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OUR RESERVE ARMY.

[From the Broad Arrow.]

It is related that the Crown Prince of Prussia, who happened to be with his father when the declaration of war with France was received, went outside the railway station, where they were standing, and uttered two words which were sufficient to summon the whole country to arms. The words were, "War, mobilize." Whereupon throughout the length and breadth of that vast kingdom, whose population exceeds 42,000,000, a quivering thrill brought forth in response a mighty host, numbering at least a million of men. As, sooner or later, we generally follow the lead of other nations in regard to our armaments, as witness our iron-clads, breechloaders, dress of our soldiers, and other matters needless to specify, there seems no reason to doubt that eventually we shall find ourselves obliged once more to take a leaf out of our neighbors' book, or else sink into an unenviable insignificance among surrounding countries. Notwithstanding the martial ardour created among us by the Volunteer movement, notwithstanding the wonderful example we have had brought before us of what a country can do when every man is claimed as an important unit in defence of the State, still we think the time is not yet arrived when England's sons will submit themselves to be compulsorily taken from their homes to serve in an army constituted such as our Army is for service at home and abroad. We may therefore dismiss from our minds the idea of a conscription for the Line as being unsuitable at the present to the character of our countrymen, and we must turn in some other direction for a solution of the problem of how we are to produce the number of men we are in want of. Our Indian Army, and the few soldiers we have in foreign garrisons, we must have at any price, together with a regular force taking its turn of home service at least to the extent which has hitherto been deemed sufficient, while a large augmentation of the Marines appears to be only a reasonable means of obtaining increased troops for colonial service or foreign expeditions. Let us consider, therefore, the question of the army we may any moment find it necessary to form service at home to enable Great Britain to have a voice among the nations in matters affecting her very existence. At present candour compels us to acknowledge we have little or none. Of what use is diplomacy unless it

has the strong arm of military power to back up its proposals, and secure respect for its voice? Prussia, whose population we have already named, is divided into nine districts, each possessing its own distinct military organisation, and furnishing in war time its own *corps d'armée*, complete in every respect, with artillery, cavalry, infantry, guns, ammunition, transport, medical staff, and in fact with every requisite. Of course each district is made up of so many towns and villages, each in its turn furnishing its quota. By this method 500,000 men appear in the field at once, backed by a like number in reserve ready to fill the vacancies in the first army or for any other emergency. Estimating our own population at about 27,500,000, and calculating our fighting men in the same proportion as Prussia, we may say that 687,500 represents about the armed force we should have at our disposal, but by stretching patriotism to its utmost, 1,000,000 might be had. We ought to raise this force, if we could induce such millions to take arms, by voluntary enlistment in the Militia, but in default of voluntary enlistment, when the ballot should be put in force, with no exception save efficiency as a Volunteer. At present, our armaments, on paper, are said to amount to 453,000, these consisting of regular troops, Army reserve, Militia, Yeomanry, Volunteers, but not including the 90,000 Regulars we have in India. If these figures really represented a consolidated army, it would be one of medium respectability—but what do they really mean according to the present standard of armies? Truth forces us to answer, nothing. For instance, to look at it in a practical way. What sort of an army could we send to Belgium to-morrow, if the tide of Continental affairs should sweep us over there? Lord Elcho tells us we have but 130 guns, 10,654 cavalry, with only 6530 horses to mount them, and 50,870 infantry, where with we are to guard our own homes and also assist the Belgians. But it is not alone the army we could send—it is the keeping up of that force we must look to as well, and considering the awful carnage which now takes place, we do not exaggerate when we say, one day's good fighting would annihilate any army we could at present place on a foreign soil. As a suggestion preparatory to the organisation of the forces we require, we would first of all break up Great Britain and Ireland into eight military districts, each under a General, and possessing some central point for its army to assemble upon when required, compelling railways to carry the men free of cost. To England and Wales we would assign three *corps d'armée* of 120,000 each, the first hav-

ing its headquarters situated in the neighborhood of London, say at Woolwich; the second central point at Bath, or thereabouts; the third at Manchester or Liverpool. Scotland would be divided into two districts, Aberdeen and Glasgow, each furnishing 50,000 men. Ireland should furnish three corps, situated at Dublin, Cork, and Galway, amounting together to 200,000 men; each of our centres being near a seaport, the army is ready for transport. Thus, we have these totals, England and Wales, 360,000, Scotland, 100,000, and Ireland, 200,000, or a grand total of 660,000, in addition to whatever continuous-service troops of the Line might, for the time, be on *home service*. This is rather below the number we ought to have, by our former calculation, but still if even these could be raised it would be something, and we must bear in mind these numbers should not include the regular Army. To each headquarters would be attached a permanent staff, whose duty it would be always to keep the force up to its proper strength, each division to be subdivided as necessary by this Staff, and over these sub divisions officers should be placed, keeping accounts of all changes, reporting the same to headquarters, and organising local transport for their respective troops, one or more of these corps to assemble annually for manœuvring for four or five days. In connection with this system we should induce as many men as possible to enlist in the regular army for short periods, say from three to five years, at the expiration of which service they might be massed for drill once a year with the rest of the reserve. Though these men would cost little or nothing in time of peace, the country must be at the expense of a first outlay for arms, clothes, and accoutrements. There must be depots of arms and ammunition; there should be hundreds of thousands of arms in store, as well as men in reserve; and, above all, there must be a real administration of stores and transport, not the miserable mockery of the broken-down system of French *Intendance*, under which we at present suffer. Ministers, again, must be taught honest arithmetic, and not be allowed to count so badly as they did of late, when two thirds of the rifles said to be in store proved to be over the other side of the world and when they have supplied half the fabulous number of "men in buckram," offered by the First Lord to the Minister of War, would have rendered him unable to place another Marine in the fleet. Such statements by men in their position will, sooner or later, drag the country into the mire.

When the nation has determined on the number of men she thinks necessary for