

not try to learn all we can as to method from the experience of our great national educational bodies. But there is one matter in which I would venture to join issue. The teaching of individuals as individuals is only incidentally our work. The very fact that so highly educated a man, and so zealous a Volunteer, speaks as if that was the main business of Officers or non-commissioned officers, shows that we have, as to the essential nature of our own business, something to teach our teachers. An old soldier some 300 years ago, took for his motto one which has been very powerful certainly, for at this moment the conqueror of Europe is struggling almost in vain against the society which was found upon it. Yet the motto of the Jesuits, "the death of the individual in order that the society may live," is far less potent than our true military motto, which is the life of the individual in order that the society may live." Life is likely to be more potent than death, but the life must be expended "in order that the society may live." It is the habit of looking to this before all things in the training of yourself and of your men, which it is so difficult to acquire.

Let me take a simple instance; I confess I like best to take the most common place ones. A Commanding Officer of a Volunteer corps once told me that he could always keep his men silent on parade, because as long as they were at drill, he kept changing formations so smartly that they had no time to talk. Now, in so far as that meant that he was a good drill, I am quite sure that his knowing his own work well had an excellent effect upon his men. But in so far as it was a trick by which he made them fancy that they were very well disciplined when in reality they would have chattered if they could, he did them thereby, not good, but distinct mischief. That which was important was, not that they should be then silent, but that they should command themselves as far as to remain silent. The object with us is always the ulterior, in preference to the immediate one,—the training of each man to take a certain place, not the teaching him a certain lesson, or the achievement of a certain task.

So far from its being always advisable to make it seem the easiest thing in the world to men to do their duty, there are times when the kindest thing you can do, is to make them feel distinctly that it is not easy and then to confront them with the simple appeal to duty itself. I have spoken of this in connection with the question of personal relationship with the privates, because for my own part I have always found that the thing which Englishmen like best is, that you should speak to them as if you understood the difficulties of the particular situation in which they are, and then, as if the very fact that those difficulties exist, ought to make them proud to overcome them.

But I must pause. If I followed on in this vein I should, as I told you, be commencing a literature; and I have yet some things which I must say as to the application of these and a thousand kindred things, to your own special conditions.

I do not mean to say much under that head, because, as I told you at the beginning, I do not know enough of all your circumstances to be able to do so. But, in so far as an outsider who is also a very cordial well wisher, has some advantages in viewing your position, I would venture to say this. Your Inspector-General told you last week that from an examination and individual knowledge point of view, you yourselves had by your own voluntary action done by

far the largest part of all that has been done to render you efficient. I cannot help thinking that in relation to the matters which I have brought before you to-night, the same rule must obtain. As it has been well said in a passage to which I have already alluded, you must do by "conscious motive. Officers and privates working by free consent towards a common end," that which we acquire by habit. How far the substitution is possible I do not know, and I think if I believed it to be easier than I do, I should be more disposed to say it behind your backs than here. I do think the greatest compliment we can pay you is to tell you of your difficulties. But this I will say, that there is no historical proof whatever that if you choose, you cannot succeed. As for the Mobiles, I can answer from conversations I had with many of them in Le Mans very soon after that campaign, that many, if not most of them, had never fired a shot in their lives; you, however, shoots well. I dare say many of you know that narrative of the time by one of Gambetta's perfects which appeared in "Fraser." From it it is very apparent that they were as unwilling to serve as they were incompetent to do so. I confess I do not know of any precedent whatever for the existence during a period of apparently profound tranquility of a body of 160,000 men who genuinely and voluntarily set themselves to do their utmost to prepare themselves for what may come.

Of the Volunteers of 1805, Sir Charles Napier's opinion was that "two millions of them were," as he pithily expresses it, "all right;" and I cannot see why as for as your part of the matter goes, you should not be if you choose as effective whenever war breaks out as they were in 1805. But to that end two things before all others will then be necessary.

