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ARMY RE-ORGANISATION;
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE INFANTRY
OF THE LINE AND MILITIA.

*By Colonel JAMES D. LEGARD, p.s.c., Commanding Yorkshire Artillery
Militia and East Yorkshire Infantry Volunteer Brigade.*

Wednesday, February 9th, 1898.

General The Right Hon. Lord CHELMSFORD, G.C.B., in the Chair.

The CHAIRMAN :—It is my pleasing duty to introduce to you Colonel Legard, who has kindly consented to give us, this afternoon, a lecture upon what I may almost style the burning question of the day—certainly, so far as the military members of the Service are concerned. It appears that the civil community at large are also taking a very intelligent interest in this question. Colonel Legard has passed the Staff College, he has been appointed to the command of a Brigade of Volunteers in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and he is also in command of an Artillery Militia Regiment; therefore, I am sure we shall feel that whatever he has to say upon this important subject will have been well considered. As I have read it myself, I cannot help adding that I think his views have been very clearly and explicitly set down in the lecture which we shall now listen to.

LECTURE.

THE military requirements of our Empire appear to be twofold: we must have absolute security at home—security for our homes, our ports, and food supply; we must also be able to strike quickly and powerfully at any foe who may threaten our material interests abroad.

We need not include in our considerations a land war in Europe. If we had the need or desire to undertake such a war, we have not, and cannot have, the means. Our land forces, as compared with those of any of the European Powers, are, and must remain, numerically contemptible. On the other hand, elsewhere than in Europe, our sea power should enable us to act on sea and land against even a combination of European Powers with a tolerable certainty of success.

To meet sudden, often unforeseen, but usually temporary emergencies, our military system should be elastic. It should be easily expanded when required, and as easily contracted when an emergency has passed away.

There are other considerations of a permanent character which must be kept in view. Under this head would fall the occupation of India or Colonies and coaling stations, and the discharge of other similar functions which cannot be left over until war has commenced or become imminent.

On this last consideration will depend the strength of our Standing Army in time of peace. It is not proposed to discuss in these pages what that strength should be, but rather to assume that this point has been settled, and to propose means by which the other earlier named requirements may be adequately met. An addition to our Standing Army, as foreshadowed by the Secretary of State for War, may or may not be necessary. It will be sufficient for our purpose to take our land forces as they stand now, and to propose an organisation equally suitable for the existing or for an increased establishment.

To attain absolute security at home, the numbers and quality of a possible invader's troops must be considered. To discuss all the arguments which may be brought forward as to the possible strength of an invading Army would be beside the present purpose. There are, however, good grounds for believing that no nation would attempt a serious invasion of England with less than 150,000 infantry; and it is doubtful if an enemy would be able to land a much larger force than this in any period of time that would be at his disposal. The quality of the invader's Army cannot safely be assumed to be inferior to that of the best Continental troops.

An officer of distinction, who has recently had opportunities of seeing the Armies of France and Germany in the field, has stated¹ that he does not consider our Auxiliary forces, constituted and organised as they are, capable of meeting the troops of either country with a fair chance of success. It will, therefore, be my endeavour to suggest, in connection with the re-organisation now proposed, a means by which a portion at least of our Auxiliary forces may be brought up to a higher standard of efficiency.

Some writers appear to assume that our Navy renders any invasion impossible. If that be so, we require no Home Defence Army at all. The existence of such an Army implies the belief of those responsible for our defence that invasion is not impossible. We need not therefore further discuss this point. But even if we assume that our Navy *can* render an invasion impossible, is it wise to exact that duty of it? Such a course would, I imagine, tie a considerable proportion of our sea strength to the immediate neighbourhood of our shores and harbours. Surely it is preferable that our fleets should not be thus hampered, but should feel themselves free to attack the enemy wherever and whenever he appears most vulnerable, and protect our main lines of commerce. To secure this liberty to our Navy, it seems of paramount importance that our land forces should be equal to giving a good account of an invader who may have succeeded in crossing the Channel during the temporary absence of our fleet.

But a great war with a European Power, if not a remote contingency, is at all events an incident of infrequent occurrence. For once that we are engaged in a European war, we are probably engaged a dozen times in military operations on a small scale. Since the war with Russia, we

¹ Lecture given by Colonel E. T. Hutton, C.B., A.D.C., before the Aldershot Military Society, 7th December, 1897.

have engaged in expeditions in China, Burma, Abyssinia, Egypt, our Indian frontier, South and West Africa. As the Commander-in-Chief told us not long ago, one of the chief attractions of the British Army is that it is always at war. We have proportionately, if not actually, a much greater number of officers in our Army with war experience than any Army in the world. Small wars, therefore, form another eventuality for which our land forces must be prepared, and for which their organisation must fit them.

To sum up, then, the duties as required of our land forces are as follows :—

1. The occupation and defence of India, our Colonies, Egypt, and our coaling stations abroad.
2. Home defence, including therein over-sea operations against an enemy.
3. The occasional despatch of small expeditions to distant countries.

Nos. 1 and 3 impose serious limitations on our system of enlistment. It is admitted on all hands that for service outside these islands compulsory enlistment is impossible, and some form of voluntary service imperative. On the other hand, for service within the United Kingdom some form of compulsion, if necessary, would seem to be permissible.

We are told by the highest authorities that a foreign or Colonial Army, as separate and distinct from our Home Army, is, in the interests of discipline, undesirable.

The problem, then, is to provide a single Army which will meet the above requirements, subject to the limitations which they entail.

The proposal now submitted is broadly as follows :—

1. To adhere to voluntary enlistment with modified short service for foreign and colonial purposes.
2. To adopt a form of short service with or without compulsion, adaptable to home defence and foreign expeditions.
3. To relieve our Army stationed abroad by detachments only, and not by detachments and complete units, as is now the case.
4. Re-organisation and increased efficiency for the Militia.

It is proposed in this paper to deal with the infantry only. It is probable, however, that, with some modifications, the artillery might be similarly treated.

Taking our present normal organisation of an infantry territorial regiment, we have two Regular battalions, one abroad and one at home, a regimental depôt, and two Militia battalions. There are, however, considerable variations from this state of things. Not counting the Guards, we have 69 territorial regiments. Two of these (King's Royal Rifles and Rifle Brigade) have each four battalions of Regulars. The remaining 67 have two battalions each. There are thus 142 Regular battalions in all. Of these, 62 are at home, and 80 abroad. The Rifle Brigade has one battalion at home and three abroad. Eight regiments have both Regular battalions abroad.

Then, again, of these 69 territorial regiments :—

3	have 4 Militia battalions each, or total	..	12
8	" 3 " " " " "	..	24
33	" 2 " " " " "	..	66
25	" 1 " " " " "	..	25

Total, 69 territorial regiments with, in all, 127 Militia battalions.

Under the proposed re-organisation, every territorial regiment will have an equal number of Regular and Militia battalions. We shall want, therefore, 142 Militia battalions. To do this, we must redistribute some of the existing units, and raise fifteen additional Militia battalions.

The regimental depôts in their present form will disappear.

With the exception of the King's Royal Rifles and Rifle Brigade, each territorial regiment would be normally as follows :—

1st Battalion	abroad on Establishment No. I. ¹	
2nd	" at home on	" No. II.
3rd	" at Regtl. Dist. Hd. Qrs.	} on Establishment No. III.
4th	" " " " }	to include both battalions.

The Rifle regiments will remain as at present, each with—

2	battalions abroad on Establishment No. I.
2	" at home on Establishment No. II.
4	" at home on Establishment No. III. doubled.

Apart from uniformity of organisation, there seem to be good reasons for equalising the number of Militia battalions. With one exception, the Royal Fusiliers, all the regiments with three, and one with four, Militia battalions, are in Ireland, where the population is decreasing. On the other hand, the populous and increasing county of Lancaster has three territorial regiments with only one Militia battalion each. The populous centres of Cardiff, Halifax, Leicester, and Newcastle only produce one battalion each. The two Yorkshire regiments belonging to Pontefract, representing the Leeds and Sheffield districts, have also only one Militia battalion each. The Royal Highlanders, Perth, and the Gordon Highlanders, Aberdeen, might surely also be represented by more than one Militia battalion. Moreover, any system of compulsory enlistment must be based on population, and for this reason also some re-distribution of the existing Militia battalions would seem to be desirable. Equalisation of territorial battalions was contemplated under Lord Cardwell's scheme, the idea being that every 100,000 population should provide 1,000 soldiers.

ENLISTMENT AND TERMS OF SERVICE.

India, the Colonies, and Egypt.—Battalions abroad would be on Establishment No. I., and comprise non-commissioned officers and men enlisted for general service only. For these units the present so-called short-service system, with some modifications, would suffice. The first period of service in ordinary cases would be divided thus :—

- Two years with the home battalion.
- Six years abroad.
- Four years in the 1st Class Army Reserve.

¹ The proposed establishments are given in Appendix I.

Inducements, however, should be given to encourage non-commissioned officers and the best soldiers to extend their service to twelve years, and then to pass into Section D 1st Class Army Reserve, with the guarantee of employment in civil life; a proportion of non-commissioned officers to be allowed to serve on for twenty-one years and pension; deferred pay to be given either in the form of increased daily pay, or divided into smaller sums and given as an annual Reserve bounty.

Home Defence and Foreign Expeditions.—The home battalion on Establishment No. II. would comprise a full complement of officers, and non-commissioned officers enlisted for general service.¹ This battalion would also contain all men enlisted for general service of less than two years' service. These men would receive a higher rate of daily pay.

