

notwithstanding, he is to remain in the regiment, should he so elect. Now, I have no wish or intention to question the decision of authority in this case. Authority no doubt had reason for its decision, of which outsiders have no knowledge. I only wish to point that, while to all appearance the grounds upon which the commanding officer based his course of action remain unchallenged, and are even admitted sound, the opinion of the commanding officer, as to what is necessary for the fitness of an officer and the honour of his regiment, has been overridden; and on the facts of these proceedings so far as known, the precedent is established that *riding*—I do not speak of horsemanship—is not a necessary qualification for a cavalry officer; while an unrefuted, undisputed charge of falsehood is no longer a bar to the holding of Her Majesty's commission. Sir, it has been said by the *Daily Telegraph* that Mr. Tribe is one of what are called Cardwell's men—that he is the first officer appointed under the new system. I have, I think, disposed of this part of the case, and shown that there is no foundation for such statements. Sub-Lieutenant Tribe having been, in all essential respects in the same position as a purchase officer; but assuming for the sake of argument, these statements to be true—assuming him to be a "Cardwell man" and the first appointment under the new system, what a prospect does this hold out to us, if, with the new system, we are to have a new standard—if the old association of "an officer and a gentleman"—I do not mean a gentleman by birth, but by character and conduct—is to be dissolved, and men are to be allowed to remain in the Army, "although their conduct is not, in some respects, such as has hitherto been characteristic of the British officer!" I think the Secretary of State has good grounds to pray to be saved from his friends, if Mr. Tribe is to be considered and kept in the Army as the first fruit of Army regeneration.

2ndly, I come to consider what is the position and duty of the officers of a regiment in their social relations with each other. In the endless discussions which we had last year upon Army matters, one thing at least was not denied—viz., the excellence of what was and is called our regimental system. In any failures or shortcomings, it was not our regimental organization that ever failed us. This, at least, we could safely rely upon when all else had collapsed or broken down. The regimental system then it was by universal consent determined to uphold as far as possible in the coming changes in the Army. Now it was perhaps difficult to define precisely what was and is meant by "the regimental system;" but I think I shall not be far wrong if I say that a part, a vital part—nay, the soul and very essence of it—consists in the free, friendly, social intercourse in each regiment of the officers with each other, and in the knowledge and belief that whatever might be their relative social standing in the world, whether born of high or comparatively low degree, whether rich or poor, whether in purchase or non-purchase men, or risen from the ranks, once they held the Queen's commission, they were one and all, officers and gentlemen; meeting in their common mess-room, like the Knights of the Round Table, socially on terms, of the most complete equality, the honour of all being the care of each, and the honour of each the care of all. To the spirit of *camaraderie*, to the brotherly, knightly feelings thus engendered and fostered, we owe that self and mutual reliance which, plus the in-born native courage of the race, has enabled British

