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An OUTLINE of

BRITISH MILITARY HISTORY

1660 - 1936

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1660 - 1936

BY
MAJOR D. H. COLE, M.B.E. M.A. LITT.D.
and
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PREFACE

SOME explanation of the scope of this short outline is necessary. It does not attempt to give a complete account of all the campaigns in which British and Indian troops have taken part during the last three hundred years or to deduce all the lessons which can be drawn from each. Its object is more modest—to provide a clear outline for the use of students who want such a sketch as a preliminary to the more detailed study of individual campaigns. Necessarily it must suffer from the need for selection in the choice of material and is open, therefore, to the criticism that much which is worth mention has had to be omitted. If, however, the essentials of the story are present, if the emphasis is generally placed correctly, and if the part played by British and Indian troops in the acquisition and protection of the Empire is clearly shown, then it will have achieved the purpose for which it was designed.

The choice of maps has presented some difficulty, and, owing to considerations of size and cost, the number has been kept down to the minimum necessary to illustrate those campaigns which are not adequately illustrated in any good historical atlas. Further, it is hoped that readers will make use of the maps which can be found in the various authoritative works referred to in the Bibliography.

The authors find it difficult to express fully their indebtedness to Captain R. St. G. Ransome, the Royal Fusiliers, for the constant, unsparing and most valuable help which he has given in the preparation and selection of material. His wide and exact knowledge of military and regimental history, his critical ability and his enthusiasm for the subject have been generously available.

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CHAPTER I

THE BIRTH OF THE BRITISH REGULAR ARMY

THERE must always be an element of artificiality in breaking history up into periods for the convenience of the historian. But the selection of 1660 as the starting point of this book can be justified on the grounds that it was the year in which the British Regular Army came into existence, and that the narrative which follows in these pages is primarily concerned with the deeds of that Army and the part which it has played in the acquisition and protection of the Empire. Nevertheless, some mention of earlier times must be made, for the Regular Army derived not a few of its institutions and traditions from those earlier days, and can, with certainty, trace an unbroken line at least from that New Model Army which Parliament established during the Civil War in 1644.

Previous to that time, England had never—with perhaps the exception of the Royal bodyguards of sovereigns such as Cnut and Harold—possessed a permanent force of any kind. It did, however, from the earliest days maintain the principle of national service in time of need. Thus, in Saxon times every man from 16 to 60 years of age was liable for military service and could be called on to appear fully armed and equipped, in accordance with his status and property, when required for the defence of his own countryside. With the Norman conquest this method of occasional universal service, by " shire levies," was retained, but over it was superimposed the feudal system, by which the tenure of land was associated with the obligation of giving military service up to 40 days in any year. Obviously, such a system was of little use in the event of campaigns outside England, or even within it, and, hence, the more ambitious and aggressive Norman Kings and their successors were easily persuaded to acquiesce in arrangements by which service could be commuted for payments of money. The money obtained could then be expended by the King on securing troops, either by contract with some feudal leader, or by obtaining foreign mercenaries. In either case the troops thus obtained were in the nature of professionals, were more highly trained than the levies and were paid for their services. They were thus, in the strict sense of the word, soldiers or men who fought for their " *solde* " or shilling.

This trend towards professionalism was hastened still further by

the development of firearms. The discovery of gunpowder had been recorded by Roger Bacon in 1248; by 1300 it had been first applied to the propulsion of missiles. Primitive mortars and cannon rapidly made their appearance and were used chiefly as siege pieces; and somewhat later still, hand guns, at first merely short iron tubes without stock or trigger mechanism, came into use. By 1400 a stock had been added, and later a trigger or "tricker" by which the smouldering match, or cord soaked in saltpetre could, by a simple system of levers, be lowered into a pan holding the priming powder which would ignite the charge. The matchlock so arranged was called a "harquebus," and though it did not entirely supplant the bow until two centuries later, had increasingly marked effects on the progress of military art. Armour had to become heavier to a point of absurdity to withstand the new missiles; the knight or man-at-arms became an anachronism, and, more important, a specialized knowledge and technique was introduced into war.

One result of this gradual specialization was the more rapid growth in Europe of "Free Companies" of mercenary soldiers, who led a corporative existence and whose members were bound together by articles of association: They were prepared to sell their services to anyone who was able and willing to pay for them; they owed allegiance to no King except a temporary loyalty to the one for whom they might be fighting at the time. There were German, Swiss, Spanish, French and Italian companies fighting throughout the 15th century in almost every campaign in Europe, and from them, indeed, many of the military usages and terms of later times were derived.

