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regiments.Irregular
cavalry.Local
troops.

raised of late years, and which, although not numbered, took their place as a part of the regular army.

The native battalions were 1,100 strong in Bengal, and 900 in Madras and Bombay. The British line battalions had a nominal strength of 1,000 rank and file.

The cavalry of the line, it will be observed, bore a very small proportion to the infantry; and the disproportion was the more remarkable, when it is remembered that the plains of India are particularly adapted for the use of that arm. But a force of 18 regiments of what was termed 'irregular' cavalry, was attached to the Bengal Army, in addition to the 10 regular regiments. The force thus styled was drilled and trained on the same method as the cavalry of the line, and was subject to the same discipline and to the Articles of War. The points of contrast were, that their officers were selected from other regiments, and that the men were engaged under different conditions (as to clothing, arms, and the supply of horses) from those which governed the rest of the army. The Bombay establishment also comprised several regiments of the same kind.

In addition to the regular army, various local regiments had been raised from time to time in Assam, Arracan, and other places which were exceptionally unhealthy for un-acclimatised troops; while, on the annexation of the Punjab, a strong local force of eleven regiments was organised for the defence of the frontier, recruited principally from the mountain races of the border, and placed under the orders of the provincial government. The formation of these local forces, as the empire was increased, was deemed preferable to an expansion of the regular army, which in course of time had lost something of the mobility which distinguished the native troops first raised by the English, and was recommended also on grounds of state policy. It was felt that the regular army of, at any rate, the Bengal Presidency, was already too large a body, raised as it was from one re-

crucial field, and united as were its members by common interests. Accordingly, in 1854, on the annexation of Nagpoor, a local force was raised on the Punjab plan; and again, on the annexation of Oudh, in 1856, another considerable body was formed, to aid the regular army in garrisoning those provinces. The Oudh local force was the last addition made to the Indian armies before the outbreak of 1857. At that time the total military force in the pay of the Company was about 280,000 men, of whom about 45,000 were Europeans. Of the latter, rather more than half belonged to the royal army.

Further, besides the Company's troops of all kinds, regular, irregular, and local, a considerable supplementary native force had gradually arisen, which was practically at the disposal of the British Government, in the various contingents of native states. The first, as well as the largest and most important of the kind, was the Hyderabad or Nizam's Contingent, consisting of two strong brigades of infantry and cavalry, with a proportion of artillery. This force was originally established in order to strengthen the position of our ally the Nizam in his own dominions, and with respect to his neighbours, and also in order to give the British Government the aid which would be available from the alliance, were a portion of his army rendered efficient by discipline. The contingent was commanded by European officers of the Indian Army, and was paid for by the Nizam, the payment eventually taking the form of an assignment of territory in perpetuity. This example was in course of time followed in other places, and almost every native state had in 1857 its contingent based on the same plan, and paid for in the same or a similar way. These troops were not under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, but were under the direction of the Foreign (or diplomatic) Department of the Government of India, the officer in command receiving his instructions through the Resi-

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Officering
of irregu-
lar troops.

With-
drawal of
officers for
civil duties.

dent at the native court in question. The aggregate strength of these contingents was about 35,000 men.

All the battalions and regiments additional to the regular army—extra regiments of the line, irregular cavalry, local troops, and contingents—had each a complement of three European officers, selected and specially appointed to them from the regular regiments. To supply these officers, the effective strength of the latter, which was nominally two officers per troop and company, was correspondingly reduced; and as appointment to the irregular service in every branch carried with it an increase of pay and higher relative position, it was eagerly sought after. Thus, from an early date, the system of officering the irregular service tended to lower the efficiency and morale of the regular army. But this was a small part of the evil. The whole of the extensive army staff, and the military departments—commissariat, pay, stud, &c.—were all supplied, in the same way, by officers borne on the effective strength of their regiments; and the drain on the latter was still further increased by the formation of the mixed commissions of civil and military officers, for the administration of the different non-regulation provinces, as they fell under British power. The employment of military officers in diplomatic duties, and as judges and magistrates (under the titles of commissioner, deputy-commissioner, &c.), dates from the earliest period of British rule; but the great drain in this direction was caused by the annexations made by Lord Dalhousie of the Punjab, Nagpoor, and Oudh; when, simultaneously with the formation of large new local forces, a great number of officers were appointed to the civil administration of those provinces. The Court of Directors made a slight addition to the army to meet this demand, a sixth captain being added to each regiment of cavalry and infantry in 1843, and a seventh captain and eleventh lieutenant in 1854; but these augmentations were but a slight alleviation of the evil, and at the outbreak of the

mutiny, out of the nominal strength of twenty-five officers there was scarcely a regiment in the country with a dozen officers attached to it. The greater number of the Bengal regiments had much less, and the majority of these officers were usually ensigns and junior lieutenants, who had not yet qualified for staff employ.

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But the paucity of officers was the smallest part of the evil, for a dozen officers under a good system should have been an ample complement for a native battalion. The mischief lay in the unhealthy feeling of dissatisfaction with which regimental duty came to be regarded, as the last course, only to be undergone by the minority who could get nothing better. If it had been a question in each case of making a definitive choice between the irregular and regular service, or between a civil and a military career, no doubt many aspiring and able soldiers would have elected to remain with their proper regiments, foregoing present advantages for the chances of future distinction. But, as matters were arranged, a man sacrificed nothing of his regimental position by accepting staff or civil employ. He rejoined his battalion in his proper standing if it were ordered on active service, and in most cases he reverted to it on promotion to field officer, when as a matter of course he took the command, no amount of absence on civil duty being deemed to make him ineligible for that position. Under these circumstances, when every consideration tended to attract an officer from his regiment, it must have been almost impossible that any man should voluntarily elect to remain permanently on regimental duty; and, unless Indian patronage was impurely bestowed—an assumption quite without warrant—it must necessarily have been the case that, ordinarily, the abler men of the army had escaped from that employment.

Its ill
effects.

Thus regimental duty had come to be regarded, either as what must be accepted in default of good-luck or qualification, or as a mere stepping-stone to

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preferment in some other direction. The effect of this prevailing sentiment on the tone of the native army was only too apparent during its latter days. It was impossible but that this degeneracy of feeling should be reflected by the men; and the paucity of officers, from the manner in which it came about, was unquestionably one of the many causes which led up to the great mutiny.

Other causes may be mentioned, which combined especially to impair the tone and discipline of the army. Two field-officers were nominally attached to each regiment, a major and a lieutenant-colonel, but there was not, on the average, more than one available for duty. Now the majors, as has already been explained, belonged to their respective regiments, from which they could not be removed; while the lieutenant-colonels were borne on one general list for each branch of the service, infantry and cavalry. In order therefore that the field-officers should be distributed equally, it followed that the lieutenant-colonels had to be posted to those regiments of which the majors were absent on leave or staff employ; and they were always liable to transfer, on the return of the major, or the promotion of an effective captain to that rank, to some other regiment in want of a field-officer. It need hardly be said that a system which thus made a convenience of the commanding-officers, was subversive of all sense of individuality and responsibility on their part. To this evil must be added the excessive centralisation of the army administration, which deprived commanding-officers of all authority; this, combined with the system of promotion latterly maintained, under which all the non-commissioned and native commissioned grades were filled up solely by seniority, and the permission accorded to the soldiery to petition the Commander-in-Chief privately touching any supposed regimental supersession or other grievance, rendered the commanding-officer a perfect cypher in his regiment. These evils had existed for many

years, and were perceived and fruitlessly deplored by all who thought about the matter. They reached a culminating-point during the administration of Sir Charles Napier, after which there remained the mere appearance of regimental discipline throughout the Bengal army.

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During the mutiny, it need hardly be said, only a remnant of the Bengal army remained faithful. All the contingents placed in contact with it joined, sooner or later, in the rebellion. The Punjab local force—which formed a separate army, recruited from a different country, and which had never been brought into contact with the regular army—came eagerly to the aid of the small British force in the Punjab, and took a highly prominent and distinguished share in the suppression of the rebellion. The Bombay army generally escaped the contamination. Of the Madras army one regiment only of cavalry showed a mutinous spirit, and was disbanded.

Mutiny of
1857.

Since the mutiny, the European force has been considerably increased. The nine local European infantry regiments have been transferred to the line, and the total number of battalions stationed in the country has been increased from twenty-two to fifty-two; the British cavalry has been increased from four to eleven regiments. The artillery has undergone a large augmentation, European batteries having been substituted for native, and the local regiments have been fused with the Royal Artillery, involving an augmentation of the latter of fourteen brigades, containing from four to seven batteries each. But the establishment of each battalion and cavalry regiment is smaller than formerly, and the total number of Europeans serving in India is now only about sixteen thousand in excess of the garrison of 1857.*

Subse-
quent in-
crease of
European.

* The establishment of European troops in India, stated above, has lately [1870] undergone some reduction.

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and reduction of native troops.

Present strength of native army.

On the other hand, the native army has been largely reduced. A small Bengal army has been reorganised, consisting partly of the remnant which remained faithful during the mutiny, and partly of new levies raised at that time. The Madras army has been reduced by twelve regiments of infantry and four of cavalry. A considerable reduction has also been made in the strength of the Bombay army. The contingents and local regiments which had mutinied have not been restored. The Indian army now consists of the following elements:—

	Battalions Infantry	Regiments Cavalry
Bengal	49	19
Madras	40	4
Bombay	30	7
Punjab	12	6
Hyderabad Contingent	6	4
Total	137	40

There are also two regiments of local horse and five of local foot in Central India, under the Political Department. Of this force, the Punjab army, which has five batteries of native artillery attached to it, is not under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. The Hyderabad Contingent is also under a general officer who receives his orders from the Government of India. Cavalry regiments have a strength of 500 sabres—the infantry about 700 of all ranks. The total force is therefore under 120,000, or about one-half the strength of 1857, and less than it has been at any date since the time of Lord Cornwallis.