For service with the home battalion, a proportion of men would be enlisted for home service and Reserve, with the same liability to service as the present 1st Class Army Reserve. These men would serve two years with the colours and ten years in the 1st Class Army Reserve. A proportion of them should be liable to be recalled to the colours, with their own consent, for small wars during the earlier portion of their Reserve service. During this period they would also be liable to be called up for annual training for a period of from twenty-one to fifty-six days with the home battalion. As an inducement to undertake this liability they should receive a daily rate of Reserve pay, and a bounty at the termination of their annual training, at the same rate as that of the Militia Reserve. The periods of Reserve service for these men might possibly be fixed at six years, with liability to be called up whenever wanted, and four years without such liability. These periods, however, would have to depend to some extent on the numbers who accepted this liability. Men who were discharged after two years' colour service, with liability to ordinary Reserve service only, would receive no Reserve pay, but should report themselves annually in their respective districts, and receive a bounty on so doing. They would not be called up for annual training.²

¹ "General service" here means liability to serve abroad when required with a battalion of the territorial regiment. All recruits should be enlisted for a territorial regiment, and no man should be compelled to serve in any other regiment without his consent.

² To make the proposed arrangements as to Reserve Service somewhat clearer they may be stated as follows:—

The 1st Class Army Reserve would be divided in sections—A, B, C, and D, as at present.

Section A.—As at present (empty).

Section B.—As at present. (Men from the battalions abroad) and transfers from Sec. C.

Section C.—As at present; but after two years' colour service only—liability to serve whenever wanted. Reserve pay and annual bounty; annual training; after five (or six) years in Section C to be transferred to Section B for remainder of engagement.

Section D.—As at present, with the addition of men discharged after two years' colour service and without liability to serve except in case of great emergency or imminent national danger.

At any time during his colour service, a soldier enlisted for home and Reserve service only should be allowed to volunteer for general service. Men are deterred at present from enlistment because they do not like to commit themselves to the certainty of a considerable number of years' service, and the strong probability of having to serve abroad, until they get an idea of what a soldier's life really is. A considerable number of men now enlist in the Militia, with the intention of joining the Army if they find the duties to their liking. A Militia recruit may at any time before receiving his bounty claim his discharge on the payment of £1. An Army recruit, on the other hand, is only allowed to claim his discharge within three months of his attestation, and then has to pay £10 for the privilege. After that period, discharge by purchase cannot be claimed as a right by a soldier, and is only granted as an indulgence. A Militiaman, on the other hand, may purchase his discharge at any time, the payment required not being more than £2 under any circumstances, but usually £1.

The recruit on joining the Army will then have the choice of several alternatives.

1. He may join for general service, with the prospect, if he is a good man with some education, of becoming a non-commissioned officer, serving for twenty-one years, and gaining a pension and drawing increased pay during the whole of his colour service.
2. He may enlist for general service, and after eight years join the Army Reserve for four years with Reserve pay.
3. He may enlist for home service for two years with ten years' Reserve service, no Reserve pay, and liability for service only in case of imminent national danger or great emergency.
4. He may enlist for home service for two years, with Reserve service and liability to general service at any time when wanted and to annual training, receiving Reserve pay and bounty for accepting this liability.

All officers and non-commissioned officers would be liable to general service, and should take their turn of foreign service according to roster. A period of foreign service would always, when possible, be succeeded by at least an equal period of home service.

Home Defence Only.—There remain the 3rd and 4th Battalions of the territorial regiment on Establishment No. III. For these the terms of service would be the same as those prescribed by the Militia Acts when the ballot was in force, viz. :—

Six months' preliminary drill.

Twenty-one to fifty-six days' annual training.

Five years' service, with option to re-engage for a further period of five years.

One-fourth of the establishment of these battalions would be enrolled as now for the Militia Reserve, and liable to general service under certain circumstances. It would, however, be desirable to vary the Reserve

Forces Act, 1882 (Sec. 12 (1)), to some extent, to enable a proportion of these men to enrol themselves for general service at any time when required. They would thus be available to fill the ranks of the 2nd Battalion for small expeditions, and they should be granted an additional £1 bounty for so doing. I have little doubt that nearly all Militia Reservemen would accept these terms if they were offered. The Militia Reserve is very popular at present, and in my own regiment I have always more candidates for it than vacancies.

A certain proportion of officers on Army service and an ample number of non-commissioned officers on general service would be posted to the 3rd and 4th Battalions on Establishment No. III., and these battalions would, when not called up for training, perform the duties of the regimental dépôt. The establishment of officers on Army service for these two battalions would be the same as intended for the dépôts under Lord Cardwell's scheme. During the non-training period two companies under each of the 3rd and 4th Battalions would, in fact, form a 4-company dépôt. When both these battalions were called up for training, or on mobilisation, the establishments would be completed in officers from the Reserve of Officers or officers now serving as Militia officers. Tables given in Appendix show the proposed establishments under all circumstances.

The effect of these arrangements would be as follows:—

1. The battalion abroad would be maintained at its effective strength by a constant supply of well-drilled and mature recruits. At least a moiety of officers and non-commissioned officers would have been some years with the battalion and have experience of foreign service. Anyone who has served in India must have observed the helplessness and inefficiency of a unit newly arrived in that country, and which a residence there of two or three years is necessary entirely to overcome. It is probable also that retaining a proportion of seasoned soldiers abroad for their first period of service would materially diminish the waste through invaliding which occurs under our present system. By the constant interchange of officers and non-commissioned officers with the home battalion the discipline and traditions of the regiment would be maintained. It was stated recently in the *Times* that the 1st Battalion Rifle Brigade was to return to England last January from Singapore and Penang, after an absence abroad of seventeen years. Probably the only portion of the battalion returning with it which accompanied it abroad in 1880 will be the mess plate! There seems to be practically no difference between a system which leaves units abroad permanently with constant reliefs by detachments and one which allows a battalion to remain abroad for seventeen years. Interchange of stations between India, Malta, Gibraltar, Egypt, and the Colonies would, of course, go on as at present, if, and when, thought desirable.

The objection to a foreign or Colonial Army appears to be based mainly on the experience of the old East India Company's troops at the time of the mutinies. The state of things then existing was, however, entirely different from what is here proposed. In the Company's service officers and men spent the whole of their service in India, and were

quite out of touch with the Home Army. Under the present scheme every officer and non-commissioned officer would spend at least half, and probably more than half, his colour service at home, and would be relieved at short periods (say four or five years). Every soldier would have spent the first two years of his service in the home battalion.

2. For foreign expeditions a battalion would be brought up to its war establishment by calling to its ranks general service reservists and the whole of, or volunteers from, the Militia Reserves of the 3rd and 4th Battalions.

On the departure of the 2nd Battalion the 3rd Battalion would be brought up to Establishment No. II. and receive all men of less than two years' service destined for the battalions abroad. The places of the Militia Reserve men of 3rd and 4th Battalions called out in permanent service would at once be filled as provided for in Reserve Forces Act.

3. For home defence the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Battalions would be mobilised, and form a three-battalion Regiment, two or more such Regiments forming a Brigade.

The only case where some difficulty might arise would be when a 2nd Battalion is ordered abroad in time of peace and cannot be augmented from the Army or Militia Reserve. If hostilities were not anticipated the step would probably not be a matter of urgency, and would have been foreseen long enough to raise the establishment of general service men by additional recruiting. In any case, with a sufficiently elastic Reserve Forces Act, a portion of the Militia Reserves might accompany the unit, they being gradually withdrawn and their places taken by men enlisted for general service. There is little doubt, however, that for a short period of foreign service as many men as were wanted would be obtained by volunteers from the territorial battalions remaining at home. Some modifications of the Militia Act (Sec. 18 (1)) would, however, be necessary.

RECRUITING AND THE BALLOT.

The question arises whether we should obtain the number of recruits we want under the proposed scheme by voluntary enlistment, and, if not, what is the alternative?

Taking the average of the last ten years (as shown in Army Returns, 1897), we require for India, the Colonies, and Egypt some 10,000 infantry recruits annually. As we now enlist about 20,000 line infantry recruits for general service annually, there is no doubt that we shall get 10,000 without difficulty, especially in view of an increased rate of pay and other advantages. Not only so, but we shall be able to dispense with "specials," and take further precautions with regard to the age of our recruits.

On the scale proposed in Establishment No. II. each battalion will want about 85 recruits annually enlisted for home service, or about 6,000 annually for our 71 battalions. This will give us a Battalion Reserve of 500 men in their first six years' period of Reserve service. My belief is that for short service at home under the proposed conditions these men would

be obtained. But if not, inasmuch as recruits for the home battalions are enlisted for home service only, I can see no reason why compulsory service in some form cannot, if necessary, be applied. We have at various times in our history adopted the principle of compulsory service for home defence; in fact, it still exists in the annually suspended Ballot Act for the Militia. All that is necessary is to demonstrate its necessity. I am convinced that if the Government would go to the country and say, "We want so many men annually for our Home Army and Militia, and unless we get them we cannot guarantee your immunity from invasion," the country would find the men, and if voluntary enlistment failed, then by compulsory service.

Moreover, it appears to me essentially unjust that the onus of finding recruits should be thrown upon the Military Department of the War Office. The duty of the Military Department is to ascertain the military needs of the country, and to train, supply, and equip the national forces. The duty of finding men and money should fall on the country itself.

We should require some amendment of the Militia Ballot Act, so that it might apply to all forces raised for home defence only, and to let it take effect when and where necessary to supplement voluntary enlistment. The latter has always been recognised as a means of filling the ranks, even when the Ballot has been in force. It is not improbable that most districts would find means of furnishing their quotas by voluntary enlistment rather than allow the Ballot to take effect.

Substitutes would be allowed, as under the existing law. It would probably also be desirable to make a money payment, or a fixed period of service as an "efficient" in the Volunteers with a reduced money payment, a means of avoiding the Ballot. The effect of this would be to draw into the Volunteers men belonging to the middle and lower middle class who now rarely serve in the Auxiliary forces in any capacity.

The county quotas, being now the same as those fixed by the Militia Act, 1852, would have to be revised by Order in Council, having regard to the changes in population which have taken place during the last forty-five years.