Still another result of these developments in arms and methods during the 15th and early part of the 16th centuries was that war became increasingly expensive, and this at a time when the influx of bullion from America had enormously reduced the purchasing value of money. The Kings of England had generally only the revenue of the royal domains, which had not increased in value, plus such grants as Parliament would reluctantly supply, to meet their expenses; and only rigorous economy, as exercised by Henry VII, would enable them to do this. War on a large scale and particularly a war outside England therefore spelt insolvency for the King. This goes far towards explaining why the Tudors avoided prolonged military adventures on the continent, and it also partly explains the lag in the development of the English military system during the 16th century, when England fell far behind European countries in the weapons and practice of war.

Nevertheless some developments did take place. A few "Companies" of English troops were raised for special needs; a per-

manent Royal bodyguard, clad in scarlet and known as the Yeomen of the Guard was formed by Henry VII in 1485 (and is the oldest military corps in existence to-day, wearing the same uniform and carrying out many of the same Palace duties as when it was formed). About fifty years later, the Honourable Artillery Company was started in London as a "guild of Archers and handgunmen." New military ideas began to enter England from the continent, brought by travellers, soldiers and writers. Meantime, the old method of raising a national force in time of need by Shire Levies still persisted in a modified form in the "trained bands" or "militia" as they were now called. These consisted of selected men in each county who were armed and trained (for a few days each year) at the expense of their parishes and mustered when necessary by the county lieutenants on the King's command. Parliament exercised no control over them; they were solely under the King; and the King's control of them was regarded with a deepening resentment by Parliament as an instrument which might be used to overawe it and as a means whereby the King could exact money and arms from London and the counties without Parliamentary consent.

It is impossible to describe here the growth of the controversy which arose between Charles I and his Parliament on this matter, or the difficult constitutional questions involved. It must suffice to say that the Civil War which broke out in 1642 had, as one of its main causes, the determination of Parliament to control such armed forces as the nation possessed, and the equal determination of the King to retain that control with all that it implied.

The Civil War

When the Civil War broke out, military knowledge was, as has been explained, at a low level in England. Few of the new ideas which were being put into practice on the continent were known here. There was a handful perhaps of officers who had served under leaders such as the great Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden and who knew something of his fertile and original military genius. But not for the first year or two of the war did these ideas make much impression on the organization or tactics of either side.

The trained bands immediately took service in accordance with their loyalty to King or Parliament. Nominally they were supposed to have carried out eight days' training each year; in actual fact they were for the most part completely untrained and generally unarmed. Nevertheless they formed the bulk of the infantry on both sides. They were organized into infantry regiments each generally consisting of 10 companies of about 120 men. Two-thirds were musketeers and one-third were pikemen. (The bayonet had not yet appeared in England, though it was known on the continent.)

The musketeers were armed with matchlocks, that is, they went into battle with the cord wound round their waists and a couple of bullets in their mouths. To fire was a business requiring much care and preparation, and two rounds a minute was considered "rapid." In order to obtain some continuity of fire various devices were tried, such as that of drawing up the musketeers six deep; each line firing in turn and then filing to the rear to reload, but this soon had to be abandoned as the competition to file to the rear was keener than the desire to fire accurately. Other expedients were thereafter tried, such as ordering even files to fire while odd files were reloading and vice versa.

The normal course of an infantry attack was as follows. The musketeers on both sides proceeded to discharge their matchlocks until their ammunition was exhausted. They and the pikemen on both sides then advanced to hand to hand combat; pikes were interlocked; the musketeers drew the swords which they carried or raised the butts of their muskets and not infrequently finished the attack by what a later generation would call "all-in wrestling."

But, in fact, the foot soldier had not yet come into his own. The matchlock was slow, heavy and inaccurate, and its range was no greater than that of the bow. Indeed, there were many who said that it was inferior to the bow which had been last used by English troops in 1627. As missile troops, therefore, the infantry were not yet successful; as shock troops they were inferior to the cavalry. The latter were armed with a sword and a flintlock pistol; and marshalled three deep they charged home, trusting to weight and their swords for success—not to the pistol; for it, like the musket, was so inaccurate that the homely advice then frequently given was sound practice—not to discharge the pistol "until it was held close upon the body of an enemy."

Artillery was divided into Field and Siege, the weapon of the former being a demi-culverin which threw a ball of eight lbs. In reality it was of little use in mobile warfare; powder was bad; the guns were clumsy. Moreover, the gunners were enlisted with little care and were regarded as an undisciplined mob—with an evil reputation for profane language. The guns were hauled by waggoners hired or impressed for the service, and an infantry escort was provided to see that they did not run away.

Tactical skill was greatly handicapped by the military practice of the time. General officers commanding a force also commanded a unit in battle and fought with it. Intercommunication was difficult in the heat of combat, and all that the commander could do was to select as strong a position as possible, draw up his force there with the infantry in the centre and the cavalry on the wings, give the order to begin—and then hope for the best.

