

you cannot help it, the ranks are positively drained for administrative purposes. Now in this country we have Volunteer corps largely composed of Government officials, members of the Civil Service, post-office employés, dockyard and arsenal employés, not one of whom could in war be spared from his legitimate functions.

A country at war is not like a party of gentlemen out shooting. The actual fighting is but a tithe of the strain thrown on the whole State, war tries the weak points of a nation, searches out the flaws both in her civil and military departments. A country at war is like a ship in a heavy gale of wind, everything from keel to truck creaks, strains and labours. Government officials, from the highest to the lowest, could not be spared to fight in the ranks; their whole energies would be required in fields of higher importance.

I have pointed out how all the civil and military forces of France, after Sedan, gravitated to Paris, and were there shut up. Now the chief difficulty the French Government in the provinces, when it attempted to organize the Army, had to contend with, was the want of military officers, and the entire want of civil officers. There were no treasury officials, no war office officials, in fact, there was not one person who understood how the complicated wheels of a vast administration could be kept at work, how supplies were to be bought and furnished, for nearly all the arsenals were in the enemy's power.

We all have seen in the newspapers, accounts of the want of maps in France. Now there is a splendid survey in France, and most beautiful maps; of course the plates from which these maps are printed are most carefully preserved, as those of our own Ordnance Survey are at Southampton. But they were preserved in Paris, and when Paris was blockaded, these plates were all shut up too. Thus no maps could be got, until such stray sheets as existed in offices in the departments, could be photographed and copied; thus in the heat of war, the country had to form a great map establishment, and many of the sheets had even to be sent by balloon to Paris.

Hence the Government had to get officials where it could, had to seek them from amongst railway managers, manufacturers, and promote to higher grades and responsible positions men utterly untrustworthy; the result was that, partly from ignorance of the duties they had to perform, partly from other and worse causes, the contracts made for the unfortunate armies of irregular troops were costly to the country and destructive to the efficiency of the troops. Boots with pasteboard soles, shoddy cloths, cartridges that would not fit rifles, artillery that burst, were issued, and issued so late that bad as they were they were of little use. A country at war, less than at any other time, can afford to dispense with its trained confidential servants. As for our arsenal and dockyard corps, they would have to work night and day to produce, not to expend, warlike stores.

I often here it proposed to form the railway employés into corps of Volunteers; now this was done in France—able, powerful men, under a certain amount of discipline—it seemed as if these men, with their officers, were the finest material that soldiers could be made out of. But what was the result? We read in the pages of Jacquin, the manager of the great French Railway de l'Est, that this crippled the railways to such an extent, that the movement of the troops, the sending up of supplies, was so interfered

with, that the country lost far more than it gained. Accidents frequently happened, the stations being worked by old men, women, and boys. Hence under the new French law of recruiting, railway officials are specially exempted from being called on to fill up the ranks.

But there are certain branches of the State Administration that can largely help an army. I allude to the Post Office and Telegraph Service.

During the Autumn manoeuvres, we had many of the Post Office Volunteer corps doing in their uniform the legitimate proper work they should have done; such men are too valuable to put in the ranks to pull triggers. You may get others to do that, but you cannot get men to do their work at a moment's warning. I was particularly glad to see the Post Office corps working in this way, it is a step to utilizing the Civil Departments of the State for defence by work conjointly with the Army in their own proper sphere. If the Post Office corps had not done this work, sergeants of the regular Army would have had to do it, and you would have then had the regular sergeant doing Post Office work for which he was not trained, and the Post Office official doing soldier's work for which equally he was untrained—an interchange of duties which benefited neither, and would have injured the public service.

There is another duty for which I think Volunteers are admirably fitted, and which opens up a vast field for useful military action, both direct and indirect.

