

ception of what the French government has done for the Trocadéro. Last, and best of all, comes this new committee of gentlemen, interested both in the subject and in the museum, who have already raised some \$100,000, a large part of which they have contributed themselves, for the purpose of presenting to the museum, on the part of the public, a collection which, supplementing those already mentioned, and devoted mainly to sculpture, will produce a museum of reproductions without a peer in the world. Is there not cause for rejoicing?

The composition of the committee shows that the desire for such a collection is not confined to any one class or profession; and the manner in which the project has been started is the best guarantee that it will be carried out satisfactorily. First of all, amateur knowledge has been discarded. From the beginning the committee have placed themselves under the guidance of experts. They began by inviting experts in this country to prepare for them lists of objects which it would be desirable to have in a collection intended to be illustrative of plastic art in all epochs. These lists, which were drawn up by Mr. Edward Robinson of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and Professors Allan Marquand and A. L. Frothingham of Princeton, were published in a sumptuous style as "Tentative Lists," for the purpose of inviting further suggestions. Copies were sent to the principal European authorities on the history of art, as well as to those of this country. As a result of the replies received, and of Mr. Robinson's visit to Europe in the interests of the committee, the final lists of the collection have been prepared, the or-

ders have been sent out, and we presume that there is hardly an important foundry of plaster casts in Europe which is not occupied with work of which our city is to enjoy the benefit. The prospect of so much that is good and valuable makes us impatient for the time when the ultimate hopes of the committee shall be realized, and all the casts of the Metropolitan collections be brought together in a separate building erected especially for them—a building in which all questions of effective arrangement and proper lighting can be settled without restrictions of space or regard to the needs of other departments. The present structure, even with the addition now being completed, will of course be far too small for all that is to be comprised in these collections, and if the intentions of the committee are fully carried out, we shall be able to boast of a museum which is absolutely unique—a place where students may find all the necessary materials for inspiration and instruction, where painters, sculptors, and architects may enjoy, not indeed a substitute for study in Europe, but a most delightful and useful reminder of treasures seen there, and where everybody may feel the quickening influence of great thoughts expressed in beauty of form and line.

There are other reforms and improvements still possible at the museum, which would bring the institution into still higher esteem throughout the world of art; but as this is a subject on which our views are well known, and as we desire to say only complimentary things at the present moment, we will not be specific on these points. Just now we heartily wish success to the liberal plans of the committee on casts.

## OPEN LETTERS.

### The Regular Army and the National Defense.

HOW to prepare the republic for war is a topic that has been quite frequently discussed of late in the public journals. The articles upon this subject have been unanimous only in one respect—they have all maintained that preparation is necessary. Each writer has his own theory as to how the preparation should be accomplished, and any one of them would be feasible with a central government that could enforce the measure. None, however, seem practicable under a republican government such as the United States, because our institutions are incompatible with the requirements of military service. We must have a military system adapted to our form of government, and any attempt to assimilate it to the methods of the European powers must fail for the want of an arbitrary power to enforce it. Our statutes have borne upon their pages for nearly a century some military laws that are fundamentally the same as those of the German empire to-day, but for half a century they have been a dead letter. They constitute every able-bodied man between the ages of eighteen and forty-five a soldier, and require of him certain services. These services are never rendered, and the laws are complied with in but few trifling particulars, and in their tendency to the national defense they amount to nothing.

The regular army of the United States is content

with trying in a feeble manner to imitate European methods in such details as the authorities are able to enforce. These imitations are limited mainly to matters of dress, drill, and exercises, and are usually patterned after that military power that was considered to be in the ascendant. So long as the French were victorious we wore the French uniform and taught French tactics, and when the Germans conquered the French we donned the helmet, and now gather our ideas of progress from the German ranks, regardless of the difference of environment. The conditions of our service are so very different that we are not justified in this humiliating imitation and importation of foreign military methods. We should have a purely American and republican army, adapted to our surroundings and our form of government. There are no conditions on this continent that call for anything approximating to the standing armies of Europe. Such preparation here would be a waste of energy and time.

