one of their fast cruisers to run for one of these floating vessels, which would place them in instant communication with the shore, and they would receive rapid information as to what was going on on the enemy's coast. That our cruisers having constantly to run into port in order to convey information to the shore, and receive instructions. As I observe that gentlemen of the press are pressing to enlist them as Reservemen; I mean in this way. No doubt it is very desirable that Englishmen should know exactly the details of everything that is going on in the world, and it is very desirable that the British public should be well informed as to the details; but I think we have arrived at a crisis in our country's history, and it would be well if Englishmen generally would consider rather our national duty than their own natural curiosity. It is time for the press to maintain a reserve, because what is communicated to our countrymen is communicated rapidly, perhaps, to that very country with which in a very short time we may be ourselves at war. Therefore, the information given to our enemies, our friends, should be limited. I think also that the time has arrived when our ports and dockyards should be closed more than they are at present. We must be cautious and use some reservation with regard to permitting our friends to visit them. As war seems to be approaching, that we should look to our own defence and see that we have no traitors among us who might be tempted to communicate information to the enemy.

Lieutenant-Colonel EVELYN, 3rd Royal Surrey Militia: I think it is in discussing matters of this kind, not to forget the distinction between the Forces and Reserve Forces. The Reserve Forces are the First and Second Reserve and the Militia Reserve, but not the Militia.

The CHAIRMAN: Colonel Fletcher explained that in his paper.

Colonel EVELYN: I think the whole of the Auxiliary Forces should put in proper order at this crisis. We are not in danger, as the gallant who last spoke seems to imagine, of invasion. I doubt if the Russian idea of invading us, but they will prove a stout enemy if we attack the afraid some changes we have lately made, certainly in the portion of the Forces to which I belong, the Militia, have not been conducive to the efficiency. Regiments have been, I fear, seriously injured by the reduction of the deprivation of quarters, and by being concentrated in brigade depôt being allowed to remain at outposts. One serious objection is the difficulty would be if the regiments have to be embodied in winter, in quartering town. It is difficult enough to billet one militia battalion in a small town; extremely difficult to billet two, and if the Militia are wanted in the winter the case in 1854 and 1855, it will be necessary to billet them, and it is difficult to billet them when concentrated two or three battalions together in one town because it happens to be the head-quarters of the brigade depôt. Various instances which militiamen have served have generally been misunderstood. There has been an impression, rather general, that an Act of Parliament can impose on the militiamen, whether they have been undertaken by his engagement. For instance, it was said the other day that an Act of Parliament might be passed immediately, making the Militia available for foreign service; but it is forgotten that no Act of Parliament can, or at least ought not to, affect the service already taken. An Act of Parliament, to make the Militia available for service during war, ought to be passed, but still it would not affect the enlistment, at least, if it did, they would no longer be volunteers—themselves pressed men. It was tried in 1855; the Militia were then serving in the Crimea, which only bound them to be embodied in case of actual danger of invasion. They were wanted to replace the troops that had gone to the Crimea, and passed empowering the Government to embody them; they were embodied over England there was much discontent in the Militia, and Government reconsidered their measures. I hope that no such mistake may be made now if the Militia are wanted for foreign service, there will be plenty of recruits to volunteer; but no service must be forced on the men, or there will be discontent and difficulty. I hope it will be remembered that, if the Militia take the place of the line, and are to be a skeleton force in time of peace, they must be depended on to march almost at a day's notice, that the staff of the Militia must be kept complete. There must be no such thing as the adjutant in the Militia; in turns by the Captain of a regular regiment—that there should be an Adjutant, but an Officer of a regular regiment acting as Adjutant. The Adjutant for a Militia regiment should not be restricted to the ten Companies of the linked line battalion, of whom the two or three seniors are too near the end to hold a five years' appointment. The best of the other Captains do leave their own companies, and probably the only one who can be induced to take a militia adjutancy is one who wants to marry, or avoid foreign service for similar reason. That is an arrangement that does not work at all. There are other things that were to be carried out as proposed by the Militia, such as these; that a militia regiment should even be deprived of its major, of its quartermaster sergeant, of its orderly-room clerk, of its clerk, in fact, of every single thing that makes a battalion a battalion. A regiment of Militia was to be made a mere unorganized band of recruits teased into joining the regular Army as quickly as possible. That was much like killing the goose that has the golden eggs. If you want to keep a stream of recruits from the Militia, you must keep up the militia regiments, destroy them, and the staff should be always complete, and lodged in the depôt under the constant supervision of the Adjutant. Under present circumstances a better plan could be adopted than that of giving up some of the numbers in the depôt establishments to the militia battalions.