This great reduction has only been possible by the transfer to a newly-organised police of a large part of the duties formerly undertaken by the army, especially the escort of treasure, and the guard of the district treasuries; and there is probably no country in the world in which the military force bears so small a proportion to the population, and where, quite irrespective of

its fitness for offensive warfare, even the large cities are so slightly guarded. City for city, the military garrisons of India are smaller than even those of England. The Indian army, in fact, must be regarded at present as merely a peace cadre or depot, so organised as to be readily capable of augmentation. It is barely able to supply the ordinary demands of peace-time; and it is no exaggeration to say that, in order to furnish a brigade for foreign service, a strain has to be put on the army which is felt from one end of the country to the other.

The Indian army now consists wholly of natives, the local European troops having been transferred to the British service. It has also undergone a complete reorganisation, which took place in 1861, and is now formed on what is commonly styled the 'irregular' system; a wholly inappropriate term, since in fact the system is in every respect much more uniform than that which it replaced. Formerly the regiments were of two kinds—the irregular, commanded by three selected officers; the regular, officered by a variable number of persons who could not succeed in obtaining, or were not qualified to obtain, some better employment, and commanded frequently by a lieutenant-colonel who was exercising the command merely on sufferance, until, on the return of the major to regimental duty, he should be required to give way. Under the new system, every regiment has an establishment of seven effective officers, who are specially appointed to it; who are not liable to displacement; and whose places are permanently filled up if they quit it to obtain other employment. The vicious system of promotion by seniority in the native ranks, in itself sufficient to destroy the discipline of any army, has been abolished, and by the new Articles of War commanding-officers are vested with considerable powers, both for reward and punishment.

Reorgani-
sation of
1861.

At the same time, the system which regulated the

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promotion of the European* officers by regimental seniority, and which had lasted from 1796 till 1861, was swept away. The new arrangements are not yet quite completed ; but eventually all the old regimental cadres will disappear, and the officers of the Indian army will belong to an unattached list, termed the Staff Corps, in which promotion is made by length of service, and from which officers will be appointed to the different military and civil situations which have to be filled throughout the country. The conditions of the Indian army under this new organisation, and the suitability of the Staff Corps to meet its requirements, will be discussed in the two following chapters.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE INDIAN STAFF CORPS.

THE three Indian Staff Corps, as has been explained in the foregoing chapter, are intended to furnish a body of officers for service in India, upon all the various duties, military and civil, which have heretofore been performed by the officers of the different regiments of the old Indian army. Eventually, military employment in India, save on regimental duty with British troops, will only be obtainable by previously entering the Staff Corps.

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all de-
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ments of
Indian
service,

One class of duties has, however, been excepted from this rule. Appointments on the general and brigade staff of the Indian armies, which formerly were entirely closed to the British army (excepting in the case of general officers), are now shared by them with officers of the Indian army.

except the
staff.

In the first instance the Staff Corps were of course filled mainly by officers of the old Indian armies, who were transferred to the former, while retaining the appointments and offices which they were respectively holding at the time of the reorganisation. In their case, indeed, the change of service was merely nominal, except in so far as they gained certain advantages from the favourable rate of promotion established in the Staff Corps. But ultimately, as the supply of officers from the old Indian army becomes exhausted, the only road to admission to the Staff Corps will be through the royal regiments serving in India. An officer of one of those regiments, desirous of entering the Indian service in

Organisa-
tion of
Staff Corps

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any capacity, will first be required to pass an examination in the native languages, as well as the departmental test of that branch which he is a candidate for. On the occurrence of a vacancy, he will be transferred to the Staff Corps, and, if an ensign, will be promoted at once to the rank of lieutenant, his place in his regiment being filled up. After twelve years' total service in the army, of which at least four years must have been passed in the Staff Corps, he is promoted to captain; after twenty years to major; after twenty-six to lieutenant-colonel; after thirty-one to brevet-colonel; and after thirty-eight years' service he will be entitled to return to England on colonel's allowance of about 1,100*l.* a-year, retaining his place in the army. He will be promoted to general officer according to seniority, in succession to vacancies in one list to be formed for the whole British army, excluding the artillery and engineers, for which corps separate establishments of general officers have been provided.

Title used
in pecu-
liar sense.

It will be clear from the foregoing account that the designation, Staff Corps, applied to this body is so far inappropriate, that it is used in an entirely different sense from that in which it is employed in every other country and army. The officers of the so-called Indian Staff Corps will consist mainly of two classes—one employed on regimental duty with the native army, the other on various civil duties. Only a small fraction will be engaged on the staff, properly so called; while staff employment is the only kind of employment which can be filled without joining the Staff Corps.

Separation
of Staff
Corps into
three
bodies
needless.

Further, it will be apparent that nothing whatever is gained by having three separate instead of one Staff Corps for India. Each of the three corps is organised on precisely the same footing; the conditions of any member are not one whit altered by transfer from one corps to another; and the interests of the different members with respect to regimental promotion do not in any way

conflict with each other. The division moreover is purely nominal; an officer of the Madras or Bombay Staff Corps may serve with the Bengal army, and as a matter of fact the members of the three corps are mixed up together in various services and departments all over the country. The formation of three Staff Corps, instead of one, was therefore plainly unnecessary. The idea which led to the measure was no doubt derived from the previous organisation of the Indian forces in three separate armies; but on consideration it becomes plain that the new system rendered this division not only unnecessary, but absolutely inconvenient, and that numerous anomalies must arise if it be endeavoured to maintain the three corps distinct. This has been pointed out in an earlier part of the present work,* where it has been shown that the abolition of three separate military establishments in India is recommended by powerful considerations of military policy and administrative convenience.

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These arguments point to the fusion of the three Indian Staff Corps into one. But a further examination of the subject will, I believe, show convincingly, not only that the Staff Corps system is not worth preserving, but that it is so essentially defective as, sooner or later, to render a radical reform an imperative necessity. Before proceeding to unfold this opinion, it will however be proper to point out those advantages which the Staff Corps system undoubtedly possesses over that which it replaced.

Merits of
Staff Corps
system.

In the first place, then, the elasticity of that system is peculiarly suitable for an administration like that of India, the wants of which are subject to constant variation. Any establishment of fixed strength will, in that country, always be liable to be constantly either short or in excess of the needful complement; but the Staff Corps are of no fixed strength. They are, in effect, an unattached list of indefinite size, and, on a new post being created, any

Its elas-
ticity.

* Book II., Chapter II.

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eligible officer of the British army can fill it by becoming a member of one of those corps. Under the old system the only source of supply was the fixed establishment of the native regiments, and these were sacrificed to supply the needs of the other departments.

Further, in a service like that of India, the wants of which are constantly expanding or contracting, the system of Staff Corps promotion, which is regulated by length of service, gets over the difficulty that would otherwise have been felt, in regulating the redistribution of the different grades in conformity with the varying strength of the aggregate service.

Improved
position of
regimental
officers.

But the most important advantage gained, is that regimental duty has been rescued from the degradation into which it had fallen, from the invidious preference formerly given to every other description of employment. Not only were the numerous irregular forces of contingents and local troops supplied with 'selected' officers on higher pay, but every man taken away from his regiment to fill any other situation whatever, received an additional salary, and in virtue of the change was deemed to occupy a better position than the brother officers whom he left behind. The Staff Corps system has broken down this distinction, necessarily destructive of proper professional feeling. Not only are the regimental officers much better paid than before—a change which however is not a necessary feature of the Staff Corps—but they, equally with all other classes of officials, are selected for the posts they fill in the native army. The latter no longer acts as a condemned feeder to the rest of the state appointments, and all invidious comparisons between the two lines of employment are removed. Service with the native army now offers a distinct and definite career, instead of being a mere temporary resting-place, until something better could be reached.

Staff Corps
likely to
prove
attractive;

These are undoubted improvements. Further, before proceeding to notice what appears to be defective in the

new system, it may be useful to add a few words regarding the opinion sometimes advanced, that the Staff Corps are likely to prove a failure from being insufficiently attractive. As regards the officers of the old Indian army, the slightest examination of the facts should be sufficient to dispel this delusion. The truth is, the new Staff Corps came just in time to save that army from a state of stagnant promotion such as it had never before experienced, bad as that promotion often was; more than one man, for example, becoming a substantive field-officer, who but for the Staff Corps would be still a subaltern, while very many of the new lieutenant-colonels are still captains on their old regimental lists. The position of the large majority of the army has been vastly improved.

It is said, however, that although the Staff Corps may have benefited the Indian army, the officers of the British army are averse to joining it, as shown by the small number who have as yet done so. Whence it is inferred that so soon as the existing reserve afforded by the old Indian army shall be exhausted, a sufficiency of candidates will not be forthcoming to maintain the Staff Corps at their required strength. But those who make this objection are probably not aware that, up to the present time, officers of the British army have practically not been eligible for admission. The restriction has certainly been removed upon their employment in India in any capacity, which was maintained by the Court of Directors; but the Staff Corps of necessity cannot be filled up to their full eventual strength, so long as there is a sufficiency of officers on the cadres of the old Indian regiments available to make up the deficiency. Consequently, the comparatively few cases which have yet occurred, of officers from the British service being admitted to the Staff Corps, are special and exceptional; they do not necessarily represent the number of applications for admission, and they offer no criterion as to

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the probable result of throwing the Staff Corps freely open to the British army.