On the continent of Europe the situation requires that the armies should be ever ready for immediate action, and no first- or second-class power can afford to neglect this precaution. No such condition exists on this side of the water. When we consider these facts, it is difficult to understand why we should imitate and adopt so many of the details of their vast preparation. Much of the duty these large armies are engaged in has been instituted to furnish occupation for the troops dur-

ing times of peace; otherwise they would much more frequently become an element of danger to their own government. Take the matter of drill. Very much the largest part of drill tactics has no practical application in actual warfare. There was a time when it did. When battles were won by the shock of compact bodies of men from three to six ranks deep, drill was an important factor in maintaining compact formations. Now, to conduct a compact formation, even at the regulation route-step, within range of the improved long-range arms would be fatal. Compact formations are justifiable only beyond range for the comfort of the men and to economize space. Then why should we on this side waste so much time on the minutiae of complicated drill tactics, repeating, from one year to another, what a soldier is able to acquire in a few weeks as well as he ever can, when, as will be shown hereafter, he might be so much better employed? All we need or use of drill in actual war is to pass from column into line and from line into column by the simplest possible methods.

The use of drill tactics constituted an insignificant factor in the war of the Rebellion. That a large proportion of the exercise of it can be dispensed with even in the European armies is evident from the fact that the German volunteer, when his means will enable him to do it at his own expense, can get through with the military duty the Government requires of him in one year, while the impecunious conscript must take three years, when it is possible that the latter may be endowed with natural abilities to do the same duty better and in half the time. Different conditions justify different tactics. The Indian has no use for Upton, and all the information we could acquire from that manual would be of little service in qualifying us to meet the wily savage in the use of his own tactics. Our great difficulty in fighting the Indian is to adapt our service to his tactics. Every nation endeavors to put its military establishment on a footing that will make it superior to the dangers which threaten it.

While we need not be wasting our strength and resources in preparation for immediate war, we cannot afford to ignore the necessity that exists that we should be organized and properly instructed for war, as the surest method of preventing it. It is in war above all other maladies that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. We should have a sufficient military system to enable us to keep pace with other countries in the knowledge of the art of war, and to be able to utilize our resources in the event of the misfortune of war coming upon us. This is the general character of the preparation to which the intelligence of the nation must be directed.

The first requirement for national defense is an army properly officered; that is, fully supplied with officers thoroughly informed in their duties and capable of instructing the rank and file in their duties. Our present army can be utilized to that end by making every military post a military school, for which the graduates of the academy would be the proper instructors, and could educate the enlisted man to that degree which would qualify him to serve as an officer in the event of a war. To this end, the age for enlistment should not be over twenty-one years, and reënlistments should be exceptional. The matter of reënlistment has grown into a serious detriment to the service. The rank and file

should be young men always, and for the subalterns youth is the first qualification also. War is the young man's opportunity to realize his dreams of greatness and the admiration of mankind. He has less to lose and more to gain than the man of maturer years, who has entered upon the career he has chosen, and assumed responsibilities that he cannot lightly forgo.

If, in addition to the condition of youth, the recruits be selected *pro rata* from all portions of the Union, we provide for the dissemination of military knowledge throughout the country where it will be needed when the nation calls upon its sons to defend it in the hour of danger.

By constituting the regular army an educational institution for the purpose of furnishing instructors for the available militia of the land in time of need, there would be little if any addition necessary to the annual appropriation to carry the measure into effect. The low social status of the enlisted man would be at once raised to a plane of the highest respectability. The character of the duties would be such as to exclude from the ranks that element which furnishes the deserters, the gamblers, and the drunkards of the service, who have thrown so much discredit upon the army in times of peace as to deter the respectable youth of the country from entering its ranks.

By making the army respectable and introducing as the fundamental principle of the service the education of the young soldier, and his preparation for a higher station in life, at the public expense, there would be no difficulty in keeping the army filled with the best and most energetic of the youth of the land. We have had ample proof in the history of the country, and the existence of the military organizations in every State and Territory, and the devotion with which the people worship their military heroes, to make it certain that there would be no difficulty in keeping our little army full of the right kind of material for the defense of the nation in case of danger. But the army must be made distinctively republican, and adapted to our form of government.

Our army is limited to 25,000 men. If the recruits were selected from the different sections of the Union *pro rata*, fifteen from each congressional district annually would keep the army full, and at the end of five years they would return in the same proportion to the districts which sent them, and after the system was fully established, it would supply, every five years, seventy-five young men graduates from the army, instructed in all the duties necessary, from which the officers could be selected to supply the quota that would be called into service from the district in the event of a war. This number would be ample, the supply would be continuous to replace casualties, and the knowledge which they would bring would be up to date as regards progress in military methods.

With such a source from which to draw instructors, the raw levies called for could be in a condition for defense in the shortest possible time, and if the war clouds were as slow in gathering as they would be in the event that our enemy came across the ocean, they might be sufficiently prepared to act on the offensive by the time the storm burst upon the country. It is self-evident that there is no method provided by which the forces of the Union can be utilized and made effective to meet an emergency; the nation would be subjected to

humiliation and disaster before her strength could be organized for defense, and it would be impossible to estimate the loss that must be endured before the military strength of the country could be in a condition to act on the offensive.