Under the existing law, dating from 1757, the lords-lieutenant and deputy lieutenants are responsible for the application of the Ballot. The fines leviable for not raising the quota would then be paid by Quarter Sessions. County Government having now passed out of the hands of Quarter Sessions into those of the County Council, a change in the machinery for putting the Ballot in force would probably be necessary. The Ballot might be made an "adoptive" Act, *i.e.*, it would be in the power of the local authority (County Council) to adopt the Act if they thought proper. The duty of finding the county quota would be thrown on the local authority. They would then, in case of any deficiency in the quota, have the alternative of paying the fine (at present fixed at £10 per man) or of putting the Ballot in force to get the men. The County Council (or one of its committees) would settle the quota for each parish or district, and on the Parish or District Council would fall the duty of administering the Ballot within their own areas.

Whether it be desirable or not to apply compulsory service to our Regular Army for home defence, it certainly should be applied for the Militia if the latter cannot otherwise be maintained at its full establishment.

One of the great obstacles in the way of recruiting is the reluctance of employers of labour to give employment to Reservists or Militiamen. An instance was quoted recently in this theatre (during the Prize Essay-discussion) of an employer who posted notices in his works that no Militiamen need apply. As a practical remedy I venture respectfully to suggest that a clause should be inserted in the Army Act rendering any employer who refuses work to a Reservist or Militiaman, on the grounds of his military service, liable to a substantial penalty. I would also suggest that anyone having in his employ one or more Reservists or Militiamen should be able to claim a rebate of Income Tax or Inhabited House Duty in respect of every man so employed. We pay a retaining fee for horses in private employ and liable to Army service. Why not do the same for men?

Appointment of Officers.—To increase the efficiency of third and fourth battalions, I think some change should be made in the appointment of officers. I propose that about half the officers and all the non-commissioned officers above the rank of corporal should have Army service. Under the proposed scheme it will be noted that one commanding officer and one major of these battalions and eight company officers are Army officers on full pay. I would fill at least half the remaining vacancies, above the rank of subaltern, by retired Army officers. Liability to service in a third or fourth battalion should be made a condition of appointment of all Army officers to the Reserve of officers, and all retirements on gratuity or to pension should carry a similar liability. At present there are 368 majors and 405 captains in the Reserve, few of whom are doing duty in the Militia: sufficient to supply field and company officers to 100 battalions on the scale shown in the tables.

The junior ranks of Militia officers are to a large extent filled by Army candidates. The only qualifications, however, for a Militia subaltern are—17 years of age, good moral character, and a medical certificate of fitness. The last, however, is not considered sufficient to qualify him for the Army without further medical inspection. So far as mental qualifications go, his mind may be a perfect blank. Many units too are lamentably short of their establishment.

To improve the class of officers and to fill their ranks, I would advocate a proposal that has already been made, I think in this theatre, by Lord Raglan, viz., that service in a Militia battalion should be made the only road by which infantry officers could enter the Army. A candidate for the Army, before entering the Militia, should first pass a literary competitive examination based on the modern side of our best public schools. He would then be appointed to a third or fourth battalion, and, while serving there, should undergo a course of garrison instruction, followed by a qualifying examination in the four military subjects. Sandhurst might be retained as a school of instruction for junior officers in practical field work and equitation, which cannot

conveniently be carried on in a garrison class. Officers would be appointed to the Army according to the places gained in the literary examination. Some inducement should be offered to tempt candidates to pass the literary examination direct from a public school.

A word or two in explanation of the establishments given in the table.

Establishment No. I. has, for convenience, been taken at the present Indian establishment. It differs only from the present colonial establishment by an increase of one lieutenant and twenty privates.

In considering the numbers shown on Establishment II. it should be noted that, taking the average of the last ten years (as mentioned above), we require for India, the Colonies, and Egypt some 10,000 infantry recruits annually. Each of the sixty-nine territorial regiments would, therefore, be required to furnish, on the average, 145 men annually to the battalion abroad. As these men on enlistment serve two years with the home battalion, the establishment of privates for general service is taken at 300. In addition to the men enlisted for general service, the home battalion on Establishment No. II. will require a sufficient number of men enlisted annually for home service to maintain its establishment of privates at the total laid down for home defence (824). As these men are enlisted for two years with the colours and ten years in the Reserve, the maximum number of recruits serving at any one time is taken at 170, half of whom would pass annually into the Reserve.

I estimate of these 800 Reservists about 500 would be G.S. Reservists in their first period of Reserve service, and 300 in their second period. To these would also be added the foreign service Reservists coming from the battalion abroad. We should have also some 400 Militia Reservists liable to general service, 300 of whom would be added to the 500 G.S. Reservists of the 2nd Battalion when the latter was made up to its war establishment for a foreign expedition.

Officers, non-commissioned officers, etc., have been retained at the present establishment of an infantry unit serving at home.

Establishment No. III. comprises the cadres of two battalions, formed into four companies for the purpose of enlisting and drilling recruits. The officers would be on Army service and the non-commissioned officers, etc., taken from those on the general service list. For training or mobilisation they would be divided equally between the third and fourth battalions. The number of recruits required annually should be sufficient to maintain both these units at the home defence establishment, and therefore double the number required by the battalion on Establishment No. II.—340. This would give about 500 men per battalion in their first period of Militia service; and, say, 300 re-engaged men in their second period.

The numbers of non-commissioned officers may seem excessive, but a good many of them would be employed on recruiting duty, and it would probably be desirable that all recruits for the second battalion enlisted for general service should be drilled for at least three months at the regimental headquarters. It is also desirable that as great a

number as possible of well-trained non-commissioned officers should be available for the third and fourth battalions when trained or mobilised.

The numbers shown in the column headed "Reserves" show the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men required to bring the battalions up to their establishment for mobilisation or training. Some of the subaltern officers, though shown in this column, would, as Army candidates, be in reality serving with one of the home battalions.

Some provision would be required for the discharge of duties, other than regimental and recruiting, which now devolve upon an officer commanding a regimental district. The inspection of the Volunteers and all matters connected with their administration and mobilisation might be transferred to the officers commanding Volunteer brigades. The preliminary arrangements for the mobilisation of the three home battalions, including pay, clothing, and equipment of Reservists, mobilisation, stores, and transport, would remain in the hands of the lieutenant-colonel on Army service at regimental district headquarters. A Reserve officer of rank, with a suitable staff, should be detailed to take up the depôt duties when all three battalions had been mobilised and had taken the field.

To make a rough estimate of the comparative cost of my proposals, as compared with the proposal to add 12 line battalions to the Army, I have worked it out on the basis of daily pay only. Under the scheme suggested, 71 battalions on Establishment No. II. with 71 double battalions on Establishment No. III., and 15 additional Militia battalions, take the place of 62 battalions on present home establishment, 12 additional such battalions, the regimental depôts and the present Militia permanent staff. I call the latter proposal *A*, and mine *B*. It then appears to work out as follows :—

A.

62 battalions now at home as per	
Army Estimates, 1897-8, at	£
£20,061 6s. 3d. - - -	1,243,791
Regimental depôts, as per Estimates - - - - -	198,079
Militia P. S. annual pay, as per Estimates - - - - -	200,700
12 additional battalions, at £20,061 6s. 3d. - - -	240,735
	<hr/>
	£1,883,305

B.

71 battalions on Establishment	£
No. II., at £15,920 15s. 5d. -	1,130,450
71 battalions on Establishment	
No. III., at £8,969 9s. 5d. -	636,834
15 additional Militia battalions for training only, at £1,580 -	23,700
	<hr/>
	£1,790,984

This shows a small balance in favour of *B*, as regards pay only. There would, however, be the clothing and equipment of an additional number of men to set off against this. If the colonial battalions were brought up to the Indian establishment, there would be a further increase, due to the pay, clothing, etc., of 21 lieutenants and 420 privates.

We should have then available for foreign service (if all second battalions are at home) 6 battalions of Guards and 71 battalions of infantry of the Line, sufficient infantry for 3 army corps.

For home defence we should have, including the Guards, 219 battalions of infantry, or sufficient for 9 army corps. Assuming for the moment (a very big assumption, by-the-bye) that we had cavalry and artillery, etc., for this force, we should have an available field army of 300,000 men. At any rate, we should have upwards of 260,000 infantry to oppose to the 150,000 invaders which we assumed as his probable maximum.

It must be borne in mind also that for a foreign expedition, certainly in Europe and probably elsewhere, we should be able to use at least some of the 21 battalions now serving abroad, elsewhere than in India, their places in garrison being taken by newly mobilised battalions from home.

My object in reading this paper is not to attempt to lay down a cut-and-dried scheme, for which, indeed, I am not presumptuous enough to claim either the ability or knowledge. I desire to throw out some ideas in the hope that they may lead to discussion by those who are better qualified than myself to speak on this question. Some of the objections to my proposal are obvious, and others will no doubt present themselves to those who have had the patience to listen to my remarks.

I stated when I began that our organisation should be elastic—easily expanded and as easily contracted. Most of our present difficulties arise from the fact that some of our linked battalions have both units abroad. If that state of things is likely to be permanent, no doubt the simplest remedy is to increase the number of battalions at home, which is understood to be the intention of the Government. But is the present state of affairs likely to be permanent? Our policy in the past has been to withdraw our troops from our Colonies so soon as the latter can stand alone. When I joined the Army there were, I think, some 20 battalions of infantry, a regiment of cavalry, and 6 batteries of field artillery in Canada—now we have no troops there at all. Probably the time may come when we may withdraw our troops from the Cape. We profess to intend to withdraw eventually from Egypt. We may possibly hand over the defence of some of our coaling stations to the Navy and Marines. It would seem, therefore, not impossible that the present inequality may right itself, and we may want to contract our Home Army just as now we want to expand it. It is for this reason I propose, instead of raising fresh battalions for general service, to bring up to a permanent establishment one of the territorial Militia battalions in the case of each of those 8 regiments which have both Regular battalions abroad. Apart from convenience and economy, I believe such a step would have the best effect on the Militia service in proving to them that they are in reality part of our first line of defence.