The Volunteers are a most admirable force, and, for my own part, I spared myself neither trouble or expense in trying to promote them. Still, we must remember that in the time of the Peninsular war the

fell a great deal into disuse after the establishment of the local militia—a force of which one never hears now, and a force which probably many gentlemen in the room never heard of. It was a force organized in the different parishes and drilled on the village greens, and formed a few times in the course of the year into a battalion. It was found, in many respects, a more convenient force than the Volunteers, though the Volunteers had their place and were most admirable in many respects. But what on earth can induce those young gentlemen in the Volunteers to wish, under present circumstances, to serve abroad as private soldiers I cannot quite understand! However, if they like it well and good, but I am afraid, if they have to work with the pay and allowances of private soldiers, and no others, they would not like it very much. If they expect double and treble pay and pensions when they got home, &c., they will be very expensive, and perhaps hardly worth their money. There is one thing I think would add enormously to the efficiency of the Militia. The system of deferred pay has done a great deal of good in the Army, though some of the provisions under which it has been introduced are not, in my opinion, very judicious. I have some right to speak on the subject of deferred pay, for I believe, if it had not been for a letter of mine that appeared in the *Times*, in October, 1873, the term “deferred pay” would not have been applied to this day, with reference to the pay of the soldier, and I was somewhat amused, a year or two after my letter appeared in the *Times*, to see a long discussion, whether Captain Trench or Archdeacon Wright, or somebody else, was the first to make the suggestion. However, I held my peace. I think a modification of deferred pay might be introduced into the Militia, and would stop desertion to a very great extent, as the men get no pay, except when up for training, it would necessarily be a deferred bounty. I quite agree that, in time of war, a system of ballot for the Militia should be re-introduced. But if it is, I do think a man who is balloted for and serves in the Militia five or six years, ought not to be turned adrift, without a farthing in his pocket, at the end of that time; and if the country gave every man who did good service during his period in the Militia, a 5*l.* note, it would not be a bit too much for him to go back to his friends with, and it would make the militia service far more popular than it is, and would prevent the great militia riots which occurred in the late war in consequence of the Ballot Act being put in force. That Ballot Act was carried out with great difficulty, and was attended by several great riots. It was found very difficult to carry out a measure of that sort in England, and doubtless nowadays the difficulty would be increased.

Major WETTERHED: I should just like to explain that in what I stated I did not for a moment intend to express the belief that Russia would invade England.

General Sir WILLIAM CODRINGTON: I do not know whether the lecturer referred to the conscription as a necessary part of the Reserve, or any part of the system of England, but Lord Waveney did so refer to it, and possibly it might go forward that it was the feeling of a great number of Officers, that it is necessary to have conscription in England. Now, as everyone is entitled to his opinion, I must own my opinion is decidedly against it, except in case of necessity balloting for Militia for home defence. Conscription for general Army service is contrary to the feeling of England. Not only is it contrary to the feeling of England as a matter of oppression, but it is an extreme oppression in France, in Prussia, and in Russia, where there can be no question about it, and as such, it is contrary to the usual habits and spirit of liberty and feeling in England. On the other hand, I do not believe that there is any more expensive system than this one of conscription. Cheap to the Government, but not nominally cheap for general national interests, or for the lives of the men exposed to it; because I believe there is very little doubt that the hospital and other arrangements in a conscription-country in war have not the same attention paid to them as in England, where the Army is a volunteer army. One main point, however, is that it is a very expensive system nationally. You take away from all classes of society the best members for national improvement, its able-bodied and those of full age; and you force them into the Service not only in war but in peace. They are taken and not able to carry on their own business, or to marry for so many years; I think it is ten, and this in the very prime of a man's life. Therefore I hope it will not be considered as a necessity for England that conscription should take place for the Army.

