

Cursory remarks on recruiting & recruits / by Frederic Roberts.

Contributors

Roberts, Frederic.
Royal College of Surgeons of England

Publication/Creation

London : Parker, Furnival, and Parker, 1852.

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/ku7sx4bq>

Provider

Royal College of Surgeons

License and attribution

This material has been provided by This material has been provided by The Royal College of Surgeons of England. The original may be consulted at The Royal College of Surgeons of England. where the originals may be consulted. This work has been identified as being free of known restrictions under copyright law, including all related and neighbouring rights and is being made available under the Creative Commons, Public Domain Mark.

You can copy, modify, distribute and perform the work, even for commercial purposes, without asking permission.

**wellcome
collection**

Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>





5

CURSORY REMARKS

ON

RECRUITING & RECRUITS,

BY

FREDERIC ROBERTS,

First

Staff Surgeon of the ~~Second~~ Class.



PRESENTED
by the
AUTHOR.

LONDON :

PARKER, FURNIVAL, AND PARKER.

EXETER: H. J. WALLIS.

1852.

CURSORY REMARKS

BY

RECRUITING & RECRUITS

ERRATUM, page 13, line 9.

For "invaliding and deaths," read "free discharges."

BY

FREDERICK ROBERTS

Staff Surgeon of the Army Class

PRESENTED
BY THE
AUTHOR

LONDON

PARKER FURNIVAL AND PARKER

EXETER: H. J. WALLIS

1882

PREFACE.

MANY of the principles contained in this Memoir were enunciated in articles published at different periods on Military Hygiene, which comprehends a tolerably wide range of subjects, in the *Medical Gazette*, and in articles on an uncompleted subject (Development of Military Offences) in the *United Service Magazine*. The plan of distribution of Recruiting Officers which existed in 1845 is retained, to save the expense of engraving a new plate for a map, but the *principle* is preserved — the distribution of Recruiting Officers being now nearly the same as in that year. To maintain a relative uniformity with the illustrations on the map, the census of 1841 is continued.

F. R.

December, 1852.

PREFACE

CONTENTS.

General Remarks on the Intellectual, Moral, and Physical Capacities in Recruits	5
Influence of Local Association in the Success of Recruiting, and Character of Recruits	17
Influence of a Standard Height on the Physical Capacities of Recruits, and Success of Recruiting	26
Recruits for Cavalry, Artillery, Sappers, Grenadiers, and Light Infantry	29
On the Influence of Age in Recruits	30

RECRUITING AND RECRUITS.

General Remarks on the Intellectual, Moral, and Physical Capacities in Recruits.

The probability of life depends upon the degree of physical energy and the sum of resistance made by the organism to the causes of diseases. Constitutional perfection of formation and proportional vitality resist disease, however, in proportion to the more or less favourable physical (external) conditions they are placed in. Further, the higher the degree of moral qualities, the more these powers of resistance increase.

The general advantages of moral and physical perfection being thus briefly considered, I shall premise by offering a few remarks that bear more especially upon the subject, and then advance what is expected to facilitate the acquisition of recruits possessing them. There are agencies to which the soldier and civilian are differently situated; such as clothing, diet, habitation, and occupation. The one is under arbitrary injunctions to clothe himself, eat, to be lodged, and to work, by a certain rule, whatever his temperament, constitution, and power of endurance and accommodation to the same: the other acts more under the dictates of nature, by consulting his convenience and comfort. It is these adverse habits that work such destruction in the frame of the soldier, and not so much the topographical and atmospherical influences, to which persons in civil life are equally subject. When soldiers have to contend against nature in this manner, the highest qualifications should be selected, and should increase as the laws of nature are the more violated, as they are by gradations from the cavalry and artillery to the infantry, in which latter is the maximum of perversion; the probability of life being half per cent. higher in the cavalry and artillery than in the infantry at home.*

The history of armies at all times teaches that they are very susceptible of disease, and although modern armies are far differently situated with respect to physical and moral circumstances to those which existed in former times, yet

* The annual ratio of deaths per 1000 of mean strength in the Dragoons and the Dragoon Guards is 15.3, by Lieut.-Col. Tulloch's Reports. For a period of seven years, in the Artillery at Home, the ratio is about 15.5, which is calculated from a Return called for by Mr. Hume in the House of Commons, dated 12th June, 1845. The ratio in the Foot Guards, according to Lieut.-Col. Tulloch, is 21.6 per 1000.

there remain, not loathsome, but active and palpable causes of impoverishing the vital resources. By a late account of sickness and mortality in the American army, the number of cases of indisposition, to the number of men in the service, was 281 per cent.; and the number of deaths a fraction less than $1\frac{2}{3}$ per cent. in the same number of men. In our own select Foot Guards the mortality is more than two per cent. In the Prussian army, which consists of men between 20 and 25 years of age, the mortality is 11·7 in 1000, when in the civil population it is only 10 in 1000, and the average ratio of admissions of sick annually is 111 per cent.

From 1820 to 1826 inclusive the average annual mortality in the French army in *France* was 19 in 1000. In the male civil population the mortality between the ages of 20 and 30—corresponding to those of soldiers—was from 10 to 12 per 1000.

Soldiers appear to be subjects among whom malignant diseases have arisen in different times. A virulent malady had its origin in the army of Charles VIII. at the siege of Naples, and was propagated by it over the greater part of Europe. The "sweating sickness" appeared for the first time in the army of the Earl of Richmond (Henry the VII.) upon his landing at Milford Haven in 1415, and spread to London, where it raged from the beginning of August to the end of October. So formidable and fatal were its effects, that the Coronation of Henry VII., the victor in the battle of Bosworth Field, was deferred till this strange pestilence had subsided. Armies have always been composed of the good and bad. Even at late dates soldiers have been collected from the refuse of the people and from prisons, from whom not so much could be expected, to avoid disease, as from a more respectable class of people. In the cases of devastating epidemics, which the army so often suffers from, (witness those of China and Scinde lately), the pernicious influence is not universal; that is, the causes of unhealthiness are not to be attributed exclusively to position and climate, but in great measure to the external condition of the soldiers, as must be when those who enjoy certain independence and physical comfort pass comparatively free from their ravages. Physical comfort can best be acquired by a strong mind and a strong body; the mind may not be polished, but it may be intelligent. Some amount of scholastic education is necessary to preserve a correct mind, and this more so in the army than in civil life, where it is more practicable to divert it. The outcry about drunkenness in the army by its officers is constant, and its cause is attributed to the inferiority of the men in character and class. On obvious grounds education must improve the welfare of the men in the service, and its reaction on health is conspicuous.

Crime is a fruitful source of disease in the army, both directly and indirectly. Education cannot fail to be an important additional resource to the soldier, as it is seen that in proportion as troops are well situated with respect to physical

and moral position, so does crime less prevail. In the cavalry and artillery, where the soldier is held in greater esteem, on account of his relatively higher position, by possessing better education, by the more intellectual nature of his duty, and the greater sphere there is for the exercise of mental qualities, and the consequent dependence upon his judgment, in a state of greater exception from control, crime is less prevalent than in the infantry.

It should be our object to obtain as respectable recruits as possible, so as to avoid crime and delinquencies; for no particular system of punishment yet ever practised, whether harsh or lenient, has in the slightest degree contributed to reform military offenders, or prevent relapses of crimes and delinquencies. The frequency of offences is precisely the same under the institution of the lash, "shot drill," "solitary confinement," "low diet;" shewing that it should be less our object to correct criminals and venial offenders, than to place them in a position where they can do the least injury to themselves and others, and contribute to the general service of the army. According to the Report on Military Prisons, the re-committals for the several offences of desertion, absence, drunkenness, disgraceful conduct, and other crimes increased from 2452 in 1849, to 3174 in 1850. These Reports take cognizance of offences *punished* in Military Prisons in Great Britain only, and not those *committed*.