Further, it has to be noticed that the bulk of the officers now in the British army entered it without any special inclination towards Indian service. A large number of them would never have come to India but for the demand for a sudden augmentation of British troops occasioned by the mutiny; and to the majority of these permanent service in India would probably be unattractive. Moreover they have most of them made investments in the purchase of promotion which they would be averse to abandon. But an entirely new class of officers is now entering the army, under entirely novel conditions. Haileybury, Addiscombe, and direct appointments to the Indian army have been abolished; but the sons of Indian officials of all classes have not the less to be provided for; and the result is merely that the stream of preferment has been diverted into another channel, and the young men whose relatives and interests are in India, and who under the old state of things would have looked to be appointed to the Indian service, now enter the British army, in view to being eventually transferred to these Staff Corps. This is a change which no one, save those who have lost their patronage, will regret. The Court of Directors was probably the only body in the state in the possession of patronage, which bestowed no part of that patronage on public grounds, but left it at the unfettered disposal of individual members; and, except in the case of the relatives who were brought up in the expectation of receiving appointments as a matter of course, the bestowal of these valuable gifts was too often attended with an excess of solicitation on the one hand, and condescension on the other, from undergoing and witnessing which the present rising generation is happily spared. Indian appointments were given, in those days, not necessarily to the children of those who had best served

the state, but of those who could best command interest of a peculiar and by no means elevated kind.* But Sandhurst is practically open, and a commission is to be got there on very inexpensive terms simply by industry and good conduct; while, after entering the army, the subsequent admission to the Indian service through the Staff Corps is a mere matter of routine. So far, therefore, from the abolition of the old system of patronage being a loss, the Indian service at large would appear in truth to have been entirely gainers. It is open now to every man to provide respectably for his sons, without stooping to ask favours. The same career is now also for the first time opened to the British army generally; and it will certainly be embraced by many out of that large class of officers, who enter the line without money to purchase promotion, and whom poverty too often forced to quit its ranks at an early stage of their service.

There appears, therefore, not to be the smallest need for apprehension lest the Staff Corps should not prove sufficiently attractive. The same class of men will enter the Indian service as heretofore, only they will enter it in a more independent and satisfactory way; and, judging from what has already taken place, it may be safely predicted that in a short time the junior ranks of every regiment serving in India will contain a large proportion of men who have joined it simply as a stepping-stone to an Indian career. And this career is a vastly better one than what was offered to the previous generation, owing to the greatly advanced rate of promotion allowed by the Staff Corps rules over what used to obtain in the old service, and to the much higher pay now attached to employment with the native army.

But when the matter is regarded from the side of

Defects of
Staff Corps
system.

* No amount of distinguished service sufficed to procure a seat in the Direction, which could only be reached by a tedious and, what to many men must have been, a most distasteful canvass, extending sometimes over many years.

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state interests, the new arrangements present a very different aspect, as will appear from the following considerations.

The employments which the members of the Staff Corps are intended to fill may be divided into four main classes or branches of the public service:—first, the regiments of the native army: secondly (in part), the staff departments of the army in India—namely, those of the Adjutant-General, Quartermaster-General, and Judge-Advocate-General, with the brigade and divisional staff [some of these posts will be also held by the regimental officers of the British army]: thirdly, the civil departments of the army—Pay, Commissariat, Stud, Clothing, &c.: fourthly, the purely civil branches of the Indian public service, comprising the mixed civil and military administrations of the non-regulation provinces, consisting of commissioners, deputy-commissioners, and others who fulfil the duties corresponding with those of judges and magistrates in the so-called regulation provinces; appointments in the civil secretariat; diplomatic appointments, as those of residents and their agents at native courts; and the great departments of police and public works. Now in this respect, indeed, no change has been introduced, for these are precisely the duties which have always been performed by the officers of the old Indian army. A portion only of the whole establishment was engaged on regimental duty; the rest were distributed among these various occupations. But the extent to which the system is now about to be carried forms quite a novel experiment, and entirely alters those features of the Indian military system. Under the old state of things, seven officers per regiment of twenty-five, that is, about one in four, were allowed to be permanently detached from regimental duty; and even these absentees were not all removed from military duty, since they included those attached to the army staff, as well as those serving with the numerous local and irregular

troops, and the latter formed a large proportion of the more fortunate section. This limit of seven was not always very strictly maintained, especially of late years, when a great pressure arose from the demands created by annexed provinces; moreover, the place of temporary absentees from staff and civil employ was always made good by drawing on the regimental supply, so that practically the absentees exceeded the proportion above stated; but probably, on the whole, about three-fourths of the army were employed on military duty of one kind or another. This ratio has, however, now been entirely changed. On the one hand, the army has been largely reduced; the number of regiments has been diminished, and the complement of officers has been cut down from twelve or fourteen (the old effective average) to seven per regiment, so that the field of purely military duty has been greatly contracted. On the other hand, the demand for European officers in the various branches of the civil administration is constantly increasing, while the newly-created police department alone employs about two hundred. Thus the relative proportions of the civil and military appointments held by the army have been entirely altered.

The ultimate strength of the Indian Staff Corps, and its distribution under the four main classes of employments, are given in the following table; its actual strength at present is somewhat different, because the establishment of officers is at present in excess of its requirements, and all the officers of the old army have not joined the Staff Corps:—

I.—*Regimental Duty.*

For 177 Regiments of Cavalry and Infantry, at	
7 officers per regiment	1,239
Irregular and local troops	23
	— 1,262

II.—*Military Staff.*

Military staff appointments actually held by	
officers	1

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IV.III.—*Civil Departments of the Army.*

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IV.—*Civil Employ.*

Employed in Political Department, Civil Department, Public Works, Survey, and Forest Departments, Police Department, &c.

1,068

2,705

These figures bring out a sufficiently curious result. Out of a total strength of 2,700 military officers, less than half will be really employed in a military capacity; about two hundred will be attached to the civil branch of the army; nearly 1,100 will have no sort of connection with military business of any kind.

No analogy between new and former system.

Another important point has now to be noticed. In establishing this Staff Corps, the idea held in view was, no doubt, that of perpetuating the old system under which the class of military civilians was first formed. But in fact the conditions which then obtained have been entirely altered by this very measure, which involved a radical change of system. Formerly officers were, so to speak, merely lent from their regiments, which were considered to have the first claim on their services. But Staff Corps officers will belong to no regiment, and although holding military rank, will not, in virtue of their connection with the Staff Corps, have any military duties to perform. It is true that, even under the old system, a large proportion of those on civil employ were, in practice, permanently detached; but still the exceptions were numerous. Many appointments could not be held by regimental field-officers, and therefore a man on reaching that position usually returned to regimental duty; while the rule was almost invariably enforced of recalling all the officers belonging to it whenever a regiment was sent upon active service. Further, promotion in every branch of the army was determined solely by regimental seniority. In this way every officer, however employed, continued to be more or less identified with his regiment, and the uncertainty

Staff Corps officers will virtually quit the army.

attending his tenure of detached employment tended to keep up his connection with the army. The system was confessedly imperfect, and it worked very hardly for the less fortunate men, who were left behind in peace, but were liable to be superseded by the return of their more fortunate brethren in war-time; but it was a very beneficial arrangement for the latter, who reaped all the advantages of their position as military men, without undergoing the monotonous drudgery of regimental duty in peace-time. It was this rough-and-ready system which tended to cultivate the general handiness and manysidedness in which Indian officers excelled, and it produced the soldier-politicals who have conferred so much reputation on the Indian Army. And it was, no doubt, under the idea that this sort of practical training would be perpetuated by it, that the Staff Corps plan was hit upon. The constitution of that body, on its first formation, may have tended to countenance this conclusion. But its present appearance would entirely mislead as to its probable future condition. The Indian Army having suddenly collapsed, from mutiny and reductions, a large number of officers of mature experience and military training became available for other duties; and a great expansion of civil employments having occurred simultaneously, especially from the formation of the new police, it has so happened that the Staff Corps on its first institution, has been mainly filled by soldiers of considerable professional standing. But henceforward the candidate for the Staff Corps will finally leave his regiment to join it, usually as an ensign, and will perhaps never again be employed on military duty of any sort. Yet he will, nevertheless, be promoted in certain order through all the military grades, till finally he retires from the service as a general officer!

It may be said, however, that the Staff Corps is intended to contain men of every class, and that because an officer joins it to enter upon a civil appointment, he

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is not thereby disqualified from afterwards turning to military employ. Practically, however, the line of demarcation is impassable. The course of promotion in every branch of the service now runs almost wholly in departmental channels, and the tendency of things is to make the rule still stricter. The days have gone by when personal qualifications and interests rendered a man independent of special training. The only way nowadays of rising high in any branch of the service is to enter it young, and work up from the bottom; every department has now its special tests for appointment and promotion; and a man who has once established a footing and claim in one line cannot afford to give up his standing in it and make a fresh start in another. The more settled state of the country, and the apparent termination of our advance from one conquest or annexation to another, also tend to close the career for soldier-politicals. The lives of men like Malcolm or Nicholson, alternately commanding armies and ruling conquered territories, cannot be repeated. For good or evil, the patriarchal system of government is being everywhere succeeded by a more complex and refined system of administration; while, last but not least, military duty with the native army has been elevated into a distinct career, and supersession of the regimental officers in their own commands by ex-lawyers and tax-collectors will no longer be permitted. It appears certain, therefore, that those officers who henceforward enter the Staff Corps, in view to taking civil employment, will virtually quit the army; and that, although holding military rank, and continuing to receive military promotion, they will henceforth be soldiers only in name. In the course of time the officers on this extraordinary footing will constitute one-half of the whole Indian Army. A body so constituted will surely form a remarkable specimen of military organisation.