Nor indeed could it have been otherwise with the inexperienced officers available. On the King's side there were only a few like Sir Jacob Astley and Sir Marmaduke Langdale who had some experience of European warfare ; and there was the King's nephew, Rupert, who displayed energy and dash as a cavalry leader, but lacked the capacity for controlling his force or for exploiting a success. Violent, headstrong, excitable, yet with a touch of genius, he played many parts in his life—cavalry leader, admiral, scientist, merchant, pirate and explorer—and in each left some mark on the pages of history.

At the outset the Parliamentary side was also destitute of officers for the higher commands. Apart from the Earl of Essex, who commanded their forces at the beginning, Sir Thomas Fairfax and General Skippon, they had few who had seen fighting before. Indeed, many of the Colonels were men of middle age who had never drawn a sword or fired a pistol in anger. Of such was a Captain Cromwell, as yet an undistinguished country gentleman of small estate from Huntingdon who had represented his town in Parliament for fourteen years and was now forty-three years of age.

The First Round, 1642–1644

In the campaign which began in 1643 both sides had definite advantages. Parliament held most of the ports of England ; the Navy was loyal to it, and it was able to prevent arms or reinforcements from being sent to Charles from the continent. It also controlled most of the towns where the chief wealth of the Kingdom was concentrated. Hence it could afford to arm and equip its infantry better than could the King. But the initial Royalist superiority in cavalry almost counterbalanced these, and might have altered the whole course of history had it been used to its full power at the outset under a capable leader. Discipline and control were, however, almost completely absent and each battle was a repetition of the blunders of the last. Each time, the Royalist cavalry charged and swept those opposed to them off the field ; each time, elated by victory, they pursued the fugitives for miles and fell to plundering their camp ; each time they returned, heated and blown, to find that the Royalist infantry had given way and been routed, and that the battle they had counted won was actually lost.

Of this type was Edgehill, the first important action of the Civil War, fought in 1643, when most of the Parliamentary cavalry was chased off the field by Prince Rupert and only a few officers deserved mention in a list of those " who never stirred from their troops, but fought till the last minute." On this list was the name of Cromwell.

After this battle, Cromwell, realizing the importance of cavalry

which could stand up to the Royalists obtained leave of absence for himself and his troop and went to the eastern counties near his home " to raise " as he said " such men as had the fear of God before them and made some conscience of what they did." Throughout the remainder of 1643 he was recruiting and training, preparing by a strict discipline the force which was to gain immortality as " the Ironsides." Plundering was forbidden under a death penalty; swearing cost a shilling a time; drunkenness was punished by the stocks. His new troopers had only a light helmet or " pot," and a " back and breast of iron," and were thus lighter and more mobile than the heavily armoured Royalist cavalry. They were well mounted also, on heavier and better horses from the eastern counties, and taught horsemastership, " to look after, feed and dress their horses and when it was needful to lie together with them on the ground."

Shortly after, throughout a summer's evening at Marston Moor, nine miles from York on July 2nd, 1644, one of the greatest battles ever fought on English soil took place, and the Parliamentary cause was only saved from defeat by these same Ironsides. Three thousand Royalists fell on the battlefield; 16 guns, 100 colours, 6,000 muskets and 1,600 men were captured.

The New Model Army, 1645–1660

But the King's cause was by no means lost. With autumn and the harvesting both armies began to melt away, and the King won a few small victories which restored the spirits of his side. It seemed to Cromwell that the war could only be ended successfully by getting together a well armed, well disciplined, and regularly paid force, such as he had raised in the eastern counties. But above all it must be permanent and not dissolve at the approach of harvest. He impressed this view on the House of Commons, and on February 15th, 1645, a new force—known as the New Model—was authorized by Act of Parliament. It was to consist of 11 regiments of horse, each of 600 men, twelve regiments of foot each of 1,200, a thousand dragoons or mounted infantry armed with a short matchlock called the dragon, and a small train of artillery. More than half the cavalry came from the men of the eastern counties. Its Captain-General was Sir Thomas Fairfax; Sergeant-Major-General Skippon commanded the Infantry and Lieut.-General Oliver Cromwell the Cavalry. [The Cavalry was the senior branch; therefore a Lieut.-General to-day is senior to a (Sergeant) Major-General.]

The scene of mobilization of this New Model Army was Windsor Park, and for the first time an English force was clothed uniformly, in scarlet. Before that time, troops wore the livery of the officers who had raised them. In the New Model they all wore scarlet, but

each regiment had for its facings the private colours of the Colonel. Fairfax's colour was dark blue; so his regiment had dark blue facings; and when some fifteen years later the Regular Army was formed, this colour was adopted for the facings of some of the Royal regiments. Some of the new ideas and methods of Gustavus Adolphus were incorporated and great stress was laid on mobility, power of manœuvre and fire power. Thus the companies of Infantry were divided into "platoons" and odd and even platoons fired alternately in order to give some continuity of fire. Otherwise no radical change was made. The old faults were still apparent. The Commander of a force still commanded a regiment, fought at its head, and sometimes lost control once the battle started. But at least there was discipline.