officers to stand and die shoulder to shoulder, as they have stood and died together, in mutual trust, on many a bloody field, in the orchards of Hougoumont, on the slope of Inkerman, in the breach of Delhi. Surely, then, it would be well to foster and guard this spirit, and to encourage the feeling in the officers of our Army of confident *camaraderie* and mutual trust. We hear nowadays much about Prussianizing our Army. Do not, at least, let us de-Prussianize it in this respect; for upon this feeling Prussia sets store that before an officer can be received into a Prussian regiment he must be accepted by the officers, who have a right to exercise a veto by ballot upon his appointment as complete as that exercised by the members of our military clubs in Pall-mall on the admission or rejection of members. And if it be well to foster and guard this feeling of *camaraderie*, it cannot be well to interfere with the social relations of the officers to one another—it cannot be well to strike at its roots by an attempt to force into the social circle of a regiment an officer unexonerated from the charge of falsehood, whose conduct "was not, in some respects, such as has hitherto been characteristic of the British officer." And if the officers of a regiment should at any time respectfully resist such an attempt—if they should decline to "try their best" to be on social and friendly terms with a brother officer charged with and unacquitted of falsehood, their position is impregnable. They cannot fail to be supported by all honourable men and by public opinion. It may, perhaps, be said that evidence taken before the Court of Inquiry was not sufficient to justify a court-martial; but to this I would reply, that when the Army Bill was last year under discussion, we heard much from the Secretary of the good that would result from the appointment of sub-lieutenants, who would serve in a probationary stage of existence, and who, the Royal Warrant of November 1, 1871, says, "shall be removed from our service from moral or physical unfitness;" and I submit that, under this Warrant, Mr. Tribe might have been dismissed without any further proceedings being required. And now, Sir, I have finished what I had to say upon this strange, eventful story; but before I sit down, I would offer, if hon. members will kindly bear with me a little longer, a few remarks as to the position of the House of Commons and the military authorities in relation to questions such as this, affecting the discipline of the Army. At the outset of my remarks, I said that my hon. and gallant relative deprecated, as I did, the necessity of bringing such matters before the House, but that in doing so he was only following the lead of the Secretary of State, whose uncalled-for, incomplete reply to the question of the hon. Member for Hackney necessitated the moving for the papers necessary to enable the public to form a sound judgment upon the question thus raised by the press and in the House of Commons. But, although the doctrine that Parliament is not a fitting place for discussion or questioning of matters of military discipline is undoubtedly sound, there have been, and there will be, special occasions when this salutary rule has been, and ought to be, departed from and this has been admitted by the highest constitutional authorities. I find in Clode's well-known book that Earl Russell, speaking many years ago on a question relating to a court-martial, said, "There can be no doubt that under that kind of superintendence and supervision which this House ought to exercise, there might arise cases which would require such a proceeding as I have hinted at." And again, Lord Brou-

ham on another occasion said, "I have always been one of those who were of opinion that, as a general rule, no interference with the proceedings of any naval or military court-martial, or with any part of the discipline of the Army and Navy, ought even to be dreamt of; but still there were some exceptions to that rule." And I would myself add that unless the press have members of the House of Commons and the Secretary of State act very differently from what they done in this instance, those exceptions spoken of by Lord Brougham will inevitably become of more frequent occurrence than here tofore. The times are also changed. So long as not only theoretically, but to a certain extent practically, the Crown exercised an independent authority over the Army and the Militia through the General commanding in chief and the Lord Lieutenant, there were sound constitutional grounds for matters connected with military discipline, as distinct from military expenditure, not being brought before the House of Commons; and so long as questions of first appointment and promotion were in the main independent of the principal of selection, and regulated themselves by the received and recognized custom of the Army, the chances of interference in such matters by Parliament are comparatively few. But now the theory of the Army being what is called a Royal Army, governed and controlled by an authority outside and independent of Parliament, has been practically exploded by the subjugation, capture and confinement of the Commander in Chief within the walls of the War Office, while the Horse Guards are now a mere shell, and only represent the tomb of his separate authority, with two cuirassed mutes sitting on black horses at the door. Further, by the abolition of the military authority of the Lords-Lieutenant, we have practically all power and patronage now centred in the dictatorship of the Secretary of State. I say *practically*, for the theory of the independent authority of the Sovereign, acting through the Commander in chief and the Secretary of State, still exists, though in a fossil state; the independent prerogative of the Crown in military matters being only brought into play, when it is necessary on an army question, rudely to override the decision of Parliament, as was done last year on the Army Bill, as has been done this year in the supercession of the Line officers. It becomes then, only natural, and even necessary, that men should under the new system, watch jealously all that relates to the patronage and discipline of the army, and that when a legitimate occasion arises, this watchfulness should make itself known and felt within the walls of Parliament. And all the more so, when we see the great influence of the Press, and how that influence has—as I have, I think, shown—been wrongfully brought to bear upon the subject of my motion. Such, then, being now the true practical position of Army matters, you may rest assured that, whatever may be said as to the inexpediency of such matters being brought before Parliament, there will be occasions when justice to individuals, to regiments, or even to the Army at large, will require that some members of Parliament should, if needs be, make an appeal in this House from the injustice of officialism to the Cæsar of Parliament and free public opinion. In doing this for my hon. and gallant relative on the present occasion—would to God he had been here to do it himself!—I trust I have been temperate in speech, that I have spoken in a becoming tone, and that what I have said may tend to vindicate the character, unjustly aspersed, of one of the most