

so little for the most important and useful class of its population—its soldiers—as to allow them to end their days in a workhouse, when the State had received the benefit of their labour at a rate far below its real value.

It may very well be asked, what has soldiers recruited from the class which now forms the Regular Army and officered by competitive examination to fight for. There can be no particular sentiment or motive in saving GOSCHEN'S profits or GLADSTONE'S inheritance, nor is it a point of patriotism to protect, Baring's finance or JOHN BRIGHT'S acquisitions from the Prussians. Most assuredly, of all existing military forces that of Great Britain has the smallest motive for enthusiasm and loyalty; and the Army Reorganization Scheme, by abolishing purchase, has severed the last tie which linked it to the landed interests.

That Great Britain has arrived at that period of military decadence in her history which all purely commercial states are sure to undergo, we are slow to believe; but her salvation will not be due to the trading interests of the class which has virtually governed her since 1832; but to what is her really material interest—her landed aristocracy. If the Conservative element comprised in her agricultural interest does not succeed in arresting the downward progress of the mere commercial spirit and interest, a dozen years will not elapse before the wisdom of the ARTHURIAN SAGE will be justified in her case. "He that possesses more iron will own all this gold."

There is patriotism and life in the nation yet; but between the shopkeepers and the workhouse, both stands a fair chance of being extinguished in the interest of greed, cant, and stupidity!

In another column will be found an article from *Broad Arrow* of 25th January, on the "British Navy," which is terribly suggestive as to the extent in which its affairs have been mismanaged. In fifty years the enormous sum of between thirty and forty million pounds sterling has been squandered in crude experiments. Our contemporary may well ask, *and with what results?* as the answer is that the navy is "now in the same state of transition" as in 1861.

Our contemporary ascribes as the primary cause of failure, *want of organisation*, or as the *Quarterly Review* more clearly points out *want of administrative ability*, and the vicious system of allowing every shop-keeper who attains a seat in the House of Commons, and a portfolio in the administration of the day, because he is a more violent and unscrupulous partizan than his fellows, to *pull to pieces* and reconstruct a purely technical department, in which neither his previous training, knowledge, ability or character, would qualify him to be a clerk.

If England is to have either an army or

navy, the House of Commons must strip itself of the whole of its usurped power, and by placing both branches of the National Government in the hands of skilled officers, put them beyond the reach of political egotists or intriguers.

There can be nothing to hinder the Commander-in-Chief of the land forces being an *ex officio* cabinet minister, nor an Admiral exercising the functions of First Lord of the Admiralty. Neither the one nor the other need be political partisans; but they should be held responsible for everything connected with the services in their several departments—from the button on the soldier's coat to the construction of the first rate man of war.

The great cause of inefficiency in both branches of the service was the everlasting meddling of the mere politicians, and the splitting up into a lot of independent branches, for purposes of political patronage, what ought to constitute a single department.

We differ altogether with *Broad Arrow* that the manifest interests of the whole empire "must be wielded for political considerations." The service of the country is above all such paltry issues as partisanship, and the sooner that idea is realized in England the better for its interests. Neither is the present state of disorganization, wasteful outlay, and transition, a question of *construction* at all: it is in reality a problem involving what style or class of vessels shall comprise the future British fleet, and with what nature of artillery it may be armed. That problem will not be solved by members of Parliament—disciples of the Manchester School—nor such great naval reorganizers as CHILDERS or GOSCHEN. The sooner the system that brought such men to the surface is abandoned the sooner will a solution be arrived at, and the present generation may again see Britannia rule the waves—not otherwise.

Our gallant contemporary G.W.G. at Victoria, Vancouver Island, sent us an extract from the *Army and Navy Gazette* on "Infantry Drill," for which we could not find a place when his letter was published. We gladly insert it to-day, as the subject is one of surpassing interest to our readers, and it is only by collating as it were the opinions of every one capable of writing on the subject, that a true idea will be arrived at, respecting the proper "Tactics" to be adopted.

In the case before us, the writer is evidently an admirer of the Prussian system of mounted captains, and large companies of 240 men. If we understand anything of the matter, this tactical unit is both too small as well as too large. Small, because 240 men will only put 80 forward as skirmishers; too large, because it requires the

supervision of a mounted officer, in all its details, while, in reality he should only attend to its work, and if he needs support, will he not find it as difficult to get it from other companies as the British officer would? or is it a peculiarity of the British service that the officers in reserve are independent of any authority? The case made out is not applicable to any condition of the new tactics. Our battalion arrangements are far superior to the Prussians; and as our skirmishing, nor indeed that of any other army, will not be carried out by independent commands, we prefer for all practical purposes our own organisation; and if two companies are out skirmishing, two will be in support, and two in reserve, while a Lieutenant Colonel and two Majors will be responsible for the work performed. We also prefer Col. MACDONALD'S formation by fours to the Prussian theory.

We have endeavoured to keep our readers informed of all improvements in artillery or projectiles, and especially those designed for our naval armaments, inasmuch as the first line of defence of Great Britain must necessarily be most complete. The various articles which have appeared from time to time on this subject in the *VOLUNTEER REVIEW* have been characterized by the marked dissent exhibited to the conclusions arrived at by the theorists, and to the system of manufacturing the monster ordnance with which modern mechanical skill seeks to subvert mechanical impossibilities.

It has always been averred that seamen alone were the best judges of the weapons with which the British navy should be armed, because they alone understood the practical conditions under which such arms could be used. The soundness of the positions laid down is receiving confirmation every day.

The following from *Broad Arrow* of Feb. 1 is the latest:—

"Lieut.-Col. Alexander Strange, F. R. S., inspector of scientific instruments to the Indian Government, delivered a lecture at the United Service Institution on Monday evening last, on the expediency of mounting heavy guns at sea on the principle about to be adopted in the construction of the Bessemer saloon; Captain Goodenough, R. N., presided. The lecturer began by showing how the rolling of ships at sea interfered with the rapidity of fire and accuracy of aim in the guns. Our sea cannonade was, in fact no better than a sort of snap shooting, so much so that in the case of the *Monarch* it was calculated that only one in ten of her shot would hit at a distance of a thousand yards. This was a state of things to be remedied, and the council had come to the conclusion that experiments should be made with Mr. Bessemer's system of controlled suspension as a remedy. He had already come to the conclusion that Mr. Bessemer's principle would secure the first necessity, namely, steadiness of platform. The adoption of the principle would, however, necessitate an entire change in the naval gun drill. Vertical sights would give way to spirit levels and electricity; and, indeed, Mr. Bessemer's