It is well known that nothing breaks up a battalion so much as taking wounded men to the rear; a shot comes in, a man is knocked over, at once three or four men pick him up to carry him off. If the fire is at all hot, these men often make an excuse not to come back again; thus each shot really deprive the battalion of not one but several rifles. It is impossible to prevent this, unless there be some means provided for removing the wounded. In Prussia this is done by special companies of volunteer Landwehr men, who are specially selected for the purpose, and who, to the number of about 500, are attached to each army corps; these men are usually men who have served eight or ten years, and are consequently about thirty years of age. It is their duty to go into action and remove the wounded; thus no man who is in the ranks is allowed to fall out on any pretext, but the wounded man is removed by the bearers, who, are combatant troops specially detailed for this duty.

This dangerous and not over pleasant duty is admirably performed, and contributes much to the steadiness of the Prussian troops.

In such services as these, where intelligence, courage, and skill are especially needed, and the action of which so much aids the fighting troops, there is a great scope for the beneficial action of irregular troops.

In the early stages of the recent war, when the French Army was entirely distinct from the French nation. It is astonishing to see how little aid and assistance it received from the people, and how much of its strength was frittered away in the performance of duty that in the Prussian Army was done by semi-civilian agency. We find with in ten miles of Metz, in a thickly peopled country, troops losing their way; and the same thing happened repeatedly. It appeared as if the French people were distinct from the army, and wished in the contest that was being waged, to be neutral.

On the Loire, when troops were away from

their own localities, they frequently not only met no assistance from the peasants, but the latter, to avoid incurring the anger of the Prussians, actually gave the latter more help than they did their own countrymen. We read: "We were ordered to Brou. Several times on the way we fancied we saw Uhlans; we were mistaken; but the Uhlan is in the air, one has only to hear the peasants talk of them."

"When we reached Brou the chief magistrate informed our Major that the citizens had no intention of defending themselves. We found in the town hall £600 worth of bread secreted; our indignation knew no bounds; it was evident these stores were not intended for us, since French troops were neither expected nor desired in the town. We found out afterwards that 12 Uhlans were quietly at supper 500 yards off; in such cases the country people are very careful not to give the alarm, knowing that the enemy would return in force and burn down their houses."

We learn, therefore, from the recent war that, somehow or other, the Army in a country must be part of the nation must strike its roots deep down into the nation's heart; that it must be connected with the civil population of the country at every point; that the feeling, the hopes, the fears of the country must all strike similar chords in the Army.

That there must be some means of drawing on the talent, knowledge, and ability of the civil population; that there must be some means of getting enlisted for the defence of the country the peculiar technical knowledge which is so useful to the Army; that there must be some means of uniting the Army to the country; this, gentlemen, I conceive, is one of the peculiar functions, I would rather say the peculiar missions, of the auxiliary forces.

FIVE YEARS OF NAVAL ECONOMY.

(From the Broad Arrow, April 14.)

Five years have passed since the late Administration took in hand the reduction of the naval expenditure. We ought, therefore, to be in a position, now, to form some opinion of the result. Has the issue been disastrous or beneficial? has the reduction which has been accomplished been partial or thorough? and is the condition of the Service, for this, after all, is the chief point, better or worse than it was five years ago? These questions are worth discussing; and the answers, if given fairly and impartially, should help to clear up doubts which still exist, and must, even yet, arise, as to the effect of this reduction. To treat these questions from a party point of view, is a mistake. The care of the Navy is a national work; for an administration to do this work well is, simply, to be doing a plain and imperative duty; to do it badly, to neglect it to make it subservient to party purposes, is to court unpopularity, if not disgrace. Considering the amount of party spirit which has unfortunately, though, doubtless, unavoidably, arisen during the past five years in regard to naval topics, it is worthy of notice that the late First Lord, Mr. Goschen, has maintained and insisted on maintaining, with an almost unbroken uniformity, an impartial attitude on all naval questions. In endeavouring therefore, to ascertain what has been the practical result of the economy which has been effected during the past five years, it is desirable to refer, as far as possible, only to prominent facts, and leave those facts to speak for themselves.