

*Second Line.*—The Militia, considerably augmented in numbers and greatly improved in its efficiency, to supplement the regulars in the event of an abnormally large army being required beyond the seas, or otherwise to supply it with “drafts” to make good the waste of war.

*Third Line.*—The Volunteers, for home defence only, but subject to the right of individual officers and men to offer their services for over-sea operations, in case there should be need of them.

Mr. Haldane thinks somewhat differently, and his views have the support of larger numbers of equally influential officers. He does not, however, if I understand him correctly, deny the virtues of the “three lines” organisation, but its practicability. The point at issue is a matter of opinion upon which it is scarcely possible to adjudicate with certainty, except after actual experiments, and we certainly cannot afford to waste time upon such things. Mr. Haldane is at the head of affairs and naturally elects to employ the measures which he is persuaded are the best. Therefore we can only hope that he is right. The opinion of the Secretary of State is that we cannot advantageously have more than *two* “lines,” the *first* composed of the regulars serving with the colours, and not only the regular but also the “irregular” reservists; the *second* of the “Territorial forces,” comprising in *one* “National Army” the elements now represented by the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers. It is proposed to resuscitate, in slightly altered guise, the ancient militia system, so that the raising and administration of the Territorial forces will, within specified limits, be entrusted to “County Associations,” having at their head the Lord Lieutenant, and for members the Deputy Lieutenants, local officers (to the extent of “at least one half”), and certain other persons appointed *ex-officio*. The result is that neither will the Militia itself be absorbed by the Volunteers, nor the Volunteers by the Militia; but that an entirely new, or more accurately a reconstituted, National Militia will in the course of time absorb both. The *cadres*