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The Education and Training of Infantry Militia Officers

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Friday, April 10, 1891.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL A. J. LYON-FREMANTLE, C.B., Deputy
Adjutant-General for Auxiliary Forces, in the Chair.

THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF INFANTRY MILITIA OFFICERS.

By Captain R. HOLDEN, 4th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very glad to find myself on this occasion amongst an assembly of Militia Officers. I have heard rumours, I hope not very widely extended, that, on account of the supposed greater popularity of the Volunteers, the Militia is sometimes rather neglected at the War Office. Now, if that is so, I must, on behalf of His Royal Highness and of the Adjutant-General, repudiate it to the utmost extent of my power, and in the strongest language that I can use. As regards myself, I can only say that if His Royal Highness, or the Secretary of State, suspected for one moment that I looked upon the Militia with anything but the greatest sympathy, my position at the War Office would have been perfectly untenable, and I should not have kept it as long as I have. I think I may appeal to many of the faces I see here, gentlemen who have done me the honour to call upon me at the War Office, and I may ask them whether, under any circumstances whatever, I have shown any want of sympathy with the Militia. I hope I have endeavoured always to meet any Militia Officer's views as much as I could, and to do all that was possible for the advancement of that Service. With regard to the civil side of the War Office, of course I know perfectly well that all branches of the military Service are rather like the daughters of the horse leech, crying always, "Give, give;" but I think that the Secretary of State has quite lately shown sympathy with the Militia by increasing the Militia Estimates by 50,000*l.* a year. With these few remarks I will now introduce Captain Holden, a very enthusiastic Officer, I may say, of the Militia, who is so zealous that, not content with his Militia work, he has become Adjutant of the 1st Cadet Battalion of The Queen's (Royal West Surrey Regiment), a battalion which is doing most admirable service, and from which I hope the Army may derive great assistance on account of popularizing the Service amongst the lower classes of our London population.

I FEEL that it is more than venturesome for an Officer of my age, rank, and limited experience to undertake to read a paper on a subject of such importance as the education and training of Infantry Militia Officers; but I have been induced to do so for two reasons—first, because, notwithstanding its increasing importance, the subject has never been thoroughly discussed in this Institution; and, secondly and principally, because a great deal has appeared within the last few months in professional magazines and newspapers on the alleged *want* of military education on the part of Militia Officers generally: While I am convinced that, in these progressive days, a far higher

standard of professional knowledge can easily be obtained with advantage to the Officers themselves and the Army generally, I hold an equally strong opinion that Militia Officers as a body are not so deficient in military education as some of our friends would have the public believe.

I lay claim to no special qualification of any kind for the task which I have undertaken; but I venture to hope that, if my lecture is the means of bringing forth remarks and suggestions from those who can speak with authority on the subject, I shall be considered to have justified my appearance here.

It is not so many years ago that the necessity for military education was first acknowledged in England. It appears to have been an article of faith that the trade of soldiering was one which required no previous training—in fact, that the soldier was born, and directly he donned the red coat became at once impregnated with those qualities and that knowledge which in other professions had to be acquired by hard work and study. In recent years considerable advances have been made in the education of Officers, and the Militia has improved with the rest of the Army; but it is not sufficient to say that the professional qualifications of Militia Officers have very much improved in recent years. We require to know what part the Militia will be called upon to play in the event of hostilities—whether the Officers are in possession of a sufficiently high standard of qualification to enable the command of the Force to be left with confidence in their hands, and, if not, what steps it is advisable to take to ensure their better education.

In explaining the duties which the Militia will be called upon to undertake in the event of embodiment, it is unnecessary to repeat the oft-told, but soon forgotten, tale of how well the Force has served the State in years gone by; to dilate on the unanimity with which whole regiments have volunteered for foreign service; and on the patriotic spirit with which the whole Force is undoubtedly animated at the present time. We know that the Militia will be embodied upon any “imminent national danger or great emergency,” and in the event of invasion the regiments would be called upon as they stand, and would be used in the first line as an integral part of the defensive forces of the country. In the opinion of the military authorities, no military expedition could be sent abroad and maintained at its fighting strength in the event of the country being engaged in a serious foreign war, without the embodiment of the Militia. The idea of the present organization of the Army is that whenever an important expedition is despatched abroad, thereby necessitating a considerable number of our territorial regiments having both Line battalions away from the country, the Militia would be at once embodied. The normal constitution of a territorial regiment being two Line battalions, two Militia battalions, and a *dépôt*, both Militia battalions would be embodied in those regiments which had two Line battalions abroad, one Militia battalion in those which had one Line battalion abroad, and the *dépôt* would be raised to the strength of a battalion. The troops at the seat of war would then be fed by their own Militia battalions at

home, to which all recruits would be passed from the dépôt as soon they were capable of bearing arms, and for which all enlistments would be for general service. The Militia battalion would thus perform for the troops on active service functions precisely analogous to those which in peace time the home battalions perform for their twin battalions in India or the Colonies, and would actually become in all senses a part of the Regular Army; within, of course, the limit that they cannot, by present Act of Parliament, volunteer for service beyond the Mediterranean.

In fact, it amounts to saying that upon embodiment the Militia becomes part and parcel of the Regular Army, and that the Officers will have to perform precisely similar duties to those required from Officers of the Line. The question then arises, are the Officers with their present system of education and training sufficiently well educated professionally to perform those duties? The War Office authorities apparently think so. The fitness of a Militia Officer for his duties is tested, as in the Regular Army, by the promotion examinations. These are as follows:—

A Subaltern, unless he has previously served in the Regular Army and passed the examination for the rank of Lieutenant, is required, during the first year's service from the date of his appointment, to attend the annual training of his battalion, to undergo the course of musketry as laid down for recruits, and to pass an examination in the undermentioned subjects:—(a) The various formations and movements prescribed in the first two parts of "Infantry Drill;" (b) the duties of commanders of guards, together with the mode of marching reliefs and posting sentries; (c) the duties of regimental Orderly Officers and of Subaltern Officers; (d) the system of pay and messing in the Militia; (e) Practical examination in rifle exercises, aiming, and firing exercise. If an Officer fails in obtaining a certificate in these subjects, he is examined again within six months, and, in the event of a second failure, is required to resign his commission. To enable Officers to acquire practical experience in their duties and pass the required examination, they must, during their first year's service, undergo two months' instruction either at the preliminary drill of their battalions, at the headquarters of a regimental district, with a battalion of the Guards or Line, or at a school of instruction; or they can attend for one month at either of the three first-named courses, and a further period of a month at a school of instruction. It is well known that a very large proportion of Subalterns in the Militia are candidates for commissions in the Line, and that, generally speaking, they possess a higher standard of theoretical professional knowledge than the *bonâ fide* Militia Subaltern who joins the Militia with the idea of remaining in it. Candidates for the Regular Army to be successful have, in addition to passing the professional examination already alluded to before the end of the second training, to pass what is known as the "preliminary" and the "further" literary examinations before the Civil Service Commissioners. If successful in these, and recommended by their Commanding Officers, they are admitted up to the age of 23 to the competitive examination in

military subjects, which embraces fortification, military topography, the elements of tactics, and military law, in each of which they must obtain 0·25 of marks and 0·5 of the aggregate.

Before promotion to the command of a company, a Subaltern must pass an examination in (a) practical company drill, and command of a company in battalion; (b) formation of advanced and rearguards, principles and practice of skirmishing and the attack; (c) certain sections of the Army Act, Rules of Procedure, Appendices relating to General, District, and Regimental Courts-Martial, Section 6 of the Queen's Regulations on the subject of Discipline, and Sections 7 to 28 of the Militia Act of 1882; (d) Regulations respecting the Service and Bounty of the Militia and Militia Reserve, Issue of Clothing and Necessaries, Lodging and Billet Money; (e) Duties in Camp, Barracks, and Billets; (f) Chapters III and IV of the Regulations for Musketry Instruction, and the Regulations for the Militia relating to Musketry Instruction and Prizes.

Captains before promotion to the rank of Field Officer must pass an examination in the following subjects:—(a) practical battalion drill, the command of a battalion in brigade, advanced and rearguards, the duties of mounted Officers, manœuvre and route marching, riding, skirmishing, and the attack; (b) the proper mode of demanding supplies of ammunition, food, and forage, also the system of regimental orderly room work, and the proper channels of correspondence.

In addition to these compulsory examinations, all Militia Subalterns who are not candidates for the Regular Army are entitled to attend a two months' course at the School of Musketry, which is in every respect the same course which Officers of the Regular Army are required to attend. After their first year's service they may also attend a school of instruction at Wellington Barracks or Aldershot, receiving the pay and allowances of their rank in both cases. Captains may also, to a limited extent, attend both these courses and receive pay and allowances. Militia Officers may also, at their own expense, present themselves for examination in signalling, tactics, military law, field fortification, and military topography at the same time, and on the same conditions, except as regards pay, as Officers of the Regular Army; they may also attend a garrison class or signalling course.

The number of Officers in the Infantry Militia who have attended a voluntary course at a school of instruction is 450; the number who have passed in tactics is 133; 265 have obtained certificates at the School of Musketry, Hythe; and some 10 have passed in signalling. This calculation takes no account of the very large number of Officers who have been attached to Line regiments and regimental depôts for duty; of those employed in Colonial regular or irregular forces and police; or of those who have passed a garrison class, and have qualified in fortification, topography, and military law. Of the 127 Officers commanding battalions of Infantry Militia, 63 have served in the Regular Army, and others have served with their regiments on embodiment. Of Captains and Field Officers effective on 1st March,

no fewer than 270, or more than 20 per cent., have served previously in the Regular Army; and 10 per cent. have seen active service either as Regular or Militia Officers.

I think you will admit that the compulsory examinations alone present a very fair test of the Officers' capabilities, not only of practical military work, but of interior economy; a test which all Officers now serving, except a very few appointed as Captains prior to 30th October, 1871, have successfully passed; and that taken with the additional statistics they are a sufficient proof that Militia Officers are not so devoid of professional education as some critics allege. For not only do they possess every qualification which the authorities demand of them, but a large proportion have over and above that gone out of their way to qualify in special subjects, regardless of inconvenience and sacrifice of time, and at their own expense.