Out of the strength of the English army, the average daily number of men in confinement and under punishment for desertion, absence, drunkenness, may be estimated at 3000, and uncaptured deserters at 1000; and if we estimate each prisoner to cost £30 annually on account of food, raiment, expenses of prison establishments, salaries, (underrated, were the interest of money laid out in building prisons taken into consideration) 3000 prisoners would cost the government £90,000 per annum, and the army loses their services as well as those of the 1000 deserters constantly absent. This enormous list of military prisoners, not only affects the numerical force of the army, but also its health, in as much as the separation of defaulters from their proper duties, and their detention in prison, imposes additional and often irksome services on the remaining well behaved soldiers.

How much more interest a person takes about a matter when he knows something, than when he knows nothing about it! A tolerably well-instructed soldier will see, that when his duty is regulated by a free, orderly activity of mind, it provides rather a source of enjoyment than of annoyance. A relation of this sort between intellectual and physical activity cannot fail to make health better and life happier. In the infantry a man learns many little things; but they are isolated matters, without interesting connexion, and have no deep hold in the mind: the method of learning is so dry, that there are consequently many failures in instruction; good non-commissioned officers being proverbially very scarce, as it is likely to be the case when the men

cannot be attracted and interested by stiff exercise of mere memory, which neither awakens the feelings nor imagination. It is a paramount object to procure as well educated and respectable non-commissioned officers, whom I consider to be the fulcra of an army, as possible. They command the respect of the privates, who see that better men than themselves are associated with them in showing respect to their officers, in their duties in quarters, on parade, on guard, in the field, on the march, in their voyages to distant and unhealthy climates, and in all their privations and perils. The almost assimilation of the duties and position of the non-commissioned officer and private has a vast hold upon the conduct of the latter, satisfies him, and not unfrequently kindles in him no little pride that his duty should be so intimately associated with one whose respect is so greatly reciprocated by his officer.

Soldiers without intelligence are, says Marshal Marmont, in general inert and heavy, and vary much less in character than those who are smarter, and prone to reason and compare. Some allowance should be made for the restlessness of spirit, the wavering character, and often indolent habits of many recruits, over those who remain in more homely occupations. These characters naturally require more excitement than more steady and reserved people; so all reasonable attempts should be made to keep their excitement within bounds, by affording interesting occupation and amusement. The acquisitions of reading and writing are particularly desirable, but are not invariably included as essential in the requirements of a soldier, as there are, doubtless, many smart and good soldiers, who cannot read and write, with as much intelligence and resources as better educated men; but as education smartens stolid men, it should be encouraged.

In hospital, where many soldiers pass a great part of their time,* reading would lighten the tedium of long illnesses. Inability to read is distressing to a soldier in hospital, where, in addition to often long and frequent confinement, is added rigid discipline. Want of intelligence in a patient is, too, a painful obstacle to easy and rapid cure.

Physical strength is a paramount power to prosecute war, which is a necessary evil; but when moral and intelligent conduct is added, there cannot fail to be great mitigation of its horrors.

The more elevated the tone of physical and moral life in the army in times of peace, the less will be the failure of it in times of war; the more degraded the men are during peace, the more so they become in war. The heavy crimes of the French army in Algeria result chiefly from the fact that the men sent out to the regiments stationed there are of known bad character, are degraded in the eyes of the army, and being reckless in consequence, commit base crimes, and suffer dreadful punishments and further degradation.† Baron Bertrand, Chef

* In the Windward and Leeward Command each soldier is sick $27\frac{1}{2}$ days annually; in Canada 16; in Bermuda 19, and so on.—Lieut.-Col. Tulloch; *Statistical Reports*.

† Times, quoted from French Papers, July and August, 1845.

de Battaillon, examined before the Commissioners to report upon Military Punishments, when asked if his experience led him to believe that the punishment of sending criminals to "Companies of Discipline" was effective for reforming the soldiers, replied, that "it did not reform them, but it rid the regiment of them."* Confirmed bad characters are seldom reformed, especially if the means used for attracting them from their vicious course are limited. A chaplain of a county prison expresses himself in his report, that "to lessen crime, moral discipline should be used instead of mere corporal punishment, and declared that mere punishment alone, or the fear of it, will neither prevent the commission of crime, nor cure its effects on the character."

Crime is rife in the army. Captain Layard, on Tuesday, the 2nd of July, 1845, in the House of Commons, shewed, that by a "Return he held in his hand it appeared, that from 1839 to the year 1844, 3355 soldiers had received corporal punishment, and the number of imprisonments during the same period was 28,190, being nearly one-third of our whole army. Some of the latter were even of repeated imprisonments, as there were many soldiers who spent the greater part of their time in gaol."† Seeing that excessive crime prevails in the general mass of the army, but chiefly in the infantry, it is not too much to hope that, if the selection of recruits for the infantry were equal to that of the cavalry and artillery, it would assist to prevent this perpetual imprisonment and constant exposure of the health of the men. The evidence of the witnesses examined before the Commissioners for inquiring into the system of Military Punishment, goes much to say, that the recruits selected for the cavalry and artillery were of a stamp more conducive to their physical and moral preservation than those raised for the infantry of the line at least.

Numbers of eminent authors have always advocated the necessity of as much physical power in soldiers of the infantry as the cavalry and artillery; but something more than animal strength is required for each of these branches of the service; as military life, especially in the infantry, is so very artificial, men composing an army should have some intelligence to adapt themselves to it. It is not necessary that they should be learned logicians and mathematicians, but they should have intelligence enough to comprehend the common principles of personal hygiene; and I have no doubt that by means of the present improvements they will be easily attracted to their own welfare in this particular. Men without education at all, and without sources of amusement in barracks, are not in a situation to be noticed by their superiors for preferment; they are without opportunity of having their qualities drawn out. Men who have the knowledge of some craft are more likely to be able to read and write than ploughmen, and find more means of occupation in barracks. The mere ploughman has no resources in a garrison like Malta, Gibraltar, Corfù, and numerous others. The

* System of Military Punishment.

† United Service Magazine, July 5th, 1845.

passiveness of a "guard" is only succeeded by *ennui* in barracks, and sought to be drowned by smoking and drinking.

The recruits in the infantry have been probably less accustomed to dissipation than those in the cavalry and artillery. The recruits in the foot guards are very respectable young men generally, but soon begin a course of dissipation. If there was not some peculiar cause for the development of various offences in the infantry, there would arise as much in the cavalry and artillery. It is the generally superior education, the duty, which is business-like occupation, as well as the greater relative responsibility placed in the men, and the more natural and congenial mode of life, that arrests crime in the cavalry and artillery. How important then is it, in the absence of interesting occupation in the infantry service, to procure men equal in mental qualifications to those in the artillery and cavalry, to afford some means of counteracting the listlessness of infantry service. Apprehensions respecting the admission of mechanics and natives of towns into the service are without foundation. Citizens and artisans are as capable of good behaviour as agricultural labourers. Out of 88 non-commissioned officers in the 59th regiment in 1845, 45 were labourers, colliers, and servants, the rest tradesmen and clerks.* The militia were acknowledged to be in the war time a very respectable body of men, collected by ballot uniformly throughout the country; each parish (town and country) furnishing men in proportion to the population. In the evidence taken by the Commissioners to inquire into the System of Military Punishments, are scattered opinions highly favourable to this body of men. Their conduct is mentioned to have been very excellent, and their physical capabilities were still better, in reference to those of the men raised for the regular army. Among the militia-men must have been many respectable individuals, capable of reading and writing; and universal testimony goes to show that, instead of being seditious and turbulent, they were the best *personnel* for the line. The constitution of armies is so peculiar that there are seldom or never developed in its members political parties. The British army, in particular, has always been indifferent to politics, to "strikes," or any lawless movements in the people; nor has it ever engendered any mutinous conduct within any branch of itself; at least any such that can be proved to result from education. An army not in *active operation, to maintain it in a relatively healthy state*, must be better educated than that in the field, where soldiers more nearly support the character of the Roman *Exercitus*, which derived its name from its habits.