To carry these views into effect, nothing more is required than a resolution of Congress to the effect that the army in time of peace shall be conducted as an educational establishment, for the purpose of preparing officers and instructors in military duties, and to disseminate a military knowledge throughout the entire Union, so that every section may have means of defense in any emergency. The enlistment laws should be amended so that the recruits would be obtained from the various sections in proportion to the population, and only young men under twenty-one years of age should be enlisted. Re-enlistment should be authorized only in special cases where men had shown themselves exceptionally qualified as instructors, and should be an honorary privilege attended with increased pay and distinction, to serve as a stimulant to all.

Should this system be adopted, it would take five years with the present period of enlistment before the supply of material for officers would begin, but at the end of ten years every section of the Union would be supplied with a sufficient number of army graduates to officer and prepare for the field any number of volunteers that would be likely to be called for or required in any emergency.

Should war fail to come,—and the fact that we had such a means of preparing for it would be a very effective method of warding it off,—the young men from the army would still be a valuable element of the communities to which they would return. Besides being good patriotic citizens, they would be valuable as instructors for the National Guard organizations, and would keep alive in the country the military spirit so essential to our existence as a nation.

The measures herein suggested are so simple and easy of execution, and so important in their object, with little if any additional cost to the Government, that their adoption should follow in view of the fact that there is so little preparation for the national defense. The plan is both democratic and republican, for it would make our army a representative institution, drawn from the people, for the people, and would be as beneficial during peace as in war, and would give a strength to the republic it has never had. The social and political status of the army would rise to be the pride of the nation, and as long as our enemies are as remote as at present, no other means for marshaling the troops would be required for the national defense.

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#### A National Militia.

“Solon said to Cæsus, ‘If another come whose iron is better than yours, he will take away all this gold.’”

THE United States is to-day the Cæsus of nations, but there are in Europe at least six great powers whose iron of war is better than our gold. Any one of these, by merely arranging a convention to secure the neutrality of the others, could extract indemnities from us, limited only by its cupidity and our wealth.

For some years there has been more or less friction in our relations with the German empire. Our relations with Canada and hence with England have been for some time decidedly strained. The same causes which brought about the Mexican war, in 1846, exist to-day, but in vastly increased ratio, viz.: the presence of a numerous colony of our people on Mexican territory and the investment of many millions of our capital in Mexican enterprises. China has repeatedly entertained against us a *casus belli* more strong and just than any which has led to the numerous wars of this century. Should the Panama canal ever be completed, we can look forward to it as a fruitful source of diplomatic discussion, if not of serious international contention. Some of our leading statesmen have asserted on the floor of the Senate that the mere existence of that canal as a European property, under foreign control, would constitute an infraction of the Monroe doctrine, which is at present our sole foreign policy, and which we cannot now abandon without losing national prestige and incurring national disgrace.

All history shows that the suggestions of a nation are respected and heeded only in proportion to the amount of organized, equipped force with which she is ready to emphasize them. If we expect our just and reasonable demands to be respected and heeded by the powers, we must have a navy and we must organize and train a national militia. We are to-day building ships, but we are without soldiers, and these cannot be made of the standard pattern in a day, or a week, or a month. But war may come upon us with giant strides. With the vast accumulations of wealth in our defenseless lake and sea-bound cities, we offer to any well-armed, first-class power the safest, richest picking which the earth has furnished since Pizarro sacked Peru.

The Constitution fully recognizes the vital importance of the subject, and invests Congress with ample powers to enact the necessary laws. In 1792 Congress passed a Militia Act which is to-day the militia law of the United States. Under its provisions must be drilled and trained, if they are to be trained according to law, the seven millions of able-bodied citizens between the ages of eighteen and forty-five who are to form the reserve to our little regular army.

Through the neglect of Congress, the whole nation is left without a practicable militia law. Hence the individual States are left to their own devices in providing a reinforcement to their various municipal police forces. This police reserve is a measure of necessity merely as an additional insurance on life and property where a dense population exists in proximity to vast accumulations of wealth.

For all the purposes for which it was intended, it would be difficult, without a vast increase of expenditure, to devise a more reliable or perfect organization than the New York State Guard. But when we come to look at these organizations from a national standpoint, they present a very different appearance. In fact, they do not exist at all so far as the United States is concerned. Let us suppose, by way of illustration, that Congress, acting within its constitutional powers, declares war and calls out the militia, and that the President then makes requisition on the governor, say of New York, for a certain number of militiamen. Of course the only militia which he has a right to call