But though they may be fairly efficient and qualified to perform the duties required of them, it must be admitted that there is still room for very great improvement. These are days of progress, days in which great strides in the matter of professional education are being rapidly taken in the Regular Army and auxiliary forces, and the time would appear to have arrived for Militia Officers to take a step forward also. This I am perfectly certain they are all not only willing, but anxious to do, if the Government will only show that it is in earnest in desiring of them a higher standard of professional education.

Let us take the several examinations which Officers are called upon to pass, from Subaltern upwards, and the courses open to them. A recruit Officer, in addition to attendance at the annual training and the recruits' musketry course, has, as already noticed, the option (1) of being attached for two months' instruction to either a regimental dépôt, (2) to a battalion of the Guards, (3) or Line, or (4) he may attend the preliminary drill of his own battalion; or (5) he may attend for one month at either of these, and a second month at a school of instruction. It may be a matter of opinion as to which of these courses offers the best opportunities for acquiring professional knowledge; though I think that there will be a consensus of opinion to the effect that a regimental dépôt, unless a very large one, is the least desirable course to which to send a young Officer; the opportunities there afforded rarely extending beyond the drilling of a few recruits, and the experience of duties being not unfrequently confined to a barrack guard of one sergeant and a couple of privates.

(2.) In the case of the Guards it can scarcely be considered as being attached to a regiment, because the Militia Subalterns do not live in barracks, are not attached to the mess, and learn next to nothing of regimental life or interior economy; while it not unfrequently rests mainly with themselves how much drill they shall even learn. If the Guards, however, do insist upon real work, there is no doubt that the drill is perfectly taught.

(3.) With a battalion of the Line a young Officer cannot fail to benefit; he is bound to obtain, in addition to a knowledge of drill, an immense amount of useful information not to be learned from

books or at a school of instruction. He is not merely attached to the regiment in name, but in reality, for he lives in barracks, dines at mess, takes his tour of duty, is taught the various duties of an Officer, and the interior economy of a regiment. If after a two months' course, he does not leave with a considerable acquaintance with drill and an insight into regimental duties, it will be due either to his own laziness or incapacity, or want of system in the regiment to which he is attached. I have heard young Officers complain that there was no definite course laid down for them, and that they were allowed to scramble through the two months with but a smattering of knowledge. Though this must to a great extent be left to the Commanding Officer and Adjutant of the Line battalion, I am disposed to think that, if a regular course of instruction were laid down for each week a young Militia Officer is attached to a Line battalion and rigidly adhered to, it would be a great advantage.

(4.) Another alternative open to the recruit Officer is to attend the preliminary drill of his own battalion, a course which I consider to be out and out the best school of instruction for a young Officer. I am very much impressed with the importance of imparting education to young Officers, as far as possible regimentally; where they have more opportunities of learning their duties, and, as a rule, do far more work and are taught it more thoroughly under their own Officers, Adjutant, and Staff. In this manner they acquire a regimental feeling of *esprit de corps*, and a love for their regiment; they get their first instruction in it, and it associates them for ever with it as their military home, and they are brought up, as it were, in the family. It associates the Officers with the men, and the men with their Officers. But in recent years the system has been shorn of many of its advantages in consequence of the substitution, to a great extent, of the drilling of recruits on enlistment, for the old preliminary drill prior to the annual training. This is felt in more ways than one, because the number of Officers allowed to be called up for duty depends upon the number of recruits, so that the drilling of recruits upon enlistment practically militates against the efficiency of the Force, because it destroys the source of instructing the young Officers.

On the whole, however, I think that the present regulations work very well so far as the instruction of the recruit Officer is concerned; and that the instruction is fairly complete and satisfactory.

Of the schools of instruction I shall speak later on.

With regard to the training and education of the Subaltern Officer before promotion to the rank of Captain, the examination which he is compelled to pass has already been given; but I think that Officers are promoted to the command of companies in the Militia long before they can be expected to be sufficiently experienced in dealing with men. The Militia regulations lay down that "Subaltern Officers who have not previously served in the Regular Forces must, unless under very exceptional circumstances, have served three trainings in order to be eligible for the rank of Captain." I believe that many Officers will agree with me in thinking that three trainings is far too short a period of qualification for the rank, and that the great ease with

which the rank of Captain can be obtained in the Militia has the effect of lowering the estimation in which it is held by Officers in the Army. Indeed, it is quite a common occurrence to see mere boys of twenty years of age gazetted to the command of companies, while in the Regular Army, where the Officers are perpetually on duty, it is perfectly impossible to obtain promotion in so short a period; and, considering that the youngest Captain in the Militia takes rank and precedence before the oldest Subaltern in the Army, I think it is most undesirable from all points of view to lower the rank by rendering its attainment so ridiculously cheap. I am of opinion that a thorough experience of regimental duty is of the highest importance in educating and training an infantry Subaltern; and I would remind Officers of the words of the general order issued to the Army on the death of Sir John Moore: "Sir John Moore from his youth embraced the profession with the feelings and sentiments of a soldier; he felt that a perfect knowledge and an exact performance of the humble but important duties of a Subaltern Officer are the best foundations for subsequent military fame. . . . In the school of regimental duty he obtained that correct knowledge of his profession so essential to the proper direction of the gallant spirit of the soldier." I consider the command of a company in the Militia to be one of considerable importance and responsibility; and, holding that view, I am of opinion that, under no circumstances, should a Subaltern, unless he shall have served at least two years in the Regular Army, be considered eligible for promotion to the rank of Captain until he has served at least six trainings, and passed a more severe examination for the rank than is now required. The examination for the rank of Captain, so far as it goes, is all very well, but it does not go far enough, it is too rudimentary; and I should propose (1) that, in addition to the present examination, a Subaltern should be in possession of a certificate from the School of Musketry, Hythe, because I think it is of the greatest importance that we should in the Militia, by gradual process, establish the system which prevails in the Regular Army under which the Captain is the instructor of musketry to his company. (2) I should require a Militia Subaltern to pass the examination in tactics required of Subalterns in the Army before promotion. Some Commanding Officers have already made it a rule in their regiments, and I hope they will favour us with their opinion as to how the system works. (3) I should require him to obtain a certificate from a school of instruction, but not in the same course that prevails now, because I consider it hardly suitable to the requirements of the Militia. I think if the qualifications for the rank of Captain were raised in this manner it would not deter one single Officer whose services are worth retaining, while it would make the examination a stern reality and an indisputable proof of an Officer's fitness. I consider an inefficient Subaltern to be worse than none at all, and paying him a waste of public money; and I, as a Captain, would far sooner carry on the work of the company alone than have attached to me a young gentleman not thoroughly up to his work.

The question of the promotion of Officers from the rank of Captain

to that of Field Officer I hold to be one of still greater importance; and, considering the large number of eligible Officers retired from the Regular Army who are willing and anxious to accept commissions as Field Officers in the Militia, I am strongly of opinion that the qualification for the rank should be very considerably raised. The present examination is out of all proportion to the importance attached to the position, which, upon embodiment, becomes evident, and upon active service would be forcibly illustrated.

I don't think that any Captain should be eligible for promotion to the rank of Field Officer until he has served at least six trainings in command of a company; has obtained a certificate from the School of Musketry at Hythe; has passed the examination in tactics required of Officers of a similar rank in the Army; and has obtained a Field Officer's certificate from a school of instruction. I should permit each of these subjects to be taken up separately, and to be extended over the six years; and propose that Officers be granted the pay and allowances of their rank while undergoing instruction. The position of a Field Officer, with the probable eventual command of a battalion, could then by no possibility become a sinecure.

Although it scarcely comes within the scope of this paper, I have been asked to refer to the case of Adjutants of the Militia. I am not aware that any question has arisen with respect to their professional qualifications, but gather that an opinion is prevalent amongst Commanding Officers that the present system under which Officers of the Army are appointed to the Militia for five years as Adjutants has not been found to work altogether satisfactorily. It is not with the individual that fault can be found, but with the system, and particularly with the system as it affects battalions whose headquarters are situated at the headquarters of the regimental district. Upon the Militia Adjutant depends to a very great extent the welfare of the whole Militia service, and the efficiency of the Officers; and whether it would be preferable to revert to the system of appointing retired Officers, allow Army Officers to go on permanent half-pay to take up Adjutancies of Militia for ten years, or appoint properly qualified Militia Officers, I am not prepared to express an opinion; I may, however, perhaps be permitted to go so far as to say that what Commanding Officers appear to require is an Adjutant who shall be their Adjutant not for one month in the year only but for twelve months in the year. I trust that Commanding Officers may express their views upon this point.

The next point to be considered in this paper is the various voluntary courses of instruction which are placed at the disposal of Militia Officers, and which I should like, as far as possible, to make compulsory, these are:—(I) Hythe, (II) schools of instruction, (III) tactics, (IV) signalling, (V) fortification, military law, and topography.

I. *Hythe*.—I must admit that the greatest advantages which have accrued to the Militia in recent years have been in connection with musketry; and the whole Service is, I am sure, grateful for the introduction of the regulation under which all Subalterns of Militia, whether they have in view the musketry instructorship of their battalions or not, are permitted to attend a course at the School of

Musketry, and receive their pay and allowances. This cannot fail in time to prove of the greatest advantage to the Force, as it must have the effect of gradually leavening the senior ranks with men experienced in the Hythe system, and so removing that prejudice against musketry which even now exists in some battalions. The only drawbacks in so far as the system affects Militia Officers, are that the accommodation at Hythe does not always admit of all applicants being allowed to attend the course, and that Captains are to all intents and purposes not permitted to go. The requirements of the Regular Army must, of course, be first attended to; but I venture to suggest that the formation periodically of special courses at Aldershot limited to the Militia, at which accommodation could no doubt be found for sixty Officers at a time, might dispose of the first difficulty. The question of the Captains is far more important. Under present regulations Captains are only permitted to proceed to Hythe with the view of their appointment as Instructors of Musketry, and upon a certified statement that no Subalterns are available. I should like to see this rule altered. I consider it of the utmost importance to the efficiency of the Officers and rank and file that the Captains of companies should be in possession of a Hythe certificate. I may be told that that is what the authorities are endeavouring to introduce gradually, which is, no doubt, the case; but it must be apparent that under this regulation none of the present Captains in the Militia can ever hope to qualify in musketry. I think that they, to commence with, have the first claim, apart from its being of greater importance for them to be in possession of the certificate than Subalterns; and I would therefore suggest that the regulation under which Subalterns are permitted to attend at Hythe be temporarily suspended until all Captains have had the option of going through a course. This need entail no extra expense worth speaking of.

