

AT THE LAST.

The stream is calmest when it nears the tide,
And flowers are sweetest at the eventide,
And birds most musical at the close of day,
And saints divinest when they pass away.

Morning is lovely, but a holier charm
Lies folded close in Evening's robe of balm;
And weary man must ever love her best,
For morning calls to toil, but night to rest.

She comes from heaven, and on her wings doth
bear,
A holy fragrance, like the breath of prayer;
Footsteps of angels follow in her trace,
To shut the weary eyes of day in peace.

All things are hushed before her, as she throws
O'er earth and sky her mantle of repose;
There is a calm, a beauty, and a power
That morning knows not, in the Evening hour.

Until the Evening, we must weep and toll;
Plough life's stern furrow, dig the weedy soil,
Tread with sad feet our rough and thorny way,
And bear the heat and burden of the day.

Oh! when our sun is setting, may we glide,
Like summer Evening, down the golden tide;
And leave behind us as we pass away,
Sweet, starry twilight round our sleeping clay.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON REORGANIZATION OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

Continued from page 203.

96. The mode of raising Artillery recruits will be twofold, according as plan (a) or plan (b) may be applied to particular artillery districts.

97. In those districts in which plan (a) might be adopted, the Militia Artillery Permanent Staff would be attached to the artillery centre and would recruit from that centre over the whole area of the artillery district.

If Militia Artillery alone were in question, the recruiting parties detached from the artillery centre for the purpose of raising recruits for Militia Artillery, would have considerable distances to travel with a comparative small result as regards recruits enrolled, and judging by the results obtained from the mode hitherto practised of raising recruits for a Militia regiment within the circumscribed limits of its own county and the large cost of enrolling such recruits per head, the financial result of recruiting for Militia Artillery over an area comprising many counties, from one centre, might be very unsatisfactory in a financial point of view.

The disadvantage expressed in the last paragraph will, however, be diminished by combining the recruiting for the Royal and Militia Artillery under the superintendence of the artillery lieutenant-colonel; as well as by the expedient, if approved, of detaching a certain number of the Militia Artillery Permanent Staff for the instruction of Volunteer Artillery during the non-training periods of the year, since these last would act as recruiting agents of the artillery lieutenant-colonel at their respective localities.

98. In those districts in which plan (b) might be adopted, the permanent staff sergeants of any Militia Artillery regiment would be attached to the depot centre of the infantry district to which the regiment territorially belongs, a certain number being detached for the instruction of the Volunteer Artillery corps within the limits of the said infantry district.

These artillery sergeants would act under the orders of the artillery lieutenant-colonel in raising artillery recruits within the said infantry district; the Royal Artillery recruits so raised being forwarded to Woolwich, or to the artillery centre of the artillery district, according to circumstances; while the Militia Artillery recruits would

be sent for their recruit Infantry training to the depot centre of the infantry district.

99. Under the operation of either of the plans (a) or (b), where artillery recruits might require to be raised in infantry districts possessing within their limits no Militia Artillery special recruiting parties must be employed under the authority of the general of the division.

100. Practically it may be anticipated that Militia Artillery regiments will recruit in their own counties. In England the counties, with a few exceptions, represent infantry brigade districts; and to require any such district to supply two infantry battalions of 1,000 strong, in addition to an existing artillery regiment, would altogether overweight its capability. In this view it would appear desirable, by raising the standard of Militia Artillery recruits, to drive Militia Artillery regiments farther a-field to obtain them and thereby relieve their immediate localities of part of the pressure of artillery recruiting.

101. It is with reference also to those counties or districts now possessing Militia Artillery, that it has been recommended to fix two Militia Infantry battalions at a minimum strength of 750 rank and file as the quota of each brigade district in England, and 650 rank and file as that of each district in Scotland.

ON THE MOST CONVENIENT NUMBER OF LOCAL CENTRES.

102. The committee was instructed to consider the question whether—in view of desirability of having two Militia Infantry battalions in every line district, and of the difficulty of maintaining more than a hundred such battalions in England and Wales—it might not be expedient to reduce the fifty-three line districts into which by the scheme submitted by the committee England and Wales were divided, to fifty.