The New Model was soon to have its first experience of war. The King had besieged and taken the important Parliamentary stronghold of Leicester and was now about to march northwards to join James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, a brilliant leader who, followed by a handful of wild Highlanders and Irishmen, had almost mastered the whole of Scotland on the King's behalf. Between him and Montrose was a Scottish army fighting as an ally of Parliament under Leven; and to his south was Fairfax with the New Model fresh from its training at Windsor. He resolved to turn on Fairfax and rend him, and then to catch Leven between his own and Montrose's forces. Though slightly outnumbered, the Cavaliers thoroughly despised the troops of the New Model. "Their new modelled army consists for the most part of raw inexperienced pressed soldiers. Few of their officers are thought capable of their places."

The two Armies made contact a mile north of the village of Naseby in Northamptonshire on June 13th, 1645. They were drawn up facing one another on two low ridges separated by a gentle water-sodden valley. The right flank of the Parliamentary force was protected by broken ground, full of rabbit holes and dangerous to cavalry.

The disposition of troops was of the usual type at the time—cavalry on the wings, infantry in the centre, some infantry and cavalry in reserve; and thus Cromwell with his Ironsides, who formed the right wing of the Parliamentary force faced Sir Marmaduke Langdale, while Richard Ireton, Cromwell's nephew, faced Prince Rupert on the left. Fairfax and Skippon faced the King and Sir Jacob Astley in the centre.

Battle was joined on June 14th. The infantry of both sides advanced slowly down their slopes to meet at the foot. Rupert dashed impetuously on Ireton's horse and routed it; and then tore after it in reckless pursuit as far as the baggage wagons in Naseby. Meanwhile, Cromwell gave orders to Colonel Whalley to charge

Langdale's front, while he himself charged the flank. The scheme and its execution were brilliantly successful. Langdale's troops fled headlong; and rallying his force again, Cromwell next rode against the now unprotected flank of the Royalist infantry. It began to yield and then to break. Charles threw in his reserve to stem the flood, but without success. When Rupert rode up hot and breathless from his pursuit the battle was already lost, and the King was in retreat hotly pursued by the Roundhead dragoons.

It had lasted only three hours, but it was as decisive as any battle in history. The pursuit went on for 13 miles. All the King's guns, wagons, colours, and even his private papers were captured. Leicester surrendered three days later. One by one, his great strongholds, Bristol, Winchester, Basing House, Chester and his faithful counties of Devon and Cornwall were taken. Montrose was defeated and driven into exile by the Scotch Covenanters, and bereft of hope, Charles nine months after Naseby was forced to surrender himself to a Scotch army at Newark. For a short time he had to suffer their veiled insults and, worse still, to listen to their sermons. In January 1647 they gave him up to the English Parliament for a payment of £400,000.

Here we must take leave of the tragic story. Battles and intrigues still raged round his person. He was moved from prison to prison and finally tried before a specially appointed Court at Westminster Hall for "levying war against the Parliament and realm of England"; was sentenced by a Court mainly of officers of the New Model (Fairfax refused to be present); and two days later gave up his life on a scaffold erected outside the Banqueting Hall of his own Palace of Whitehall (now the Royal United Service Institute).

Ireland, always Royalist, was quickly subdued by Cromwell in a campaign of terror, and Montrose who had returned to Scotland in the hope of repeating his former successes was captured and executed by his political opponents. The Scots who had opposed Charles I and who now sided with his son, in return for his signature of the "Solemn League and Covenant" were defeated at Dunbar (1650) and again at "the Crowning Mercy" of Worcester (1651),[1] and the Civil War was over.

For nine years from 1651 to 1660, the government of England, though nominally in the hands of Parliament, was actually in the hands of Cromwell while he lived, and of the Army afterwards. Thereafter for a time, the country was divided into districts over which Major-Generals ruled with despotic powers; and all pretence

[1] Worcester was a marvel of precise organization. Three separate Parliamentary forces starting from three different bases, converged on the right place and then carried out an enveloping movement which has merited the admiration of continental critics. "Not Napoleon, nor Moltke could have done better" (Höning).

of self-government came to an end. By a strange irony, the force which had been established to prevent a tyranny with the King at its head, became itself an instrument of military tyranny.