II. *Schools of Instruction.*—I think that one of the first things to be done is to alter altogether the present system of instruction at these schools. I am strongly of opinion that, constituted as they are at present, they fail to satisfy the requirements of the Militia, and I know that this opinion is held by many Officers, especially by the senior Officers who would be anxious to go were the course a more advanced one. No one will, I hope, for one moment imagine that I think that Officers are indifferently taught at Wellington Barracks or Aldershot. I have had experience of the Wellington Barracks school, and in my humble opinion the instruction imparted there is, as far as it goes, perfect; and I can conscientiously say that I learned, thoroughly, more drill there in one month than I learned before or am ever likely to learn again in the same time. Nothing can exceed the completeness and finish of the system of drill taught there, or the earnestness and attention bestowed upon the Officers by the Commandant, the Adjutant, and the non-commissioned officers; and I am told that at Aldershot it is the same. But I consider that both schools fail to meet the requirements of Militia Officers for the simple reason that they only teach—admirably of course—what can or ought to be sufficiently well taught for all practical purposes in their own regi-

ments under their own Officers and Adjutants. I do not pretend to say that it is possible, in a month's training, with every hour fully-occupied otherwise, to instil into Officers such a thorough knowledge of company, battalion, and brigade drill as is so perfectly taught at Wellington Barracks, and I believe at Aldershot. But I am one of those who, though I fully value the importance of steady drill, believe that too much importance is attached to battalion and brigade drill in the majority of Militia regiments, to the prejudice of more practical work. I admit that it is all very interesting, and very agreeable to the eye of an inspecting Officer whose warm commendation it frequently elicits. But, from a serious point of view, I am of opinion that the short time allotted to the annual training of a Militia regiment does not justify so much attention being devoted to mere parade movements and useless brigade drill, especially when, as Lord Wolsley tells us, "in respect to the battalion and brigade evolutions required during an action, the worst Militia regiment could do enough for all practical purposes."

I therefore suggest that, if the space at Wellington Barracks will not admit of it, which obviously it will not, the course at the School of Instruction at Aldershot be confined, in alternate months, to Militia Officers, and that it should embrace such training as they have not the means of acquiring in their own regiments. The four weeks' course might be arranged more in the manner of the present course of field training, and include the attack and defence of a position, fire discipline, skirmishing and attack formations, hasty entrenchments, defence of posts, advanced, rear, and flank guards, reconnoitring, and outpost duty. I feel sure that such a course would be far more attractive to Officers than the present one, and certainly far more instructive and valuable.¹

While on the subject of schools of instruction I cannot help alluding to what appears to me to be a very unsatisfactory arrangement in regard to the attendance of Officers and the question of their payment—an arrangement which is perfectly incomprehensible to the Militia Officer, as it entails no question of economy. According to existing rules, if a Subaltern attends a school and obtains a certificate, he receives the pay and allowances of his rank for the number of days the course lasts, provided that he has not done more than one month's recruit training at the dépôt, with a Line battalion, or elsewhere in that year. If he has undergone two months' recruit training in that year, he is not allowed pay when at the school, but can obtain it by waiting till the year following. In the same manner a Captain, who has already obtained the School certificate for that rank and received the usual pay and allowances, may attend a school for the purpose of obtaining a Field Officer's certificate, but must do so at his own expense. Both these restrictions appear to me to be unwise and unfair, and they bear on their faces an anomaly, for the

¹ Captain H. J. Craufurd, Grenadier Guards, the Commandant of the School of Instruction at Wellington Barracks, has very kindly furnished me with full particulars of the system of instruction imparted at his school, from which it is apparent that the course is as extended as the limited space will possibly admit.

payment is allowed in the case of a Subaltern in the following year, and in the case of a Captain, he may on promotion to Field Officer attend a school of instruction, and obtain the pay of a Field Officer, more than he would have received if he had been permitted to receive pay as a Captain. But this lapse of time frequently makes all the difference to the Service, for by the time field rank is obtained, Officers have no longer the inclination to run about at schools of instruction, be drilled by sergeants in the Army, and be required to salute Officers in the Army of the rank of Lieutenant. I am of opinion that by the time an Officer becomes a Field Officer he should have done with school; and I think the removal of the restrictions in regard to pay would have a most beneficial effect in increasing the attendance of Officers.

III. *Tactics*.—I am not one of those who fancy that a theoretical smattering of tactics and strategy is more apt to fit a Militia Officer for the efficient performance of his duties than the useful military knowledge to be acquired by a close attention to regimental training and musketry; but, surely the possession of a useful knowledge of both is not a very unreasonable or impossible aspiration. If a competent knowledge of tactics is considered essential for Officers of the Regular Army, it stands to reason that it must be an equally necessary qualification for a Militia Officer, who may, at any time, find himself in precisely the same position on active service. And I do not think it is too much to demand of an Officer promoted to the important position of a Field Officer in the Militia that he should have a competent knowledge of tactics, and be required to pass the examination in that subject required of Captains in the Army. If, however, an Officer is to be compelled to pass an examination in tactics, some payment ought undoubtedly to be made to him. At present, not only are Militia Officers not paid for the expense and trouble they incur in studying the subject of tactics, but they are actually placed in a worse position in this respect than Officers of Volunteers. In that Force a special capitation allowance of 1*l.* 10*s.* per annum is granted for each Officer who is in possession of a certificate showing that he has successfully passed an examination in tactics; and no limit appears to be placed on the numbers who may take up the subject. According to the numbers given in the March Army List, some 1,300*l.* per annum is expended in payment to the Volunteers for possessing certificates in tactics; but upon the Militia, a senior Force, not one penny is similarly expended. Surely it cannot be the intention of Government that such a one-sided arrangement should be maintained. I may be told that, like the capitation allowance for signalling, it is not paid to the Officers, but goes to the funds of the regiment. This no doubt is true, but why not grant a similar allowance to the band or mess fund of the Militia? Perhaps Colonel Walker's battalion, in which ten Officers have passed in tactics, or Colonel Hill's, in which seven have passed, would not be above receiving grants of 15*l.* and 10 guineas per annum towards, say, their band funds.

All these certificates which I would render obligatory are now

optional; but the fact that a very large percentage of Officers are content to study and obtain them, in their leisure time, at their own expense, and knowing that they give no claim to promotion is, I think, sufficient indication that were their possession made a *sine quâ non* before promotion, few Officers would be found to object; and we should establish a proper organization in place of a "go as you please" system.

What *may* be done is sufficiently shown by the record of one distinguished Militia battalion, in which all the Officers, without exception, pass a school of instruction; while out of a total of twenty-four Officers, ten have passed in tactics and nine hold the Hythe certificate.

IV. *Signalling*.—I fully recognize that considerable difficulty would be experienced in attempting to maintain a proper supply of trained signallers in a Force trained like the Militia. The course of instruction in signalling is a long and tedious one, and when a knowledge of the subject is once acquired, constant practice is necessary if anything like efficiency is to be maintained. Signallers, however, are considered necessary for the Regular Army and necessary for the Volunteers, and would therefore appear to be equally necessary for the Militia, unless the Force is maintained merely as a recruiting agency. On account of the great difficulties that would be experienced in training private Militiamen, I should consider their instruction in signalling as out of the question; though it might be possible to utilize many old soldiers now serving in the Force who have qualified in the subject, and keep up their knowledge during preliminary drill, when they are called up to assist with recruits. I am of opinion, however, that some one in every regiment ought to understand signalling, and that every Commanding Officer should possess in his battalion, at least, the means of communicating by signal with every part of his battalion in whatever formation it may be, and of communicating with other bodies of troops, positions, or forts, and of keeping up communications at all times on the line of march. I think, therefore, that at least two Officers in each battalion should be qualified as instructors in Army signalling, and should receive the pay and allowances of their rank while under instruction, on condition of obtaining a certificate. We shall, no doubt, be told that payment cannot be sanctioned for Militia Officers attending such a course. But why not? In the Volunteer Force, a special capitation allowance of 11. 10s. is allowed for two Officers in every corps who are in possession of signalling certificates, for every year in which they earn the ordinary capitation allowance; and yet no payment can be made to a Militia Officer. Is this quite sound or reasonable?

V. *Fortification, Military Law, and Topography*.—These subjects I should not propose to make compulsory; but I should like to see some inducement offered to Officers to study them, such as giving them the same facilities for attending garrison classes as Officers of the Regular Army possess, by granting them the pay and allowances of their rank if they succeed in passing, and by giving them a prior

claim to promotion, to military employment at regimental depôts, and on active service.

With regard to the training of Militia Officers generally, I think it most advisable that Officers should practise as far as possible the duties which they will be called upon to perform on service. One great step in the right direction has been the training of the Militia under canvas instead of the old demoralizing system of billeting; but I think a great deal more might be done in the direction of training individual companies under their Captains; and placing the junior Officers in some defined sphere of action in which their personality is allowed to find vent. In some districts there may be a difficulty in regard to space, but surely, in the majority, sufficient ground can be found for company training on a small scale. One company might go out for the day, carrying tents and rations: the men would pitch their tents, cook their rations, and go through a short course of elementary military training along the roads and public parks, the different sections acting against each other; which would be far more useful and far more interesting to both Officers and men than the monotonous routine experienced in the annual training of most Militia regiments. I think that company drill and company training should form the most important part of the soldiers' training; since in actual warfare much will depend upon the skill and intelligence of the company commander. Much also might be done in the same direction in the case of regiments whose range is situated at a distance from headquarters (as is the case in my own regiment), if the companies were detached and encamped on the range. It has answered extremely well with us, and has the effect of making all ranks take a far greater interest in shooting, besides giving the Officers a very valuable insight into the duties appertaining to individual command and its various responsibilities.