One, that you should distinctly understand this: that, splendid as the fact is that such a body of men as you are should have thus voluntarily sacrificed your convenience, the value of the sacrifice depends on your not so piquing yourselves on having made it, as that the first time you meet with some one who makes a mistake in dealing with you you recall your surrender. That was the fatal error which rendered useless the Spanish Armies. They, unlike the Mobiles, had all the enthusiasm and intention to be self-devoted that you would have. But we have indisputable authority for saying that that very enthusiasm in the form it took, as the greatest curse. Every one who had to obey an order that was unpleasant to him, or in which he thought he detected error, imagined that his own sacrifices to his country had been so sublime already, that he need not add such an one as this to them, and he neglected it. Every one who had to give an order, thought he might order anything, no matter how useless or impossible, because of this enthusiasm. Yet he never thought it right to enforce its execution. How could he deal sharply with such noble enthusiasts? I am far from saying that you are at all likely as common-sense Englishmen, to make these mistakes. But there is constantly, I think, among men who have not shaken into their places in a great organization, a tendency to imagine that everybody's duty towards them is to be quite perfect in all they do, and then that they will themselves do very well. When you look at the thing calmly, I need hardly tell you that whoever imagines that, imagines that he is entering a paradise or a millenium in which Armies and many other things, doctors and lawyers, for instance, at all events, like the evils they have to oppose, will have vanished away.

The other point is this. You must face the fact that you cannot acquire what we do by our methods. It does seem to me, I confess, the greatest of all mistakes for you to attempt to adopt one uniform system in those matters which are not settled for you by regulation, because we adopt one uniform system. Our lives can be, and are adjusted to it; yours cannot be. But if acting by "conscious motive" you are to arrive at that part of our result which is valuable to you, you must look to the object to be gained, and must take the method which our own circumstances render best adapted for acquiring it. I think you must by much instance, get out of our ablest and best Officers, all that they can give you as the result of their experience as to what the essential objects to be gained are. That done, London cannot distate to Hereford, nor yet Hereford to Devonshire, how best to apply such experience. But, before all things, do not delude yourselves with the notion that "standing Armies," "mercenaries"—call by what names you please those who definitely devote themselves during peace time to preparation for war—have so often triumphed over popular forces without there being any reason for it. The reason is worth seeking for. It does not lie on the surface. The power of Armies is not the "visible thing" that Wordsworth thought it was. There is something actually to be learnt as to the art of creating and working great organizations of men. The triumph of the mercenaries has been due to a more real and actual self-surrender to the common end—to a more perfect development of unity and absorption of the powers of all into it. And the process which tends to bring about this result, is often going on here in England in peace-time when you least suspect it. Do not imagine that because you are staying for a month with that regiment of cavalry or infantry, or with that battery of artillery, and nothing, as it seems to you, is going on that can tend towards efficiency, that therefore nothing is really going on. Linen has been washed clean, but we don't go into highways and market places to proclaim that the process of washing dirty linen is going on. The more efficiency is produced by a healthy system, the less will you hear of it. So much so is this the case, that one of the most zealous of soldiers said to me a short time ago, "Don't you sometimes wish for a profession in which you could feel you had something to show for what you do, were it only a big hole you had had dug?" But I think he made answer to himself, "No, after all the best peace work is that, even in that which seems so contemptible, the getting of buckles polished, we can be preparing a genuine efficiency, and yet by no power on earth can anyone else tell by mere inspection whether the cleaning of the buckles did tend towards efficiency, or was published up for a false pretence that it might look well."

OUR FORTIFICATIONS

We are neither jealous of our neighbours on the south of us nor do we hate them. But, while we can appeal to our whole journalistic record to testify to our friendly feelings towards our neighbors, we have never believed, and do not believe, even now, in these piping times of peace, that the millenium has come, or that it would be wise for our nation entirely to disarm, under the conviction that all the rest of the continent