No compensating
advantage

It may perhaps be supposed that there are some compensating advantages in this peculiar arrangement which

have yet to be stated. But none such are to be discovered. It may be said, indeed, that the Staff Corps system forms a convenient basis for regulating pay; but even this view disappears on examination. A specified rate of pay is indeed provided for each military grade in that corps; but the salaries in the Indian civil departments are consolidated sums, regulated solely by departmental standing without reference to military rank, so that in all these cases the Staff Corps rates are not brought into operation. They do not even affect the pensions of officers, which are determined solely by length of service; and although, since Staff Corps promotion is regulated in the same manner, it follows that certain rates of pension will be received by certain grades, the former are not dependent in any way on the latter.

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The only possible argument which apparently could be advanced for maintaining this extraordinary system, would be that the bestowal of this military rank on civilians is valued by them, and constitutes an effective part of their remuneration, which if withdrawn would have to be made up by other considerations, in order to render the service sufficiently attractive. Upon this it seems obvious to remark that, were the fact really so, it would afford a decisive condemnation of the practice; for that to offer military rank as a bait to men, to induce them to accept office on lower emoluments than would otherwise be sufficient to attract them, is a prostitution of that distinction which ought at once to be stopped. But, in truth, there is no reason to suppose that any such attraction exists. On the contrary, the facts tend to show that the very reverse is the case. The local Table of Precedence places so low an estimate on military rank—a lieutenant-colonel, for instance, taking rank with a civilian of twelve, and a major with one of eight years' standing—that the military civilian would often find himself rated lower than his own subordinate, were it not that the rule of precedence has fallen into practical disuse. In the case of a

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of no prac-
tical value.

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man who rises to high civil office, military rank is frequently a positive inconvenience; even a man like the late Sir Henry Lawrence would find it difficult to carry the awkward encumbrance of a regimental captain's commission with the government of a province.* In a country of military camps like India, where the duties of government are closely connected with the service of the army, the position of a governor would in every case be stronger were he divested of military rank.

As to the value of the appendage when carried home on retirement, there was a time, no doubt, when military rank in England had a considerable social value. But what with the honorary and relative rank now so freely bestowed on the non-combatant branches of the army; the establishment of an extensive commissioned militia; and the honorary promotions given to retired officers; this value has of late years been undergoing rapid depreciation. A still greater fall would occur were the Staff Corps scheme persisted in, under which England would in course of time abound with so-called colonels and generals, who had never so much as commanded a company. Military titles would then be held in about as much estimation as they were in America before the civil war.

Staff Corps
system
conflicts
with that
of British
army.

Lastly, it has to be pointed out that the mode of conferring military rank, introduced by the Staff Corps rules, conflicts in a most embarrassing way with the system in force in the British army. Under that system, as all acquainted with it are aware, a lieutenant-colonel is eligible for promotion to colonel after five years' service, only if he has held certain qualifying appointments; otherwise he remains at least eight years (often an indefinite time) in the lower grade. But the Staff Corps

* Many persons will remember how much the late Sir Charles Napier, when Commander-in-Chief, resented the requisitions being made on him for the movement of troops in the Punjab, because the head of the Administration was a 'captain of artillery,' and how he chafed under the instructions received from the Government of India, because the secretary who signed them was a brevet-major.

lieutenant-colonel is secured his promotion under all circumstances in five years. Thus non-combatant officers are constantly superseding the combatant; and since the general officers of the whole British army are henceforward to be appointed by seniority from the amalgamated list, the real military officers will many of them be distanced in the race by the nominal ones. It seems impossible that the two systems can be maintained when it is once understood how they clash with each other.

To prevent misconception, it may be as well to explain here, that the foregoing criticism is directed rather to the perpetuation of the Staff Corps system, than to its first formation. The transfer of the Indian officers to a Staff Corps, as they stood after the mutiny, was a most liberal measure, and was at any rate a definitive way of reorganising that army; and although it is at least questionable whether it was the best, yet, as regards those officers, the change was little more than nominal. But as a system to be perpetuated, it appears open to the gravest objections; and when these are clearly apprehended, it is hardly possible that it can be persisted in.

Nor is the reform that seems to be needed at all difficult or complicated. As regards the present class of officers in civil employ, indeed, to recast the system again would involve difficulties that it might be well to avoid. But in the case of future applicants for civil employ, a simple and sufficient plan would appear to consist in their removal altogether from the army, and transfer to the civil service of Government. And if the offer of such a transfer were made to the present members of that corps, it seems probable that the change would be gladly accepted by the majority, provided, of course, that the conditions of pensions and leave were made not less liberal than those they are now entitled to. The greater independence conferred by the position of a civilian would be with many a sufficient attraction.

It would remain to be considered whether such persons

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Transfer to
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should be admitted to the covenanted Civil Service, or whether an additional and separate service should be formed to embrace them. The objections are apparent against the first plan, which would admit men, by a mode of selection more or less dependent on preference and patronage, to the same privileges with those who had won their place by open competition. As regards the other plan, I have endeavoured* elsewhere to show, that the time has now arrived for a revision of the crude classification which divides all Indian civil officials into 'covenanted' and 'uncovenanted.' Of the new official body which may now advantageously be formed, to include all the higher ranks of officials without the pale of the covenanted Civil Service, the military men transferred to civil employ would form an important element. The argument, founded on both necessity and convenience, for continuing to recruit the Indian public service to a large extent from the army, will also be found in another part† of this work.

and in
civil de-
partments
of army.

As regards the next class of employments to be supplied from the Staff Corps—the civil departments of the army, these are in every other army filled by civilians, and it will probably be admitted that a special Staff Corps is at any rate not necessary on their account. While, therefore, the position of the existing members of those departments, who have been all transferred from the old Indian army, calls for no alteration, it appears very desirable that all future appointments to them should involve retirement from the military branch of the army. Relative rank might be given, should the superior emoluments offered be found insufficient inducement to procure competent men. But the bestowal of military rank for the performance of purely civil duties,—to which men will henceforward be permanently attached for the rest of their service, after they once quit the active branch of

* Chapter XI.

† Chapter X.—MILITARY CIVILIANS.

the army,—is incompatible with the use of that distinction in its original meaning, as the special attribute of a soldier. Military title would cease to denote a military man; it would merely denote an official serving the Indian Government in some capacity or other. Of all countries in the world, India is surely about the last where it would be desirable to introduce so novel an experiment.

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With respect to the purely military staff of the army, the case is different, but the machinery of a Staff Corps is by no means necessary for supplying this body. The system as now laid down provides, indeed, that only a part of the army staff shall belong to the Staff Corps; a part is to be supplied from the regiments of the British army, in the same way as is the staff of the army serving in other parts of the world. Now the French system of a separate Staff Corps, the members of which are entirely distinct from the regimental officers of the army, has been pronounced unsuitable for the British army generally, and there appears to be nothing in the nature of service in India to render it especially appropriate there. The system is moreover plainly incompatible with the conditions established in that country, as well as at home, that each officer's tour of staff service shall be limited to a fixed period. Under these the regimental officers of the British service find re-employment by returning to their regiments; but a man who has left his regiment permanently, and joined an unattached list like the Staff Corps, in virtue of obtaining a staff appointment, must either be placed on the shelf on the expiry of his term of staff-service, or else the regulations must be practically evaded by shifting the staff-officers about from one appointment to another. At any rate, the military staff-officers form comparatively a small body, being only about seven per cent. of the whole Indian army, and the principle here contended for would not be affected by the formation of a separate Staff Corps comprising them alone. This plan might be better or worse than the English one; but such

Staff Corps
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for supply-
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staff.

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IV. a corps would at any rate have a distinctive object, and be intelligibly designated by its title, which the Indian Staff Corps, as now constituted, is not.

There remains to consider the case of the officers attached to the native army; this will be entered upon in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER. XV.

REGIMENTAL OFFICERS OF THE NATIVE ARMY.

It was explained in the previous chapter, that of the officers of the Indian army, 2,500 in number, nearly one-half are employed on other than regimental duties, the large majority of this portion being wholly unconnected with military employment of any kind; and I have endeavoured to show that, for this class, the organisation of a military staff corps is entirely unsuitable. It remains to consider how far that institution is adapted for the requirements of the other branch of the service to be supplied by it—namely, the regiments of the native army.

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Staff Corps
a vehicle

The regimental officers of the Indian army, about 1,250 strong, are distributed among 177 regiments of infantry and cavalry. The whole of these officers, under the regulations provided, must eventually belong to the Staff Corps, and, in virtue of their connection with it, will rise, at certain stated periods of service, to the rank of colonel, and afterwards, in succession to vacancies in one general list for the British army, to that of general officer. But their regimental advancement will proceed on a totally different plan. Each regiment has attached to it seven officers, who, although they form the *regimental*, as opposed to the *staff* officers of the army, are nevertheless—irrespective of their commissions in the so-called Staff Corps—virtually staff-officers also, since every appointment to their branch of the service is a staff appointment. The establishment of a regiment of native

for supplying officers to regiments of native army.

Regimental are virtually staff appointments;

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and made
purely by
selection.

infantry consists of a commandant, a second-in-command and wing-officer, another wing-officer, an adjutant, a quartermaster, and two officers for general duty, termed wing subalterns. Similar grades are established for the cavalry. A specific staff salary is attached to each situation, which is drawn in addition to the Staff Corps pay of the holder, and each situation constitutes a distinct appointment, to which officers from any part of the (present) three armies are nominated, as vacancies occur, at the pleasure of the Commander-in-Chief. Thus while, on the one hand, the substantive army promotion of officers is guaranteed to them by rules which eliminate all chance, and cannot be hastened by the casualties of war, nor retarded by the stagnation of peace, their regimental advancement is subjected to no rule or method whatever, but is determined by simple personal selection. So strange a combination of rule and caprice has never before been applied to any army. The bearing of the case may perhaps be appreciated by supposing that, in the British line, every officer of every rank were to have a specific designation, such as is now confined to the posts of commanding officer, adjutant, musketry-instructor, &c., and that each post were filled up by selection—so that, for example, a regiment might be commanded by one of the captains, the lieutenant-colonel be employed as a major, and the majors holding charge of companies. Such an analogy, so far as analogy is possible, represents the condition at which the Indian army will ultimately arrive, so soon as the system lately established shall be fully developed.