The question of finance unfortunately crops up at every point when any question of improving the efficiency of the Militia is concerned, and no doubt it is the chief drawback to many regiments experiencing the great advantages of training with regular troops at large camps like Aldershot, the Curragh, Shorncliffe, &c. Some battalions have for the last ten years trained at one of these camps, but the majority unfortunately have never, within the memory of living man, had the advantage of training outside their county towns. This, I think, should not be overlooked in any attempt to improve the efficiency of the Militia; and if the question of expense will not admit of every regiment in turn training at a camp or garrison with regular troops, surely some more large camps, like Strensall say, might be formed locally, at which the regiments of adjoining counties could be assembled together. The occasional participation of the Militia in brigade and divisional manœuvres would also be most beneficial to the Force, if it could be periodically made supplementary to steady squad and company drill—say once in every fourth or fifth year; at present the Field Officers have no opportunity of practising minor tactics; and the majority of Officers studying the subject may be said to be learning, to a certain extent, what they may

have never any opportunity of applying. The Militia is very unfortunately situated in this respect; it appears to be very easy to give the Volunteer Force the advantage of Easter Manœuvres and brigade camps, but the majority of Militia regiments have to rest content with a dull annual training year after year in their county town without variety or relief, without stimulus of any kind, unseen by General Officers, and unheard of by the general public.

In formulating any system of compulsory military education, we must not ignore the fact that there are a great many Officers in the Militia, and most excellent Officers, men of property and good family, with hereditary military instincts and fine physique, and who in their daily life develop those habits of sport and amusement which require physical strength, activity, courage, skill, and endurance—qualities which always have and always will count as important factors in actual warfare—who do not take kindly to book work or study; and I admit that their idiosyncrasies must be carefully considered before adopting any universal advanced system of education which might tend to make them dissatisfied and throw up the Militia: the gradual operation of retirements will eventually furnish a solution of this difficulty. But, speaking for Officers of my own standing in the Force, I am convinced that, taken generally, the more real you render the business of soldiering to them, and the less of a slope and a lounge, the better they like it and take to it; and the more you treat the Militia as a serious service with serious duties and responsibilities the better. Considering the monotony of an annual training year after year in some out of the way country town, it is surprising to me how many country gentlemen and retired Officers of the Regular Army are found to serve on. A Militia training is by no means the picnic which some fancy. The twenty-eight days is one continuous record of dull but hard work performed quietly and without ostentation. Though this is unknown generally, it has impressed some Officers of the Army. Lord Wolseley has testified to the zeal of the Officers. In the course of some remarks on the Army recently, he said: "I have often in the course of my duty to inspect Militia regiments, and I invariably leave the parade ground with a deep sense of how much more hardily they work than Officers of the Regular Army. I am astonished, too, to find how admirably they perform their duties, looking to the fact of the small number of days in which they have to learn them." Some of our critics have not such a high opinion of us; but I am vain enough to fancy that the hostile critics of the Militia are not to be found, as a rule, amongst those Officers who have been brought into close contact with the Force. Inspecting Officers and others who have served alongside the regiments at Aldershot and elsewhere, invariably speak in favourable terms of the zeal and energy of the Officers and men, who only want a little more official encouragement to render the Force what it undoubtedly is to my mind, the only real and reliable reserve of the Regular Army. We have enjoyed so long a period of immunity from war in this country, that there is some danger of the fact being overlooked. The Militia has served as an Army Reserve in every big war

for the last 150 years. It has been available, and has been utilized to supply the place of the Regular Army ordered on active service; it has gone on foreign service, and it has gone on active service. But its real value to the State, which in the case of a European war will become at once evident, is well nigh forgotten in the anxiety of the Government to utilize it for one purpose only—a purpose for which it was not originally intended—that of feeding the Line with recruits.

In conclusion, gentlemen, I hope that the suggestions which I have ventured to make will not be voted presumptuous, or condemned as impracticable. Many of them have already been recommended by the Militia Committee; and they are advanced by me in the conviction that it is absolutely necessary that the Militia, if it is to hold its own, should keep abreast of the times—that the efficiency of its Officers should be placed beyond the reach of disparagement, whether by friends or foes.

Colonel C. K. BROOKE (3rd Batt. East Yorkshire Regt.): I stand up with very great diffidence to speak in the presence of so many Commanding Officers who know so very much more about the subject than I do; but there are one or two points I should very much wish to bring before the meeting. I wish first of all to express my deep debt to the lecturer for the exceedingly practical manner in which he has put forward the various disadvantages under which Militia Officers labour; especially with regard to facilities for learning field service duties, and to attending instructional, garrison, musketry, and signalling classes. I will deal first with the field training of the Militia, a subject which I have studied for some years, and that is my sole plea for standing before you this afternoon. I think, looking at the work that the Militia does during the training, there is at the present day a little bit too much of following on in the old lines. Very different circumstances exist now; and it is time that we Commanding Officers take some step or other to alter the ordinary routine, which, as the lecturer has very fairly said, in a great many regiments is said to be dull. From my point of view, I do not see that there is any great difficulty in training the Officers of Militia battalions in the rudiments of field service exercises; but, feeling this, one is brought face to face with the fact that we have only twenty working days in which to do all the work we have to do, and it requires a great amount of scheming and planning to bring in this extra work. If you will allow me, I will just read in a few words the scheme which I have drawn up for my regiment, and which I intend to commence this year. It is simply this, that knowing that we have only twenty days to work in, I feel that a thorough field training cannot be carried out in one year, but I think the work may be done in three years; and, in consequence, I would devote each year to different branches of field service duties. In the first year I would take up advance guards, rear guards, outpost duty, and company combats on an open plain or common. In the second year I would take up the attack and defence of a position, the supply of ammunition on the field, and fire discipline; with these I should combine some reconnoitring exercises. In the third year the training would be the attack and defence of localities—a village, woods, a defile, and the like—action against cavalry and artillery, escort to guns and to a convoy. I think by adopting some plan of this kind and spreading it over three years some definite training might be given to the Officers.¹ The first week of the training, we all know, is an exceedingly stupid

¹ Two months before the training, all the Officers of the regiment would be informed as to the field service exercises that will be demanded of them. The permanent staff would be prepared by the Adjutant during the winter.

week to everybody. The men are being soundly trained in the rudiments of their drill, continuously, most carefully, and thoroughly, but in their training the Officers have very little to do indeed. For this week I would suggest that we take out of the ranks all the old soldiers we have, also any specially efficient Militiamen; group all these men into a special squad, and make use of this squad to train the Officers in the rudiments of whatever field exercises are going to be done in this year. In the succeeding week this field training would be enlarged by making it company work first, then wing, and then battalion with a skeleton enemy. If some such system as this were taken up, and worked out by different Commanding Officers, then from the data thus obtained we could evolve some plan which I think might get rid of the reproaches made by some Officers, that they learn nothing about any field service work at all. Passing from this particular point, there are one or two things in the lecture on which I should like to speak. With regard to the deficiency of military education in Subalterns who are promoted to the rank of Captain after only a few trainings, it must be remembered that now-a-days a very considerable number of Subaltern Officers, and also many Captains, do duty with the depôts, and there they get a very good training indeed, and this training is quite sufficient to wipe out the necessity of attending six trainings with their regiment in order to become Captains. There are a great many Subalterns within my knowledge who have spent months and months at depôts doing as useful and as thorough work as in a regiment: these Officers certainly should not be debarred from promotion because they have not attended six trainings. Again, it is well known that in 1859 there was a large deficiency of Captains in the Force, I think 123. That want of Captains has always been a very serious fact, and it is a point we must not tamper with. We must not institute compulsory examinations for Subalterns; it would drive away Officers from becoming Captains, and therefore I think any hard-and-fast rule with regard to the promotion of Subalterns is to be deprecated. A great deal lies in the hands of Commanding Officers of Militia. I have served in the Line twenty-two years, and all I can say is, that I consider that a Commanding Officer in the Militia is a much more powerful man than a Commanding Officer in the Line: you have more power in your hands over your Officers and men. If a Commanding Officer insists upon tactics and other examinations being passed by his Officers, he gets them to do it; and if one Commanding Officer can do this, why cannot another? I say that we Commanding Officers must step into the breach; first, show how much can be done in twenty days; then turn to the authorities and say, "We can do no more; you must help us." With regard to Officers attending the different classes of instruction, I quite agree with the lecturer that every Officer should be permitted to go, and that his expenses, if he obtains the required certificate, should be paid. There should be a regulation permitting, say, two Captains and four Subalterns per annum to attend instructional classes; or some kind of scale of allowances that might be expended in each regiment. The present system is excessively detrimental to the Captains. I have a Captain in my regiment, a very zealous Officer, very keen in musketry; he wanted to go to Hythe; but I have two Subalterns who have been to Hythe; consequently he could not go. The result is, that Officer does not get the qualification in musketry that he absolutely deserves. I think this is a blot in our system, and it works very unfairly to Officers. I am sure that on this point the lecturer has done very good service by bringing the matter forward, and I hope his suggestions will be duly weighed.