Nevertheless, during the nine years of military control our prestige abroad was greatly raised; and we fought and won a second round for the supremacy of the seas. The Dutch had supported the Royalist cause during the Civil War; and had sent it arms and ammunition. They were also our trade rivals in the East. They had massacred our traders at Amboyna thirty years before and had made no reparation; in America their colony at New Amsterdam was on bad terms with our own New England settlements. Their ships were carrying much of our overseas trade. And lastly, they had a formidable fleet, and their Admiral Tromp was regarded as the most brilliant seaman of his age.

In 1651 the English Parliament took action, and passed a Navigation Act, which provided that all imports, into British possessions, of goods from Asia, Africa and America, should be in ships owned by Englishmen and manned by English crews; while imports from Europe must be either in English ships or ships of the producing country. This struck at the very foundation of all the carrying trade of Holland with the English lands; and war was inevitable.

Our Navy had greatly decreased in size and deteriorated in quality since the time of Elizabeth. Now it was hastily enlarged and reorganized by Sir Harry Vane. Generals and Colonels of Parliamentary Horse were so suddenly translated into Admirals that in the heat of battle they attempted to order their ships like squadrons of cavalry.

Tromp defeated one such, Robert Blake, off the coast of Kent in 1652, but in the following year Blake had his revenge. He beat Tromp decisively off the North Foreland, and a few months later defeated him again in a battle in which the Dutch Admiral was slain; and the war came to an end in 1654, with the English supreme on the seas for the time being and the Navigation Act still in force. Blake had, it was said, "set the pattern of naval achievement for the future," in making it the tradition for a British fleet to attack the enemy where and when it could find them.

No sooner was the war with Holland over than Cromwell involved Great Britain in a war with Spain. He was determined that England should expand overseas. If it was to be strong, he said, it must have room. "You cannot plant an oak in a flower pot. She must have earth for her roots and heaven for her branches." In 1654, accordingly, he despatched an expedition under Generals Penn and Venables to the West Indies to attack and secure a base from which the conquest of Spanish America might be undertaken. It was a significant event—sending a British force abroad to build an

Empire—but was not a complete success. Indeed, an attempt on Hispaniola was a lamentable failure, and the commanders, afraid to face Cromwell without something to show, turned on the island of Jamaica, which was lightly held by a small Spanish garrison and took it—the first colony to be acquired for the Empire by a British military force. Spain was naturally incensed and retaliated by welcoming the exiled Prince Charles to the Spanish Netherlands, and declaring war on England. Cromwell thereupon, having made an alliance with France, despatched 6,000 men to serve under Turenne in Flanders. At the battle of Dunkirk Dunes, in May 1658, they led the attack on the Spanish force and won Turenne's admiration, and it is noteworthy that the only part of the Spanish force which stood firm was a body of English Royalists.

But no matter how efficient a dictatorship may be it has one supreme weakness. It hangs on the slender thread of one man's life ; and when Cromwell died in 1658 England was left without a Parliament strong enough to rule, and with a military force which, once the heavy hand of the great leader was removed, began to squabble and break up into factions. Peace and good government were necessary ; and men longed for a stable quiet England again.

Among such men was George Monk, who had been one of Cromwell's most competent subordinates, and was now commanding the Parliamentary Army in Scotland. Quiet, painstaking, efficient, and beloved by his soldiers, he felt that he could rely on them in what he now proposed to do. He assembled his force at Coldstream near Berwick, crossed the Tweed, and marched south to London. A new Parliament, consisting of more moderate sections, was assembled, and negotiations were formally opened with Charles. He was asked and agreed to return to England as King ; landed at Dover and on May 29th (his birthday), 1660, arrived in London, where he was saluted as Charles II, and cheered by the troops of the New Model Army, many of whom had fought against him ten years before. It is perhaps true, as Lord Macaulay says, that the cheers spoke more for the strict discipline of the New Model than for its enthusiasm for the Monarchy ; for the restoration was its death warrant. Gradually it was disbanded, and an act was passed to avoid unemployment by enabling the discharged soldiers to enter trades without undergoing an apprenticeship. But something remained.

The Birth of the Regular Army

Before it was completely disbanded an insurrection of religious fanatics broke out in London against the Monarchy, and it became obvious that a small regular force must be maintained for the King's safety. Orders were therefore given for the raising of a regiment of

Guards to be commanded by Colonel John Russell; of a regiment of horse to be commanded by the Earl of Oxford; and of a troop of horse guards to be commanded by Lord Gerard. In addition, the Duke of York's troop of Guards who were still in Holland was sent for. All of these consisted of Royalist gentlemen, except Lord Oxford's regiment which probably included many disbanded troopers of the New Model. But there was another link, between the old and the new forces. Monk's own regiment of foot in the New Model was paraded on Tower Hill where the men laid down their arms as soldiers of the Commonwealth and took them up again as the Lord General Monk's regiment of Foot Guards—or, as they were henceforth to be known, "The Coldstream Guards," or "Coldstreamers."

