

INDIA'S TERRITORIAL ARMY AND OFFICER RESERVE.

BY COLONEL L. J. H. GREY, C.S.I.

LORD LANSDOWNE'S Minute of the 2nd June, 1900, said that "Two points stand out clearly: (1) that in future campaigns we must expect demands on a vast scale for infantry drafts; (2) that our reserve is not large enough and must be increased." This applies equally to India if she has ever to defend Afghanistan against 500,000 men deployed upon the Oxus. However efficient may be the Indian Army, it has only half that strength, British and native. The reserve which is gradually being created out of the ranks of the native army can only, like the British reserve at the outbreak of the Boer War, complete their own regiments to a war footing. Therefore it was proposed, in the UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE for April and October, 1907, that the native States of India should provide a Territorial Army of 200,000 men.

(2) When Lord Lytton raised this question thirty years ago, the Indian States were shown to have a population of 53,316,352, a total revenue of Rs.179,270,032, and forces aggregating 380,773 men. Population and revenue have since greatly increased, and for the States to maintain now 200,000 fairly efficient troops, instead of the 380,000 rabble of that day, would not be difficult. It would be easy if, as proposed in the UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE for September, 1907, decentralisation and self-government were gradually attained in India by extension of territory of existing States, creation of new ones, and bestowal of Ruling Powers on the great Titular Chiefs who are as wealthy and important as the Ruling Chiefs.

(3) Even in the Boer War, as said in the first chapter of the Official History, "By the end of a year's campaigning our infantry reserves proper, including the militia reserve, were exhausted," and by the 18th April, 1900, "our organised field army was practically exhausted, and home defence was enfeebled to a dangerous degree." Much more would this be the case of India in a war with a first-class Power on the frontier of Afghanistan. No doubt, as said in Colonel Pollock's "Fighting to Win," in the

revolutionise our present strategy, and entirely obliterate all frontiers, whether weak or strong, land or water, we must realise the change in the strategic position of England itself.

Twenty years ago the population of Europe was mainly agricultural, and consequently we found customers for our manufactures.

To-day the inhabitants of Europe are our rivals in trade, and we no longer enjoy a monopoly. To defend these trades, all the Great Powers have built up strong navies, and merchant services, and as a result, ours, although still the greatest, is only one of several great navies, whereas in the days of Nelson, there was only one principal navy in the world, that of England.

Taking into consideration the accidents of naval warfare, and the short time required to cross the English Channel, we cannot say that our great sea frontier is inviolable to-day; and there is no doubt that the safety of England should be a certainty, and not purely problematical, nor dependent on *ententes*. Von Moltkè is credited with saying that it would be easy to land 100,000 men in Great Britain, but it would be impossible to withdraw them. Under our artificial and highly centralised modern conditions it is possible that such a force, if landed, might effect so much politically that there would be no question of withdrawal save in triumph.

It is one of the disadvantages of our military policy for home defence that we, of all the Great Powers, know nothing of the horrors of war in our own land, and it is impossible to foretell what madness of terror would seize upon the nation if ever brought face to face with starvation and slaughter. There seems, therefore, only one way to safety, and that is to maintain the forces of the Empire at such strength that no other Power would dare to attack. It will be expensive, and a constant financial drag, but it must be regarded as an insurance policy, and the premium must be paid in accordance with the value of the stock insured.

If our statesmen will proclaim an Empire Policy, independent of party, and will explain to their constituents unceasingly the necessities of this Empire's existence; if our greatest strategist is in the Cabinet, and our policy and strategy can be shaped side by side, and made interdependent, *then* we shall have obtained the ideal relations between politics and strategy, and the general of the future will go forth to war understood by and in sympathy with the people, whose war is in his hands. Never again would a general be forced to use the dying words of Sir John Moore, "I hope the people of England will be satisfied; I hope my country will do me justice."