Colonel ALEXANDER MAN (3rd Batt. Gordon Highlanders): Much that I was going to say has been said, far better than I could have expressed it, by the Officer who has just sat down. He has left me very little to add. There are, however, just one or two things I should still like to remark upon. I took particular notice of Captain Holden's opening words, and I think that it is a matter for great congratulation that the lecturer is, as he himself has said, young in point of rank and young in point of age. Because, if an older man, a Commanding Officer, for instance, had come forward and made many of these propositions, I am quite sure he would have been met by the cry we have heard over and over again, "Oh, it is all very well, but if you make your examinations more stringent you will lose the men you have got, and you will fail

to get others to take their places!" Sir, dissenting entirely as I do from that cry, I take it to be a fortunate circumstance that an Officer holding the rank Captain Holden does has had the courage to get up and, as much as one man can possibly do in his own person, prove how fallacious the cry is. For my part, I firmly believe that the time has arrived when it is necessary for the Militia, if it is to hold its place amongst the Forces of the nation, to try to have its standard of professional knowledge advanced; advanced in proportion as its professional status has been advanced. For, remember, since the old Regulations were made—Regulations which were good enough in their day—Militia Officers have been placed under the Mutiny Act all the year round. They are not legally soldiers for only twenty-seven days now; they are legally soldiers for the whole of the 365 days. This change in professional status should be met by a corresponding change in professional standards. I humbly express my opinions as one who began life in the Militia more than thirty years ago, and who has chanced to have had opportunities of hearing questions connected with it discussed by men who were masters in the art of organization. I have sat at the feet of two: the first was an Officer revered by all who were then in the Militia, I mean General James Armstrong; and the other was Valentine Baker Pasha, who took an almost equally deep interest in our Service. I say that I am convinced, from what I have heard these two able men say, and from what also I have myself observed, that, so far from driving away the class of Officer we want, we shall more surely gain him over to us by being enabled to give him something which is a reality in return for his services. Our people, happily, hate the very suspicion of a sham; and the class which chiefly officers the British Army looks upon all rank as a sham which does not necessarily carry with it the qualifications which, so to speak, should "go without saying" in the case of gentlemen who call themselves "Captain," "Major," or "Colonel." Time does not permit me to closely follow Captain Holden through his analysis of the present state of military education in the Militia, or through his proposals for making the Regulations more stringent. But I may briefly refer to one or two small points. As regards the present qualifications, the case is really a little better than he puts it. It is a little better in the matter of the schools in this way. There are many field Officers in the Militia who have been to schools when they were Subalterns, but who get no P.S. against their names under present Regulations. That fact must be put to our credit. Again, there are a great many Officers who have served in the Line, and have, necessarily, gone through the technical examination. They, also, do not show to our credit. In numbering up the P.S.'s and T.'s, neither of these classes comes in. As regards what Captain Holden proposes with a view of elevating the standards of professional knowledge, I am heart and soul with him in nearly everything he said. In a few details we might differ, but on the general line I am entirely with him. I think that most of his proposals are reasonable, nay, are absolutely necessary, if, as I said, we are to hold our place and are to be taken seriously. With regard to the rule which lays it down that a Subaltern must serve three trainings before he can be promoted to a company, I think that the limit is too short. The previous speaker put it, however, very fairly when he said that a man who has been, say, two years in the Militia, but who has served, perhaps, for many months at the dépôt, was in a different position altogether. I agree to that, and am speaking only of a man who has just done three trainings. It is a ridiculously short period, and it tends to lower the value of the rank. I should like to see it made a law that no Lieutenant should be promoted until he has been through the school and through Hythe, and has obtained the T. There is just one other point. I have heard it said that the Militia Commanding Officers have the remedy, to a great extent, in their own hands; that when they examine a candidate they can, to put it roughly, make a bargain with him. They can tell him, "You must do this and that, or I will not take you." Now, that is hardly the true state of the case. The very first paragraph of the Militia Regulations gives the nomination of Subalterns, not to the Commanding Officer, but to the Lord Lieutenant. Suppose the Lord Lieutenant chooses always to exercise his power, and to directly nominate, what then becomes of the Commanding Officer's bargain with the candidates? Of course, we all know perfectly well that many Lord Lieutenants take a keen interest in the well-being of their county battalions, and back up the Commanding Officers in

every way. It is so in my own case, as I gratefully acknowledge. I am supported in every possible way. I have to thank my Lord Lieutenant for that; but it is an individual case, and it might have been the other way. I have nothing more to say, except just this: I think it is, indeed, a good omen that you, Sir, are in the Chair this afternoon, and I do most earnestly trust that there may be such unanimity amongst us, on the main points we are discussing, that you may leave this theatre convinced that the old Constitutional Force knows what it wants, and is not afraid of stating, in your presence what those wants are.

Major A. L. SALMOND (3rd Batt. Sherwood Foresters): Sir, I have listened with the greatest pleasure to the lecture by my friend Captain Holden, and with the bulk of it I am bound to say I entirely agree. But there is one point on which I am equally bound to say I differ from him, and it is possible that in this respect I differ as well from some of those who have preceded me: it is with regard to the suggestion he made that Militia Officers should be granted pay and allowances whenever they get these extra certificates. If in this particular matter I happen to quote myself, I hope I shall not be thought egotistical; I only do so with the object of pointing my argument, and to show that I have personal knowledge of the matter. I do not want it to go out from here—and I am sure that such is not Captain Holden's intention for one moment—that Militia Officers in any way measure their efficiency by the financial return which that efficiency may bring to them. I should be very sorry indeed to find, and I am quite certain it is not the case, that Militia Officers in any way whatever paused before they presented themselves for these examinations, and asked themselves whether or not they were going to get paid for so doing. We all know the difficulty which exists in finding money for other Departments, and I for one emphatically repudiate the idea that we desire pay should go with these certificates. There is one subject on which Captain Holden has not touched, and which I think is a matter which does require amendment: it is with regard to some of the extra examinations which we are permitted to attend. Some of us are probably in the same position as myself, in having other occupations in civil life. Those occupations do not permit us to devote any very great length of time to preparing ourselves for examinations comprising several distinct subjects; but they do permit us time to prepare for one subject at a time. For instance, we could find time to prepare for the tactics, for the P.S., for the signalling, and other matters on separate occasions. By the present Regulations—those of 1889—dealing with the examinations in tactics, field fortification, and military topography, Militia Officers are allowed to present themselves for tactics alone. But those Militia Officers who have obtained the tactics certificate, and who wish to present themselves for examination in the remaining subjects, must take them up together and not separately. That is a Regulation that I protest against. Again I must quote my own case. I have obtained both P.S. certificates, both tactics and the signalling certificate; this I was enabled to do by reason of the fact that each one formed the subject of a separate examination. Every half-year I receive, as I have no doubt we all do, the official communication from Headquarters requesting to know whether I wish to present myself for examination in military law, field fortification, and military topography, and my answer has always been that I will go up for them if I can take each separately, but I cannot take them up all at one time. The answer to that, equally of course, is that the Regulations require them to be taken together or not at all. Well, I cannot see the reason for this; I cannot see why the subjects should not be broken up and made the matter of distinct examinations. That there is no insuperable difficulty about it I think I can show. I deprecate constant comparison of the Militia Officers with those of the Volunteers. What their qualifications are and what they are not I do not think much matters to us beyond stiffening our determination to keep ahead in efficiency; but in this case I must quote the facilities afforded Volunteers. They have permission to present themselves for examination in these subjects, military law, field fortification, and topography separately, on different occasions. If this is allowed in their case, I cannot see why it should not be in ours. This is a small concession, which I venture to hope when the new Regulations are being considered will be granted us. I certainly do not think any of us are influenced by the question of pay; we only want to make ourselves efficient, and if we are permitted to present ourselves for

these examinations in the manner I suggest, and, by passing them, to make ourselves efficient, I think, Sir, you will find a very large number of us will do so.

Captain G. Lo M. GREYTON (3rd Batt. Royal Warwickshire Regt.): It appears to me, speaking from my own personal point of view, that our lecturer is the most moderate reformer I have ever heard, for, instead of being an iconoclast, he wishes to preserve the Militia, to build it up and improve it. His scheme appears, as far as I am competent to express an opinion, to be moderate, sound, and practical. I know that there is a theory among some people, usually not Militiamen, that if you attempt to educate the Militia Officers up to date, large numbers of them will leave. I myself do not believe that will be the case. I think the small number of men who would leave if we were to be educated up to date would be inappreciable, and that we should readily fill their places with as good a class, if not a better, than those who went out. There is one small point on which I disagree with Captain Holden, that is, on the subject of the school of instruction at the Wellington Barracks or Aldershot. He said he thinks it would be better for us if the school were to be transferred to Aldershot, and we were to have a course of company military training there, instead of the existing course of drill. I must say I think it would be a mistake to do away with the existing schools. I think the school of instruction at Wellington Barracks is a most admirable institution for the teaching of drill, pure and simple; there you learn drill far better than you can expect to learn it at your dépôt, or at your own battalion. With your battalion, or at a dépôt, the teaching staff is not able to concentrate its attention upon you, they have to lick the men into shape, they have not the time and opportunity to watch and correct your mistakes; whereas, if you go to Wellington Barracks, there is a class of about twenty-four Officers, with a Commanding Officer and Adjutant, and at least four uncommonly smart Guard sergeants who are always at your heels; they shout at you on the slightest pretext; they make your life a burden to you for the time being, and they teach you drill magnificently. There has been a good deal of talk in some of the papers about the way in which Officers at the school of instruction are treated. They say, We are not treated civilly. Personally, I must say I have the pleasantest recollection of the month I spent at Wellington Barracks a couple of years ago; and I think the men who complain are men who possibly are not used to soldiering and who do not quite understand what discipline is. But, Sir, I think it would be a very great advantage if a tactical school, such as Captain Holden has indicated, could be established at Aldershot, where we could practically learn something about outposts and advance and rear guards, the attack and defence of positions, and so on—branches of our trade which we really have no opportunity of studying when we are out with our regiments. Of course I have no doubt that this suggestion would be at once met by the Treasury saying the plan to establish such a school would be too expensive, that you would require a couple of Officers, Commandant and Adjutant, and would have to take too many men away from the regiments quartered in Aldershot. That, no doubt, is true, but I have somewhere seen in the voluminous correspondence which has been going on on the subject of the Militia a suggestion which I think has considerable merit; it is that Officers should be attached for a month at a time to regiments when they are going through their company training; that is to say, a Militia Subaltern, or a Militia Captain, or Field Officer should be allowed to go to Aldershot to be attached to a company of some battalion that is going through its annual military training. I had the good luck to be attached to a Line regiment a few years ago when the first order to institute company training came out; the company I was with happened to be the one selected to go on first, and never did I spend a pleasanter time or a more profitable one. I learned lessons I shall never forget, and which I utterly fail to see that I should have learned in any other way except on active service. May I say two or three words on the subject of examinations for c. and d. ? c. and d., I find, are great bugbears to many of my friends, but my experience is that if you pass the tactical examination first, you can floor the remainder of the subjects in c. and d. in two months at a garrison class; at least, I did so last year, and I do not at all consider myself a genius! I think any man of decent brains and application who goes up to his garrison class and sticks to it will get through his topography, his law, and his fortification, in two months. It is no

