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WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR ARMY?

Every able Swiss youth has to do national service. Our citizen's army is part and parcel of our nation. Military training was based on absolute and unquestioned discipline. And this we learnt in no uncertain terms by insistent drill, maniacal cleanliness and punctilious orders with our sweat and curses and even tears. But it did us no harm and in retrospect a great deal of good and I will always regret that none of my sons had this opportunity.

All this is of the past. No more saluting your superior or calling him Mr (being it corporal or colonel), no more standing to attention or announcing yourself, or cutting your beautiful curls.

The new regulations claim to adapt national services to modern times, give more functional basic training and produce more independent men — but will they? Will this not lower the standard or even the moral?

I think the acceptance of discipline has always been invaluable to a human being and is even more so in present time when parental control has so much gone by the board. How on earth can anyone ever command if he never learnt to obey?

Arnold Biland.