I do not propose any alterations in the linked battalion system, which has now been in force nearly 30 years. On the contrary, I propose to develop it. The system has not yet had a fair chance, nor have the full intentions of its authors been carried out. The system caused much heart-burning at its commencement. Military traditions die hard. Units with splendid records resent being affiliated with others less distinguished, both being buried under an alias. But since those days new traditions have been formed, and more recent battles and campaigns inscribed on the colours of the linked battalions. Speaking as an outsider, I really do not know which battalions of the Derbys, the Dorsets, or the Gordons carried the Dargai heights. If you break up the linked battalions, how are you to divide the honours of the last 27 years? On the other hand, I should regret to see a new linking take place if that is what is meant by setting up four battalion depôts, as foreshadowed by the Secretary of State. What the Army wants in these matters is finality. As an old gunner, I speak feelingly on this matter. In the whole regiment of Royal Artillery (horse, field and garrison) I think there are only three batteries of horse artillery which retain the designations under which they were first raised. And yet there are many batteries, with glorious traditions, whose present officers and men would feel several inches taller were they acquainted with their previous history.

It may be urged that your home battalions are still nothing but depôts for the battalions abroad, and even on a lower establishment than before. This is no doubt true, but there are, I think, compensating advantages which might lead officers to reconcile themselves to this state of things. In the first place, although they are training a portion of their men for the foreign battalion, they are also training those whom they themselves will have to lead in war. In the second place, their unit will annually be made up to a full establishment when the general service Reservists are called up for training. Thirdly, since every officer will take his turn at comparatively short intervals with the foreign battalion, he will again command men for whose training he has laboured. Then, again, Army officers serving with third and fourth battalions, instead of spending the whole year licking recruits into shape at a regimental depôt, would for one month annually take part in the training of a battalion on a full war establishment. Officers who have had experience of regimental depôts can speak with more authority than I on this subject. But I must confess that it does seem a waste of power, and not likely to bring out the best qualities of officers or non-commissioned officers, to keep them in small depôts, training often an infinitesimal number of recruits.

I have no doubt whatever that the proposals now made would have the best effect on the Militia. The officers' cadres would be completed. The men would be trained and led by officers and non-commissioned officers, the majority of whom would actually be on Army service or have passed some years in the Army.

Would my proposals help recruiting? I think they would. As I have already pointed out, we should want a much smaller number of general service men—probably not more than half of the number we are

getting annually now. We should still get these men and could adhere more strictly than at present to recruiting regulations. It is, of course, impossible to say with certainty what the results of any new departure will be. As I believe, one of the main difficulties at present in the way of recruiting is to get men to pledge themselves to a lengthened period of service. With a short two years' service, men would come in out of love of change and of military life to be found in most young men. Once in the ranks, those who liked a military career would remain—men with any character or education would have a permanent employment open to them—others who thought they could do better in civil life would go into the Reserve; of these, again, I believe the great majority would accept the liability of the General Service Reserve in exchange for the substantial advantages it would offer them.

To sum up very briefly the above proposals, they are:—

1. A Foreign and Colonial Army with an eight years' colour service, four years' Reserve service with option of 21 years and pension in some cases—relieved by detachments only from the Home Army.
2. A Home Army with two years' colour service and ten years' Reserve service.
3. A Reserve divided into two classes—one with liability to general service whenever required, with certain corresponding advantages—to meet the case of small wars—the other with liability for service in case of great emergency or imminent national danger only, without reserve pay, but a small annual bounty.
4. A more efficient Militia maintained, if necessary, by the Ballot.
5. The abolition of the present regimental depôts, substituting for them the cadres of the 3rd and 4th Battalions.

APPENDIX.—ESTABLISHMENTS.

	Cost.										
	I.	II.		III.	Annual rate of Pay.						
		Re-serves.	Re-serves.								
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		
Lieut.-Colonel ..	1	1	—	1	328	10	0	328	10	0	
Majors ..	4	3	—	1	247	17	11	991	11	8	
Captains ..	5	6	—	4	211	7	11	1,056	19	7	
Lieutenants ..	9	8	—	4	118	12	6	1,067	12	6	
2nd Lieutenants ..	8	4	—	16	95	15	3	766	10	0	
Adjutant ..	1	1	—	1	302	12	1	302	12	1	
Quarter-Master ..	1	1	—	1	164	5	0	164	5	0	
Sergeant-Major ..	1	1	—	1	91	5	0	91	5	0	
Bandmaster ..	1	1	—	1	91	5	0	91	5	0	
Quarter-Master-Sergeant ..	1	1	—	1	73	0	0	73	0	0	
Sergeant I.M. ..	—	1	—	1	59	6	3	—	59	6	3
Orderly Room Sergeant ..	1	1	—	1	45	12	6	45	12	6	
Colour-Sergeant ..	8	8	—	8	54	15	0	438	0	0	
Sergeant-Drummer ..	1	1	—	1	42	11	8	42	11	8	
" Pioneer ..	1	1	—	1	42	11	8	42	11	8	
" Cook ..	1	1	—	1	42	11	8	42	11	8	
Sergeants ..	32	24	—	24	42	11	8	1,362	3	4	
Drummers, Buglers, etc. ..	16	16	—	16	19	5	5	308	6	8	
Orderly Room Clerks ..	1	1	—	1	30	8	4	30	8	4	
Corporals ..	40	40	—	40	30	8	4	1,216	13	4	
Privates—General Service ..	900	300	—	—	18	5	0	16,425	0	0	
" Home Service ..	—	170	800	340*	18	5	0	—	—	—	
Totals and Annual Cost ..	1,033	591	—	449	£2,171	3	2	£24,887	10	0	
								£15,920	15	5	
								£8,969	9	5	

* Serving for six months only.

Major-General R. L. DASHWOOD:—I agree with a great deal of what the lecturer has told us, especially with what he says with regard to the deferred pay and giving further inducements to men to prolong their service and serve twelve years with the colours, and then go on to the Reserve. But I differ with him altogether when he speaks of the linked battalion system, which he more or less approves of. He says, in the first place, the linked battalion system has not had a fair trial; I think thirty years is a fair trial for anything on earth. He goes on to say that if these battalions were unlinked—which I sincerely hope they will be—it would be very difficult to say how the honours were to be distributed. Then he goes on to tell us he does not know what battalions were engaged in the Dargai heights. Perhaps not, but that could be found very easily by reference to Hart's Army List. With regard to the new history which he says they are going to obtain, of course that means they would have a new regimental tradition, the old *esprit de corps* having been more or less knocked on the head. We have heard of that before. We have been told by the War Office, when they drew their pen through all the old regimental histories, that we were going to have a new regimental history and a new *esprit de corps*, founded more or less on the territorial system. But surely, gentlemen, an *esprit de corps* founded on the mere accident of locality of birth is a very different thing, and not to be compared with an *esprit de corps* founded on gallant feats of arms which have been performed in the last hundred years. We know very well that in the old days it has happened in war that regiments in battle in great stress have been reminded of former gallant deeds. We have read that at the battle of Corunna, Sir John Moore said: "Highlanders, remember Egypt." We have heard and read that at the battle of Inkerman, when the 57th—the old "Die-Hards"—were hard pressed, that someone cried: "Fifty-seventh, remember Albuera." Such a cry to the Middlesex Regiment would be but an empty sound. Now I altogether deny that to shorten the service, as has been done since 1870, for the purpose of obtaining a Reserve (a very good thing) it was necessary in any way to interfere with the old regimental system. You might, if you liked, have added county names to regiments as they stood. Many of them had county titles in addition to their numbers. It was perfectly possible that regiments should have retained their numbers, and each battalion been able to feed itself. A battalion at home should have its *depôt* with the head-quarters: it is the best place; a regiment abroad must have a *depôt* at home: it has been recommended by soldiers in very high positions that we should return to the old *depôt* battalion system, more or less. I have served with several *depôts*, and they were very good and efficient and not expensive. There was a large number of soldiers there, and plenty of men to drill, and I was drilled in one of these *depôt* battalions many years ago. Why, instead of leaving us alone and shortening the service and having a Reserve, did they double up the battalion? Well, we all know very well what the powers that be think most of. In the first place they want economy, and, in the second place, efficiency. If they can palm off on the public a spurious efficiency, and at the same time get credit for economy, they are all right. I suppose it occurred to those gentlemen, the War Office clerks sitting there with their books and figures before them, "We have hitherto been put to some expense with regiments coming home from India, which had men with several years to serve. (In former days, some of these men volunteered to stay in the country; no man could be forced to do so.) We will make the soldiers interchangeable so that we may put them, like a match, from one box into another, which goes off as well in either, and we shall save some money, instead of sending all these men home." These War Office civilian officials knew nothing about the Service, and they entirely ignored human feelings and human nature. We know that Napoleon, the man who best of all others knew how to deal with men, said that the moral as to the physical was three to one. Therefore, these officials invented the present system of linked battalions, and all the rest of it, which was in fact cheap and nasty. Now it often happens