hardship to study your trade; if you are a soldier you must learn your business. It may sound an exaggerated and a silly thing to say, but I would very much sooner read a clever book on tactics than an average novel any day. The law which we have to pass in we already know a good deal about, having learned it in the orderly room and in the routine work of our regiments. The fortification is very interesting, and works well in with tactics, so that one leads you on to the other. Topography is undoubtedly a bore, but the practical part of sketching is agreeable; it takes you out into the country, and is interesting, and the reconnaissance is instructive and appeals to one's common sense; but the hideous sums that they set you, asking you to turn metres into Dutch measure, and to find out how many thousand times a circle 25 inches round will revolve in a journey to the moon, are singularly painful. But, after all, examiners are not quite the scoundrels we imagine. Many of them have bowels of compassion—at least, that has been my experience. They have allowed me to pass, and if they allowed me to pass I imagine they will allow others to pass also. There is one very serious reason why we ought to consider the necessity for educating ourselves. We have now been brought into the Service; we now take precedence over Line Officers who are our juniors in rank. Surely for our own sakes, for the sake of our own dignity, we ought to be at least as well educationally qualified as the men whom we are entitled to command, and whom on active service we might find ourselves commanding. Could there be a greater anomaly than for a Militia Field Officer to find himself in command of perhaps a couple of Line Captains and two or three Subalterns—men who as lads have been to Sandhurst; who have had a first-rate military education; who afterwards have been soldiering twelve months in the year; who have possibly been on active service; who have been through their tactics and fortification, law, and topography as Subalterns for promotion, and *c.* and *d.* afterwards to get their Majority—is not it a gross absurdity for these men to be commanded by a man who is not qualified by professional study to do so? Up to the last year or two there were no means open to Militia infantry Officers to acquire any military knowledge beyond drill and musketry; but, now that garrison classes are thrown open to us, it rests with us ourselves to show our appreciation of the concession by largely availing ourselves of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I call upon the next Officer, I am going to express a hope that before we finish we shall be addressed by two Commanding Officers of Militia, whom I see here, and unless they do address us, I am sure we cannot regard our meeting as a complete thing. I want to ask Colonel Walker and Colonel Daniell to address us before we conclude.

Colonel SANDYS, M.P. (4th Batt. North Lancashire Regt.): In making the few remarks I shall venture to offer you to-day, I must begin by saying what very great pleasure it has given me to hear the very able lecture that has been delivered to us. One point which strikes me very much is that a gathering of this sort, which has been alluded to as one which has occurred, if not now for the first time, certainly not for a very long time, is a matter upon which we Officers of the Militia Force must decidedly congratulate ourselves. There is an old adage which says that the men who meet together succeed better in achievement than the men who do not meet, and I venture to think that one reason why the Militia Force, as a Force, has not had the advantages conceded to it in the various points essential to its thorough training and military well-being is that the Militia Officers have not met together often enough, and have not concentrated, as a body, their collective influence upon the high public officials who are charged with the overruling and direction of their affairs. Now, I must say this, we all know that when you approach a War Minister on a subject connected with Militia affairs—I speak from experience of the matter, having done so myself—we are met, perhaps, with the answer, "An admirable suggestion, an excellent thing for the Force, nothing could possibly be better; but it will cost so much money." We all know the proverb says, "It is the eternal want of pence perplexes public men;" but still, in a case of this kind, where the well-being of a great Force, which will in time of war take, and has before taken, a prominent place in upholding the national military reputation, is concerned, I venture to think, and to take this public opportunity of placing upon record, that a cheese-paring economy should not be allowed

to interfere with the efficiency of so important a part of the national forces. That, of course, is a self-evident proposition. But now as to certain technical details. One defective point which lies at the root of an insufficiently efficient Militia is, as has been pointed out very ably by the lecturer, that Militia Officers are not compelled to show sufficient experience in the knowledge of their profession before they are passed to the various grades in the ladder of regimental promotion. One point was put forward by the lecturer in which I thoroughly concur with him; that is, that the present system of promoting Officers to Captaincies in the Militia after three trainings is a practical absurdity. An Officer who has served three trainings, each of twenty working days—that is to say, for sixty days of drill in all—is not fitted for a Captain, and if anybody will tell me that an Officer of the general age of Militia Captains is fit, with sixty days' military preparation, to be entrusted with the lives of men under his command in action, or even in ordinary peace duties away from the headquarters of the regiment, I venture to think most of us here would not agree with him. In my own mind, I have always laid it down (I am commanding a battalion at the present time; I have not yet attained that anomalous position which is called Colonel-Commandant, which I wish was struck out altogether, because I think each Commanding Officer ought to command his own battalion and be responsible for it in all details) that I would never recommend an Officer in my own battalion for promotion to Captain until he had done seven trainings. I think with seven trainings he might, if he worked hard, get a certain amount of efficiency, but he would certainly have to pass in tactics, he certainly ought to gain the H/lythe certificate, and he should certainly show interest in and knowledge of his military duties, in addition to his seven trainings, before he could be considered fit to be a Captain of Militia. The subject is a large one, and we know the time allotted for speaking to-day is short, but there are still one or two points I must touch upon. Strensall camp has been alluded to to-day. The camp at Strensall is a very excellent thing. My battalion is in the northern part of the country, so I hear a good deal about that place. Now, what happens at Strensall? Instead of a Militia regiment going to Strensall and having tactical instruction and field training drill by companies, as was recommended to-day, every word of which recommendation I endorse, for what is wanted is company drill for Militia—never mind the battalion or the brigade drill; that will take care of itself if company drill is thoroughly taught—now, the Militia regiment goes to Strensall, it is marched in the first day of training, and then we all know what a Militia regiment is the first day of assembly. The day after they get in, the order goes round, they are to hold themselves in readiness for brigade drill, a very good thing for the Field Officers and their chargers, but a bad thing for training the Militiaman. Again, we are said to go out for twenty-eight days' training in Militia; twenty-seven days' training is what we really go out for; but if the Officer gets twenty days out of the twenty-eight he is lucky. We always train under canvas on the west coast of Lancashire, and all I can make there is nineteen working days in one training, and that means exactly forty drills; doing the best we possibly can, we get forty drills and no more. What I should like, if possible, and if Militia opinion and influence could be brought to bear upon the Secretary of State for War, and upon Her Majesty's Government, to this end, it would be a great advantage to the Militia Force, and that would be, that we should be called out for twenty-eight days' actual training; give us twenty-eight actual working days; at present we only get nineteen. It only means one week more, and I am quite sure the extra efficiency that would be got from the Militia in those extra days would fully compensate the country for the money it would cost. There is one other point, which is with reference to the present system of training recruits in the Militia. The Militia recruit course is too short for him to attain efficiency. Not only is it short, but it includes non-training days—Sundays of course, Saturdays, which are generally occupied with coal fatigue in barracks, and with days at hospital counted in. A man has to be vaccinated, and very often his arm is so sore after vaccination that he cannot carry his rifle for four or five days, and all of this comes out of his recruit course. Yet the man is expected to be thoroughly efficient at the end of that course thus curtailed. Cannot the recruits come up in batches three or four times a year? You see now a dozen or fifteen drilling upon the barrack square

at the dépôt in different stages of drill. The men never get together so that you can have a company under instruction, and the non-commissioned officers who instruct them are continually worried by never being able to come to the end of their labour, for ever teaching the rudiments of drill and never getting the men thoroughly trained, as the present system does not admit of its being done. The system that I should like to see introduced into the Militia would be to say that there should be three or four times appointed for recruits to come up and train during the year, that they should be taken there as a batch of forty or fifty men together, and that those men who fail to come up to the standard at the end of the time allotted should be put back and go through it again with the next batch. That is the system adopted in the Guards, and that is how they get their men so thoroughly well trained before they are permitted to join their battalion. And though our time is short for recruits' training in the Militia, I venture to think something of that sort should be done. I quite agree that what is necessary for the Militia is that the Militia Officer should be more thoroughly trained than he now is, and unless an Officer has passed a certain examination necessary for the knowledge of his professional work he should not be promoted, and any reasonable inducement to Militia Officers to become more efficient in their professional knowledge would be well worth putting in their way. The Militia Force has been greatly neglected, and is not developed as it should be, as it ought to be, and as it can be, with some trouble and not a great deal of expense.