Objections
to practice
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The defects of such a system are made sufficiently plain by a mere statement of the case. That, in some respects, the position of the regimental officers of the Indian army has been greatly improved, may be freely admitted. They are no longer placed in the invidious position of being the remnant of a body which has been left behind in the race for preferment, while the status of regimental duty has

been brought up to the level of other employments by the liberal salaries attached to it. An officer on joining a native regiment receives, if an ensign, a step of rank, and an addition to his income of about a hundred pounds a year. A lieutenant-colonel—and every officer will now reach that rank in twenty-six years—commanding a regiment draws a salary of seventeen hundred pounds. Under the old regime he would probably, at the same age, have been still a captain receiving less than one-third that amount. The considerable increase lately made to civil salaries of district officers in the non-regulation provinces, has certainly tended to restore the old disparity; but as compared with the army staff and civil departments, and situations in the police, magistracy, &c., it may be said that regimental duty is now fairly placed on an equality with other professional employment; while the comparative ease and leisure of regimental life, with the prospects of military distinction offered by it, will probably suffice to make it, for the future, the most attractive career open to military officers—at any rate attractive enough to secure a fair share of the best men who enter the Indian service. The value of this reform cannot be overrated, for only those who witnessed it can at all understand the sort of aspect under which service with the regular native army—at any rate the Bengal army—had come to be regarded at the time immediately before the mutiny. This grave blot on the administration has now been removed, by putting the army in a position to respect itself and be respected. But it is plain the reform has no necessary connection with the institution of a Staff-Corps; while further consideration will probably make it apparent that the desired end might have been reached by a much more convenient way.

First, with regard to the practice of selection. It may be admitted that, so long as the system remains in other respects unaltered, selection of some sort is desirable, even if not necessary. A system of promotion by

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It involves
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among
regiments,

pure regimental seniority is clearly impossible in an army which has only seven officers per regiment. But the evils of departing from the rules which have heretofore more or less governed promotion in all the armies of the world, are not the less apparent. In the first place, the principle of selection severs the bond which ought to connect the officer with his regiment. Assuming that a *bonâ fide* selection is practised, every step of advancement which he obtains will involve his transfer to another regiment. Thus, for example, supposing the command of a regiment to be vacant, the selection system requires that the most deserving second-in-command in the whole army should be selected to fill it ; that the best wing-officer of the army should take his place ; and so on through the seven grades. It need scarcely be observed how great are the probabilities against the second-in-command of the particular regiment in which the vacancy exists, being the one to satisfy the needful conditions. Promotions within a regiment must therefore be quite the exception ; ordinarily, every step of regimental promotion will involve a change to a fresh regiment. Thus the besetting weakness of the old system reappears in greater force than ever. It does not take, indeed, quite the same shape ; formerly, it was detached employment of some sort which allured men from their regiments, whereas now it is advancement in other regiments ; but the evil is much more intense and widespread now than then. Under the old state of things, the choice, or rather the chance, lay between duty with one particular regiment and some other employment. If the latter was not obtained, the aspirant's place lay with the former. But now every officer looks on the whole army as open to him, and the regiment to which he belongs for the time being as a mere temporary resting-place. The army thus becomes a mere congeries of battalions, with the individual interests of which the officers are in no way permanently identified.

Under such a state of things, a proper bond of union

between officers and men is impossible. The evil becomes intensified during war, because at such a time casualties, and therefore changes, become exceptionally frequent. The campaign of 1865 in Bhootan—almost the only one the Bengal army has been engaged in since the new system came into force—was an exemplification of this. One regiment marched to the expedition under a commandant who had joined it two days before; the second-in-command was officiating for an absentee, and had been with the regiment about six months; the adjutant had also been brought in temporarily from another corps, and so was one of the junior officers; altogether, only two out of seven belonged properly to the regiment. Later in the season, when the force suffered severely from malarious fever, the whole of the officers of the more sickly regiments were persons temporarily posted to them. Such a state of things is fair neither to officers nor men. It would be utterly unsuited to European troops; how much more then must it be improper for natives, who, it is generally admitted, require ‘leading’ in action by officers whom they know and have confidence in! The importance of this fact cannot be pressed too strongly.

Further, there is the difficulty, even with the best intentions, of working such undiluted patronage properly. The proposal broached a few years ago, for introducing a certain amount of selection into the promotion of the English army, was pronounced after full deliberation to be impracticable, the authorities concerned stating that the selection of even the commanding-officers of battalions would be too invidious a task to be managed with success; while, among other forcible objections pointed out to the proposal, was represented to be the difficulty, not to say impossibility, of discriminating between the merits of officers in time of peace, and of meeting the pressure that would be exerted to influence the disposal of patronage. But what was considered too radical an innovation to apply to the British, is but a trifling matter compared

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and is destructive of proper union between officers and men.

Difficulties attending a system of selection;

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with what is now proposed for the Indian army. For that scheme, broadly stated, is nothing less than this :— that, on every occasion of a vacancy occurring, the merits and qualifications of every eligible officer in the army have to be passed in review, in order that a selection may be made of the most deserving. Such a thing has never been attempted before, and cannot succeed now. It is true that in many branches of the public service promotion is based on selection, but then the principle is always largely qualified in practice. Every branch of the Civil Service is divided into separate departments, each with its own line of promotion, and the nomination and power of appointment are generally vested in different persons. But here there would be no check interposed between each individual and the fountain-head of promotion, and an unbounded opening would thus be afforded to jobbery. That hitherto nothing has been seen of the kind, is no guarantee that it will not appear hereafter. We are now indeed passing through an exceptional state—a period of revival in military policy in India, such as occurs after a crisis. Late events have led to exceptional appointments ; soldiers of mark are placed in high command, and efficiency is for the time a higher qualification than interest for preferment. But this unusual tension of public spirit may not last. Peace and forgetfulness of danger may be expected to bring round a recurring cycle of the time when interest and senility take the place of efficiency ; and then the spirit of jobbery, if unchecked by rules and restrictions, may be expected to run riot in such a field as the Indian army would present. In former days, the efforts of aspirants for preferment and their friends were directed simply to obtaining a release from regimental duty ; no amount of interest could advance a man in regimental promotion. But now all this will be changed. Interest will be able to do anything. No situation but there is a better ; regimental life will degenerate into a scramble for promotion ; and a summer campaign at Simla,

with wives, sisters, and mothers for auxiliaries, will become as necessary, and far more profitable, than any other kind of military duty.

This, it is to be feared, would be the tendency of things, were every place in the army to be thrown open, without any more restriction on the exercise of patronage than existing regulations afford. But it will be quite a safe prediction to say that rules would speedily be established for regulating the exercise of patronage; that the tendency of administration would be more and more towards the substitution of a regular system of promotion, in place of one that proceeds on no rule at all. Such a course would be especially rendered necessary if the country entered on a long period of peace. The performance of regimental duty in such a time affords no room for the display of so marked excellence as to justify supersession; and in the absence of the distinction which can be earned in actual war, seniority must needs become the only fair qualification for promotion to, at any rate, the great majority of regimental appointments; and therefore to a system of seniority—a system which the precedents and traditions of Indian administration are calculated to foster strongly—the Indian army would almost certainly revert.

If then promotion by seniority were gradually to become the rule, the machinery of a Staff Corps would clearly be as unnecessary, for a means of regulating regimental advancement, as it is under a system of selection. There would obviously be no use in maintaining a double system—one based on seniority, for determining regimental promotion and staff pay; the other for determining substantive rank and military allowances, regulated solely by length of service. The two systems would be so far consistent, that the senior Staff Corps officers would be holding the higher regimental appointments; but it would clearly be a more simple and convenient arrangement to throw all the officers of the army into two general lists of cavalry and infantry, so that rank, pay, and regimental

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or a system
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advancement would all be determined by one thing—namely, the occurrence of vacancies on this general list.

But although a seniority system would prevent the abuses that might attend the use of unrestricted patronage, and the heartburnings and jealousies caused by promotions of men out of their turn, who are not recognised as possessing superior merits; a seniority list, running through and regulating the promotion of a whole army, would be attended with some of the worst defects which characterise promotion by selection. Whether the officers of each army were thrown into one general list for each branch of the service, in which both promotions in army grades and advancement to regimental appointments were to be regulated by seniority; or whether the Staff Corps rules of promotion, for length of service, were maintained;—in either case every step of advancement would ordinarily involve the transfer of the officer from his own to a new regiment. Regimental system there would be none: so far as the officer is concerned, the whole army would constitute one regiment, and the separate corps would be merely so many different detachments, with one or the other of which he would be liable to serve from time to time. This would be merely to restore the state of things which obtained previously to 1796, which was abandoned in that year as unworkable, and replaced by the regimental system maintained from that time until 1861. This objection seems conclusive against such an arrangement. No system will answer the purpose which does not tend to identify the officer with his regiment.