Lord WAVENEX: I hope I guarded myself in what I said; in fact I am sure I did so guard myself in the first part of my observations. It is the principle of conscription we must come to; I believe we must come to the general obligation for service, and I think I guarded myself by saying by the old form of the ballot, which in its original form takes every other manifestation of the principle that no man is to be held exempt for home defence, I should wish it to be felt that there is always a man to serve for home defence.

Colonel ALCOCK: I am perfectly convinced that the great strength of this country arises from the system of voluntary service, and that the necessity of foreign countries, although it may appear to be otherwise, arises from military services, and the reason is very obvious. It is this, that the compulsory service is so great that the time will ultimately arrive when they will resist it, and it must be felt at this moment in Russia; in fact by the public prints, that in that country unfortunate men are taken from their homes and marched off immediately to the war without having any of the taking leave of their friends. The conclusion I come to with regard to the discontent so caused, is one in which I am supported by, I believe, every great philosopher; for it was the opinion of Auguste Comte many years ago, he said that the people would ultimately rebel against the tyranny of compulsory service. There is in continental countries another source of weakness with this which does not affect us, and the freedom from which we must add enormously to the stability and power of England, and that is the existence of the secret societies. It is perfectly well known that there is a mine of dynamite under many kingdoms, and especially under Russia, and ready at any moment to explode. I will say no more upon this subject but adhere to my opinion.¹

Lieutenant G. H. HOSE, Civil Service Rifles: A gallant Officer, who was on the opposite side of the theatre (Colonel Evelyn) drew attention to the lecture which dealt with the question of the employment of Volunteer service. As is probably known to most of this assembly, this question has recently been much ventilated, and the most opposite views are expressed. On my own part, speaking not for a class but as an individual Volunteer, I cordially agree with the arguments advanced and the conclusion arrived at by Colonel Fletcher. It was said by Colonel Evelyn that Volunteers see time of war would not care for the life. Now, Sir, I do not suppose any man goes to war with the idea of enjoying himself, but rather with the idea of duty; and I am convinced that, in the discharge even of the arduous active service, Volunteers would not shrink from encountering danger. Equally do I hope that there are many who, in such an emergency, would be willing to sit very loosely to their civil professions and give up those professions and their prospects altogether, and who would throw themselves in a special brigade or division for service abroad. I do not think the Volunteer Force ought to consider itself greatly indebted to Colonel Evelyn for having drawn out a definite scheme by which the opportunity of service is promised to it, and I trust that, if the need arises, that opportunity will be given.

Lieut.-Colonel BUSHBY, Rifle Volunteers: The gentleman who has just been speaking has partly taken out of my mouth what I was going to say. I wanted to say that I result to your lecture. I do so with great diffidence, because two letters from Lord Elcho and the Honourable Charles Lindsay speaking again being employed for foreign service. If war should unhappily break out

¹ As political subjects are not allowed in the discussions at the meetings, I thought myself called upon to stop, but I believe that without infringe the rules, and after having alluded to the reaction in other countries against conscription, in which the assailant trusts to the power of compulsory service, might have added that, when the great amount of physical force which is required by that means is compared with the smaller figures shown by the voluntary system, we must likewise compare the want or the amount of inherent moral force in each of these systems will respectively promote.—T. S. L. A.

every man that can come forward will be required. I think it would be an excellent thing if the Government opened a small office somewhere near Charing Cross to take the names of men who would go into foreign service. I will confidently assert that out of the 190,000 you could soon get up a brigade of say 3,000 men for active service abroad, and officered in a very short time, and might be fed from that very body which we keep in England as a Reserve. There are thousands and thousands of young men who pay no taxes to the State, living with their families, and who might very well go forward and show that the middle class were ready as the upper and the lower classes to face danger and death. I think a body of men might be a beginning, and might be fed from the Volunteer ranks. In all events, I am quite sure if war were forced upon this country you might get that body a small beginning, say 3,000 drilled men, from whom you could, such as I see before me, you would get, not only good, but desperate soldiers.