LORD RAGLAN (Captain Royal Monmouthshire Engineer Militia): I do not feel quite entitled to speak here, because I am not an infantry Militiaman, but there are certain points in the lecture I should like to make a few remarks upon. With most of the lecture I thoroughly agree. The first point was attaching an Officer to a regiment for instruction. I do not think that is a good system, looking at it in every way. A Militia Officer attached to a regiment of the Line is nobody's child; nobody is particularly interested in seeing that he learns what he should learn, and even with the best will in the world, with a Line regiment at home now-a-days, the time is so thoroughly taken up in training their own recruits, and their own Officers, that there is a great difficulty in getting a battalion together, and even a company for drill. Then there is another point. Captain Holden suggested that nobody should be appointed to a company in the Militia who had not a Hythe certificate. I think that is a little bit hard. I think Officers should be encouraged to go to Hythe as much as possible; but it would be almost impossible to lay down a hard-and-fast rule that they must have a Hythe certificate. After all, a man can teach men to shoot without being in possession of a Hythe certificate, and it depends on the interest the individual Officer takes in the shooting of his men, almost more than on having been trained at Hythe. There is another course which has not been mentioned by anybody who has spoken here to-day, which is the most excellent and valuable course known as the Infantry Officers' Engineering Course, at Chatham. A great deal is taught there in a very short time, and if Militia Officers were to be allowed to attend that course, I think they would find the greatest possible benefit; they would learn a great deal of what, many of the speakers to-day said so truly, Militia Officers do not learn, such as field fortification, and things of that sort, which, if they are valuable for Officers of the Line, must be equally valuable for Officers of the Militia. I do not know whether I shall be in order in referring to my own branch of the Militia, the Engineers, but I would say that we ought to be allowed to attend the long engineering course at Chatham, and to receive pay at the same time. Some time ago they sent to ask my regiment whether any of us would go to the six months' course; seventeen Officers, so far as I remember, sent their names in, and, appalled by this, the authorities at Chatham said, "Oh, we don't want any of you!" We have never had the offer made to us since. I certainly think if you have Engineers at all in the Militia, we ought to know something about engineering. Under our present system of training we do not learn more than the average Line Officer learns about engineering. I do not quite agree with the remarks of one of the speakers, about Officers not receiving pay when they go out to these schools. I think "the labourer is worthy of his hire." If he is doing his duty—qualifying himself for the position which he holds in the forces of his country, I think the least

the country can do is to give him money for doing it. About signalling, the lecturer said it would be impossible to teach private Militiamen signalling. I do not think myself there would be any difficulty whatever in getting men from any Militia regiment to attend a course of signalling at Aldershot, or anywhere else. In my own Militia regiment the volunteer sergeants go through a four months' engineering course at Chatham. We never have any difficulty in getting them to go: they go sometimes twelve or fourteen in a year, and I hope there will be no difficulty in getting either volunteer sergeants or private Militiamen to go through a signalling course, provided of course the Government would find the money for doing it.

Colonel G. G. WALKER, A.D.C. (3rd Batt. King's Own Scottish Borderers): I am thankful that by General Fremantle's suggestion I am enabled to say a few words, and the first word I would say would be to acknowledge the deep debt of gratitude that we feel to General Fremantle for the cordial and friendly words with which he opened this meeting, disclaiming any feeling of hostility or disparagement to the Force to which we are proud to belong. We accept those statements of his gratefully and without reserve. Knowing the Force, I think, pretty well, having been in touch with it for a great number of years, I think it only right and fair to say at present there is a deep sense of discouragement pervading the whole Force; there is a feeling, it may be justified or it may not, that we are without friends, and there is a feeling that, while we do not belong to the Regular Army, we are administered by the Regular Army, and we are administered for purposes which are not our own, but are those of the Regular Army. That is the feeling which I am afraid is very strongly and deeply implanted in our Service. Turning from that to our friend Captain Holden's lecture, I feel we are deeply indebted to him for having taken the trouble to call us together at all, because we have always felt that it is one unhappy accident of our Militia Service that we are not a Force really; we are only a set of disjointed battalions, we never meet each other for discussion, or for the purpose of comparing notes. An occasion on which we assemble in this room we consider to be a most valuable opportunity for discussing Militia matters. But, quite independently of that, we have elicited a practical amount of unanimity on the subject on which he has lectured. There is general agreement that the education of our Officers admits of improvement; there is general agreement that we are quite ready to adopt measures for its improvement, and we only want the encouragement of the War Office to carry them out. I have said that there is an amount of discouragement pervading the Force, and as a humble member of that very much, and to some extent deservedly, abused body, Lord Harris' Militia Committee, I should like to refer to it in a few words. I think I am not violating any confidence when I say the Militia members of that Committee, discussing it over amongst themselves, determined to make no extraordinary demands. We felt that we had very little chance of getting anything involving a large expenditure of public money, and we had no chance of getting anything at all unless we succeeded in carrying with us the official and military members of that Committee, and therefore the suggestions made by that Committee were the minimum we could accept. I do not say nothing was done, for something has been done, and I myself, and I trust all of us are grateful for what has been done. Tent floors have been given us, and also the very useful boon of flannel shirts is gradually but very slowly permeating the Force. In addition to that, something was given which I think is of very great value, and that was the fortnight for musketry, which enables us to bring our recruits together for a fortnight before they commence training. I cannot exaggerate the value of that, but, having mentioned that and having pretty well exhausted what has been done, I am obliged to call attention to what has not been done. I will only mention three subjects, but they are not the least important of the suggestions made, and which have been absolutely ignored. In the first place there was the question of schools, which has been discussed very ably here this afternoon. The Committee unanimously recommended that the schools should not be carried on on the present system, but that there should be alternate courses for the Militia, and for the Volunteers, for this reason, that with the very ample time now given for the training of a Militia recruit Officer it was unnecessary for them to go to the existing schools. At schools of instruction they teach, and

teach most admirably, what the young Militia Officer ought to be taught in his battalion, squad, and company drill, rifle exercises and so on. If a young Officer cannot learn this in the twelve weeks he has now got to serve in his first year, he has not got anything of the soldier in him, and therefore the schools are not qualified for doing the work for the Militia which I have no doubt they do for the Volunteer Force. That recommendation I am sorry to say has been entirely ignored at present. There was another matter of recommendation which was perhaps rather a matter of sentiment, and which did not involve the expenditure of one sixpence. There was a strong feeling among many Militiamen that it was a great misfortune for the Militia losing its own name, and being lumped up, under the title of the Auxiliary Forces, with forces which have nothing in common except the courage of our countrymen. They felt that their Service was left out in the cold, and that the Militia were looked upon as rather a dead branch of the Auxiliary Services. The Committee unanimously recommended that the old title should be restored, and that we should be known as the Militia. For this purpose unfortunately it was necessary that there should be an Act of Parliament, but it would have to be a very brief one, because the only change required was to insert the words "Militia and" into all Acts connected with the Services. There was, I think, something very near a promise given last year that that would be done, but for the present it seems to have been forgotten. That is the second point that has been passed over. There is a third point the Committee called attention to, the subject of brigading the Militia. It is true a considerable number of battalions of Militia go every year to Aldershot, to Shorncliffe, and other camps, and go there with very great advantage; but it is done, as far as I can see, on no system whatever except to do it in the cheapest manner possible, and the proof of that is that in my own country, Scotland, where they have, I think, thirteen battalions of infantry Militia, not one single battalion has been brigaded with the Line for sixteen years. What the Committee recommended was that the Militia battalions should be put on a regular roster, and that they should be sent at intervals of five or six years to camps of instruction to take their turn at the mill. I do not think the present system is a good one, always sending the same battalions to Aldershot, or elsewhere; it weakens the local spirit of the battalions, and in some cases must check recruiting; but our battalions could not possibly object to go once in five or six years to a camp of instruction. I have mentioned those three points which were unanimously recommended by the Committee, and which have been entirely neglected. I have said there seemed to be a general consensus among the Officers present that there is room for improvement, and that we are willing to make it, and I hope everything will be done to press that upon the authorities, but I should like to say to those present, and especially to the young Officers, many of whom are here, that we should go with these demands to the authorities with much greater confidence, if we were able to say we have done all in our power to make ourselves efficient. And I would say the future of the Militia depends especially upon the young Officers who have to replace the old fellows when we have cleared out. Every Officer can do much if he is willing and anxious to do so. There are many ways of acquiring military information; there are the schools of instruction, the the; there is being attached to your own recruits, attached to your depôts or line battalions, and there is also private study. All of these are good, and I should like Officers to adopt that which suits them best, or at any rate to do something. For myself I can only say, though all are good, there is no one so good as constant daily contact in the drill field and in the quarters with soldiers, and especially with the soldiers of your battalion. That is the best school the young Militia Officer can attend, and the lesson he should learn there would be, not getting certificates and that sort of thing, but learning the habit of command, learning to do instinctively, to think instinctively, the right thing, to say instinctively the right thing and to say it in the right way, that is, to give the clear ringing word of command to which the British soldier jumps instinctively. That is what we have to look to learn and not piling up certificates on paper. I entreat Officers to look at it in that spirit and never rest until they have acquired that habit of command which is of so much value. I am not sanguine, I am too old to be sanguine, about anything, especially about the Militia; but I am

anguine enough to think, if we address ourselves to our duty in that spirit, the old Militia cause has got such a hold upon the instincts of the country that it will survive even its present discouragements and will yet live to take its old place in the defensive system of the country.

Colonel J. LE GERT DANIELL (4th Batt. East Surrey Regt.): I came here, Sir, to listen, and not to speak; therefore I did not send my card up to you; but, in obedience to the suggestion you were good enough to make with regard to Colonel Walker and myself, I rise to make one or two observations. One reason why I did not propose to join in the discussion myself was that the Officer commanding our regimental district, Colonel Bayley, was present, but has been obliged to leave, who would be able to speak on the subject with much greater force than I can. Keeping ourselves to the point of instruction of Militia Officers, there is very little that I can add to what has been said already. I regret to have to disagree with the opinion of Lord Raglan, that a Line battalion is not a good place for a young Militia Subaltern to be attached to, because, as a gallant Commanding Officer on my left said just now, so much remains with the Commanding Officer of a Militia battalion. If he were only to interest himself a little bit with the Line battalion to which his young Subaltern was attached, the result will be appreciable directly. I agree with Captain Holden in his views, and I thank him most heartily for what he has given us. It would be a good thing if we could get an extension of opportunities for instruction in various parts of the country, at which Officers of the Militia could attend together. One thing that did strike me was in connection with the new Musketry Regulations which are to come out, or have come out, that it would be a good opportunity for providing that the recruit Officer should be obliged to go out with the recruits for a fortnight before the regular training. I think it would be a great advantage to him, as he can have but very little knowledge of musketry, and if he would only do that, great advantage would be obtained, and I trust, Sir, you will be able to see your way to giving this matter your consideration.

