

the gravamen and substance of the charges against the 9th Lancers—viz., that Mr. Tribe's was the first appointment under the new system; that he had passed with distinction at Sandhurst; that he sought to pass a further severe examination; that he was, in consequence of all this, bullied, charged by his commanding officers with falsehood; that a court of Inquiry reported; and that Mr. Tribe had been ordered to return to his duty, and the officers had been censured. Now for the facts. Mr. Tribe was not the first to secure a commission under the new system, not even the first in the 7th Lancers, a son of Earl Russel having received a similar commission before him. He did not pass with distinction at Sandhurst; he did not pass there at all, but went up for examination for a direct commission at Chelsea, which he obtained before the change of system. Mr. Tribe, therefore, stood in all respects in the same position as a purchase officer before abolition of purchase, and if the Army Bill had not passed, he would have had to pay for his commission like any one else. All, therefore, about his being one of Cardwell's men, and so forth, falls absolutely to the ground. It is true that he obtained leave to go through another examination, and having obtained it, he took no steps in furtherance of his professed object. I hold in my hand a letter from Colonel Rich, late Major in the 9th Lancers, which says, "Sub Lieut. Tribe obtained an extension of leave from the 31st December, 1871, to the 20th January, 1872, to go up for examination at the London University. The examination was held on the 8th of January 1872. Mr. Tribe did not go up, and could not have done so, as he had not given the prescribed fourteen days notice; so he really cancelled his leave, and should have joined his regiment on the expiration of his first leave. He could not be ignorant of having to give notice, as he had previously been up for three similar examination—i. e. similar to that held on the 8th of January. I ascertained these facts from personal interviews with the authorities of the University. I saw one of Mr. Tribe's applications for one of these previous examinations, which he went up for. The examinations were for matriculation." Comment upon this letter is needless; I pass on to other matters. It is true that he was reported as unfit for a cavalry officer, being unable to ride, having thrown himself off his horse on more than one occasion in the regimental riding school as he had previously done when at Sandhurst. It is also true that he was placed under arrest by his commanding officer, and that charges of falsehood were brought against him. But it is not true that the Court reported. A Court of Inquiry—I have here "Simmons on Courts-Martial," but I shall not trouble the House by quoting from it—may either report their opinion or not, according as desired to do so by the supreme authority convening the Court. In this case, it is said that the Court, which was presided over by Major General Lysons, intended to report, but that a telegram came down from the War office forbidding them to do so. They accordingly only transmitted the proceedings to the authorities. The inquiry, I should mention, was so far opened that counsel was allowed, the hon. member for Shrewsbury acting as counsel for the 9th Lancers; and reporters were also present, on the understanding that the reports of the proceedings were not to be published until these were completed. Subsequently, after the military authorities had considered the proceedings, a memorandum from the War office was read to the

officers of the 9th, assembled for the purpose, by Sir T. M'Mahon, the General in command of the Cavalry at Aldershot. The memorandum began as follows: "If Mr. Tribe elects to remain in the army, he must remain in the 9th Lancers; although his conduct"—I call the attention of hon. members particularly to this—"in some respects has not been such as has hitherto been characteristic of the British officer;" and it ended by saying that if he remained in the 9th Lancers, he must be treated with courtesy. The memorandum made no reference to the counter charges brought by Mr. Tribe against the officers; it neither censured nor even mentioned the commanding officer, and it may be said, so far as is known, practically to admit that the charges preferred against Mr. Tribe had not been, to say the least, disproved. What followed was, that the officers, declining to associate with Mr. Tribe, except on regimental duty, his counsel and guardian, Dr. Tompkins, complained to the authorities; and the Adjutant General came down to Aldershot in uniform, summoned the officers of the 9th Lancers together, and said the Field Marshal Commander-in-chief must insist on their receiving Mr. Tribe socially into the regiment, and he ended by saying, "All I ask is a very simple matter; only write me a private letter containing these three little words—say you will 'try your best.'" What the reply of these officers has been to this request, I do not know. I have not seen it, but I know what it must have been. I know what English gentlemen, what every member of this House would have written. They must have replied that while ready to meet and communicate with Mr. Tribe on all regimental matters, as in duty bound, they must decline to associate socially with him until he was relieved of the charges of falsehood that had been brought against him. Subsequently Mr. Tribe has been more than once placed under arrest without leave, and the last information I have is a telegram I received on Thursday evening, which says, "He is under arrest, and charges are preferred against him for falsehood and bribery." So much for the facts of the case. I come now to the question of the hon. Member for Hackney, and to the answer given by the Secretary of State. The hon. member asked whether the Secretary of State would have any objection "to state the nature of the charges brought by Major Marshall, of the 9th, against an officer who was the first to receive a commission without purchase; and what was the nature of his decision?" Now the Secretary began by apologizing for answering the question at all, saying that he did so because the hon. member for Hackney had said he asked it in the support of the authorities; but I submit that this is an insufficient reason. I deny the right of the Secretary of State to answer a question on a matter of military discipline at one time because it suits him, and at another time to refuse, when it is convenient for him not to answer. But the point which I wish to bring strongly before the House is that the Secretary of State—unintentionally, I doubt not—answered this question in a way to endorse the current misrepresentations on the matter at issue. Thus, after saying "that the nature of the charge was that Sub Lieutenant Tribe had been guilty of conduct unworthy of his position as an officer," he told the House that "a Court of Inquiry had examined into the circumstances, and reported the proceedings to His Royal Highness, who has decided that Sub-Lieutenant Tribe shall return to his duty,