Education, it is plain, can better be dispensed with in an army on active service than in quarters, where it requires some resources to while away the listless hour. To suppose that sufficient occupation can always be provided for

* Under the head of "Labourer," are often included men of more intellectual occupations, as apprentices, &c. In the above number of labourers there were errors to this effect, and in favour, consequently, of the argument advanced.

the soldier in the interim, and even during many, of his ordinary duties, is contrary to experience; especially in the various strange and remote stations an English soldier is doomed to serve in. The duty of an infantry soldier is so monotonous too, that he especially requires some relief from its tedium, which perpetual drill and exercise will not remove, but indeed rather aggravate. Marshal Marmont, in his "Spirit of Military Institutions," says, "that military exercises are undoubtedly the first elements of that system, [activity] which I am now advocating, but they are not the only ones. The soldier must first acquire a thorough knowledge of all his military duties, but when he has accomplished this, to continually occupy him with details he is perfectly acquainted with, and which can teach him nothing more, is the infallible means of disgusting him with his profession."*

Education makes an important difference in the social position of the soldier; when educated and intelligent, his civil friends are selected from among the better order of the community; but when ignorant, the only acquaintances he has a chance of forming are the dissolute and outcast, who only add to his obloquy. It has been asserted, but not proved, that artisans are inferior, both in physical and moral qualities, as soldiers generally, to agricultural labourers. As far as moral qualities are concerned, it may be mentioned, that, as half the non-commissioned officers in the 59th regiment were "mechanics" and "clerks," and if two-thirds of the army are labourers, the class of artisans would appear to supply double the number of non-commissioned officers the labouring class do, if every corps could shew the same result.

It has been observed for a long period past in military history, that there are fewer punishable offences among those troops who are the best fed and clothed, whose duties are least artificial, or more consonant to nature's laws, whose moral standing is highest—the cavalry, artillery, and sappers and miners; and that there are more in those whose services are worse paid, are the most intense, most artificial, whose clothing and diet† are relatively inferior, and whose social indulgences are the most stringent and arbitrary—the infantry. It is very generally maintained, that the exercise of this extra stringency towards the infantry soldier is the result, and required by reason, of his inferiority in class in society. Every due allowance and consideration being conceded on this score to the men composing these higher branches of the service, there is not, nevertheless, so much difference in the social character of cavalry and artillery recruits as to be the *sole* cause of their good behaviour; there is no positive proof to warrant such a conclusion, and the supposition is much shaken by the fact, that the system of recruiting in the English army makes no distinction of class in admitting recruits into any of its branches; and that volunteers

* United Service Magazine, June, 1845, p. 225.

† The rations issued to the infantry are the same as those to the cavalry and artillery, but the latter having better pay always contribute more towards their messing than the infantry in the British army.

rather select the infantry to serve in in foreign armies. There is a general lower standard of intellect probably in the infantry, from inferior physical developement, and consequent lower standard of morals, than in the cavalry and artillery. Many infantry recruits having been badly fed, their intellects have remained unexpanded, although it is possible that many can read; but as *intellectual* education is not always *moral*, it is to be feared that that accomplishment is but too frequently, a morbid one in ill-conditioned recruits. The leniency shewn towards the cavalry man, artillery man, and sapper, results from the greater bodily exertion required of him, and hence the vulgar idea of his greater *hardship*, but really only wholesome exercise, which would do the foot soldier much more good, than his stiff sentry-work, unbending parade, &c.

I have always been convinced that there are powers at work which produce desertion and other crimes and delinquencies besides a man's own choice, or free will; for if not, why should not these occur as much at one time and place as at others? which they do not; but at certain seasons, in certain regiments, in certain places. The science of Military Economy, as yet in its infancy as regards these things, should rank among the positive rather than among the empirical sciences. Were Returns made out at regular periods, to illustrate the relative prevalence of desertion and other crimes in different arms of the service, in different seasons, and under other circumstances, to try and discover what favours and what counteracts the commission of various offences, some more positive information would be acquired. I admit that *individuals* are instigated to desert by *specific* motives, which are the reasons assigned to account for this and other offences in the army, and which the modes of correction, not *prevention*, in use, fully prove, are supposed to be the causes. But *all* desertions are more or less favoured by further *general* causes, which should be sought for, prior to private reasons—as various as those that *lead to enlistment*. It is, therefore, presumed that some instructive deductions could be drawn from such Returns, as those proposed respecting the developement of the crime of desertion, drunkenness, absence, and other offences, both general and local, in this class of recruit and in that. I believe that desertions, like other offences, fluctuate by seasons, and even in different years, and vary frequently in different branches of the service. Such Returns would offer opportunities for further remarks as to the indications of cure of this moral disease in our service. When facts are known the causes will be investigated, and a general law will be evolved. For example, we should see whether desertion seems proportionately more frequent among labourers or artizans, among indiscriminately-enlisted men, in those recruited within their own native places, or when absent from home, among those enlisted in manufacturing towns, or rural districts.

Many effects which appear to be accidental, cease to be so when the observations are extended over a large number of facts; and as Quetlet remarks, “the

liberty of choice (free will), whose results are so capricious when individuals only are observed, leaves no sensible traces of its action when applied to multitudes." Hence the important law is adduced, "that social facts, influenced by liberty of choice, proceed with even more regularity than facts submitted simply to the action of physical causes."

To shew the various shades and degrees of moral character of the men who pass through the ranks of the army annually, an enumeration of how many are required to fill up the vacancies caused by desertion, blank discharges, discharges with ignominy and transportations, invaliding and deaths, should be periodically made. If we cannot control all the causes that lead to these vacancies, it may be presumed that by increasing the chances of obtaining better recruits they might be diminished. Besides shewing at one glance the actual number of each class we have to deal with every year, we might, with close examination perhaps, be assisted by it in devising means to avoid some of the *criminal* discharges and to diminish the number of desertions, if it did not indicate that by the proposed system of *recruiting* alone a fewer number of men would pass through a regiment annually than under the present one, and consequently dispense with fewer recruits, nor have a better army.

The chief object to be sought for when an army is recruited by voluntary enlistment is, by fostering and husbanding its nursery, to check too great a draining of the youths from among the populace; so as to provide as much choice of men as possible. By looking over the rate of desertion in the several arms of the service, there would appear to present themselves obvious preventible powers.

Upon the authority of a correspondent of the United Service Magazine for December, 1843, it seems that "during the half year ending 31st August, 1843, no less than 1510 deserters appear in the War Office List (published in the London Police Gazette), giving an annual loss of upwards of 3000 men by desertion, upon a force of about 43,000 in the United Kingdom." The deserters from the cavalry during the six months over which the observations extended were 70, or, in round numbers, 8 per 1000 upon an average force of about 9000 men. Those from the artillery were 20, or 5 per 1000 out of an average force of 4500. The number from the foot guards were 33, or 8 per 1000, leaving 55 per 1000 among the infantry of the line of an average force of 25,000 men.