Major F. R. TWENTYLOW (4th Batt. N. Staffordshire Regt.): There is one point which has been raised which I wish to say a word about, which has not been referred to by any previous speaker. The lecturer said that in his regiment it had been found very beneficial to send one or two companies at a time to a musketry camp on the range. I can only say that in the adjoining county of Stafford we have not found the system work altogether well. No doubt it is a good thing to give an Officer individual responsibility, and from the point of view of the Officer, I dare say there is much to be said for it. But we have to look to the general discipline of the regiment, and in that respect I venture to think the arrangement is open to grave objections. During the time I have been in the Militia, we have had experience of billets, and camps, and barracks. Experience seems to show that with men who have only imperfectly acquired habits of discipline and obedience, and with Officers who only command during one month in the twelve, and whose military knowledge is apt to get somewhat rusty, it is most desirable to keep the regiments together, and to prevent the men from being in constant contact with civilians. In barracks you have the men inside the wall at night, and they are then under complete control. In permanent camps you have far more hold upon them than in billets. But in these temporary camps it is difficult to keep the men thoroughly in hand; and the musketry returns show conclusively that better shooting is made when the men return each evening to headquarters. Circumstances alter cases, and in some places this difficulty may not be serious; but where, as sometimes happens, the rifle range is in the immediate neighbourhood of a large town, the result is something like this:—a company is sent under the command of its Captain, with the Subalterns, staff-sergeants, &c., to go through three days' musketry (there may be a Sunday intervening, and on that Sunday the men have nothing to do after the church parade). It is necessary to have a canteen to supply the men with what they require, and this attracts people out of the town, whom it is impossible to keep out of the camp, and discipline is sure to suffer. There is another practical consideration, which is that it is most desirable that staff-sergeants should be under the eye of the Adjutant and sergeant-major.

The CHAIRMAN: This is not quite an educational question: the point we have to discuss is rather the education of the Officers.

Major TWENTLOW: My point is, that the experience which these small camps afford to the company Officers may be too dearly bought.

Colonel JOHN DAVIS, F.S.A. (3rd Batt. "The Queen's," Roy. West Surrey Regt.): Most of the subjects I had in my mind have been so well and ably stated by other Officers that I really do not see that I have anything to add. There is one thing, however, I should like to say, and that is that I feel very strongly indeed that the future of the Force, and the future education and position of its Officers, depends in a very large degree upon the Commanding Officers of Militia regiments. One gallant Officer has said that the power of a Militia Commanding Officer is greater than that of an Officer in the Line. I can only say, since I have been a Commanding Officer I have always had the most complete obedience from my Officers, but I have found some little difficulty in persuading Officers to go through the school of instruction. I am glad to say that that difficulty is gradually but surely being overcome, and I hope before my term of command is over I shall be in the proud position that my friend Colonel Walker is in, of having every Officer in my battalion passed through the school, and possessed of the very distinctive marks of the education of a soldier. If Commanding Officers could be led to feel as Colonel Walker does, as I have done myself, and a great many others, that it lies with themselves to make the Militia service more powerful and better thought of, and if they only get the cordial support of their Officers in getting the very best possible instruction they can, and making themselves proper and fit soldiers, I think the Militia Force would again take the position that it ought to occupy.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure we should like to hear an answer from Captain Holden on some of these points. As far as I am concerned, I do not want to criticize the lecture at all, but I should like to make one or two remarks upon certain things that have fallen from the gentlemen who have done us the honour of addressing us. I perfectly agree with what has been alluded to by Colonel Brooks, by Colonel Davis, and Colonel Walker, about the power of the Commanding Officer to influence his Officers in the Militia. I think a great deal depends upon the force of character in the Commanding Officer, and I am perfectly sure that all young Commanding Officers here will follow the example of Colonel Walker and Colonel Davis, and will get their Officers to go to school, and to arrive at a standard which will be a very high and good standard. I was disappointed that no one has alluded to a rather important subject raised by Captain Holden, and that is, with regard to the Adjutants of the Militia. I can only say, from my own experience, that, on the whole, I think the five years' rule of bringing Officers fresh from Line battalions to the Militia, and their going back again at the end of that time, has had a good effect both on the Militia and Regulars, and I am disposed to think that, because, in a great number of instances, when that five years has expired a Commanding Officer has implored me to do everything possible to retain the services of the Adjutant a little longer. Of course, I am perfectly aware that there are Adjutants and Adjutants, and I can assure you one of the most difficult and anxious tasks of an Officer holding my position is to prevent indifferent Officers from getting Militia Adjutancies, and to insist upon nobody getting them but really good men; and if the Commanding Officer of a Militia battalion, with the support of the Officer Commanding the District, will say that an Adjutant does not pay proper attention, that he is idle and slack, you may depend upon it that Adjutant will soon be sent back to his duties in his Line battalion. I quite agree with a great deal that has been said about the want of room at Hythe. I only wish we had more room, because it has been most deplorable to me sometimes to be told by Commanding Officers that, after a great deal of trouble, they have induced so-and-so to go to Hythe, and then there has been no room for him. That really is most depressing upon the Militia. I have always pressed it upon the authorities, and said how unfortunate it is that we cannot get more room, because you cannot always get a Militia Officer to volunteer to go to Hythe. It has a very bad effect when a Militia Officer says he will go, and then cannot be taken in. About the youth of Militia Captains, I quite agree that we would much rather have them with

six or seven years' service; but, unfortunately, beggars cannot always be choosers, and one particular case has come before me in which a very young man with a very short service has been recommended for a company in the Militia. His Commanding Officer makes a very good fight for it, I must say, and he is backed up by the district authorities. He says that he is well qualified (no other Subalterns being qualified at all), has been extremely zealous, and has passed every school he possibly can pass through, and that it would be an incentive to other Officers if he gets promotion. I confess myself, I find a certain amount of difficulty in saying, "No, promotion must not go on in the regiment; we must find somebody from outside to bring in." These things have to be looked at from more than one point of view, and in that I am sure everyone will agree with me. The only other thing I am going to allude to is as to what Colonel Sandys suggested with regard to increasing the length of time of training. I think I am not wrong in saying that before the Militia Committee some very interesting evidence bearing upon that was brought out, and I think rather the consensus of opinion was that, though the time during which the Militia training lasted is very short indeed, they do work at high pressure—tremendously high pressure there cannot be the slightest doubt—considering the result at the end of the training. I think there is a general opinion expressed that if you increase the time, that high pressure could not be kept up, and therefore it is very doubtful whether we do not get more out of them in the short time than we should by increasing its duration. That is all I want to say; but before I sit down I may say that I appreciate very highly the extremely interesting lecture that has been given to us by Captain Holden. It has been very moderate, very excellent, and very well thought out, and I am sure we are very much obliged to him, and we shall be very glad to hear his reply to any of the points that have been raised.

Captain HOLDEN: I do not propose to detain you long in reply. I made it a point in my lecture to urge the desirability of training Officers in time of peace in the duties which they will probably be called upon to perform in the event of war, and I therefore strongly advocated the training of individual companies under their Captains, according to the system of field training adopted in the Regular Army, as far as it can be made applicable to the Militia; and I am proud to find myself in such good company as Colonel Brooke, who holds similar views. He has served many years in the Line, has graduated at the Staff College, has carefully studied the subject of field training, and has published his views. Far too much attention is, in my humble opinion, bestowed upon battalion drill in the Militia, to the prejudice of sound practical company training, where young Officers might be taught the power of command, how to depend upon themselves, and how to act for themselves. I must confess that I am somewhat astonished at the remarks of Major Twemlow, who apparently thinks that the detaching of companies from their headquarters, even for the purposes of musketry, is open to such serious objection, that it would be difficult to maintain discipline and regularity; that there is no place in which to train a regiment so good as inside the barrack walls, and that when you have once got your men inside you should take good care to keep them there. I can speak with authority, certainly of my own regiment, and unhesitatingly assert that every Captain in it is perfectly competent in every sense to command his men and maintain discipline in whatever circumstances they may be placed, whether in a detached camp or elsewhere. Holding the view that the Militia should be trained in peace-time in the duties required of it in war, I do not consider a barrack square the proper place of training for a Militia regiment, from any point of view; and I hope sincerely that our duties on active service will find scope outside the limited sphere of barrack walls. As the remarks of one or two speakers might lead to the impression that I insufficiently appreciated the schools of instruction at Wellington Barracks and Aldershot, I wish to repeat, what I thought I had in unmistakable language made clear in my paper, that, so far as the instruction imparted at those schools goes, I consider it perfect. But, at the same time, I think it is unnecessary to devote so much time to the niceties of mere drill, when there are other more practical and more important subjects of which it is far more important a knowledge should be acquired. I do not concur in the opinion that the duty of making Officers attend schools of instruction, Hythe, and

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tactical examinations should rest with Commanding Officers. I consider that the duty should rest rather with the authorities. Would it not be better for the Government to lay down a certain standard of efficiency, and insist upon every Officer coming up to that standard, as is done in the Regular Army? The relegation of that duty to Commanding Officers is unfair upon them, and has the effect of inviting invidious comparisons between one regiment and another, which are very undesirable. I should like to see all the hieroglyphics which are now shown against different Officers' names swept out of the Army List; and the mere fact of an Officer appearing as a Captain or Field Officer in that book should be a sufficient indication that he is thoroughly qualified for his duties. As Colonel Walker has alluded to the promise of the Government to remove the Militia from the title of "Auxiliary Forces," I may mention that I happened to look yesterday at the Army Act of 1891, and the various amendments passed this year, but I did not find that the change of title had been effected: it appears to have been altogether ignored. I think nothing remains for me now but to express my sense of the compliment paid me by so many distinguished Officers coming here to-day; and to ask you to join me, which I am sure you will all do most heartily, in thanking General Fremantle for his kindness in taking the chair.