

there were thirty millions of armed people against five millions of Canadians—even supposing the Canadians were united as one man—it was a question whether the defence of Canada would be possible. Would it be possible for Great Britain to give such effective aid as would prevent the occupation of Canada by the people of the United States? He believed it would be an impossibility. Happily for us, the attitude and the feelings of the people of the United States were essentially peaceful; they did not, as far as we knew, desire to increase their military responsibilities or extend their Empire. The present was not the time when it would be useful, or in any way practicable, for the Government of this country to take any actual measures for the defence of Canada. Unless we were at war with the United States, Canada was absolutely impregnable; if we should be at war with the United States, he believed it would be impossible to defend it. In regard, therefore, to colonial defence he believed that, with the exception of Canada, we were invulnerable. How about the centre of the Empire—the British Isles? We were here with a handful of soldiers, while across the sea a nation after nation had armed men to be counted by the million against our poor thousands. How far were we safe? There, again, we must rely upon the supremacy of the Navy. Even assuming, however, that we were safe from invasion, England might at any time be called upon to undertake military operations abroad, because our defence policy in the past had been, as he hoped it always would be in the future, to ward off attack from our own shores by carrying the war into the enemy's country. That was true defensive warfare—to assume the offensive and make it so hot and unpleasant for the enemy that they should be forced to sue for peace. How far was it possible to carry out that policy with our present resources and military policy? Our Army in England consisted, all told, in Regular troops of 110,000, and of that force about 60,000 would be available for employment abroad. Reserves would be immediately wanted, and as a matter of fact we had hardly any Reserves in the British Army. It was not pleasant to reflect that in case of war the active part taken by England would be on a scale commensurate with what could be done by Holland or Roumania, or even Bulgaria. This state of things had arisen simply because those responsible for the military arrangements seemed never to look beyond the obsolete conditions of the past. Should occasion arise for the sudden augmentation of our Army we must raise the number of men (not boys) at their price in the open market. He warmly urged that the time has arrived when, for the sake of our honour as well as the safety of our magnificent resources, our 35 millions of people should turn serious and immediate attention to the question and take an individual part in remedying what was the undoubtedly weak point in our Imperial defence.

Mr. H. C. Batchelor, who followed, agreed that the residuum would be improved by a little drilling, and he urged

that the club should have the pluck to advocate conscription, if it were needed, though he feared the movement would be unpopular.

Major Grimston feared that Australia would be in danger from Russian attack if her coaling stations were insufficiently defended.

Mr. Cox said the important question concerning the Navy was the food supply.

Mr. H. Knox denied that our Navy was supreme. He contended that £18,000,000 should be spent on the Navy and £14,000,000 on the Army at once.

Mr. Keeling deprecated compulsory military service as an extreme measure, inconsistent with English traditions and instincts. The Army should be made more popular by better pay and abolishing deductions.

In reply, Sir G. Chesney denied that he had advocated compulsory military service. His suggestion was that in war time an Army should be raised, by voluntary service, of men obtained at a price sufficient to secure the number of soldiers needed.

The Chairman, in closing the discussion, said that an increase in the Navy Estimates must first be desired by the country. Governments did not dare to impose burdens on the taxpayers unless they felt that the latter approved of their action. We had been too long sitting on our money-bags, staring ruin in the face; but the present Government had been stirred up, and he believed that adequate provision in regard to the Navy would be made when the Estimates came on in the spring. The measure of our sea power should be the work we had to do, and we had the means to do it. Her Majesty's Government, he believed, would then be prepared for the French and Russian alliance. Our colonies were safe only as our sea power was assured. As a humble and modest sailor, he had endeavoured to drive that wedge home. By the Jingo and fighting spirit of Englishmen the Empire had been won, and by the same spirit would it be maintained.—United Service Gazette.

THE SOLDIER'S SORE FOOT.

At the Royal United Service Institution, January 26th, Major-General Lord Methuen, C.B., C.M.G. (commanding the Home District) presided on the occasion of the reading of a thoughtful and practical paper on the above subject by Surgeon-Captain W. C. Beevor, Scots Guards.

There are, he explained, two kinds of sore feet: the soldier and his leader have to contend with. The one where the outer skin is rubbed rapidly away and destroyed by some high degree of friction or some projecting object in the sock or boot, and a raw, tender, and sometimes bleeding, surface of the inner skin is exposed; the other where the outer skin is intact but raised and stretched by subjugent fluid, thus suggesting a less degree of friction than the first type, and no offending projection in the foot's covering. Regarding the general swelling and heat and the soaking of excessive perspiration so frequently seen in the Infantry soldier's foot and lower part of his leg, the lecturer condemned the pre-

sent fashion of folding a thick and generally voluminous trouser within a non-porous leather legging, as generally adopted for the Infantry soldier of the Line in our Army, and strongly advocated the plan of allowing all the men time-expired or part-worn trousers, which are at present used as "swabs," to be cut short and worn hanging loosely over the upper part of the leggings, a fashion almost generally adopted by officers; by this means the circulation in the lower part of the leg and ankle need not be obstructed, a fairly good degree of evaporation is allowed from the leg, and cool air encouraged to play in the space between the skin of the leg and its covering.

The regulation boot at present in use, the lecturer averred, does not fulfil the requirements of nature. In the first place, the waist is made of two layers of stiff leather stoutly sewn together by four rows of waxed thread, and forms an almost unbending bar. Again, the little play that the sole does possess takes place too far back, and not in the position of nature's oblique line. Consequently, in walking, the only movement practicable in this boot is a sort of roll from heel to toe, for the heel reaches the ground first, and as the step proceeds it is lifted, and finally the toe alone rests on the ground, on the principle of what engineers term the "rocker or rocking lever." But the tendency of the foot within is to bend, and consequently the tendency of the heel of the foot is to act independently and work up and down within the boot. Again, this boot is lined along the sole with a thin layer of sheepskin, which, when wet, will stretch to an extraordinary extent, thus giving rise to folds which become hard and cracked when dry, and cause great irritation to the foot. There is great difficulty in retaining the original shape and construction of these boots, because the soldier, and particularly non-commissioned officers, will persist in having them altered to suit their ideas of fashion, generally having them refronted and made so short that the foot cannot possibly work naturally, the toes being pressed upon and bent inwards, and so deformed into various shapes, besides being predisposed to attacks of cramp in the toes and muscles of the sole of the foot.

No ankle boot can be supplied to a great number of men without some defects; the best covering for the foot that has to perform severe work is that which covers it the last. For marching, running, jumping, etc., a boot which confines the ankle is a mistake, and most people agree that a shoe, when well fitted, is preferable, though the lecturer declared it was without much hope of success that he put forward for approval an equipment consisting of a shoe that can be fixed with one fastening, and made on a very pliable pattern.

The advantages he claimed for a shoe are—(1) Rapidity of adaptation; (2) cheapness; (3) lightness; (4) the ease with which the regimental shoemakers can adapt its shape to any peculiarity of the man's foot; (5) much greater ease with which a spare pair can be packed and carried in a man's kit; (6) the ease with which it can be removed on the march, and the foot