Here therefore the New Model Army, the disciplined force which fulfilled Cromwell's demand that it should be able to "go anywhere and do anything," disappeared and was succeeded by a Regular Standing Army, as yet only in its infancy and composed of the following:—

Royalist Gentlemen	From New Model
1st Guards (Russell's)	Coldstream Guards (Monk's)[1]
1st Life Guards (Lord Gerard's)	The Royal Horse Guards (Lord Oxford's).
2nd Life Guards (Duke of York's)	

It consisted merely of sufficient men to carry out the essential duties of "Guards and Garrisons," was viewed by Parliament with deep suspicion, and possessed no constitutional status based on Parliamentary statute. Indeed, lest the King should become too powerful, the control of the Militia was vested henceforward in the Lieutenants of the counties, who were to be responsible to Parliament for its training and control.

[1] By an order of Charles II dated 1675 the First Guards (Grenadiers) were given precedence as the first regiment and the Coldstream Guards as the second.

CHAPTER II

EARLY DAYS OF THE REGULAR ARMY

THE last chapter told of the birth of the Standing Army; this one is concerned with its stormy and unpopular infancy. To the average Englishman of the time such an army seemed both unnecessary and objectionable. Were not, he argued, the sea and the Navy sufficient protection against dangers from without? As regards its use at home the military dictatorship of the Commonwealth had given him an abhorrence of all soldiers. Further, as things stood, the Army was controlled by the King, and paid for by him out of such money as he could obtain from Parliament or elsewhere. It was regarded as the King's private force; entirely at his disposal and loyal to him rather than to the country; and thus was a dangerous weapon which might be used by an unscrupulous sovereign to overawe Parliament and country. Hence every increase in its size was regarded with anxiety and suspicion, and money for its maintenance could only be obtained with difficulty and sometimes by strange pretexts and evasions. Nevertheless, for various reasons which will be evident, it grew slowly year by year. It is interesting to notice that the first of these reasons was the need for defending an outlying part of the new British Empire.

TANGIER, 1662–1680

No sooner was Charles II on the throne than he announced his intention of marrying the Princess Catharine of Braganza, a daughter of the Royal House of Portugal. It was no love match, but the dowry which she brought, consisting of Tangier, the island of Bombay and half a million in cash went far towards compensating for a homely countenance.

Of the two new additions to British territory Tangier appeared infinitely the more attractive. Bombay, eleven thousand miles away, was little more than a large mudbank in a hot country, and Charles, after vainly attempting to make some money out of it, sold it to the East India Company for an annual rent of £10. But Tangier was near at hand and important. Moorish pirates frequented the harbours of North Africa, attacked shipping in the Mediterranean and Atlantic, murdered or enslaved the crews and had even captured the Governor of Virginia not far from the American coast. With Tangier as a base the British Navy might suppress this piracy

or at least prevent the pirates from venturing through the Straits of Gibraltar into the Atlantic.

But, admirable as it was for this purpose, Tangier had one great disadvantage. It was open to land attack by the Moors, and required a strong military force to defend it from their constant attacks. Accordingly, in the autumn of 1661, a new regiment of infantry was paraded on Putney Heath, and shortly afterwards sailed for Tangier (The Queen's). Here it was joined by some Cromwellian companies which had been part of the garrison of Dunkirk, and a little later by men from two units of the Royalist force. To this regiment, representative of both Royalist and Parliamentary forces was given the name, " The Governor's Regiment of Tangier Foot." It and the 1st Royal Dragoons also formed for the same purpose, had the unique distinction of being the earliest regiments raised to defend outlying parts of the Empire and both possess the first battle honour in the history of the Regular Army— " Tangier 1662–1680." Here they shared with the several other regiments which later augmented the garrison the experience of discarding the pike and adopting a new weapon, the bayonet.

For twenty-three years the Queen's and Royals formed the greater part of the garrison of Tangier, and, during that time, saw continuous active service under difficult and almost tropical conditions against a redoubtable enemy. In due course they were reinforced by another regiment, the Royal Scots, to whom, as well as to the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards, belongs the later battle honour " Tangier 1680."

The origin of the Royal Scots, which has been mentioned, is of special interest. In 1661 when the Guards regiments were formed, to protect the King from an impending insurrection of religious fanatics, he had requested Louis XIV of France to send to England a regiment (Lord George Douglas') of the Scots Brigade which had been on the French establishment for many years, and which professed to trace its origin back to Scottish legionaries of the Roman Army. (Hence " Pontius Pilate's Bodyguard.") This regiment arrived in England in 1662, when it became the Royal or Scots Regiment ; and, later in the year, when all danger was past, returned to France again. It was not until 1670 that it came permanently to England and became the first regiment of the line.

