

THE MILITARY DEADLOCK

MUCH attention has recently been concentrated on army affairs, which is at least an advantage; as usually the nation disdains to consider such matters. In the present case this attention is particularly necessary, although usually it is desirable that Parliament and people should allow the military authorities to carry on their work without let or hindrance. Our army is always in the unfortunate position that each incoming War Secretary is expected to produce a new scheme; and solve the army problem, which is well-nigh insoluble. Hence the army is perennially undergoing reconstruction; and no scheme is ever allowed time to mature and become systematised. Obviously such treatment does not make for efficiency. How would any great railway company fare if each new general manager brought out a new scheme for organising it? Needless to say, each War Secretary considers his plan the best; and each—to take only modern times—from Mr. Cardwell to Mr. Arnold Forster, has thought himself the saviour of the situation, with what success is shown by the numerous changes which continually take place. Still, all previous enterprises have been completely eclipsed by the changes of the last eighteen months; which have been so numerous and kaleidoscopic that public and experts are almost equally bewildered, and few realise now what is actually taking place. A brief outline of recent events may not, therefore, be out of place.

Throughout our military history, reduction and increase of