In general terms we may assume a force of 25,000 infantry

of the line to lose annually by desertion	...	...	2774	men
That of 9000 Cavalry	...	...	140	ditto
That of 4500 Artillery	...	...	40	ditto
That of 4500 Foot Guards	...	...	66	ditto

Total 3020 men

According to the rate of desertion in the artillery a force of 25,000 would lose annually but about 222 men, instead of 2774, as the like force of infantry of the line does; and an equal force of foot guards 365 in place of 2774; and the same force of cavalry 311 men.

By adding another source (mortality) of loss of men to the above figures we see another contrast:

25,000 Artillery (at home) will lose annually by desertion	222 men
By death	388 ditto
	Total
	610
25,000 Cavalry (ditto) will lose annually by desertion	311 ditto
By death	363 ditto
	Total
	674 ditto
25,000 Foot Guards (ditto) will lose annually by desertion	365
By deaths	525
	Total
	890
25,000 Infantry of the line (ditto) will lose annually by	
desertion	2774 ditto
By deaths	525 ditto
	Total
	3299 ditto†

If we extended the calculation to the discharges of all kinds, it is more than probable that they would be found to be far above what occurs in the artillery, cavalry, and foot guards, especially as it is a much more prevalent custom in the two latter in particular to purchase discharges, than in the infantry of the line. I think, at a rough estimate, it may be said that were a force of 25,000 infantry of the line to lose on account of death, desertion, and the various forms of discharges (exclusive of those by purchase and invaliding) 4000 men, a like force of foot guards would lose but 900 men. The cost thrown on 25,000 infantry of the line to recruit, in a given time, the addition of 3100 men over and above the 900 men only required by a force of 25,000 foot guards would be very great, including levy money, recruiting and drilling.

Although a great number of deserters re-enlist unknown into the service, yet desertion is a source of weakening its ranks. The *particular* impulses to desertion will be more or less active according to the amount of activity of the *general* causes, facilities and prospects of escape. In Canada, for instance, where desertions are on a *sweeping* scale, the men will desert from the infantry of the line gregariously, whilst the soldiers in the artillery and foot guards (when the latter

† I have put down the rate of mortality in the infantry of the line the same as that in the foot guards, and not at the rate it is in the West India *Depôts*, as it is highly probable that in these *regiments*, taking one with the other, it is equal to what prevails in the household troops.

were stationed there) under the same discipline, and with more doubt as to the ultimate good of deserting, would desist.

It is very certain that a soldier is more contented in the cavalry and artillery. An artillery man in Canada told me "that the men in his corps did not desert, because they were well off, and did not wish to be better off." Were all soldiers placed on the same pay as artillerymen and cavalry there would be less desertion and other crimes, although, when they desert under sudden impulse, they do not, nevertheless, do so because they are dissatisfied with their pay or position, but think they may better themselves, and shun a state of discontent.

Upon the question of pay of the soldier, it is not inopportune to introduce here a paragraph from Macaulay's History of England: he says, "It is evident that, in a country where no man can be compelled to become a soldier, the ranks of an army cannot be filled if the government offers much less than the wages of common rustic labour. At present, the pay and beer money of a private in a regiment [infantry] of the line, amount to seven shillings and seven pence a week. This stipend coupled with the hope of a pension, does not attract the English youth in sufficient numbers; and it is found necessary to supply the deficiency by enlisting largely from among the poor population of Munster and Connaught. The pay of a private foot soldier in 1685 was only four shillings and eight pence a week; yet it is certain that the government in that year found no difficulty in obtaining many thousands of recruits at a very short notice. The pay of the private foot soldier in the army of the Commonwealth had been seven shillings a week—that is to say, as much as a corporal received under Charles II. and seven shillings a week had been found sufficient to fill the ranks with men decidedly superior to the generality of the people. On the whole, therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that, in the reign of Charles II. the ordinary wages of the peasant did not exceed four shillings a week; but that, in some parts of the kingdom, five shillings, six shillings, and during the summer months, even seven shillings, were paid. At present, a district where a labouring man earns only seven shillings a week, is thought to be in a state shocking to humanity. The average is much higher; and in prosperous counties the weekly wages of husbandmen amount to twelve, fourteen, and even sixteen shillings." As a set off against the suit of clothes also a soldier is annually provided with, it must not be forgotten that he has a great number of contingent expenses—small in their items, but large in the aggregate—to pay towards clothing and equipment chiefly, and that the labourer is at liberty to choose the most inexpensive articles of clothing, and to keep them in but rough repair. That good pay would be an allurements to a better class of men to enlist, and an antagonism to desertion, is most certain, and that they would make better use of it than a lesser pay, if comparison with the conduct of those troops already well paid can be permitted to be a fair one, is equally so.

Under the present system of recruiting many men enlist who never would have been permitted to do so had they not been required by the scarcity of *other* recruits. Many of these recruits, who enlist to escape the law, to avoid starvation, or to gratify some pique, are not intended by nature to be soldiers, for nature has marked her men for soldiers as for other occupations. Many men intended by nature for a soldier's life, do not enlist because enlistment is not in their way, and had they joined the ranks of the army, they would have been found to have more pride in avoiding crimes, and to have more courage in bearing punishments, than those never designed for the service.

The habit of emigration is now so general, that the spirit of local attachment, which was stronger in former days, has no weight with the modern British. With impatience to change their position from one place to another, the English quit the land where they were born, and march forth in a body to establish new settlements in other regions. Cannot this enterprising spirit of England's stalwart youth be diverted into a channel for the more immediate prosperity of the country by holding out honourable service in her army? Cavalry, artillery, and those select portions of infantry, to which in the kingdoms of Europe is applied the term of "guards," are more highly estimated than infantry of the line, and are a rank of soldiery possessing considerable precedence over others in every country. These considerations are not unworthy of notice; especially when it is hinted at that recruits often *suppose* themselves to have selected the cavalry or artillery, and, on discovery that they have been recruited for *general service*, desert from the infantry of the line, which to them has neither the attraction of a dashing service, nor that of association with their counties—the greatest balm to many a recruit, who is otherwise plunged into complete helplessness, where yesterday had no connexion with to-day's work, where there was nothing to remind him of his former self, only that his wish to wander forth to fairer scenes was now exchanged for a sick-heart longing after home, in which state many have pined away or deserted. These circumstances would suggest the plan of augmenting the more attractive corps, to include men to whose tastes they are more suitable than the general corps of the service.

After completing the cavalry and artillery to the highest strength required, the most feasible scheme for embracing men of good pretensions into the service would be to place some of the senior regiments, as far as the pay of the *men* goes, on the same footing as the guards, to dress them handsomely, and to designate them by a title equal to their claims. The trial of withholding the offer of "bounty," as being an unnecessary attraction to such men, might be made in raising a corps of *élites*.

Influence of Local Association on the success of Recruiting, and Character of Recruits.

