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notwithstanding the impetus given to recruiting by the Boer War, the actual numbers in 1900 were 241 less than in 1899, and this in spite of the standard of height having been reduced by half an inch. The Inspector of Recruiting regretfully reported that "Recruiting for the Infantry of the line cannot be considered satisfactory." Desertions have besides steadily increased from 6.4 per cent. in 1896 to 8.0 per cent. in 1900.

Whenever the strain of war comes upon us the voluntary system, based as it is now based upon a low and uninviting rate of wages, breaks down, and our generals in the field find themselves obliged to report again and again upon the unsatisfactory material that is sent to them to fill up the gaps made by disease, wounds and death. Lord Raglan, writing from the Crimea, said: "Those last sent were so young and unformed that they fell victims to disease, and were swept away like flies." Personally I can speak of many hundreds of young soldiers sent to India in 1858, and can testify to the truth of the statement that "During the Indian Mutiny men were sent out who were at once put into the hospital." History has repeated itself during the Boer War, and we know of Imperial Yeomanry and others who had to be sent back to England from South Africa as quite unfit for any military duty whatsoever.

To give a general idea of the effectiveness or otherwise of our regular force I may state that in 1873 there were, out of 53,465 men stationed at home, no less than 15,220 under 21 or over 40 years of age. In 1898, out of 62,830, there were 29,044 in the same category, and in the latter year there were 27,642 men in the ranks who would not have been passed as fit for service in the Continental armies of Europe on account of age only, 37 per thousand being actually under 17 years of age!

The standard of height and chest measurement has been repeatedly reduced; in January, 1898, it came down to 33 inches chest measurement, but even less than that reduced condition was allowed in so-called "special" cases; those amounted to 23 per 1,000 in 1899. In this latter year 18,268 recruits joined who weighed under 125 lbs., and 26,017 out of 40,701 were under 130 lbs. in weight. So deplorable has been the

result of the present voluntary system of enlistment that Lieutenant-Colonel C. M. Douglas, V. C., M. D., cannot be contradicted in his statement made at a lecture delivered in the R. F. S. Institution, when he said that "the great majority of our recruits are shallow, commonplace, nondescript youths." But the it would be strange if it were otherwise, as the pay offered to the recruit is insufficient to tempt the better class of our sturdy youth to follow the temporary profession of arms. It necessarily takes time and care to fill out and strengthen this raw material, and it requires on an average two years before this recruit is fit to take part in the labor and trials of a campaign; in the meanwhile if soldiers are imperatively required at the front, the necessary material has to be sought for in the Militia, of which service we will next treat.

II. THE MILITIA.

This force, including the Militia Reserve, was in 1899 a nominal strength of 110,900 men. But there are very large deductions to be made from this. In the first instance it is officially admitted that 10,000 of these enlisted into the line and have been counted twice over. Next the Militia Reserve is not a reserve to the Militia at all, but a part of the Army Reserve; thirdly, there were no less than 8,716 deserters to be deducted, and, finally, the Militia is always many thousands short of the establishment (no less than 19,054 in 1898). Thus it resulted that in 1898, out of an establishment of 132,493, only 113,439 were enrolled, and 98,042 only were present at the month's training, and from this number we have to deduct:

Militia Reserve.. .. .	31,905
Enlistment to Line and Navy.. ..	15,963
Double enlistment and men from	
Reserve.. .. .	2,000
Deserters.. .. .	8,716

Total deductions 57,684

So that the public who believed they possessed in 1898 a body of 132,493 Militia for the home defence, should the soil of their island home be threatened by invasion, had really only something like 40,000 men of this class actually to depend upon. Was Mr. Arn. d Forster, M. P., very far wrong when he