

# MASSEY'S MAGAZINE

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## THE BRITISH ARMY OF TO-DAY.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL W. J. GASCOIGNE,

*Commanding the Militia of Canada.*



DRAWN BY F. H. BRIGDEN, FROM PHOTO.

TRUMPETER BOY OF THE 17TH LANCERS.

**SUPPOSE** that few changes have been so complete and indeed startling as the change in the Imperial Army of to-day, as compared with that which obtained between twenty-five and thirty

years ago. I refer to the *personnel*, and principally in this to the rank and file. It is true that the officer of to-day is a very different man from his predecessor of thirty years back; to-day he is an earnest professional thinker, a student of war; not a mere man of pleasure, embracing the profession of arms as a pastime. But although the change has been very marked in the officers' ranks, it is still more clearly defined amongst the rank and file.

When I joined my regiment, now thirty-four years ago, long service enlistment, as it was then called, was in vogue. A soldier enlisted for his first period of engagement for ten to twelve years, (the actual periods were continually being changed) and if he desired to re-engage, and his commanding officer also desired to keep him, he re-engaged for a further period to complete the necessary twenty-one years' to qualify for pension.

A man was considered a recruit almost up to five years' service, and only a seasoned soldier towards the end of his first period of either ten, eleven or twelve years' service.

The result was that the ranks were filled by men whom we should now indeed style old soldiers: reliable, well-seasoned men, thoroughly conversant with their duty; men to whom the regiment represented family ties, and the barrack square a home. The non-commissioned officers, too, steady, respectable men, possessing vast influence, and using that influence to excellent purpose.