

Special cars are provided, which would come up with the trains and be left at a short distance from the place where the guns would take up their firing positions, and also as to the supply of the ammunition from those cars to the guns. The lines are double, and the simplest method would be to use the second line to run a small car on, and thus take up the ammunition to the guns. In the matter of interruption of traffic, Captain Bunbury, by admitting the fact that an enemy was bombarding a town, certainly admits the fact that the traffic would be interrupted, and in such a case I do not think any regular railway trains could run upon them. Practice in peace-time, which Captain Bunbury spoke about, is, I think, one of the things which makes the scheme peculiarly valuable. It could be practised in peace-time and thoroughly perfected. General Laurie spoke about the locking up of the guns. I cannot quite see myself how one could dismount the guns. They need not necessarily be guns of the latest pattern. We have any number of guns in the country which are not used because guns of later pattern are superseding them. If we separate the guns from the carriages, the scheme could hardly be ready in time of war. The scheme would have to be studied very carefully in peace-time, and all the details worked out. General Laurie also spoke about replacing fortifications by the use of these heavy guns. That, I think, was the last idea I had in my mind in this paper. What I did mean was that we could not hope to extend the present fortifications, and that there were many points on the coast which were totally undefended, and here the scheme could be used to greater advantage. If we only bring up light guns we may have heavy ship's guns to deal with, and I cannot therefore see that the exclusive use of light guns would be advisable; therefore, I proposed at the more important points to put one or two turntables, in order that these heavy guns might serve three or four places. If you put a coast battery for each place it would reach the cost of fifteen or twenty of these guns, or probably the cost of the heavy guns for the whole of the country. General Dawson-Scott spoke about blocking the concentration of troops coming up in case of invasion. Undoubtedly there would be some objection to this, but, at the same time, it is laid down that it does not pay to entrain troops unless they have 20 miles to go. I think it is 30 or 35 miles in Europe, but in this country, on account of our numerous railways, we assume it to be 20 miles. At any of these points it will be noticed that the guns would be up long before the troops would begin to entrain. Ashford is only 17 miles from Lydd, and the guns would be in position before the line would be used, and therefore would not cause a block. This would also seem to be the case at Clacton, as the guns would only have to travel from Ipswich. These are the two most dangerous landings in the country. At other points, if the bombardment of a town is going on, I cannot see how the ordinary traffic could possibly go on. Therefore, I should think no interruption would take place. In conclusion, I must thank the Officers who have kindly helped me. This paper is not an undivided effort, a great many people having very kindly assisted me in every way.

The CHAIRMAN: It only remains for me to ask you to join me in thanking the lecturer for this very interesting paper, and also to thank those gentlemen who have taken part in this discussion.