Contemporary Review for December last, the first requisite for war is a highly trained regular army. This India has; but a small regular army cannot alone suffice, as that article shows, without a national force behind it. When the numbers engaged are large, then smaller forces may at the outset defeat armies that are larger but less efficient. But unless the disparity of quality is as great as that of Plassy, the big battalions must win—as at Maiwand. We are not likely, on the Oxus, to meet anything so raw as those French *mobiles* whose superior numbers overwhelmed the Bavarian veterans of Von Der Taun at Coulmiers. Again, though 50,000 may defeat 150,000 of very inferior quality, yet the small numbers must presently be worn away by their own successes, like Lee's veterans in the last year's battles round Richmond, unless they can be renewed. If, however, their ranks are replenished from a reservoir of men already partly trained, then, as recently seen in the Japanese armies of Manchuria, the drafts are speedily assimilated and become worthy comrades of the veterans. Such a reservoir should be found by India in the forces of her native States. Those States are ready to do their part; India has the means, she needs only the will, to create a Territorial Army.

(4) But an important question remains—that of officers. As shown in the UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE for November, 1907, the contemplated strength of 350,000 native troops (150,000 existing regulars and 200,000 "territorials" to be provided by the native States) needs, when mobilised for war, 35 officers per 1000 with the colours and in reserve, or 10,000 more officers than India now has. It was suggested that the Indian aristocracy could, in course of time, provide a reserve of 2000 officers, namely (as explained in paragraph 9), that majority of the cadets of a Quetta Sandhurst who would return to their estates instead of entering, or remaining in, the service of the Government. It was further hoped to find, gradually, 8000 British reserve officers by a method proposed, in 1904, in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, and recently endorsed by the military correspondent of the *Times*. "India's Weakness," in the November number of the UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE, suggested that we can obtain "the only class we want, a reserve of *young* British gentlemen for the *junior* army ranks, by the method of free education, under bond for ten years, to be afforded in institutions of the West Point type." The *Times* also thinks that such education should be supplied at a low and almost nominal cost, in return for which concession every student should be bound to give a term of service in one or other category of the King's forces.

(5) The general question of the admission of native Indians as

officers of the Indian Army presents, no doubt, some difficulties. In a recent book on 'The Unrest in India,' Syed Sirdar Ali Khan of Hyderabad excludes the Army, for the present, from the departments of State service which it is advisable to open to natives of India. This he does on the score of recent Indian misconduct ; but Lord Curzon has committed us (and rightly) to the commissioning of Indian nobles in the Army, and moreover we need them. It is a source of supply of officers which, in course of time, could become very important.

(6) That course of time will be long, no doubt, but if the matter is taken seriously in hand, and the present Imperial Cadet Corps becomes a Sandhurst, or rather a "West Point" of four years' course, then another thirty years may well see Lord Lytton's objects attained. It is quite possible that, in the next generation, 2000 Indian nobles, efficiently trained, should be under engagement for ten years to take their place when required as subalterns and captains in the Army—besides many more in active military employment, or who have passed through the regiments into other branches of State service. The rigorous checks in the selection of these Indian cadets, which were proposed in the UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE for June, 1907, would make it sure that they should be such as British officers could cordially accept as comrades. Still there must at first be difficulties ; for instance, the social ones.

(7) It has been objected that "The man, to live the life of a British officer, must conform to all social usages ; what will happen as far as his wife or wives are concerned? Again, he must live and dine in mess ; what would the native ranks think of the man?" However, as the objector elsewhere admits, these difficulties do not now affect Indian chiefs, and the officers contemplated will be of their class—"either beyond criticism or too high for any criticism to hurt them," being scions of Ruling Houses or Provincial nobles of high rank. The further objection that "the native commissioned ranks are not favourably disposed towards direct commissions" applies rather to their own class of "native officer." No doubt, direct appointment to that class is regarded as robbery of the private soldier's chances. That rank, of "native officer," should be reserved for men who rise from the "private" ranks ; for those who, as said in the UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE for November, 1907, have not "either prestige or instruction to lead their men—witness their dismal failure in the Mutiny." That wonderful opportunity failed to produce a single real leader among the 200,000 trained soldiers who revolted. The officers now contemplated are something very different from these "native officers." An Indian nobleman highly educated, and trained