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regimental
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For this reason a return to the old, or what is sometimes termed the 'regular,' system, which was abolished in 1861, is often advocated by writers on the subject. That term is used to denote a method under which every regiment should have attached to it an establishment of officers, of the same, or nearly the same, strength as the former cadres of the Indian regiments; in which body promotion should proceed by seniority as heretofore, and

as it still does in the non-purchase corps of the British service. But this proposal appears to be made under some confusion of ideas. No one, it may be presumed, contemplates a return to that part of the old system which allowed half the officers of each regiment to be always absent. What is proposed is of course a complement of effective officers, all permanently engaged on regimental duty. The old regiments had a nominal strength of twenty-five officers, of whom there were seldom more than half present. Now a regimental cadre, in order to afford a reasonable equality of promotion in the army, should not consist of less than twenty men. Were the division to be much smaller, differences and inequalities would inevitably occur to an unreasonable degree in the rates of promotion in the various regiments. What then seems really to be proposed is, not a return to the same virtual strength as before, but a very much larger complement of officers. But battalions with twenty officers each are out of the question, for financial reasons alone, even if the plan were otherwise suitable. It may certainly be admitted that many persons, whose views carry weight, are strongly of opinion that the so-called 'irregular' system, *i.e.* that which allows only six or seven officers to a regiment, is unsuited to the exigencies of war; and it may be admitted that there can hardly be too many officers available at such times. But, on the other hand, there is no possible use for a strong cadre of officers in peace-time. So far from twenty, or even ten, officers being a proper complement for the ordinary business of a native regiment, it may be doubted whether there is sufficient occupation for the seven now allowed. Persons whose notions on the subject are derived from experience with European troops, would have a very imperfect conception of the ease and simplicity with which the business of a native regiment is conducted. The inspection of rations and meals; the constant orderly-room duty and roll-calls; the daily distribution of pay; the complicated accounts of stop-

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pages; the supervision of the regimental families; and the other constituent items of the British regimental system, are perforce unknown in the native army; while crimes are rare, the great cause of crime among British troops being almost unknown. On the whole, it may be doubted whether, excepting the commandant, adjutant, and quartermaster, there is effective employment for even the small staff now attached to native regiments.

These then are the difficulties to be overcome. What is required for the Indian Army is an organisation which shall give a reasonably fair and equable system of promotion, without the stagnation and senility induced by long seniority lists; which shall create a permanent bond of union and interest between an officer and his regiment; and which, without encumbering the army by a needlessly large staff in peace-time, shall provide an effective means of strengthening the regiments employed on active service in time of war.

I conceive that all these conditions may be satisfactorily met, by the simple plan of converting the army, now consisting of separate regiments [infantry] seven hundred strong each, with a complement of seven officers, into regiments of three or four battalions each, the officers of each regiment being placed on one seniority list. A regiment of four battalions would thus give an establishment of twenty-eight officers, and this would probably form the most generally suitable unit of organisation.

Such a plan, besides providing completely for the requirements of the officers, appears to be also strongly recommended by its suitability for the army in all other respects. The great reduction of 1861* was made partly in the number of regiments, and partly in the strength of each regiment retained, which was cut down from eleven

* During the mutiny a great number of levies were hastily raised in all parts of the country, and, at the termination of the war, the new Indian army was almost as large as it had been in 1857. A reduction was made to the present peace establishment in 1861, by disbanding a great many regiments, and diminishing the strength of the remainder.

to seven hundred. It need hardly be said that a nominal strength of seven hundred of all ranks gives a much smaller force of available bayonets to take the field, and a very short campaign will suffice to reduce it to a mere handful of men, barely exceeding the company of many European armies. Such small battalions, moreover, do not admit of depots. When a regiment goes on active service, every man and officer is required at the front, and the replacement of casualties necessarily remains in abeyance until the regiment returns from the campaign and begins to recruit, the result being that it remains short-handed and inefficient for a long time after the conclusion of the war.

On these accounts, therefore, the same aggregate force as is now maintained would have been perhaps more efficient, and would certainly have been more economical, if comprised in a smaller number of stronger regiments. But in determining the form to be given to the reductions of 1861—when the number of men required was thus spread over the largest number of corps compatible with the maintenance of reasonable efficiency in drill and discipline—the Indian Government was probably influenced by the desire that the measure should press as little hardly as possible on those affected by it; while it was felt, no doubt, that a peace establishment of numerous small cadres was peculiarly suitable to the military wants of a country, where recruits are to be had without limit, but where European officers, accustomed to native troops, cannot be improvised suddenly. But by regimenting three or four battalions together, one battalion at least might always be stationed in the province where the regiment was raised, as a depot for enlisting and training recruits, since all of them would not be required to take the field at the same time. The battalions on service would thus have their casualties made good, from time to time, by draughts from the reserve; and on their return from the campaign, instead of, as at present, having first

Advantages offered by proposed method, in time of war;

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to find and then to train the men required to complete their strength, they would find a supply of drilled soldiers ready to join. In this way the losses—which falling, as they now do, on one weak battalion, practically expunge it from the army list for a season—would be distributed over a body four times as strong, and would not produce any injurious effect on the general efficiency of the army. In the same way, the full complement of officers of the battalions on service could be maintained without indenting upon strangers, since the reserve battalions might well be left for a season with a smaller number. Under the present state of things, the only available mode of filling up casualties on such occasions, is either by transferring officers temporarily from other regiments, or by appointing fresh juniors, thereupon brought into contact with native troops for the first time. In either case the change takes place on the very occasion when it can be made with least propriety.

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Another important advantage which may be claimed for the proposed organisation, is that these four-battalion regiments would supply the machinery for a convenient system of promotion, free from the tedious slowness which accompanies a long seniority list, or the monotonous uniformity of the Staff Corps system, regulated only by length of service. A moderate amount of inequality in promotion, which may admit of some men getting to the higher ranks before they are past work, is a very desirable condition in every army. This would be secured by re-establishing regimental promotion, while the strength of the proposed cadre—of twenty-eight officers—would be sufficient to prevent excessive irregularities.

Distribu-
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ment.

It is only necessary to add, that the distribution of grades in these regiments should be such as to provide a fair, but not excessive, rate of advance to the higher ranks; so that the prospects of promotion afforded by service with the native army, coupled with the liberal rates of salary already attached to each post, may be

sufficient to attract a full supply of worthy candidates for admission from the British army. The old regimental organisation of the Indian army had the fault of a too large proportion of junior to senior grades, there being three subalterns to each captain, and only one major to a regiment of (latterly) twenty-five officers.* Now promotion in the Royal Artillery is considered to be certainly not too rapid; but in that regiment, out of every forty-seven officers, no less than six (or more than one in eight) are in the grades of colonel and lieutenant-colonel; in the Royal Engineers the ratio is still more favourable. It was this malproportion, and not any inherent principle of longevity, which caused the slow promotion of the Indian Army; while the tendency of late years was towards an increase of the defect, since the different small augmentations made from time to time were all given to the lower grades. The full effect of these had, indeed, not become apparent when the old army was broken up; and, but that the Staff Corps came to the rescue, the Indian Army would by this time have entered on a cycle of slow promotion, such as it never before experienced. While at all periods the only thing that saved it from being utterly clogged with worn-out field officers, was the purchase system which had become established in every regiment.

A distribution of grades for the proposed regiments, in order to work successfully, should apparently be at least as favourable as that obtaining in the artillery and engineers, and this would be provided if the twenty-eight officers composing a regiment were divided into—

4 Lieutenant-Colonels.
4 Majors.
10 Captains.
10 Lieutenants.

This arrangement would provide for each of the four

* In the Indian Artillery and Engineers the ratio used to be still more unfavourable.

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battalions being commanded by a lieutenant-colonel; the second-in-command of each would be a major; the four senior captains would be wing-officers. Of the remaining sixteen officers, eight would be chosen by selection for the posts of battalion adjutant and quartermaster. It would give a slightly more favourable proportion of lieutenant-colonels to junior grades than obtains in the Royal Artillery, but then every officer entering a native regiment will have already served at least three years in the British Army.

It may not be out of place to remark here, that if this plan were thought to give too much weight to the claims of mere seniority, and to leave no sufficient opening for rewarding exceptional merit, it would be quite practicable, while maintaining the cardinal features of the scheme, so far to modify it, as to combine a certain amount of selection in filling up the regimental appointments. For example, it might be provided that, the line of regimental promotion remaining intact, the officers of one battalion in each regiment should be appointed to it by selection without reference to standing. Other similar provisions will readily suggest themselves, as possible modifications of the general scheme; but it may confidently be asserted that, as a rule, it will not be practicable during peacetime to distinguish any marked superiority of one regimental officer over another, sufficient to override the unquestionable claims of seniority. At any rate, if provision be made for filling up one-fourth of the army posts in this way, it should prove amply sufficient for the wants of the case.

Failure of
Staff Corps
system to
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of grades,

Another argument which may be urged in favour of a fixed establishment, such as is here proposed, is that the grades held by the different officers will then be always appropriate to their duties. The Staff Corps system altogether fails in this respect. Already the number of field-officers who have attained that grade, under the qualifying length of service, far exceeds the requirements

of the army, and the difficulty of finding adequate employment for this class threatens to create continual embarrassment. In determining the periods of service which have been prescribed for promotion to each grade—twenty years for a major, twenty-six for a lieutenant-colonel, and so on—the average rate of promotion in the British army was, I believe, taken as a basis. But in that army the men who adopt the service as a permanent profession are certainly the exception. The majority of those who enter it do not remain to rise beyond the rank of captain. So that, although the average length of service of the regimental field officers may be as above stated, the officers junior to them are, as a rule, much younger men. But in the Indian army this constant movement in the lower ranks, from retirements by sale of commission of junior officers, does not occur. Generally speaking, the casualties which take place in it are due only to deaths and the retirement of seniors who have qualified for pensions, so that the comparative number of older officers is necessarily much greater than in the British army. The result is that the ratio of field-officers to junior ranks is already out of all proportion to the wants of the service, and tends to increase yearly, while in order to find employment for the captains, the posts of ‘wing subaltern’ have now in many cases to be filled by officers in that grade. The resulting expense is of course very great, and forms a potent argument against perpetuating the system, especially in the present state of the Indian finances. To meet the constantly recurring deficit various efforts are now being made to effect retrenchment in the military expenditure; regiments and batteries both native and European are in course of reduction, and the establishment of British troops serving in India has been cut down below what many good authorities deem to be the point of safety; but while all this is going on, and the British half-pay list is swelled by the officers thus thrown out of employ, the charges for the pay of the Indian officers are day by day increasing.