that a thing that is cheap and at the same time nasty turns out in the long run to be both dear and bad, and I think that has been the effect, more or less, of this system. The result has been that men have been chucked about from one regiment to another, which they very much dislike. When a man has made his home in a corps, and has his comrades and so on, he does not like being sent off to another one. That, I have no doubt, has had some ill-effect on recruiting. I remember once when I was in India I happened to be away from my regiment for six months, and during that time an officer exchanged into the battalion to command it. He was a very smart officer, and a good man. At the end of his six months when he went away, time expired, and I came back to succeed him, I remember saying to a sergeant I knew well, who had met with an accident, "How are you getting on?" He said, "Very well, Sir," and added: "We are all very glad to see you back, Sir, we like the old faces best." There is a good deal in that—the old faces. Men now have not so much chance of seeing the old faces, and everybody knows that a regiment which has, been together for some years, where men and officers know each other well, the bond of union between all ranks is strengthened, *esprit de corps* increased, and discipline is improved and made more easy; and without discipline there can be no efficiency. Since this new system was brought into play there have been several commissions. One was Lord Airy's Commission, or Committee, I forget which, composed of very distinguished soldiers, and they recommended large modifications to the present system. Their commission was shelved; it did not suit the civilian authorities. Then there was the commission of Lord Wantage. That, I think, was packed to some extent, and the documentary evidence which was sent home by Lord Roberts I have good reason to know was burked. Not only that; but they put Sir Arthur Halliburton, a civilian, a glorified clerk, upon the commission in order to wreck it. No doubt he did wreck it. Sir Arthur Halliburton made a report by himself and went dead against all the opinions of the officers, and, therefore, no action was taken as regards the finding of this commission. This shows that if the opinions of officers differ from those who are in power we are set at naught. In fact, the officers of the Army—more especially the regimental officers—are in the position of Galileo: the civilians have the power to do exactly as they like, whether they are right or wrong. There is one point which the lecturer has not touched upon. I think if you are going to have a voluntary Army you cannot do without pensions. I am aware that pensions were done away with because it was said they were expensive; but if you want a thing good you must pay for it, whatever it may be. People forgot when they did away with these pensions in former days that they were in reality offering less money and less inducements. We should have pensions for men who serve with the colours their full twenty-one years on the expiration of that service. We do not want every man to serve his twenty-one years: we want a mean; we do not want to go back to the old system: we want a mean between the old and the new. We want more men to serve twelve years with the colours, and possibly a few exceptional soldiers, 18 to 21 years with the colours. The regiments then at home would not be entirely ruined, as they are—"squeezed lemons," as a high authority has called them. Every man who enlists with the idea of a pension of course hopes to live to enjoy it; but in the ordinary course of human nature some will not. Therefore, if every man who enlisted were bound to serve 21 years—say seven years with the colours and 14 with the Reserve, or 14 with the colours and seven with the Reserve, and had a deferred pension at the age of, say, 50, according to the time he had served with the colours, I think it would have a good effect. Many men of the right stamp will not enlist now because they do not think the bargain is good enough.

Captain A. V. J. COWELL (2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade):—The lecturer has said in his admirable paper that England cannot, under any circumstances, effect

large landing on the Continent. I respectfully suggest that we should be in a position to land 150,000 across the Channel within twenty-four hours, and that we would thereby gain great prestige. In this paper I presuppose that all money difficulties have been overcome. This being so, there are about half-a-dozen ways in which the problem for supplying an efficient service for Great Britain can be solved. The way that I consider the best is as follows:—At present there are approximately 82,500 infantry abroad and 54,000 at home; these men being distributed amongst the battalions who are stationed—in India, 46; in Colonies, 34; at home, 67. The first question that requires to be settled, in view of our extension of frontiers, is: (a) The number of effective men required in peace, and (b) the number required for war. According to the opinions of experts, I suggest for (a):—India, 50,000; Colonies, 33,000; home, 25,000, ready to march at six hours' notice; for (b):—the same numbers for India and the Colonies; at home, a mobilised force of 300,000 men capable of being mobilised in three days and ready to proceed anywhere, with a further force of 300,000 for home defence, and a local force of 20,000 men for the defence of the Colonies. Owing to the great difficulty already experienced in obtaining the number of recruits required for the Regular Army, it is obvious that in order to obtain a still larger number special inducements must be resorted to, and I suggest:—

1. That greater inducements should be offered to those bringing recruits.
2. That deferred pay should cease, and that a man should receive a clear shilling a day.
3. That on completion of seven years' service a man should be granted six months in which it is optional for him to return to the colours, in order to complete his twelve years' service, on the understanding that during those five years he will receive one and threepence a day, and will then be relegated to the Reserve for ten years.
4. That all Government and municipal appointments should, as far as possible, be granted to old soldiers. Owing to the present system having failed to obtain sufficiently effective home battalions in time of peace, I propose, in order to overcome this difficulty, that the following arrangements in regard to organisation be adopted:—

1. That battalions should be named and quartered as at present.
2. That the service company, 250 strong, be introduced, and should become the tactical unit instead of the battalion.
3. That for the purposes of enlistment, drafting, training recruits, etc., the infantry be divided into eight corps, viz., Guards, Light Infantry, Fusiliers, Royal regiments, English and Welsh regiments, Scotch regiments, Irish regiments, Rifles.
4. That the foreign battalion should consist of four complete service companies. That ten battalions at home should consist of five service companies, and that the remainder (about sixty) should consist of one service company and three cadre companies, thus giving a force at home ready to march of: ten battalions, 1,250 strong (allowing for casualties), 10,000; sixty companies, 250 strong (allowing for casualties), 15,000; total 25,000.
5. The strength of the cadre companies to depend upon the needs of the portion of the corps abroad, and of the service company.
6. That in the event of small wars, the service companies above referred to should be formed into composite battalions of their own corps. Now turning to the far larger question of Class B, we must admit that in order to obtain such a great number of men, ballot must be resorted to, and it only becomes a question of discovering the means whereby this may be applied with the least harm to the State, hardship to the individual, and cost to the nation, having a due regard to efficiency. Of the 300,000 men required to be available to leave England, we may assume that 60,000 may be expected to belong to the Regular Army and its Reserve, leaving 240,000 men available for foreign service, and 300,000 available for home defence, to be obtained from other sources. I suggest, to obtain these numbers:—

1. That the Militia and Volunteers should be amalgamated, and called the Auxiliary Force.
2. That ballot should be enforced, that substitutes and exemptions be permitted.
3. Obligatory service in this force should be from the

age of twenty-five to thirty-five. 4. That it should be a territorial unembodied force with a training similar to the Volunteers, clashing as little as possible with the men's private callings. 5. That 44 per cent. should receive pay of sixpence a day, and form the force for service abroad. These men should always be under military law, and should be more highly trained than the remainder of the force. 6. Schools and colleges should be obliged to include drill and tactics in their syllabus. 7. That all officers receiving a pension or gratuity should be held to serve with the Auxiliary Force till physically unfit. 8. That all those seeking commissions in the Regular Army should be obliged to serve for three years in the Auxiliary Force. 9. That a corps of officers should be trained to assist in the training of this force, and a due proportion of men who have gone through the ranks should be with it in time of peace. With regard to these figures they are merely given as examples in order to get the correct numerical figures for the various Army departments.

Colonel H. H. A. STEWART (late Donegal Artillery Militia):—I have noted two or three salient points in the lecture, which I have read and listened to with very great interest and attention. The first point I wish to refer to is this—and regarding it Colonel Legard has rather taken the wind out of my sails, because he has now interpolated a parenthesis. He says: "An officer of distinction who has recently had opportunities of seeing the Armies of France and Germany in the field"—"in the field," I suppose, is a euphuism for manœuvres—"has stated that he does not consider our Auxiliary forces good enough to meet the troops of either country, man to man, with a fair chance of success." Well, my lord, I have seen the troops of both those countries in the field—that is, at manœuvres—and I have also seen a large body of Austrian troops at manœuvres, and if Colonel Legard, in speaking of the Auxiliary forces, refers to the Militia,¹ which presumably he does, I, as an old Militia officer and as an officer who served for over twenty years in the Regular Army—I commanded my County Militia for seven years until the other day—I unhesitatingly state that, man to man, so far as physique goes, the Militia can well hold their own against any of the men of those Armies. And more than that, inasmuch as the soldiers composing those Armies are conscripts and our Militiamen are free men, *à fortiori*, they are superior to the conscripts of the Continent. It is admissible for me to disagree with a distinguished officer—and distinguished officers on Service questions very frequently disagree amongst themselves—but I make no claim to be a distinguished officer myself. The next point is where the lecturer says: "The Royal Highlanders, Perth, and the Gordon Highlanders, Aberdeen, might surely also be represented by more than one Militia battalion. Moreover, any system of compulsory enlistment must be based on population." Very good. "Equalisation of territorial battalions was contemplated under Lord Cardwell's scheme; the idea being that every 100,000 population should provide 1,000 soldiers." I do not think that Colonel Legard can have studied this point of his lecture with as great attention or accuracy as I have. I have paid particular attention to this, because I served for several years in one of the very regiments he mentions—the old Gordon Highlanders. I am not a Scotsman, I beg leave to say, though I am from Scotia; a Scot from Ireland—and Scotia was the old name of Ireland and gave its name to Scotland. He proposes that the number of the Highland battalions, which already amount, including the Militia battalions, which are most important, to 22, should be increased by two more, that is, they should be 24. But to do that, on Lord Cardwell's basis, would require a population

¹The committee on the Militia, presided over by Lord Harris, in its report, in 1890, recommended that the title "Auxiliary Forces" ought not to include the Militia, which force should be designated by its own proper title, and this recommendation was complied with down to, I think, the year 1894, in all official documents, etc.; since then the title of the Militia has merged in that of the "Auxiliary Forces," but under what authority I am unaware.—H. H. A. S.

