

mutiny and disaster. Not only did the disciplined troops of the East India Company vanquish superior native forces led by HYDER ALI and TIPPOO's best captains, but they fought side by side with the King's English foot and horse," and were, it is added, no unequal match for the French soldiers. Later on a larger complement of European officers were given to each corps, and before the Mutiny the regular regiments of the native army, having at least two for each company, possessed in all twenty-five European officers. There had also been formed by this time the so-called Irregular Regiments, whose strength of British officers was only three. Though the Regular Regiments of the Bombay and Madras armies stood by us in the Mutiny, it was mainly the regular regiments of the Bengal army that revolted, while the irregular regiments, with few exceptions, remained faithful, and when after the suppression of the Mutiny, the army of India came to be reconstructed, it was a form of the old "irregular system," which had the advantage of being cheaper, and of providing a career for native officers of ability, that commended itself for the new organization. From that time the native regiments of the Indian Army have had each seven English and seventeen native officers, to the latter of whom is intrusted the command of troops and companies.

The Madras army, though admitted to be now of inferior value has of late been tried little by the test of active service, but of the Bombay army it appears to be unfortunately true that experience has proved its troops to be lacking in some of the qualities necessary in an efficient soldiery. What are the causes of this deterioration in two divisions of our Indian army? The population of Madras seem to have unlearned in a continued life of established tranquillity the lessons of daring and hardihood taught them in the struggles of their earlier existence. British government in Southern India has stopped the wars of native against native, and the sepoys of Madras, accustomed to fighting when we first came among them, have acquired under our strong rule an appreciation of the pleasures of a quiet life. On this point the Commission quotes the verdict of Sir C. Trevelyan, given in 1873, to the Select Committee on East India Finance—a verdict largely supported by general opinion. Sir C. Trevelyan said: "It is a fact that the famous old coast army, which not merely established our supremacy in the South of India, but formed the nucleus of the Bengal native army and fought the battle of Plassy, so that the principal Bengal regiments to the day of their death were called after their old Madras officers, has become a very peaceable, unmilitary, respectable sort of body." But it is by no means certain, or even probable that there has been a similar evanescence of warlike spirit among the troops of the Bombay army, though there would appear to be reason for believing that with them, as with the rest of the native army of India, a flaw in their constitution comes from the paucity of English officers belonging to each regiment. That there is this flaw seems to be admitted in India by a verdict almost universal. The Commission thus records its judgment: "But though we adhere to the system whereby native officers are company and troop commanders, yet we cannot fail to attach weight to the opinion expressed by a majority of regimental commanders, that the present strength of British officers does not suffice for the casualties and requirements of a regiment in the field, and we recommend that the two extra officers hitherto attached in the room of officers absent on furlough or other duty should form part of the sanctioned strength of each regiment." If, therefore, effect is given to the proposal of the Commission in this matter, the number of British officers serving with a native infantry regiment will be raised for the future from seven to nine. On account of a recommendation, connected with a comprehensive reform of the whole Indian Army, to the effect that a fourth squadron shall be added to every cavalry regiment, cavalry regiments under the new scheme will have eleven officers as compared with the seven they have hitherto possessed.

Immediately connected with the question of providing a

sufficient complement of British officers for the native regiments is the discussion of the value of native officers for exercising command over their own fellow-countrymen. At present, in the armies of Bombay and Madras, the native officers are selected solely from among the non-commissioned officers and men. In the Bengal and Punjab armies the same practice prevails, but it is varied by the occasional direct appointment of members of trusted and warlike families to be officers without any preliminary training in the ranks. It is clear that there are many disadvantages in a system which places as officers over bodies of men individual men who have no natural claim to their respect and obedience. In European armies, notwithstanding the rapid growth in Europe of Democratic ideas, it has not yet been found possible, in the provision of persons most suitable to take command of their fellow-creatures, to dispense with the aid of those political and social forces which have formed in the course of ages, and still maintain in the present, distinct classes in each nation. But among the native races of India it is harder still to surmount with success these hereditary barriers. The power of caste and the constitution of society upon the primæval basis of family groups tend to keep each individual closely within the circle in which he is born. A native who has raised himself by superior intelligence and diligence to be an officer over men of his own class must still be subject to family authority, and cannot transcend the strict orbit of his caste. He may as an officer have commanded his elder brother who was in the ranks of his regiment, but so soon as he passes within the precincts of family life, the elder brother resumes over the officer the customary supremacy of the head of the family. It is unnecessary to point out how shallow are the sanctions of a manufactured authority of modern foundation, and how difficult must be the effective maintenance of discipline in the face of forces that have preserved unimpaired for so long this primitive constitution of society. A remedy for the difficulty has been proposed in the appointment of cadets from native families of rank to be officers in the native regiments. Against such a change the regimental officers of the Bombay and Madras armies protest with almost complete unanimity. Such cadets of suitable character, they affirm, could not be obtained in the territories from which their recruits are drawn, and they fear that the distribution of such appointments would destroy the inspiring confidence in a good prospect of high promotion, which at present animates the sepoys in the ranks. On the other hand the regimental officers of the Northern armies are favorable to the plan, and the Commission recommends that in these armies a proportion of the vacancies in the appointments of native officers shall be filled by cadets of good family, for whose education it is proposed to establish a military school. It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of these questions, touching so closely upon the social life of the natives of India, and involving in their settlement the efficiency and value of the Indian Army. Whatever course Her Majesty's Government may take in regard to a sanction of the proposed reforms deserves to be awaited with a general and earnest attention.—*London Times*.

—A correspondent writes: "The 11-inch United States experimental rifled gun has completed 400 rounds and is reported serviceable. The weapon is lined with coiled wrought-iron barrels, placed loose in their casing in the same manner as the Canadian breech-loading guns designed by Sir W. Palliser. The system was recommended for breech-loaders by the Ordnance Select Committee in Woolwich in 1863. In consequence of the success of the experiment the United States have ordered four 40-ton breech-loading guns to be commenced at once."