to thorough military efficiency by a four years' course in an Indian "West Point," would be a British officer, not a "native officer." He could no more be regarded as an interloper by the "native officers" than the British officer, whose equal he will be both in social and professional qualifications, is so regarded. It is certain that, as admitted in the objection quoted, "the British officer would not mind a real good sportsman in his mess," and it is equally certain that the "native officers" and the men would not mind him either in the mess or in command.

(8) Thus the difficulties at the outset are not important; but real difficulties may perhaps appear later when, in course of seniority, the Indian nobles rise to the higher ranks. In other branches of the public service, however, British officials do accept subordination to Indians, and willingly so where the latter justify their position by their good breeding and their professional qualities. There is no sufficient reason to suppose that it will be otherwise in the Army. It lies with the Indian officers themselves; the matter will be in his own hands for each to show, during his regimental career, those qualifications which shall gain the respect and trust of his British comrades and of his native subordinates. If he does so, there is no reason why these should not cordially accept him successively as squadron or company commander, as second in command, even as commanding officer, and if he gains the confidence of his comrades and subordinates, it is probable that the military authorities will be equally ready to accept him, and to promote him to those ranks. It lies solely with the Indian officer himself to earn that confidence, if the Government will but give him the opportunity.

(9) But it is not to be supposed that many of the gilded youth of India will persevere through the worry and hard work of regimental life up to grades of command. Those Indian gentry who are disposed really to take up a profession generally prefer other lines of life. Before, therefore, they emerge from subaltern rank they will have branched off into the intelligence, diplomatic, or civil executive departments of State service. The less seriously inclined will return to their estates when their first keenness has passed. These will be the majority, and it is from these that may be expected, when the measure is fully developed, an average yearly supply of 200 Indian officers for ten years' service in the Reserve, which thus, after ten years, would stand at the number of 2000 above estimated in para. (4)

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THE NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY CHARLES SYDNEY CLARK.

THE Editor of the UNITED SERVICE MAGAZINE has done me the honour of asking me to reply to certain questions, possibly because I served for twenty-five years in the National Guard in the United States, and for the same length of time have been Military Editor of numerous publications.

He asks—

1. How many candidates are there, at a rough estimate, for vacancies in the National Guard?

If candidates for vacant commissions are meant, there are many. If a lieutenant is to be chosen, sergeants and even corporals are eligible, and frequently outsiders in other regiments are requested to run for the office. Undesirable candidates are, however, gradually eliminated by public opinion, until in the end, at the election, only those who are reasonably sure of passing examinations, and have the means to "support the office," are voted for. If vacancies in the ranks are meant, it must be regretfully said that it all depends upon the *prestige* of the organisation which is seeking recruits. Old and renowned companies or regiments with *fine armouries* keep their strength up to the maximum, and men are always waiting to enlist in them. On the other hand, the great mass of the organisations have extreme difficulty in recruiting because they cannot offer the attractions of a handsome uniform, fine armoury, and the *prestige* which accompanies membership in a fashionable club, or fashionable corps.

2. How many attendances for drill and training are required of the (American) recruit, in his first and second year?

The recruit, in the older states, is usually kept in the "awkward squad" from three to six months, in charge of a non-commissioned officer, and drills twice a week. When sufficiently instructed, he is placed in the company, troop, or battery, and thereafter, in the first or any other year, is required to drill twenty-four times, spend from five to eight days in camp or in practice marches, and attend small arms practice until he qualifies, both in the armoury in winter, and on the range in summer. These are the *required* duties, but it must be remembered that each organisation is a civil as well as