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The foregoing argument has had special reference to the infantry, and so much of it as relates to the unsuitable size of the present skeleton battalions will not be applicable to the cavalry regiments. In all other respects, especially as regards the best mode of regulating the promotion of the officers, it appears to hold good, and the formation of cadres of twenty-eight officers would be equally suitable for the latter branch of the service.

Proposed
plan would
promote
retire-
ments.

Lastly, there is to be urged the advantage which the proposed cadres would present for the introduction of a system of purchase, such as used to obtain in the Indian Army, under which every retiring officer received a bonus from his juniors. Such a system is impracticable in large bodies, where the promotion runs in long lists; and it has no place in the Staff Corps, since in that service no one is directly interested in the retirement of his seniors. Objections have indeed been made to a purchase system of this kind, although the Court of Directors did not share in them; but no branch of the service has ever worked successfully without it. The British ordnance corps are no exception to this rule. In them the effect of seniority without special invitations to retirement has been disguised by the rapid succession of augmentations occurring during the last twenty years; but the cry is already raised of stagnant promotion, and plans for increasing the inducement to retire are now under discussion. In the late Indian army, notwithstanding pensions and the bonus system, the complaint was justly made that the officers were too old; and the rate of retirement since that system has been abolished affords no room for supposing the natural effect will not follow. Increased pensions have indeed been lately introduced, but these, although offered with the most kindly motives, may rather be expected to aggravate the evil, since they present new inducements to officers to hold on longer. Before their introduction, the maximum rate of pension was reached in thirty-two

years' service; after which a man gained no benefit—except in the prospect of eventually obtaining colonel's allowance—by staying in the service. But now an additional pension follows the completion of three years' more service, and a further increase after another period of the same length. These inducements can hardly fail to tempt men from retiring at a time when they would otherwise have done so.

But, even if this were not so, pensions alone will not induce retirements sufficiently. It may be admitted that, compared with those granted in the British army, the Indian rates are liberal. But in the British army—which, if not exactly an army of rich men, is at any rate a service in which the money remuneration forms quite a secondary attraction—the retirements on full-pay form quite an inappreciable proportion of the whole. In the Indian army, on the other hand, they form in effect the only kind of retirement in force; and in order to appraise fairly the value of the inducements offered, comparison should be made with the pensions given in those departments (such as the English and Indian Civil Services), which are regarded as a permanent profession and means of livelihood. Compared with the former, the Indian army pensions are small; while in the Indian Civil Service it has been found necessary to supplement the pension of 1,000*l.* a year by compulsory retirement, the pensions alone having proved an insufficient inducement. The fact that this pension is partly provided by the civilian's own contributions does not, of course, affect the argument.

Pensions
alone in-
sufficient
for this
purpose.

It may perhaps be replied that, admitting the insufficiency of pensions as a means of support on retirement, it is not contemplated that men should look solely to them; that the rates of pay now allowed to regimental as well as all other officers are sufficient to permit men to save as well as spend. This may be admitted, although the rise of prices in India is rapidly

and steadily reducing the value of fixed incomes; but a systematic practice of saving requires a greater degree of forethought than most men possess. It is not a common virtue to exercise continued self-denial in view to a distant contingency—a contingency which, be it observed, is not likely to happen, since the majority of the officers of the army do not live to qualify for pension. A wise government will frame its regulations so that they shall be adapted to the capacity and habits of ordinary beings, and shall tend to counteract a besetting weakness of most—the tendency to set the present before the future. The different funds, civil and military, of the Indian services, were framed on this principle; and by making subscription to them compulsory, the state, at no cost to itself, enforced an economy on its servants which preserved their families from the dangers of improvidence. And, in the same way, a sufficient stream of retirement may be secured to maintain the efficiency of the army, without burdening the state with costly rates of pension, simply by such a form of organisation as shall put it in the power of the officers themselves to buy out their seniors. The experience of the last thirty years has clearly demonstrated that the regimental system of the Indian army, with its small separate cadres, affords such a machinery perfectly adapted to the wants of the case. The officers will be found quite ready enough to save, if by so doing they obtain the direct and immediate benefit of promotion. Let this be placed within their reach, and the rest may safely be left to the unerring law of self-interest.*

The old arrangement, it may be observed, was open to the defect that the regimental lists only extended to the grade of major. The promotion of the lieutenant-colonels ran in one seniority list for the whole army, so that no individual regiment was directly interested in buying-out any officer of this grade. The result was that purchase extended only to the majors; if an officer passed through that rank without being bought out, and became a lieutenant-colonel, he seldom retired afterwards, but held on for the chance of ultimately obtaining the colonelcy of a regiment. Promotion among the lieutenant-colonels used consequently to be very slow, depending simply on

Our review is now concluded of the merits and defects of the new organisation of the Indian army—or, what perhaps may be more accurately termed its future organisation, since it has not yet come fully into operation. The points which it has been sought to establish in the preceding chapters may be summarised as follows:—

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I. That—leaving out of sight the members of it who belonged to the old Indian army, to whom the argument advanced is not applicable—the Staff Corps is entirely unsuitable as a machinery for the supply of officers for the different branches of the civil administration. That in this respect it in no way resembles the system it professes to replace, but involves a new and objectionable use of military rank and title, quite alien to the traditions of the British Army. Further, that no sufficient necessity exists for such a radical change, since the required object might be equally well obtained in other ways.

Summary
of pro-
posals.

II. That the Staff Corps is equally unsuitable for supplying the civil departments of the army. Those departments are essentially civil in their nature, and in every other army are filled by civilians, or by military officers who have surrendered all further claim to military promotion, as in the case of those joining the new Control Department of the British army. Under the old system, the officers who filled them were liable to take their turn of military duty especially in war-time, and formed an effective part of the regimental strength of the army. They will henceforward be severed from connection with military duty of any sort, and there are no longer reasons for retaining them on the roll of the combatant establishment.

III. That it is an inconvenient and unsuitable machinery for officering the native army—especially that the system

death-steps. The proposed scheme, by making the lieutenant-colonels a part of the regimental cadre, would avoid this defect, as well as the greater one, that the commanding officer was frequently a stranger to the men of his regiment.

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is destructive of that bond of union between officers and men which is a necessary condition of military efficiency.

IV. There remains the case of officers on the Military Staff. But these are comparatively a small body, and it is not to be supposed that a Staff Corps would be needed, or have been organised, simply on their account.

Such being the state of the case : when already some of the defects of the system have made themselves apparent—especially the restless spirit engendered by it among the regimental officers, the cessation of retirements, and the destruction of all bonds of union between the officers and the native troops,—surely this is the time, when the system is still in its infancy, to attempt a reform, while reform is yet possible.

It may however be urged, that if the system be really so defective as is here represented, the objections to it must certainly have been foreseen. The very fact that the system has been deliberately provided is in itself, it may be said, evidence that it cannot be impracticable. This apparent inconsistency may perhaps be accounted for by the circumstance that, in the reorganisation of the Indian army, the principle which usually governs the administration of Indian affairs appears to have been departed from. That India can only be governed properly in India, is a proposition which all parties are accustomed to assent to ; and by no one has it been more distinctly asserted than a late Secretary of State, who declared in his place in Parliament that it was not his province nor in his power to govern India—that all he could profess to do was to control the Government of India. In the present instance, this sound maxim was departed from. Both the principles and details of the measure were elaborated in England, and the functions of the Indian Government were limited to giving effect to them. To say nothing of the complications which arose out of its first introduction—lately so unhappily notorious—and looking merely to the objections of a

permanent character which we have seen to be inherent in the new system, it may fairly be asserted that, if the usual course had been followed, which leaves initiation to the Indian and confirmation to the Home Government, the defects which have now become apparent would have been foreseen and provided against.

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Happily, if the defects are clearly established, the way to overcome them is not less clear; and the peculiar condition of Indian public life—the rapid change of officials, although it is often a hindrance to steady progress, renders a reversal of erroneous policy comparatively easy. But nine years have passed since the Indian army was reorganised, and already all the principal authorities concerned in the measure have passed away from official life, or to other departments of affairs. None are now left, at any rate in the East, who stand committed to a persistence in the original plan.

It now only remains to summarise the remedial measures which have been proposed in this and the foregoing chapter. These are:—

A. The formation of a second Civil Service, to take the place, gradually, of the present civil branch of the Staff Corps, the members of which should quit the army on appointment to it: their emolument and precedence to be regulated solely with reference to the nature of their departmental employment. Existing members of the Staff Corps to be invited to join this service, and the higher officials of the numerous body known as the Uncovenanted Service to be also eligible for admission.

B. The gradual transformation of the civil staff of the army—Commissariat, Pay, Clothing, &c.—into civil departments. Members of the old Indian Army to retain the position already secured to them by the Staff Corps.

C. The organisation of the native army by regiments, each of several battalions—four has been suggested as

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the most convenient number—each battalion consisting of a native regiment as it now stands; the whole regiment to be officered by a permanent fixed establishment of officers, who should be promoted by seniority, in succession to vacancies occurring in their respective cadres. This plan, amongst other advantages claimed for it, would provide a self-acting machinery for ensuring a reasonably quick stream of promotion without additional cost to the state.