The Establishment of associations between regiments and counties or localities appears to have fallen much into desuetude, if it ever existed more than at the present day. The order to assume local titles was issued to the infantry regiments in 1782, when they were desired to cultivate acquaintance with each county, so as to create a mutual attachment between the inhabitants and the regiments, which might be useful towards recruiting a corps. The best way to bring about a connexion between a county and a regiment would appear to be to station in a certain locality, a tolerable large party of men, with a few musical instruments, not omitting the drum, emblazoned with the arms of the county town, mottoes and devices of the regiment, who should attend at the different parish churches and endeavour to mix with the inhabitants in a more sober manner than at the fair and tavern, and likewise to post placards on the doors of the parish churches, announcing "that a few young men of good character are wanting to fill up vacancies in the Royal Welch Fusileers." As enlistments are governed materially by associations, recruiting parties from the *same* certain set of regiments should be kept more or less constantly moving in the same locality, to maintain communications with those regiments, and to afford opportunities from time to time for recruits to enlist into corps where their former associates and country-men would be found. The men composing recruiting parties should be natives of the localities where they are to recruit. Such men have better chance of success; and have better opportunities of knowing and learning the qualities, physical and moral, of the recruits—at once securing a more sound recruit than a stranger, and diminishing the rate of rejections. The English army raised by voluntary enlistments indiscriminately from amongst the populace is less likely to be characterized by good morals than a conscript army, in which case, in addition to the good effect of a large mixture of the better class in its ranks, probably the youths from a certain district are placed in one and the same regiment, or at least part of them we may suppose, thereby affording officers some clue to a man's character from his comrades and immediate compatriots. Now in the English army *generally* it happens that no one knows who the other is, or where he comes from; every man comes from a different place, and he may be, and often is, a thief, or robber, or abandoned character without the knowledge of the other. Were regiments recruited from particular localities *perpetually* such admissions into them would be obviated, as every person would be known, and could be rejected or admitted optionally. Previous to the late augmentations of the artillery corps it was not the custom to admit into its ranks men of whose private history *nothing* was known, as I was recently informed by a field officer in that

regiment. These facts would appear to accord with some other considerations. Were it known where a man came from, and that he was respectable, officers would have confidence in more slightly punishing him, than another who was not known. A recruiting system should fully accommodate itself to the military enterprise of a nation, and avoid seeking its recruits from amongst the most ignoble, the most ready to offend the laws. I consider that our military service even now, although it might be improved, is so attractive as to induce the *very best* men, who deem it fame to be a soldier, and they are in all ranks of life, to enlist were the opportunities on a basis rather to favour *them*, than positively to repel the *less eligible class*.

Indiscriminate recruiting leads to the enlistment of men of bad character, as London and other thieves, who abound in many regiments, and men turned out of the service, who re-enlist in proportion to the diminished chances of detection—in *large towns*;—we should depend less upon stragglers entering at the impulse of the moment and for temporary gain, and without motives of permanently remaining in the service, to recruit our regiments on emergency.

To keep up the *esprit de corps* conjointly with the spirit of local association it is the more essential that corps should be raised in different counties. From the greater sentiment of honour and loyalty with which such corps would be animated, they would, by their moral weight alone, keep in check that crowd of discontented persons who always exist in our regiments.

The present system of permitting voluntary enlistment into the militia regiments adds a link to a chain that leads to a firmer association of civilians with the soldiery who may be stationed either in garrison, on furlough, or on the recruiting service, and who invariably have a fellow feeling with their kind. The recent raising of the militia has, I understand, instilled very generally a desire amongst the men to enter into the line, and may yet lead others, besides those who enter the militia, to enlist into the army. The ascendant power of local association in recruiting an army I think may be seen in the instances of the men in the present militia regiments joining together so readily in *counties*: had they been required to volunteer *singly* for a *distant and unknown* regiment would the regiments have been so promptly recruited? By recruiting the army from among the militia the value of the regular soldier's berth would be enhanced, objectionable persons would be kept out of the service, and a simplicity in the recruiting system established.

The influence of local association may be still further strengthened, and the good conduct of recruits preserved. From the recent system of raising and drilling the militia it is a fair inference that the same results, which has followed that plan, would occur in as similar a one as feasible in recruiting for the army. From reports in the public journals it would appear that every militia regiment had obtained its complement of men, and the same journals report the conduct

of the men to have been, on dismissal, most moral. The militia men have volunteered without the preliminary step of resorting to the tavern. Thousands of recruits for the army have never drunk liquor before enticed by the recruiter. The militia men were drilled by themselves, and out of the reach of old soldiers of bad habits. The recruit joins a regiment composed of men of different characters, and is exposed to temptation and bad example of the vicious, that often before he has learnt his drill, he has acquired the habits of the worst characters. Hence is presented the fact that the recruit is, even in a few years, made worse than we found him, and is punished for sins he has learnt since he entered the service.

The plan then which would appear to suggest itself towards checking crime in many soldiers, as well as to foster recruiting in rural districts, is that of establishing drilling stations in the localities where the recruits are raised. With a good staff of drill non-commissioned officers and privates at these stations the recruit would pass his first six or twelve months with less than half the temptation he would encounter in a regiment, where he is beset with old tempters, who leave no stone unturned to lead him astray, by *permitting him to treat them*: whereas, did he join knowing his drill and appearing as smart as they, he would be far less easily *patronized* by the cunning old soldier.

A station composed of cavalry, artillery, and infantry, each of which being represented by certain regiments and battalions, recruiting in the locality, would be a place of *learning* for a recruit, who would join his regiment by no means simple or ineffective. That strictness that prevails in a regiment might in a measure be dispensed with among recruits in such a station, and permission given to ramble for half a day occasionally—like a half holiday to a school boy—after agreeable occupation at drill and at school, and amusement of cricket, gymnastics, &c. &c. in barracks. I think this plan would reconcile the young recruit to the service more effectually, by gradually weaning him and less abruptly forcing him to a distance to his regiment, than the present method, and check desertion very much too: and be no slight means of rendering a marching regiment more efficient and less encumbered with untutored files, and leave it more at liberty to exercise in the more advanced drills.

To establish the influence of local association the area of recruiting should be extended. The distribution of recruiting parties is very unequal, not only with respect to extent of territory, but to population as well. From examination of the distribution of recruiting officers for some years, it is seen that they have been generally confined to the larger towns, and especially to those in the manufacturing districts. A line drawn from the estuary of the Wash, as is illustrated by the accompanying map, on the east coast of England, to Gloucester, from thence to Liverpool, and in a north-easterly direction to the mouth of the Tees, on the eastern coast again, and down to the point started from, will include an area of about a fourth part of England and Wales, wherein were

northernmost boundary of this area are situated two recruiting officers and their parties.* On the western boundary, Wales, there were no recruiting officers' stations; on the southern side there were at present twenty-four recruiting officers stationed at different points.† These lateral portions of the country form about three-fourths of England and Wales. From this distribution, then, it is seen that a fourth part of the country was supplied by twenty-two recruiting stations (head quarters), and that three-fourths were supplied by twenty-six officers and their parties; a very unequal proportion both in respect of territory and population. This inequality is not confined to those divisions of the country, but again to sub-divisions, or head quarters of recruiting officers. It is very well known that in hundreds of towns and villages no recruiting parties ever appear; their haunts being much confined to the larger towns, where they congregate thickly, seeking recruits from among parts only of the population, and not from it generally. That there are opportunities for enlistment more equably throughout this portion of the United Kingdom, when the stations of troops are taken into account, is true; but the enlistments that take place at head quarters of regiments and depôts are so few that they scarcely deserve notice. Wales contains a population of 912,503; Yorkshire about 1,500,000. In this county there were four superintending officers of the line, and one of the Royal Marines, with, probably, the average number of five parties under each, making twenty-five parties. As, therefore, 1,500,000 is supplied by twenty-five parties, 912,503 ought to be supplied by about fourteen, whereas it is supplied by none, except occasionally. A few years ago the 23rd regiment sent a party into North Wales for some months, and now and then parties go into South Wales; but generally parties approach the borders of the Principality only. From the statistics of recruiting for the year ending 31st March, 1844, Wales produced only 167, and for the year ending March 1845, only 141 recruits; whereas Scotland produced 2061 out of a population only two-thirds greater than Wales.‡ It will easily be seen from this that Wales ought to produce, in proportion to Scotland, about 700 men annually for the service, and thus relieve in some degree the remainder of the United Kingdom from being drained of lads often weakly and, when on emergencies the standard is lowered, short. The same disparity in the raising of recruits may easily be inferred to take place in other localities in England, if taking the position of the recruiting officers is a criterion, which it is plausible to do after what has been shown with respect to Wales. Habit has considerable influence over everything—recruiting as well. Recruiting parties, from all the sources that I have been able to gather

* Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Kendal.