of 2,400,000. What is the population of the Highlands? It is under 400,000. That is, taking the population of Scotland, which is sufficiently correct, at four millions, the population of the Highlands is one-tenth of the population of Scotland. What have the War Office done? They have called upon Scotland to raise as many regiments from the Highlands (and I beg leave to suggest, in parenthesis, that Highlanders have exhibited a great "backwardness in coming forward" as soldiers in the Regular Army for the last generation or more) as the whole of the rest of Scotland with a population of 3,600,000. Next the lecturer goes on to say: "Anyone who has served in India must have observed the helplessness and inefficiency of a unit newly arrived in that country." I have had three tours of service in India. In my second tour I went out with a battalion which had never served in India during its existence. I was one of three or four officers who had served in India before, but not a single non-commissioned officer or man had ever put foot in India. Although I served in the 92nd in India several years I could not detect the slightest symptom of helplessness or inefficiency on the part of the battalion I speak of, and in corroboration of that I should like to ask those present to carry their memory or knowledge of history as far back as the Mutiny, about forty years ago, when some twenty or thirty battalions were suddenly landed in India. A large number of those battalions had never set foot in India before, but they made very short work of the mutineers. They did not display any helplessness; they did not display any inefficiency. The fourth point I wish to comment upon is that Colonel Legard—though "in plain clothes," or under ordinary circumstances, I am sure he would be a most good-natured and amiable man—in speaking about maintaining the Militia at its proper establishment, shows himself to be a good deal of a coercionist. He says if it cannot be maintained at its proper establishment, by all means let us enforce the ballot. Why should it be necessary to enforce the ballot, inasmuch as the voluntary system, as I said in this lecture-hall two or three months ago, has, in my experience of thirty-six or thirty-seven years, never had a fair chance. In support of that I may say that I spoke only the other day to a recruiting sergeant, who said:—"Sir, we have no chance this winter at all; it is too mild. What we want is a good hard winter accompanied by a strike. Then we get lots of them." How can you call those men voluntarily-enlisted soldiers? They are compelled by want to enlist. They have never been given proper inducements by the Government of the country to become soldiers, and the astonishment to me is that so many enlist. I am entirely in accord with the lecturer on some points. He speaks highly of the Militia Reserve. From my experience of my own county regiment for thirteen years I look upon the Militia Reserve as a most magnificent body of men. I think it is a great pity that an additional penny a day is not given, besides the retaining fee they get, but I think, at all events, any man who is a Reserveman in the Militia ought to be given a badge showing he is in the Reserve. We all know how proud the soldier is of a badge. The last observation I wish to make is this: The lecturer says, "I believe such a step"—that is, having a Militia battalion embodied—belonging to the same territorial district in which both Regular battalions are serving abroad—"I believe such a step would have the best effect on the Militia service, in proving to them that they are in reality part of our first line of defence." But, my lord, the Militia want no such proof. On the contrary, the Militia have proved to their countrymen over and over again throughout this century that they themselves, the Militia, are in reality in the first line of defence. They proved this during the Peninsular War. The Duke of Wellington testified to the same thing at the battle of Waterloo, where a large number of those who assisted in gaining the battle were Militiamen—clothed and equipped and armed as Militiamen. But let us come to the Crimea¹

¹ The strength of our Army at the Alma was 25,000. At Inkerman, 22,000; but at the conclusion of the war, in 1856, our Army in the Crimea amounted, I think, to about 50,000; moreover, the Mediterranean stations were at this time practically garrisoned by the Militia.—H. H. A. S.

and the Indian Mutiny. In the Crimean War our Army could never have kept the field had it not been for the thirty-two or thirty-three thousand men who joined it from the Militia. The same remark applies during the Indian Mutiny.

Colonel E. T. H. HUTTON, C.B., A.D.C. (A.A.G., Curragh District):—The last speaker but one has alluded to a statement alleged to have been made in the paper read by me at Aldershot in December last. In the letterpress of the proofs issued for the use of the audience, but not as he read it, the lecturer states that I had said that the troops of our Auxiliary forces—that is to say, the Militia and Volunteers—were not equal, “man to man,” to the troops of the Continent. The statement, as it appears in print, is misleading and inaccurate; what I did say was this—and I think most of you will agree with me—that our Militia and Volunteer Services, “*constituted and organised as they are*,” are not a match for Continental Armies. That is a very different statement from that with which a previous speaker has credited me, and the audience will readily admit that the real statement made by me is a very different thing to that given in the letterpress. I am obliged to the previous speaker for having given me the opportunity of making that point clear. The deductions made in the paper written by me as a lecture for the Military Society of Aldershot, and since published in the *United Service Magazine* for February, included the statement that our Militia and Volunteer systems, as the real defence force of Great Britain, are deficient in those all-important factors of organisation and administration which are essential to any effective defence of this country and of the Empire. Without alluding to the composition of the *personnel* of the Regular Army, I would invite the attention of the lecturer to the point, that he alludes repeatedly in his paper to the Regular Army as the “Home Army.” In doing so he confuses, I think, two separate issues. The Regular British Army is not a “Home Army” in the sense of an Army for “Home” defence; on the contrary, the Regular Army is an Imperial and a Foreign Service Army, an Army charged with maintaining law and order throughout our world-wide possessions, and with enforcing, if need be, our sovereign rights. Its obligations are world-wide. I think that a distinction should be carefully maintained between the “Imperial Army,” the Regular Army organised for Imperial purposes of defence, and for maintaining our sovereign rights throughout the world, and that “Home Army,” by which we mean the defence force for the protection of our shores and for such offensive-defensive operations as may be required in connection therewith. The lecturer has touched upon one very important question, and one which I am only sorry that he did not more emphasise: it is with reference to the re-organisation and increased efficiency of the Militia. It has been my fortunate lot to have been in command not only of Militia troops in this country, but also of those in one of our most important Colonies, and I may assure all gentlemen here, in this connection, that the Militia force in some of our Colonies is quite equal in efficiency to that of the Militia force in the United Kingdom. In some respects, indeed, the Militia force of some of our Colonies is in advance of that at home, inasmuch as this Force comprises a complete military unit, and includes field artillery, cavalry, infantry, engineers, and the required proportion of all those administrative departments which are essential for making an effective military force. I venture to think that it is in these very matters of organisation and administration that the military Militia system of the United Kingdom is so unhappily defective. The lecturer has also touched upon an extremely important point, viz., the enlistment for the Militia. He has urged the sub-division of the United Kingdom into definite military areas which shall correspond with our counties, from each of which distinct area or county a certain quota of Militia should be demanded upon a voluntary-compulsory system. Such quota—I would venture to supplement his remarks—should not only be infantry, but should form a complete military unit upon the Swiss Militia system. Many of the gentlemen present are doubtless aware that Switzerland is divided into military districts

corresponding with the cantons. Each such military district finds not only its quota of infantry, but its proportion of field artillery, cavalry, and administrative departments, so that the Militia force of each canton in Switzerland constitutes a complete military unit in itself, and is, therefore, available and ready to take the field separately if need be. I wish very heartily to congratulate Colonel Lègard upon his valuable paper, and upon the many practical suggestions which it contains.

Captain W. H. JAMES, *p.s.c.* (late R.E.):—In these days of destructive criticism I think we are to be congratulated that Colonel Legard has come forward this afternoon with some practical remarks. No doubt I am in the position of the majority here to-day. I have read many columns of destructive criticism, and at the end of the series of articles, or the end of the letter, there has been thrown in as a sort of make-weight a little suggestion as to what might possibly be a better way of improving the Army. The suggestions to the destruction have always borne, to my thinking, the part that Falstaff's bread bore to his sack—an infinitesimal part. But Colonel Legard has made very many practical suggestions to us, and I have great pleasure in supporting him, more especially because I made a good many of them seventeen years ago in the old Institute at a lecture I gave there "On the Best Means of Adapting our existing Forces to the Needs of the Empire." I think, as the lecturer very justly points out, that the weak point of our present military system—nay, it has always been the weak point of any military system, if we can ever really apply such a term to anything we have had—is this, that nothing has ever been properly carried out. Critics combine in abusing the present system, but they ought to know, if they do not know, that that system has never been carried out in its entirety; it has never been carried out in the way it ought to have been, if it was to be made a success. I am not going to allude to any magnified clerks or make any personal allusion, but I will suggest that there is one Old-man-of-the-Mountain that sits on any question of reform, and that is the building over the road known as the Treasury. I am a little inclined to think, if you could go into the inner workings and find out why our systems of reform have never been a success, we should see that above everything lay the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is advised by his—may I use the word—civilian clerks of the Treasury to refuse to find the needful. The late Commander-in-Chief of the Army was often very much taken to task by the papers for saying that Army reform would require money. I think he was right. To have any rational system properly worked out would at its initiation cost a good deal of money, and we have to face that if we are to have such a system. The first point we have to make up our minds upon is this, that so long as we have a Volunteer Army we must have, as the lecturer has shadowed in his suggestions with regard to enlistment, free trade in the Army. You must not bind a man down, but you must let him enlist for a long period or a short period—in fact, accommodate himself to the circumstances which suit him. The question as to whether a volunteer or a conscript is the better man, is, I think, utterly beside the case. I suppose no one seriously will put forward the statement, that conscripts have not fought as well as any volunteers that ever lived. Surely it is written in letters of blood that the great nations of Europe which have adopted conscription have fought just as well as ourselves who have the volunteer system. May I also remind the gentleman who made that statement, that at the beginning of this century we were ourselves compelled to have recourse to conscription for our own Militia, that we could not get the proper numbers without it, and that for the local Militia we had conscription, which was rigidly enforced. What has always seemed to me the weak point when we started the Cardwellian plan was this, that we never really adopted what was at the bottom of the whole system, namely, the non-relief of the foreign battalion; but to have a foreign battalion and a home battalion, and to relieve them by a roster of officers and by drafts of men, there is no hardship in that. As Colonel

Legard points out, the battalion of the Rifle Brigade now coming home will bring nothing but its mess plate of the original battalion. If that portion of the system were carried out I believe it would be much better. With regard to linked battalions, I personally think that an ounce of fact is worth a ton of theory. It is not unknown, I should hope, to a great many gentlemen here, that the regiments which were enabled to maintain their strength at the front in the Peninsular days were the regiments which had reserve battalions at home, and those that had not reserve battalions at home were unable to do so. In other words, to keep a regiment on active service it is necessary to have a battalion at home to feed it. That is a historical fact which nobody can deny. It is reiterated again and again in the Wellingtonian despatches, and is an absolute fact which it is impossible to do away with. If that be the case, surely, whether we have a hundred regiments or two hundred regiments, the double-battalion system is the best. Moreover, if you split up the link battalion, what are you going to do with the old two-battalion regiments—with those which have had two battalions for a great many years? Are you going to break them up, too? Because what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, and if it be desirable, on *a priori* grounds, to break up the existing linked battalions, then you must break up those which existed before. The argument is all one way; the declamation is the other. The papers have been full of the gallant deeds of the Gordon Highlanders at Dargai. Everybody knows that it was not the 92nd but the 75th who did it, but nobody talks of the 75th. They were very pleased to have the name of Gordon Highlanders, and when Colonel Mathias made his address he did not say "75th," he said "Gordon Highlanders," and surely that is an example of the fact that these amalgamations can take place. They have taken place in the past, and I honestly believe, after considerable investigation into statistics, that it is capable of proof that our best regiments have been local regiments, raised nearly all in one locality, and that any good system fosters that local connection and increases it by having, as I said, a battalion at home which furnishes the battalion abroad. And let me remind you that our foreign battalions are always at war strength. They do not require thousands of men to be sent abroad to make them up to war strength when war is declared. On the contrary, they are practically up to war strength always. We forget that. We leave out of our consideration the fact that we are always in a state of war, and that our infantry battalions abroad are, for all practical purposes, constantly in the field. With regard to the question of pay, I think we are all agreed about one thing, namely, that if you want a good article you must pay for it. At the present moment men are not coming forward in such large numbers. I know that on good authority. I am a little inclined to doubt whether we have not got to the end of our tether on the voluntary system of raising men, and whether we can get any more recruits for our Army as long as we adhere to the present system. Under the present inducements I doubt whether we can get more men. If you want to get good men to enlist in the Army you must have other inducements, but I do not believe that these are to be found in length of service and in a pension. I believe, on the contrary, that the best men are those who will go into the Service because they say: "Very well, at the end of my seven or eight years I know I shall get a billet. I like soldiering, and I am willing to join the Army because at the end of that time I shall have an assured career before me." A good many of us here are able to remember the old days in India; when regiments went home, numbers of men from those regiments volunteered to stop. They do not do so now, and they cannot be induced to do so. Efforts have been made lately, and although some of the so-called reformers say it must be done, and should be done, and can be done, it cannot, because the men won't do it. I say encourage *esprit de corps* in every way. I believe at present, having got the double battalions, we should stick to them, give them back their old facings, or the facing of the senior battalion; they ought to have it. Their abolition was, if I may say so, really a clerical measure. Why on