The Second Dutch War (1665)

In the meantime Britain had been involved in a second war with Holland. The first Dutch War, in the time of Cromwell, had in reality settled none of the problems which existed between the two countries ; and the struggle for the carrying trade and command of the seas had still to be fought out.

When the second war began in 1665 England was thoroughly unprepared. The English fleet had been criminally neglected since Cromwell's death. Now it was hastily reorganized. The King's brother, James, Duke of York, took command; the two great cavalry leaders, Monk and Prince Rupert, were his chief Admirals; and companies of Guardsmen were drafted to the fleet to act as marines. A series of tremendous conflicts, with the Dutch Admiral de Ruyter and his fleet, followed, in which the loss of life on both sides was appalling, and in which no decisive victory was obtained.

Meantime, the Great Plague of 1665 which killed 100,000 people in England had swept over London and the southern counties; and this was followed by another calamity, the Great Fire, which burnt down the higgledy-piggledy warren of insanitary hovels of which London then largely consisted. The Exchequer was nearly empty; the fleet could not put to sea for lack of supplies, and de Ruyter seizing his opportunity, slipped up the Thames one night, entered the Medway, burnt the shipping there, bombarded Chatham and kept London in a fever of apprehension for three days. Shortly afterwards the war came to an end in a treaty by which the Dutch gave up their settlements in North America which a Colonel, Robert Nicholls, had attacked and taken in 1664; and New Amsterdam was henceforth to be known as New York. But the contest for sea supremacy was not yet finished, and the peace was merely a short breathing space in the course of hostilities.

When this war had broken out, there were certain English and Scottish regiments which had been in Holland on the Dutch establishment since the time of Queen Elizabeth. To these regiments the Dutch gave the choice of swearing loyalty to Holland or of being dismissed. They refused to change their nationality, and returned to England, where the officers and some of the men were taken on the English establishment as the Holland Regiment or the Buffs as they were later called from the colour of their facings (now the 3rd Foot).[1]

The Third and Last War with the Dutch

In 1672 war with the Dutch was renewed, again, this time England fighting in alliance with France. Charles II promised military and naval help in a campaign which was to make Holland part of the dominions of Louis XIV and would move the northern frontier of France to the Rhine, in return for certain financial and military assistance by which he hoped to become independent of Parliament.

The war was unpopular from the start. Though the English people still smarted from the burning of their shipping in the Med-

[1] They were Colonel Howard's Regiment and were called "the Buffs" to distinguish them from "the Green Howards," also commanded by a Colonel Howard.

way, they realized that the war was not of English making and that a victorious France and an independent Charles II might be infinitely more dangerous than ever Holland could be. Nor did the course of the conflict reassure them. During a terrific battle between the Duke of York and de Ruyter in Southwold Bay, a French squadron looked on and took no part, owing, it explained afterwards, to a misunderstanding with regard to its orders. Prince Rupert swore that he would never serve side by side with the French again and indeed the impression was general " that they were deliberately allowing the English Navy to spend its strength while they themselves gathered experience as spectators."

In the meantime, the French had advanced by land and overrun the greater part of Holland. Amsterdam itself was only saved by breaking down the dykes and flooding the country round it, and by the gallant defence organized by the young Prince William of Orange. In England the war was now regarded as disreputable; a clamour for peace became general, and Charles II was forced by popular opinion to withdraw from it.

Thus ended the second great struggle in our history for command of the seas. Holland was exhausted and was never able to attack us again. A small country with a land frontier open to invasion, it was handicapped from the start in a struggle against England which could only be attacked by sea. Both of the gateways to its ports, the English Channel and the North Sea, were overlooked by English naval bases; and its sea communications with the outside world were therefore vulnerable to a British fleet operating from these bases. Nor had it the population or resources to continue the struggle any longer, and henceforward it gradually decreased in power until it ceased to be a formidable rival in the carrying trade of the seas.

The Monmouth Rebellion, 1685

In 1685 Charles II died and was succeeded by James II, who as Duke of York had distinguished himself as an Admiral and also as a military administrator. Though possessed of great gifts he was narrow and obstinate and thought that he could rule without due regard to the opinion of the majority of his subjects. He hoped to make the Catholic religion, of which he was a devoted adherent, the State religion of an England which was mainly Protestant, or at least ensure its complete toleration.