† The stations are these, Norwich, 1; Bury St. Edmunds, 1; Ipswich, 2; Hertford, 1; Chelmsford, 1; London, 3; Kingston, 1; Tunbridge, 1; Horsham, 1; Reading, 1; Aylesbury, 1; Oxford, 1; Salisbury, 1; Bath, 2; Bristol, 1; Yeovil, 1; Taunton, 2; Exeter, 1.

‡ The population of Scotland was according to the last census 2,620,610.

information, remain very much in the same place, and drain therefrom too much of the refuse population. The manufacturing towns in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Notts, and Warwick, are crowded with parties, when it would appear from the map that large tracts of country in the north, east, south, and west, and particularly in Wales, are not nearly so thickly studded with them as the circumscribed manufacturing districts. To show how circumscribed parties are placed, it may be mentioned that out of four under Lieut. Reynolds at York, two were stationed at head quarters (York), and two were detached. At Leeds, there were under Lieut. Connor, four parties and only one detached. When Capt. Peebles, 59th Regiment, recruited in Birmingham he had ten parties under his charge; five stationed in Birmingham, and five detached. But the number of parties under his charge fluctuated. At one time he had thirteen; seven detached, and the remainder at head quarters. These instances can be multiplied if there were further occasion. The effect of this crowding of parties is unprofitable; time and money is expended in recruiting men who are ultimately rejected.

Out of 152 recruits examined by myself in Ireland during the first six months of 1838, 53 were rejected. Not being positive as to the fact, I have, nevertheless, strong reasons to suppose that generally a third of the recruits enlisted are rejected on account of physical incapacity. Dr. Armstrong mentions it as a fact, told him by Sir J. Mc'Gregor, "that out of 613 men enlisted, almost all of whom came from Birmiugham, and five other neighbouring towns, only 238 were approved for service." Thus reversing the picture—*one* third approved and *two* thirds rejected.

It would appear that one third of the recruits enlisted annually are rejected as physically unfit. I have no data for further shewing this, however, except what is afforded by the statistics of recruiting for the year ending March 1845, when the following was the statement made out, *viz* :

Recruits furnished by England	...	...	...	7145
... Ireland	...	...	...	4009
... Scotland	...	..	...	2061
... Wales	...	...	...	141
			Total	13370
Rejected	...	...	...	4146
Fit	...	...	...	9224
Of the above were furnished by Husbandmen, Labourers, and Servants	...	...	..	8277
Mechanical Trades	...	...	..	4083
Shopmen and Clerks	...	...	...	982
Professional Occupations	...	...	...	21

In addition to the evidence quoted above from Dr. Armstrong, it may be mentioned that in the Leeds district, which includes a vast manufacturing population, half the recruits examined in 1844 were rejected.

The distribution of recruiting parties is not only out of proportion to the population, as it has been said before, but likewise to the number of persons eligible for enlistment. On the average of the whole of England (proper), taking the manufacturing and agricultural districts together, there are nearly the same number of males between the ages of 15 and 20; but as there is more sickness in large towns than in suburban and rural districts, it is evident that there are more persons between the above ages, in proportion to the population, who would present themselves for enlistment in the latter than former. There is an excess of males between the ages of 15 and 20 in favour of Wales; there being for England (collectively) 688 in 10,000, and Wales (collectively) 1009 in 10,000.* The chances are more in favour of districts, scattered over with small towns and villages, in producing good recruits.

An excess of available young men often occurs at different seasons in the rural districts, but especially in winter, when employment is scarce. This is almost constant to a more or less extent; when, on the other hand, depression in trade and want of work in the manufacturing districts occurs at uncertain periods, and for a short time only. The advantages afforded to recruiting by critical periods in trade and agriculture have often shewn themselves. During the Chartist riots a great many men enlisted in the manufacturing towns from want of work.

The rate of wages in a county must influence the success or failure of recruiting: when wages are low and the labour market full, recruiting will be successful no doubt; when wages are high and the market thin, we should presume that recruits are more easily procured for the best paid services, such as the foot guards, cavalry, and artillery. The class of men in different localities, and the rate of wages in each county should be known to the recruiter, and their fluctuations watched.

By statistics of these and other things, rendered periodically from each military district and county, information would be afforded of when most recruits are obtained, and where are the places that do not furnish them—enabling advantages to be taken of the one, and measures to be adopted to encourage recruiting in the other.

The importance of recruiting parties spreading themselves out more equally, is evident, as it is by this only that they can bring themselves in contact with a greater and better portion of the population, who may be disposed to enlist. The plan could be carried out with very little increase in the number of parties. From the densely populated districts, where the standard of health is not so high

* Annual Report of Registrar-General, 1841; pages 66 and 67.

as in the rural, and where the number of available recruits may *relatively* be more than in the latter, but is *absolutely* less, some parties may be withdrawn, and, with some few additional, may be distributed over the remaining more equally populated portions of the country. The advantages to be gained by the plan would compensate for the increased means for its adoption. Recruiting restrictedly in certain localities must lead to a greater number of rejections, than if it was done more equally. A larger sphere, then, cannot fail to produce a more eligible description of men. The proposition, further, will have for its object, not the less the improvement of the physical and moral power of the army, than the readiness and facility of its recruiting.

That recruits may be raised in remote places, where no soldiers or recruiting parties have been stationed for years, may be inferred from the experiment made by the 23rd regiment a few years ago in North Wales, where, upon a single trial, a tolerable number were procured. At first there would be a difficulty, probably, in raising men in those remote places; but upon a little perseverance many would be found to take advantage of the opportunity to enlist on occasions of slackness of labour. But the chief object is to lay a foundation for enlisting in places hitherto unprovided by recruiting parties. Until this is done, recruiting will not be successful throughout the country. Enlistments are governed as well by associations as by recklessness and choice. Young men generally wish to enlist into corps or services, where they would find acquaintances from the same part of the country as themselves. The circumstance of a young man having a friend in a particular regiment, often determines any hesitation in enlisting, and the service is readily supplied by a willing man. There would appear to be as much spirit of enterprise in the rural, (*i. e.* the inhabitant of small towns, villages, and the country, and not exclusively the agriculturist) population, as in that of large towns. Many good men come from country places into busy towns, and there enlist, merely because enlistment is in their way. Indeed, in many country places, there is as much, if not more, martial feeling among the population as in that of large towns, where young men enlist, often more from recklessness, than from any enterprising feeling. There is no doubt, that during the war men volunteered from the militia, as often from a spirit of enterprise, as from sordid love of bounty, however mercenary soldiers are said to be. In remote parts of the country known to myself, and where no soldiers are ever seen, I am aware of several instances of enlistment after leaving home for large towns, and these with provident foresight into the best branches of the service.

By extending the opportunities for enlistment, greater scope is afforded for selecting good recruits. The productiveness of recruits in the London District must greatly be attributed to this principle. In the metropolis and neighbourhood the population is less stationary than in the provinces; and here the wanderer resorts from the remotest districts- Recruits raised in and around the

metropolis are probably the best brought into service—the cavalry procuring their men in great abundance from there.† The less dense the population of a given territory, the more stationary its inhabitants. To come in contact with every inhabitant, recruiting parties should be more numerous, in proportion to the population, in the rural than in the town districts.