and that the commanding officer shall be responsible that he is in every respect treated by his brother officers in a becoming manner." "It is not," he added "quite accurate to say that Sub-Lieutenant Tribe was the first to receive a commission without purchase; he was one of the first." Now, here we have an answer which necessarily conveyed a wrong impression, and endorsed the misrepresentations to which I have referred. Why instead of saying, "It is not quite accurate to say that Sub-Lieutenant Tribe was the first to receive a commission without purchase" that being the whole point in this case—he ought to have repudiated alike the fact and interference as to his being called a Cardwell man. The fact is, the Secretary has said too much or too little, and what he has said necessitates, in justice to all concerned, the production of the official papers bearing upon this case. Justice to himself, to the officers, and to Mr. Tribe alike requires it. Those who have thus far favoured me with their attention will have observed that I have in the main as yet confined myself to a simple historical narrative. I would now point to certain considerations which naturally and necessarily arise from the very peculiar circumstance of this case, and which must, I think have occurred to everyone who has given it a moment's thought. These considerations are—1st, What is the position and duty of a commanding officer in relation to the officers and the regiment under his authority and command? 2ndly, What is the position and duty of the officers of a regiment in their social relations to each other? Heretofore, the belief has existed that a commanding officer is responsible for the efficiency and character of his regiment; that if he believes and knows an officer to be inefficient, it is his duty to report him as such, so that being responsible for the honour and character of his regiment, it is equally his duty to take notice of any act or conduct on the part of any one of the officers which, in his opinion, is hurtful to its honor and character. These two positions will not, I presume, be disputed by the Secretary of State or by any other military authority. Let us, then, take our stand upon them and from this vantage ground look at and judge, first of the conduct of Major Marshall, the position in which he finds himself placed, and the precedent thus established for the future guidance of commanding officers. Major Marshall, believing that a necessary qualification for a cavalry officer is ability to ride, and finding that one of his officers throws himself off his horse in the riding school, and that when at Sandhurst he had acted in like manner, comes to the conclusion that he is unfit for the cavalry. Upon investigation the facts of Lieutenant Tribe having thrown himself off his horse in the regimental riding school and at Sandhurst, and his unfitness for the cavalry are not disproved; and it is decided by authority that, in the words of the memorandum of the Adjutant General, "If Mr. Tribe elects to remain in the Army he must remain in the 9th Lancers." Again Major Marshall, responsible as commanding officer, for the time being, for the honor and character of his regiment, feels it his duty to place Sub-Lieutenant Tribe under arrest, and charge him with falsehood. This charge is fully investigated, and after a review of the proceedings of the Court, authority in the same memorandum, so far from exonerating Mr. Tribe from the charge of falsehood, makes no reference to it, but decides that "his conduct was not in some respects such as has hitherto been characteristic of the British officer," and that this,