earth the Buffs should be allowed to have their old facings and the Northumberland Fusiliers not be allowed to have their old green facings is a thing that passes the wit of man. There is also a number of little things which I think are great things as affecting the comfort of the soldier, because it is the summation of little things which make up the whole. Why are the barrack-rooms not properly lighted? We all know that there is never enough gas for the men to see by. There are never coals enough to warm them. I am sure we shall not increase the National Debt very enormously by giving the soldier a little more gas and coal. These attentions to comfort and matters of that kind are great inducements for the men to enlist. Another thing: pay your non-commissioned officers very much more highly. The only way to get old non-commissioned officers is to pay them better. They will then stop for the twenty-one years, and you will get a very much better class of men than you get at present.

Captain R. D. MACDONNELL (late Madras Staff Corps) :—I should like to pay my meed of praise to the lecturer for the very valuable paper which he has provided. Whether we agree with it or not at this time, there is no doubt it will prove very useful to those who read it in forming some conclusion on this matter. There is one point which I do not think this country would ever agree to, namely, conscription. I think as the years roll on they are less inclined to do so. It is impossible to dis sever the question of the increase of the Army or the augmentation of it from the political question which is decided in the House of Commons, and I do not think you will ever bring the House of Commons to the conclusion that conscription is necessary. I may perhaps astonish this meeting for a moment if I say that it is not at all proved that an increase of the Army is necessary. There are many very able men, writers and others, who have considered the subject, who are not at all convinced that we use our Army in a way most beneficial to the country, or that the distribution of our Army is at all the best distribution of it. I would remind this meeting that during the last twenty years—let us say from 1877 to 1896—the Army has been augmented by more than 30,000 men. The real difficulty of our present situation is this, that while the forces serving abroad have been increased by 25,000 or 26,000 men, those at home have been augmented by only 4,000 or 5,000, and as the battalions at home have to fill up the vacancies caused by death, by invaliding, and by the discharge of time-expired men, the home battalions become unduly depleted, and unable to bear the strain imposed on them, and it stands to reason that the claims that are thus made upon them are too onerous and more than they are capable of fulfilling, and that the machine is liable and likely to break down. I think I am right in saying that the lecturer does not propose in the scheme he has put forward to interfere in any way with linked battalions. I think that is very wise, because the linked battalions—I have written anonymously on this subject—so far as my knowledge goes, have never been given a proper trial, simply because the battalions at home, which should feed them, are in some instances non-existent. There is one other matter I want to put before you. There is no doubt that one of the most serious difficulties we have to contend with is how to meet the drain on our forces in what are commonly known as “small wars.” We are always engaged in small wars. Great European wars fortunately do not come about so often. I cannot help thinking that with an Army Reserve of something like 80,000 men it ought to be possible to formulate some scheme by which a certain fixed proportion of those men were always ready and always liable for immediate service abroad if they were called upon. I hope most sincerely that those who are now in charge of the security of this Empire will no longer delay in bringing forward some scheme or formulating some measure by which the panics almost that at times exist in this country amongst civilians will be allayed once and for all. I think that at the time of the Jameson raid, nothing was more unfortunate, and nothing more humiliating, than to feel we had hardly any soldiers in the country to defend us. Yet I cannot help

pointing out to this meeting that we have in this country, taking our Army abroad and at home, Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, a force of nearly 650,000 men. It seems very strange that with 650,000 men there can be no organisation. What I complain of is *there is no organisation* existing by which those forces which we have can be welded together into one homogeneous whole. In an emergency it should be possible in this country to put at any moment under arms, fully equipped and ready to meet any invader, a body of at least 100,000 men.

Major J. W. H. MARSHALL-WEST (4th Batt. (Prince Albert's) Somersetshire Light Infantry) :—I will only allude very briefly to two points which were touched upon in the lecture, and which, I regret, have not been discussed. The first has reference to a matter which was raised in this hall at the recent discussion of the Prize Essay. In the lecture it is referred to in these words :—"As a practical remedy I venture respectfully to suggest that a clause should be inserted in the Army Act, rendering any employer who refuses work to a Reservist or Militiaman, *on the ground of his military service*, liable to a substantial penalty." To think that in this country of ours a man should be able to make such an announcement ! It seems to me a disgrace to us as a nation. Therefore I trust that the suggestion of the lecturer may go far and wide, and may cause very deep thought. The second point, of a somewhat similar nature, was indirectly emphasised by the remarks of Captain James, who expressed a doubt as to whether we had not reached the point at which no more recruits could be obtained under existing conditions. It seemed to me that amongst the many valuable suggestions put forward by the lecturer were those for overcoming the present difficulty in obtaining recruits, by alternative conditions of enlistment. At present the would-be recruit does not always know to what he must bind himself, and consequently he hesitates. This is illustrated clearly in the case of the Militia. Men often go into the Militia to see how they like it. They find that they do like soldiering, and so they become Regulars. In this connection arises the other suggestion which I hoped to have heard discussed. I am not prepared to offer any suggestion of my own, and for this very reason I should have liked to have heard it brought forward by someone more competent to deal with a matter of so great importance. Other nations can do it, and there would seem no reason, therefore, why we should not work out some such scheme. It was suggested to me by these words :—"Inducements, however, should be given to encourage non-commissioned officers and the best soldiers to extend their service to twelve years, and then to pass into the Second Class Army Reserve, *with a guarantee of employment in civil life*." I want to know how that guarantee is going to be effected. If some guarantee could be given, I maintain that we should find no difficulty in obtaining all the recruits we want. If there were that inducement, if men knew that there was a definite aim and honourable conclusion to their service, I do not believe we should have any difficulty at all. I thank the lecturer very much for his thoughtful and valuable paper.

Admiral of the Fleet Sir J. EDMUND COMMERELL, V.C., G.C.B. :—The lecturer has made a few remarks which I desire to answer. He says, "Some writers appear to assume that our Navy renders any invasion impossible." I will agree that some writers do so, but I think they make a very great mistake. I think myself that a combination of circumstances may arise in which the invasion of our shores, either near or far, may be absolutely within the bounds of possibility. If these writers are right, if we take no steps to prevent it, no harm will be done ; but if they are wrong, what will be the consequence ? We shall find ourselves in the worst of all cases ; we shall find ourselves with a hostile Army on our shores, and I should like to know what that would mean. When you think of what the responsibilities of the Navy are at the present day, and what they have been in the past, you will see they are very greatly increased. The Navy has to protect the food supplies which must come to our country, or we should have a starving population. A great many years ago only luxuries had to be protected, but now

it is the absolute necessities of life; it is bread and meat, and, what is more, the raw material. I am perfectly certain of this, that the next paragraph of the lecture strikes home. He says that if the naval officer, the admiral, or whatever he may be, in command of a fleet, knows that his base is protected, and knows that it is perfectly safe, he will not have to look over his shoulder to see whether he is all right before he does his duty in attacking the enemy. There is only one more point which I wish to touch on. The last speaker made a remark which I think requires a little explanation. He says that any employer who declines to employ a man because he is in the Reserve should be subjected to a heavy fine. You may depend upon it that the employer will always, and necessarily, employ the best man that he can get to do his work. That work is not only his work, but your work. Supposing, for instance, that a gun manufacturer has a contract to make a certain number of powerful guns; supposing that a fault is made in their manufacture and a tremendous accident occurs. You turn round to him and say, "Your gun is faulty; why is it?" "Because you have compelled me to employ a man who is not up to his work." I think these matters cut both ways. I am perfectly sure that employers do all they possibly can to employ those men who have been through an amount of discipline in the Army or the Navy, and are fit for the work. At the present time, I think that the old pensioners carry the field for the simple reason that an employer has a man's pension at his back as a guarantee that he will do his work faithfully and well.

Major MARSHALL-WEST:—May I say that Admiral Sir Edmund Commerell was evidently not present at the discussion referred to, when it was stated that an employer of labour in Ireland actually put up a notice to the effect that "No Militiamen need apply"; and, moreover, that I never contended for a moment that employers of labour should be bound by law to give work to Militiamen or Reservemen irrespective of their capabilities, but that, as suggested in the lecture, they should be prevented from refusing work merely *on the ground of their military service*.