Recruiting more generally in the less populated districts would be attended with further good results. As education is becoming more disseminated through the country, more intelligent men can be procured. In remote places it is presumed that men have better conduct, from the greater facility afforded for observing their actions than in crowded towns, where men are not so careful of their behaviour. Although more eligible recruits, in physical points, can be raised in proportion to the number of inhabitants in rural, than in town districts, yet the inhabitant of the town, if of the required physical qualities, is always equal, and very often better than the countryman. The majority of the inhabitants of towns are handicraftsmen, and are always more intellectually occupied than the agricultural labourer. The influence of occupation a man has been subject to before enlistment, cannot be of such a nature as to make material alteration of the frame without being observed. He will have quitted his trade too early to have suffered in physical qualities from any peculiarity of it. The quantity of labour a soldier has to undergo in time of peace and in garrison, is not such as requires much exertion. But of two men of equal natural powers, the one,—the agricultural labourer,—accustomed to continual hard work, will bear more than the other—the artizan,—unaccustomed to such employment. An army of agricultural labourers going into the field will, no doubt, last longer than one formed of artisans, provided both entered immediately on their formation, and before they had suffered from the effects of a soldier's occupation. It has been long observed that the effect of a trade followed before enlistment is no more perceptible in the soldier, from the beginning to the end of his career, than that of agricultural labour. Artisans and agricultural labourers equally experience the depressing influence of soldiers' duties, but the latter experience, in addition, the want of *active* exercise, chiefly, however, in the infantry. Artisans, even in the very largest towns, when in full employment, are as healthy as field labourers. And although mortality is actually greater in manufacturing districts than in those where the population is chiefly employed in agriculture, it is at the same time discovered to be mainly due to inequality in the tide of occupation. The Registrar General has sufficiently shewn, that disease is generated in the country by poverty and ignorance more than by the nature of occupations. Artisans are, I am aware, condemned as generally stunted in growth, feeble in constitution, &c.; this may be very true as far as respects workmen in confined places in the large manufacturing towns, but as to its being applicable to all the artisans of large

† The only officer of cavalry recruiting is stationed in London.

towns, is a very wrong notion. There are many strong men employed in mechanical trades in Manchester and Liverpool; and as it is not the "weaver" only that is enlisted in those towns, it is not fair to denounce all the artisans as unfit to be soldiers. The argument respecting the ineligibility of artisans to become soldiers is not tenable even as regards those living in large towns; and as to those inhabiting the smaller towns is still less so. It is too often the fashion to generalize all artisans as a species of "weaver," or "penned-up-artificer," a habit detrimental to the interests of recruiting, and which arises from the system of recruiting being so much restricted to manufacturing districts, where so many are brought up for examination, in proportion to the population, that rejections are very numerous, and hence the hasty conclusion that *all artisans* are deformed, emaciated, and altogether unfit for the duties of a soldier. The rustic labourer makes an unskilful and unhappy soldier in garrison, in time of peace at least, and is not better than even the "*low squalid mechanic*," who should always be avoided. The animal strength of the former is as soon exhausted as that of the latter under the oppressive influence of a military life, and his boasted strength cannot prevent his being replaced as often as the manufacturer.* Recruits raised in agricultural districts are often listless and heavy, have not the sprightliness of men of more intellectual occupations, raised in and near towns, and are consequently unable to resist the *depressing* powers of the service, but give way to dissipation and negligent habits. The standard of education being lower in the rustic than town population,† the amusement of reading is more often debarred the former, and recourse to less mental amusement is the alternative. The aptitude of the common "rustic" for acquiring his drill is acknowledged not to be equal to that of a handicraftsman: nor can he so well comprehend the good intentions of his superiors for his welfare, nor anticipate them in accomplishing designs for their mutual and public benefit.

Influence of a Standard Height on the Physical Capacities of Recruits, and Success of Recruiting.

The more spread out our recruiting parties, the better the chances of keeping up the whole strength of the regiments at a good height; for it is at length discovered that the short and slight men are not so well adapted for the soldier's duties as the taller and heavier men. A few years ago (1849) it was discovered, in consequence of having lowered the standard, on augmentation of the army some

* From the Statistics for the last two years, it is seen that about two-thirds of the recruits were labourers, husbandmen, and servants, and I believe this proportion has continued for many years.

† Education is becoming now, however, more general in the country.

time before, that the marines had not the weight or muscular strength of men of about the standard of 1830. In fact, a detachment of a frigate of about that period had more weight in hauling on a rope than the whole detachment of a line-of-battle ship of later dates. Lowering the standard for artillery and cavalry recruits brought into the army a large mixture of puny and undeveloped men.

The lowering the standard height of cavalry, a few years ago, had for its object the acquisition of lighter men, it being found difficult to obtain horses strong enough to carry men of the former standard. Were the system of recruiting more extensively spread out over the land, there would be less occasion for lowering the standard on emergencies. By excluding tall recruits from the cavalry, the army loses a very large number of the most eligible men; and, considering that tall men and large horses cost but the same as others something smaller, there is further lost the heavier weight of the former, in a body of equal numbers with the latter, in a charge, whether against an opposing force of horse or squares of infantry.

In order to discover the relative strength of recruits, men of the *same height* should be classed together, and their girth and power tested. *Short* men should be of a certain weight. It would be impolitic to reject *all short* men: their selection and rejection should be determined by their *weight*.

There must be a great accumulation of facts contained in regimental and district registers of recruits, and which, by reduction into certain parts, would establish principles of important value in the recruiting department. From these documents, a statistical calculation of the sizes of recruits in different counties, and of the relative prevalence of a low standard of height in different localities, as a cause of rejection in recruits, might be made; thereby indicating to us where we should look for recruits affording the efficiency of height. One county, where the men run short, may contribute a smaller quota of recruits than another to the army or marines, in consequence of a fewer number coming up to the standard height. The sizes of the various regiments of militia now enrolled would be a criterion of the average height of men in different counties.

With respect to what should be the fixed height of soldiers, there is a little discrepancy of opinion. The exact meaning of authors on the subject, is, at least, difficult to be determined: some would say that tall men are most liable to disease, and that little men resist it longer; others, again, remark that a certain height is coincident with a generally healthy constitution, and *vice versa*. Professor Lévy, physician to the French forces, says, that "the corps of the French army, which comprise the picked men, are the artillery, engineers, sappers and miners, &c.; they are selected solely because of their higher stature, the regulation height six inches (French), or nearly one-tenth above that of the infantry of the line. These select corps not only present fewer cases of sickness, and have a less proportion of deaths than the infantry, but Professor Lévy says, it is impos-

sible to glance along the lines without being struck with the difference between the two classes of troops*." There is, no doubt, great truth in this; but, in opposition to M. Lévy's opinion, I think that the superiority of health in the artillery, engineers, &c. must greatly be attributed to the better physical condition generally of these troops, both in the French and English services, than of the infantry of the line, in which there are as many fine men as in the select corps; as, for instance, in the light and grenadier companies and regiments, and, indeed, throughout the battalion companies, especially in our service. In three regiments of infantry of the line, in Portsmouth, in May 1845, whose aggregate strength amounted to 2,546, 1,209 were 5 feet 8 inches and upwards; 704 were 5 feet 7 inches; and 633 were below this stature. The night duty of the infantry, with indifferent means of resisting disease, is much greater than in the artillery, whose occupation in the day is much more natural, and must create a difference between the branches of the service. The foot-guards certainly present bad specimens of the effect of a military life upon tall men. But it must not be said that they fall a sacrifice to their height, but to causes incident to the service; some of which have already been set forth in articles on Military Hygiene, published in 1844.†

The subjoined interesting Return, kindly provided me by Captain Orange, staff-officer of pensioners at Halifax, may throw some light upon the influence of height on longevity and health. It shows the average age, height &c. of the enrolled pensioners at the stations named in the Return. This Return

Station	Cavalry	Infantry	Artillery	Total	Average Age	Average Height	Year
Chester . .	5	40	3	48	46 $\frac{1}{2}$	5ft.8in.	1844
Halifax . .	4	63	2	69	47 $\frac{1}{12}$	5 8	1845
Bradford . .	7	43	3	53	48 $\frac{7}{12}$	5 8 $\frac{1}{4}$	1845
Burnley . .	3	15	6	23	46 $\frac{8}{12}$	5 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Huddersfield .	2	23	3	28	49	5 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Total .	21	184	17	222	47 $\frac{27}{52}$	5 7 $\frac{7}{8}$	

was elicited by observing the tallness of the company of veterans at Bradford when collected together for a week's drill. It may be mentioned that the cavalry and artillery pensioners do not increase the average height—some of them being much shorter than those of the infantry. It will be seen that the total strength of these veterans is 222, the average age rather more than 47 years and six

† See *Medical Gazette*, July 18th, 1844, and August 16th, 1844; articles Military Hygiene and the Clothing of Soldiers, by myself.