103. With reference to this question, it is to be remarked that, although the scheme nominally creates fifty-three districts or centres in England and Wales, four of these are metropolitan districts, so that practically there are only forty-nine depot centres, irrespective of Guards and Rifles.

104. It would doubtless be possible to effect a further reduction by uniting in each of the counties of Yorkshire and Lancashire two of the proposed depot centres into one; an arrangement which would reduce the number of infantry centres in England and Wales to forty-seven; and would set free from the district distribution as now proposed four Line battalions, to be provided with a territorial home elsewhere, by attaching them permanently as third Line battalions to four of the existing two-battalion districts.

105. Although in some respects it might appear advantageous to have a certain number of districts possessing three battalions while the remainder possess only two battalions, there would be a peculiar inconvenience in such an arrangement, which the committee desires to point out as follows:—

It is true that, according to the scheme submitted, one of the districts in England had three Line battalions allotted to it; but this arrangement was imposed by the fact that the infantry battalions of the army form two pairs of seventy and one odd battalion, and by the necessity of giving to the odd battalion a territorial home. The odd battalion in this case becomes really a floating battalion, and may be employed in any manner that may be thought desirable without interfering in the smallest degree with the working of the general system.

106. But the effect of creating four additional districts, each within three Line battalions, would be as follows:—

The normal condition being that seventy battalions shall always be abroad, and seventy-one battalions always at home; a special roster would be necessary for these four districts, so that two of them would at all times have two battalions abroad and one at home, while the other two should always have one battalion abroad and two at home. If this roster were disturbed we might find three districts out of the four, each with two battalions at home. This would disturb the equilibrium of foreign and home battalions, because to maintain that equilibrium the four districts under consideration should always possess in the aggregate six battalions at home and six abroad. In the case we are supposing, however, seven battalions would be at home and five abroad, and to restore the balance it would be necessary that some one of the two-battalion districts should have both of its battalions abroad, which in ordinary times is contrary to the principles of the organization proposed.

107. The actual condition of affairs as regards the distribution of Militia infantry battalions is as follows:—

The main deficiency is in Scotland. Five of her nine centres possess each only one battalion of Militia Infantry; while one centre has no Militia Infantry whatever. But this portion of the empire does not contribute its fair quota in proportion to population.

Ireland, on the other hand, has a Militia establishment in excess of her proportion, which practically there is difficulty in raising. If, therefore, the establishments of Irish regiments were reduced in the aggregate by 5,000, the same number added to the existing Scotch Militia would suffice to provide each Scotch centre with two battalions of 700 rank and file; or of 650 rank and file if the increase were limited to 4,000.

108. In Lancashire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire, and Northamptonshire, where there exist at present Militia battalions of great strength, a sufficient number of battalions to complete the proportion of two to each district can easily be added.

109. Of the centres which remain, six possess only one Militia Infantry battalion, but they each possess one regiment of Militia Artillery.

Kent, which comprises two centres, has at present only two Militia Infantry battalions instead of her proper quota of four; but a third battalion might be raised in the county of Kent, which possess in addition one regiment of Militia Artillery.

Surrey, which comprises two centres, has at present three Militia Infantry battalions, which might be increased to the desired quota of four.

There remains only the centre of Berks, which has now only one Militia Infantry battalion; but it is suggested that in Berks and Northants, which must on the score of population be worked together for recruiting purposes, a second infantry battalion might be raised for the Berks centre.

110. The centres exceptionally referred to in the foregoing remarks are shown in Appendix (G).

111. It would be desirable to form the existing Welsh regiments of small strength into battalions of eight companies each.

112. It appears that if the strength of Militia battalions for England and Wales were, as a rule, fixed at 800 rank and file, a redistribution of the existing numbers would suffice, in connection with the increase recently authorised, to provide the additional battalions proposed to be formed according to the plan here suggested, on the condition that a minimum strength of 750 should be