D. There remains the case of the fourth and last class of officers who compose the existing Indian Army—the Military Staff. These are altogether less than two hundred—a proportion of the military staff appointments being held by officers of the British service—and they could be conveniently supplied from the proposed native regiments; officers while on the staff being made supernumerary in their cadres, after the practice in force in the Royal Artillery.

E. The proposed plan would admit readily of exchanges between the British and Indian services; and it would be easy to provide, when working out the details, for the return of officers to the army from the civil departments, within certain limits as to length of service in the latter.

Importance of speedy action.

In conclusion, the great importance may be urged of speedy action, since every fresh admission to the Staff Corps increases the difficulty of reform. Fortunately, the proviso was made in 1858, that all officers entering the Indian army after that date should be liable to the provisions of any future changes; so that the perpetuation of the Staff Corps system need not be extended after the disappearance from the army of all who entered it before that year. Finally, whatever plan shall be determined on, it may be hoped that, after the experience afforded by the agitation of the last nine years, the legality of that organisation may be established, beyond doubt or cavil, by embodying its provisions in an Act of Parliament.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE NATIVE ARMIES.

WHEN advocating, in the earlier part of this work,* a reform of the military administration of India, which should sweep away the cumbersome and expensive machinery of three separate establishments, and centralise all military authority in the Supreme Government,—with which already virtually rests, and must in any case ultimately rest, all military responsibility and power,—a reservation was expressly made regarding the native troops. The argument for placing the whole of the British troops in India directly under the Commander-in-Chief, and for fusing the three establishments of officers of the Indian army into one body, is based on entirely different considerations from those which affect the native armies to which they are attached. These separate establishments, which took their origin out of the early conditions of British connection with India, when the three presidencies were isolated points on the seaboard, have been maintained, as far as the European troops are concerned, long after the division ceased to be necessary. There is no longer any more reason for maintaining three distinct British armies in India, at great cost and inconvenience, than there would be in pursuing the same arrangement for the troops in Canada or the United Kingdom. The maintenance also of three different bodies of officers for the local armies ceased to be necessary after the separate lines of pro-

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Mode of
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Effect of
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Madras.

motion were abolished by the Staff Corps system, and the fusion of the general officers of the British and Indian armies into one list; and it would be equally unnecessary under the method which has been proposed here for replacing that system. But, on the other hand, the advantages of maintaining a division of the native armies have been too clearly displayed by late events to require any advocacy here, while there appear to be conclusive reasons, which will now be stated, for carrying the existing divisions still further. The following remarks will be devoted to enforcing this view, and to offering some suggestions on the general subject of native troops which appear deserving of consideration.

Before entering on these subjects, it may be useful, in order to prevent possible misconception on this head, to point out that the proposed amalgamation of the officers of the Indian army would not involve any mere intimate connection between the different native armies than at present subsists. The Punjab frontier army is at present wholly unconnected with any other force, but the officers belonging to it are supplied from the three Staff Corps. The Hyderabad Contingent is isolated in the same way. Under the proposed system the isolation would be carried still further, because an officer once appointed to a regiment would remain attached to it for the rest of his service, whereas now he is eligible for transfer from one regiment, or even from one army to another.

To turn now to the effect of the measure proposed in the preceding chapter on the different native armies. First, as regards the Madras Army. The forty battalions of which this army is composed plainly constitute a convenient body for conversion into the proposed four-battalion regiments. The force is a homogeneous one, the men of each regiment being recruited generally from the southern parts of the peninsula. Its size renders it easily manageable, and no further subdivision

seems called for, especially when its character for loyalty is remembered; but having regard to the cardinal principle on which our military policy should be based, it might be well to give each regiment hereafter a permanent recruiting district to itself, at which one of its battalions should always be stationed. The formation of a permanent regimental head-quarters of this sort, while certainly tending to make the service popular, would afford a depot system for the Madras troops serving in Burmah and other places beyond the sea, which is much needed. The four regiments of Madras cavalry would be kept separate as at present; their officers would furnish one complete cadre of the proposed new strength.

The Bombay Army is still smaller than that of Madras, Bombay. consisting of only thirty battalions of infantry, with a little over 20,000 men. The whole of this force is raised generally from the districts occupied by it, with the exception of two battalions composed of Beloochees, and a battalion—the 30th, or Jacob's Rifles, a local corps—raised in Sind. These three battalions are usually stationed in that province, and a fourth battalion might usefully be localised and united with them to form a local Sind regiment, for reasons which will be more fully dwelt upon when I come to speak of the Bengal Army.

The cavalry of the Bombay Army divides naturally into two parts—one composed of four regiments of Hindostanees, the other of three regiments of Sind Horse—which would be advantageously kept, as at present, apart from each other. The fact that the number of infantry battalions and cavalry regiments is not an exact multiple of the proposed new unit, would not materially signify, the arrangement to be made for the case of the extra battalions being a mere matter of detail. A pedantic adherence to the number four is not in any way necessary; nor, if the organisation were thus symmetrically established in the first place, is it to be supposed that the Indian Army will always remain unchanged. But what-

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ever may be the additions or reductions made hereafter in its numbers, it would always be practicable to arrange the officers by cadres of uniform strength. This would be desirable in order that all might have an equally fair chance of promotion; but it is obviously not necessary to have precisely seven officers with each battalion. As to the disposal of any surplus officers, it may be observed that, whenever the number attached to a regiment may be in excess of its requirements, those officers employed on the staff need not be made supernumerary; and that by a proper application of the practice of 'seconding,' the strength of the effective list might be adjusted to any degree of nicety required.

As regards the composition of the Bombay Army: in the opinion of many experienced officers it would be advantageous to establish a separate recruiting-ground for each regiment, and so break up its present homogeneous character, by the formation of class-regiments. In any case it seems particularly desirable that the practice of enlisting sepoys for it from the country whence the Bengal Army is supplied should be put an end to.

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The case of the Bengal Army needs to be dealt with at greater length. The sepoy portion (*i.e.* the infantry) was before the mutiny recruited almost entirely in Hindostan, and principally from the people occupying the great plain north of the Upper Ganges, especially Oudh, and between that river and the Jumna. One-sixth of the sepoys of each regiment might consist under the rules of Mahomedans, and possibly, at the time when the army was first raised, this difference of religion running through the ranks may have been a useful preservative against secret combination; but it had long ceased to be of any value in this respect. The ties of service were stronger than any surviving prejudice between conquered and conquering races; and the army had become a vast brotherhood, united by supposed identity of interests, throughout which, by a sort of freemasonry, the popular feeling

could be communicated with extraordinary celerity from one end of the land to the other. The cavalry was principally recruited in Rohilcund and the country westward of the Gangetic Doab; it consisted chiefly of Mahomedans, and it was generally expected to prove indifferent to any passions which had their origin in Hindoo caste-prejudices. The result, it need hardly be added, completely falsified this expectation. The bond of union formed by long years of association in garrison life proved superior to every other consideration. With the exception of a few battalions, whose loyalty was the more conspicuous from the rarity of such examples, the whole Bengal army mutinied. In some places the Hindoo sepoys took the lead—in others the Mahomedan troopers; in ill-discipline, bitterness of feeling against their masters, and confidence in their power to overthrow them, there was nothing to choose between Hindoo or Mussulman, cavalry or infantry.

Fortunately, the so-called Bengal Presidency was not garrisoned wholly by the regular army. Four battalions of Goorkhas, inhabitants of the Nepalese Himalaya—who had been kept aloof from the rest of the army, and had not imbibed the class-feeling which animated that body—with one exception stood loyal; the conspicuous gallantry and devotedness to the British cause displayed by one of these regiments especially won the admiration of their English comrades. Two extra regiments of the line, which had been recruited from the Punjab and its neighbourhood, also stood firm. But the great help came from the Punjab Irregular Force, as it was termed—a force, however, which was organised on quite as methodical and regular a footing, was quite as well drilled, and vastly better disciplined, than the regular army. This force consisted of six regiments of infantry and five of cavalry, to which may be added four regiments of Sikh local infantry, usually stationed in the Punjab. These troops were directly under the orders of the Government

Advantages derived during mutiny from separation of Punjabees from Hindoostances,

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ficed.

of that province, and not subject to that centralised system of administration which had so large a share in undermining the discipline of the regular army. It was with these troops, and the handful of Europeans quartered in the upper part of India, that the rebellion was first met. Meanwhile the sympathies of the people of the Punjab were enlisted on behalf of their rulers. A lately-conquered people, whose accustomed occupation had been superseded by the disbandment of their army, they entertained no goodwill towards the Hindostanee garrisons which occupied their country, and welcomed with alacrity the appeal to arms made them to join in the overthrow of their hereditary enemies. Any number of men that could be required was forthcoming, and the levies thus raised were pushed down to the seat of war as fast as they could be equipped and drilled. And on the reorganisation of the Bengal army, these Punjab levies have formed a large component part of it. The isolation formerly maintained of the Sikh—or to speak more correctly the Punjabee—from the other peoples of India has thus been broken through, and one of the most important principles which, I venture to think, should guide our military policy has been abandoned. The moral, above all others, to be learnt from the mutiny was surely, that the different military bodies which we are compelled to keep up should be as distinct as possible from each other. It was this isolation of the Madras and Bombay Armies from that of Bengal which prevented their being contaminated by the spirit of mutiny. The same cause, among others, kept the Punjab on our side; the bulk of the Bengal Army was not recruited from that country. But this advantage has now been discounted. The Punjabee levies have been converted into regiments of the Bengal line, and take their regular tour of duty throughout the whole country, from the Peshawur frontier to Assam; Sikh sentries now garrison Fort William, side by side with Poorbeahs from Oudh and Behar; and, as a