* British and Foreign Medical Review, January 1845.

months, and the average height a little less than 5 feet 8 inches. Allowing for the shrinking of the frame with age, these veterans still present a very good size : and presuming (with some right) that the average height of the army during the war was not so much as since, it may be fairly concluded that tall men live longer than short ones ; or, at least, that more tall than short soldiers have arrived at the average age of 47 years and six months. What would appear to strengthen this supposition, is the circumstance of the *enrolled* pensioners being selected to bear arms from their superior health and strength. Whether all classes of pensioners (the enrolled included) would present a higher or lower average height than the above, I have no data to show ; but it would appear that those found most fit to serve are rather tall than short. The average height of the infantry of the line of the present day, would not appear to exceed that of the veterans, who were enlisted at a period when the standard height of the army was much lower than at present. Two regiments of infantry of the line in Portsmouth, in May, 1844, measured a fraction less than 5 feet 8 inches. One of these was unusually tall. Proper and extended comparisons of the relative physical powers and longevity of tall and short men would be interesting, and are yet to be made. Unusually tall and very short men are further removed from the normal type than men of medium height ; and selection from among the latter would be attended, on the average, with more symmetry of frame. A good frame, besides, gives a man more confidence in his own powers. Stunted men are generally supposed not to have either the animal or moral courage and steadiness of the strong, and are characterized by impatience unfavourable to firm resistance. I think more short than tall men are rejected on account of physical disabilities. It is obvious that a small and lighter man, who carries the same sized musket, the same sized pack, the same quantity of ammunition, &c. as a taller and heavier one, must bear proportionally a greater weight than the taller, and suffer more.

*Recruits for Cavalry, Artillery, Sappers, Grenadiers,
and Light Infantry.*

A race of men born to the exercise of arms should be sought for as recruits for cavalry, artillery, and sappers and miners in particular ; and it is reasonably presumed, that the hardy occupations of smiths, carpenters, masons, grooms, and servants in general, would supply more vigour and resolution than the sedentary trades. Agricultural recruits are better suited for cavalry and artillery service, by reason of those services being less distantly removed from the previous simple life of the recruits than the more artificial service of a foot soldier, into which townsmen and those accustomed to in-door work should rather be sent. There being at present no plan of distribution of urban and rural recruits into the different branches of the service, I think benefit would accrue from partial adoption of it.

When there is a scarcity of recruits of the proper standard, small men would be more available in that arm of the service in which the soldier has least to carry—the rifles—their fire-arms being lighter than the musket. Men of uniform small size formed into regiments of *Tirailleurs*, possess the advantage of presenting a small surface of body to the enemy's sharpshooters. On the other extreme, to accommodate the army to the size of men, a few regiments of grenadiers could be easily raised.

On the Influence of Age in Recruits.

One of the most important physical qualifications to be obtained by a wider dispersion of recruiting parties, is a more mature age in recruits. The opinion of non-professional persons is well known on this subject. Napoelon condemned "boys, as serving only to encumber the hospitals and road-sides." The opinion of all thinking men is the same. Deputy Inspector-General H. Marshall says, that, "before a youth has acquired the physical and moral qualities suited to enable him to endure fatigue and to execute the duties incident to a military life, a certain age must be attained;" and that, "if a recruit do not possess the strength calculated to enable him to endure fatigue, and to surmount the mental inquietude incident to his initiation into the army, he loses that active fortitude which is required to fit him to bear up against difficulties, and falls into a gloomy state of mind, that is soon followed by deteriorated state of health; loses his appetite, becomes emaciated, a slight cough supervenes, and, after frequent admission into hospital, he at last dies of diseased lungs. This is the outline of many a young lad who enlists into the army." This is a fact which cannot have failed to make its impression upon every medical officer in the army.

Besides the advantages of more strength of body and mind acquired by age, recruits at 20 years of age will have passed over several diseases incident to youthful ages chiefly—such as measles, small-pox, &c. Although, in civil life, mortality between the ages of 15 and 20 is less than between 20 and 30, yet in the army it is increased considerably; the mortality per cent. in the foot-guards, between 18 and 25, being more than 2; whereas the mortality in civil life, in England, between the ages of 15 and 30 (a much greater latitude), is not 1 per cent.; being only .834.* Early enlistment prevents young men from acquiring strength to resist disease in the army; and hence the excessive mortality in the service, even at home, in great measure arises. There are numbers of lads in the ranks of the army, who have to carry nearly half their own weight. Boys, weighing 9 stone, and often less, carry about 52lbs. weight—the knapsack complete, arms, accoutrements, ammunition, and personal equipment, without rations weighing little less than this. The necessity of a more mature age in recruits is

* Statistical Reports of sickness in the British Army in the United Kingdom, p. 18; and Sixth Annual Report of Registrar General, p. xxvi.

acknowledged, and so strenuously advocated by all authorities upon the subject that it requires no further comment. By recruiting an army from between the ages of 17 and 22, a much greater number could, of course, be collected than from between the ages of 19 and 22; and, provided a young army was more gradually inured to the service the objections to its formation would greatly diminish, if not altogether cease to exist. To avoid extreme youth in recruits, which is a frequent result of hurriedly completing a regiment on returning from foreign service, or on sudden augmentations of the army, regiments should be recruited *steadily*, and kept up *above* their complement *at all times*, as well as to meet casualties and any timidity that might be expected in young men joining when a regiment is in an undesirable station abroad.

By a wider distribution of recruiting parties there would occur, not only a greater scope for selecting good recruits, but fewer rejections would happen, and consequently less expense would be incurred. There would result, besides, among more carefully selected soldiers, less mortality, which would thus enable the army to dispense with fewer supplies of recruits. Reduction in the expenses of several departments might be looked for. The pension list, by diminishing the number of invalids (as well-selected soldiers would live and serve longer), would, in particular, undergo a reduction. What with the number of deaths, which are most between 20 and 30 years of age, and desertions—most prevalent at the same age—invaliding, purchasing of discharges, free discharges, discharges with ignominy, and transportations, which latter Sir H. Smith sets down at one to each regiment annually, among the men limited to ten years' service, the future drafts of recruits from the population is likely to be enormous.

A widely spread plan of recruiting would ensure a supply of good men in these kingdoms at all times, I think. Limiting the period of service, to facilitate recruiting and stop desertion, to 10 years, was proposed by Captain Layard, M.P. some years ago; but it does not appear to have succeeded in bringing more recruits or better ones, nor to have diminished the rate of desertion.

The details of recruiting have not extended to Scotland and Ireland, though I believe it is more or less irregular in those countries.