Colonel J. A. FERGUSON, *p.s.c.* (Professor in Tactics, Royal Military College, Sandhurst):—The lecturer is one of my oldest friends. I have known him for thirty-five years, and he has asked me to say a few words. I knew when I was told he was going to lecture that we should only hear good sound sense from him. I think he has given us a very valuable paper, and I only hope that the authorities will study and digest it well. But although in the main I entirely agree with Colonel Legard—as I agree with his premises, and with a great many of his conclusions—may I, just in two or three words, say where I differ from him? In the first place, I think it is unfortunate that he uses so often the expression "General service" in a new sense. General service has a very definite meaning in the Army—it has not a very savoury sound to a soldier. I think, if instead of using the expression "General service," he would say "service anywhere," "service at home or abroad," or something of that kind, it would be better. Although, in the main, I agree with Colonel Legard, I doubt the wisdom of putting battalions perpetually on foreign service. That is the one grave doubt that I have with regard to his lecture. Would it not be wiser to revert to something like the old system of having a strong *dépôt* to feed the foreign battalions? The *dépôt* ought to consist of the cream of the non-commissioned officers, and the pick of the officers, and instead of being a place which would be looked upon as a "loaf," it ought to be a place where everything is done perfectly. I see no reason why, if the *dépôt* is strong enough, a soldier could not get just as good training there as with a battalion. By all means keep the battalions linked as they are at present, but I do hope the fatal system of making the home battalions feed the battalions abroad will disappear. People talk of compulsion with a kind of horror, but if men will not render the service to their country, which is their duty for their country's defence, without compulsion, then compulsion they must submit to. I maintain, as I have main-

tained before, that it is the duty of every able-bodied man in the country to render service to his country for his country's defence in some shape or form, either as a soldier for short service—two years if you like—and then service in the Reserve or as a Militiaman or Volunteer. In some way every able-bodied man, every man not disqualified by the doctors, every man not found physically unfit, ought to feel it his duty, and his duty ought to be universally acknowledged, to make himself fit, in case of need, to defend his country. If we cannot get this in some other way, then I think we must get it by means of the old Ballot Act for the Militia. Let me repeat once more what the terms would be. If the Ballot Act was enforced, as it was originally proposed, it would simply mean this—that every able-bodied man in the country, if he did not serve the Crown in some other way, would have to put in four trainings in the Militia between the ages of 18 and 30—surely not a very severe condition. If we had the Ballot for the Militia there would be no difficulty in maintaining an adequate force. I think, considering the enormous stake the country has in every part of the world, that our military forces ought to be five times as great as they are, and if we had the Ballot for the Militia (enforced to whatever extent Parliament chose) there would be an enormous increase to the trained men of the country, and in case of need there would be no difficulty in getting regiments on service up to their full strength. It is often said that every man, after doing his seven years with the colours, ought to be guaranteed employment by the country. I think we ought to encourage men more to extend their service to twelve years, and that the principle should be recognised that after he has rendered twelve years' service with the colours the country should be bound to find him employment; but I am unable to see that a man who serves for so short a time as seven years has established a claim on the country for employment. I think we ought to give the men every inducement to extend their service by increased pay, and give still further inducements to the men whom commanding officers wish to retain to re-engage for pension. The actual details of the pension are too lengthy to go into.

Colonel A. HUME (King's Own Scottish Borderers):—I only wish to speak a few words on one point of the lecture. It has been my experience that employers of labour are disinclined to employ men who belong to the Militia on account of their temporary absence for training, and a Militiaman who obtains permanent employment will almost certainly buy his discharge. Something may no doubt be said from the employer's point of view, but for us it is a very serious difficulty and a point to be kept in view and considered. But for this I am sure there would be no difficulty in keeping Militia regiments up to their establishment.

The CHAIRMAN (General Lord Chelmsford):—Before calling upon Colonel Legard to reply to the different points which have been alluded to in this discussion, I think it would be only fair to him that I should make my remarks first, in order that my objections to some part of his scheme may be added to those which have already been put in. Before doing so, I wish to congratulate Colonel Legard upon the very clear and fair way in which he has brought out the different points connected with his scheme. We may differ from him materially on the foundation of his scheme, and we may differ from him in the details of his scheme, but I think everybody will admit that, according to Colonel Legard's lights, he has made out a very workable scheme. Whether it is advisable to adopt that scheme or not is a matter for individual opinion. I wish to point out what I think is the spirit in which Colonel Legard has written this lecture, that is where he states:—"My object in reading this paper is not to attempt to lay down a cut-and-dried scheme, for which, indeed, I am not presumptuous enough to claim either the ability or knowledge." That shows the modest way in which Colonel Legard has approached this very important question, and I am sure we are all very much indebted to him for having given us an opportunity of discussing it. I will not go through the different points where, perhaps, I should be inclined to

differ from him, but I will only take the main point of objection which I have. It is with regard to the organisation of the Line battalions abroad, and the Line battalions at home. In our country the battalion unit is the one point, in my opinion, to be considered. Battalions are necessarily scattered about. Aldershot is the only place where there is any force that can be dignified by the name of a division, and it is not a division according to the foreign acceptance of the term, as its battalions change every year; the officers of the staff are constantly changing, and it is merely a division for instruction, and nothing more. If we attend to the individual battalions, and do our best to make those battalions efficient when the time comes that these battalions have to be put together into brigades, divisions, and, if necessary, army corps, we shall have no reason to complain of their efficiency as a fighting force. It has been lately said that the long-service system broke down in the Crimea. I wish to challenge that statement. The long-service battalions did not break down, but the long-service system failed because no provision had been made by the authorities to replace the men who died in the service of their country, or were invalided home from the severe duties which they were called upon to perform. Although I am not one who would wish to return in any way to the long-service enlistment, still I do hope that in any changes that may be brought about opportunities will be given to any man after serving seven years to re-engage for five years more, and if then physically fit, to serve on for pension. I am quite satisfied that by that means we shall have again efficient battalions serving at home, full of that *esprit de corps* which is maintained with such difficulty under the present system. It is on the point of *esprit de corps* that I take exception to Colonel Legard's proposals for the foreign battalions; where officers and men are changed so frequently the identity of the battalion itself would be lost, and it would be almost impossible to keep up its *esprit de corps*. The case of the Rifle Brigade battalion alluded to by Colonel Legard does not seem to be an analogous one, as, although there perhaps might only remain the mess-plate to represent the original composition of the battalion when it first went on foreign service, still its identity during those seventeen years of absence was never lost, and it no doubt retained that *esprit de corps* which is always found so strong in the Rifle Brigade. It has never been denied that our battalions serving abroad are efficient fighting units; it is the home battalion system that we want to improve. Unless those battalions are strengthened in numbers, and are allowed to have a larger proportion of re-engaged men in their ranks, I do not see myself how those battalions can ever be made really fit for active service, even under the present system; under the scheme proposed by Colonel Legard, however, in my opinion, they would be even more inefficient. A two-years enlistment would mean that all the home battalions, in the event of the Reserves being called out at a time of a serious national emergency, would practically be made up entirely of Reservist rank and file, many of whom would have been for a very long period of years absent from all military discipline and instructions. Colonel Legard no doubt contemplates periodical training for all Reservists; but I question whether such a scheme could possibly be carried out. I will not detain you at this late hour, but will ask Colonel Legard to reply to the criticisms which have been passed on his scheme.

Colonel J. D. LEGARD, in reply, said:—I must first thank you, my lord, particularly for the very good-natured way in which you have been pleased to criticise some of my suggestions. I shall not be so presumptuous as to differ from an officer with so long an acquaintance with these matters, but I should just like to point out one important point which, I think, has not been made sufficiently clear in the remarks you made just now. Of course a great deal may be said for long service and short service, for one or the other, but I may point out that in the suggestions I have made for reducing the service to two years it differs very widely from the existing state of things. Every man who passes into the Reserve during his first period of Reserve service goes up annually for from

twenty-one to fifty-six days' training. These men having served two years in the regiment, having come up every year, up to five years, for training, would be very much more efficient than the men who now go to make up the Home battalions for war. I do not at all depreciate the value of the regimental system, and in saying that, I would like to allude to what fell from Major-General Dashwood. I do not in the least underrate the advantage of *esprit de corps* and discipline, and it may be argued that what I propose—changing officers and non-commissioned officers between the home and foreign battalions—may to some extent be liable to do away with your present excellent discipline. I would point out, however, that that is what has been going on for many years in the Royal Artillery. In the Royal Artillery officers and men have been interchangeable for years between home batteries and foreign batteries, and I should be very sorry to think that the discipline or *esprit de corps* in the Royal Artillery was in any way inferior to that of the best regiments of the Line. But as regards the linked battalion system, I must confess, that looking at it as a whole, I am, personally, strongly in favour of it. I believe it is the only system by which you can get an adequate Reserve, and, at the same time, connect your battalions with the districts from which they come, and the only way in which you can maintain your territorial connection. Although it would be a great pity to, in any way, lose the present regimental traditions, yet I cannot help thinking that in due time those traditions will apply just as well to linked battalions as they have done in the past to certain individual battalions, and that, at the same time, you will maintain your strong territorial connection. I look forward to the territorial connection to a very large extent taking the place of that purely battalion *esprit de corps*, which has been so useful an instrument of discipline in the past. I do not think there are many other points of importance to which I need allude. Colonel Stewart pointed out very justly that the population of the Highlands was not sufficient to maintain a large number of Highland regiments. That is a thing very much to be deplored. We wish the Highlands were more populous than they are, but at the same time it is a very well-known fact that Highland regiments do not contain a large proportion of Highlanders, even if they contain any Highlanders at all. Colonel Stewart also took exception to my saying, that battalions when they first arrived in India are more or less inefficient. I think what he said rather supported my argument, because he also told us that he and one or two other officers had had previous experience in the country. I have no doubt it was due to their presence in the battalion that the battalion found itself so efficient. I wish everybody in this room and outside this room may hear what has been said by Sir Edmund Commerell as to the possibility of invasion. I believe that is a point we want to bring home to the country. One speaker asked if it were thought possible that we should have conscription in this country. My belief is, that if we get the country to believe that without conscription or ballot, or some form of compulsory service, invasion is possible, there is no doubt whatever that we shall have compulsory service. I have only to thank my audience for the very kind way in which they have listened to my remarks.