Mr. LOWE (Queen's Westminsters) here made some remarks regarding the colours into action, and regarding the colour of the fighting dress of the troops, not being *à propos* of the subject of the lecture they are not given.

Colonel FLETCHER: There are very few points that I have to add in regard to what Major Wetherhead said, my lecture was upon the Land Forces, not the Naval Reserve Force. I think the Naval Reserve Force is a most excellent topic for a lecture. I agree with Sir William Codrington that the great thing is to avoid a ballot if we possibly can, and all that I hint at is a ballot for the Militia for home defence, which I thought we might have recourse to. The object of my lecture was to show how universal if it is to be avoided, is only to be avoided by extending the channels of and increasing the means by which an army may be raised. I must thank and Colonel Bushby very much for their remarks with regard to the Volunteer which are very valuable as coming from Officers who have had so much experience of that force. I am very glad to find that my opinions coincide.

The CHAIRMAN: I think I may venture in one word to take the meeting with regard to the valuable paper which has been read, and I thank my friend Colonel Fletcher for it. I say our friend because he is alike to the Army and of the Auxiliary Forces. Several burning questions have been discussed, and foremost is that of conscription. I must say I am an Englishman to depend more upon the spirit of the people for keeping the sinews of war. But in an emergency the ballot may be resorted to to put up the Militia, and if we have to do that it would not be at various English institutions; it is not long ago indeed since the ballot was that, that, however, would only be a very partial operation, and very different from general conscription, which would greatly injure commercial interest was made by our gallant friend, in the early part of his lecture, to the effect of employing our Indian troops, and I think that is a very important point for us to consider. I have heard it said more than once in this country that if we have war with Russia we might reckon upon India to furnish a contingent of troops. Now, I have served several times in India, and lately commanded there, and I am bound to say that in such a war I would go into with the greatest confidence at the head of sepoy troops, especially the Sikhs and the Gurkhas. But there is one point that must be rectified before they can be brought to join in a Russian War, and that is in the tactical organization of the troops. The European Officers are too few. They are well trained, well educated, but they are too few, and the tactical duties assigned to them are faulty. There are only seven Officers to a regiment of infantry, and no mounted. At my first inspection of a regiment, I asked their tactical distribution in field movements. They knew of none, except to suppose the regiment marched past, six Officers followed the last company, having command whatever. The companies are commanded by natives very well, but they are incapable of tactical knowledge.

Upon one occasion, at a field day, I purposely drove a brigade through rough ground, but such as infantry might have to work through in action; it was not a single European Officer to be seen with one of the regiments; but

back, they were all choked off behind. Therefore, although doubtless it would be a great thing to employ native troops in a European war, still it is very different tactical arrangements to those adopted at present. Our Volunteers joining the Army, which was another of the subjects, exists much difference of opinion; our military system is composed of three branches serving under the provisions of their respective Acts, the regular Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers. Then there are two subsidiary Acts, the Army and Militia Reserves. Now four of these admit of service abroad. The Volunteer Act keeps the Volunteer at home; he is enrolled under that Act for the purposes of home defence. Nevertheless, it is only natural that the whole country be imbued with a desire to maintain the honour of England abroad as well as its defence at home. The only question is how best to be accomplished. It has been proposed to organize battalions, of those Volunteers, who desired to serve abroad; and I dare say that it would be very glad on an emergency to authorize such battalions of Volunteers under selected Officers, to be enrolled for that purpose. They would belong to the Army; they would not be any longer Volunteers under the Act of 1863. Speaking as an Army Officer, I would welcome in them men who are become almost seasoned soldiers by this time. But as a Volunteer, I should say, "God speed you as Volunteers to the Army, but not as Volunteers under the Act." My gallant friend mentioned also the advisability of instruction in the event of war, and I entirely agree with him; it is absolutely necessary. But instead of selecting the sites of those camps in strategical localities, I would be inclined to have them near their homes, and within easy reach of railways, in fact near railway stations, so that the men should be able to follow to a certain extent their own pursuits, and at the same time receive instruction in large bodies to fit them for their duties. I have nothing more with which to detain you, but request that you will accept of me in thanking Colonel Fletcher for his very able paper.