Before he had been on the throne for two months a rebellion in favour of the Protestant Duke of Monmouth, a natural son of Charles II, broke out in Scotland and England. James II took the opportunity as an excuse for making large additions to the Army. He summoned some English infantry which had been left in Holland

(after we withdrew from the 3rd Dutch War) to help the Dutch against the French, and from it formed various regiments of which the 5th and 6th Foot are still in existence. He increased the establishment by 9 new regiments of infantry, one of which was armed with fusils or flintlocks and used as an escort for artillery (now the Royal Fusiliers), and the remaining eight are now the 8th to the 15th of the Line. Nine regiments of cavalry and two of dragoons (including the regiments now known as the 1st to the 6th Dragoon Guards and the 3rd and 4th Hussars) were also formed at this time, and he brought from Scotland the King's bodyguard there, which was later to become the Scots Guards. The rebellion in Scotland, under the Earl of Argyle, misfired. The Campbell clan rose to his assistance, but none other, and after a few days all his men dispersed. He became a fugitive, was eventually taken and executed, and the rebellion collapsed.

It was, however, more protracted in England. There, Monmouth, who had landed at Lyme Regis in Dorsetshire early in June, declared himself the rightful heir to the throne and appealed to all Protestants to come to his aid. Ploughmen and miners from the western counties, armed with ancient fowling pieces, home-made swords and pikes and even with scythes and pruning hooks, flocked to him. Unopposed, he pushed on to Taunton. The main force of James II under a dilatory commander, Lord Feversham, was far away; a small column, consisting of four troops of the Blues, four of the King's Dragoons and four companies of the Queen's all under the command of a young brigadier, John Churchill (the future Duke of Marlborough), who had served with the Queen's at Tangier, was on its way from London; only untrustworthy militia were close at hand. But Monmouth lacked the power of decision, was already despairing of success and was contemplating how he might escape instead of planning how to advance to victory.

On July 5th, he was at Bridgwater, with the now united King's force facing him near the village of Weston Zoyland on Sedgmoor, in a position covered by a broad ditch called the Bussex Rhine. During the evening a farmer named Godfrey brought a story to Monmouth that there was drunkenness, disorder and lack of precautions in the King's force, and Monmouth, with 4,000 raw levies, prepared to carry out the most difficult of all military operations, a night march followed by a night attack against a superior force. Direction was lost in the night march; part of the attacking force lost itself completely in the darkness; confusion followed and the Regulars had plenty of time to prepare for the attack. By four o'clock in the morning the last battle fought on English soil was over. The rebels were "so totally routed that not fifty of them remain in a body." The horrors of the pursuit by the Dragoons and by

Kirke's Lambs (The Queen's under Colonel Percy Kirke); the cutting down, man-hunting, and hangings without trial were only surpassed by the grotesque parody of justice meted out at the Bloody Assize which followed when Judge Jeffreys bullied, browbeat and then hanged hundreds of the unfortunate peasants and sent over a thousand to slavery on the plantations of Barbados. It is only justice to say that the Brigadier, John Churchill, to whom the King's victory at Sedgmoor was chiefly due, took no part in this pursuit nor in the subsequent events. He was, it has been said, "prepared to fight for the King, but not to act as his executioner."

The End of the Stuart Dynasty

The severity with which the Monmouth rebellion was put down horrified the country. But the ease with which it had been suppressed filled James II with confidence, and by this very self-confidence started him on the path which was to lead him to exile. He now openly aimed at filling important offices in the Church and Army with Catholics, and felt secure in the belief that he could overawe Parliament and the country by means of the Standing Army.

Had he remained without a male heir to the throne, the English people might have tolerated this condition of affairs, in the knowledge that the next occupant of the throne would be the Princess Mary, the wife of the Protestant Prince William of Orange. But in June 1688 a son was born to James, and the now intolerable prospect of a long succession of Stuart and Catholic Kings was followed by a conspiracy. Leaders of all parties in England combined and William of Orange and his wife, the Princess Mary, were invited to accept the throne.

On November 5th, 1688, William landed at Torbay and marched inland. James hastily raised new regiments, of which the 16th (Beds. and Herts.) and 17th (Leicesters) Foot still remain; but one by one important officers of the Army and even whole units such as the Blues and Royal Dragoons deserted to the side of the invader. John Churchill, who had been the chief agent in defeating Monmouth, Percy Kirke who had harried the peasantry of Somerset after Sedgmoor, the King's son-in-law, Prince George of Denmark, and even his own daughter, Anne, deserted him, and James, realizing the hopelessness of his position, fled to France in December. With hardly a shot fired the Stuart line had been dismissed from England and William ascended the throne as William III.

Killiecrankie—Sword *versus* Musket—1688

The struggle was, however, continued in Scotland and Ireland and during 1688–89 ten thousand additional troops were raised, including

the regiments which are now the 7th Dragoon Guards, and the 18th to the 27th of the line. In Scotland, John Graham of Claverhouse, Earl of Dundee, succeeded in raising many of the Highland clans to fight for James II, not so much because they loved the King, as because they hated the Campbells who were on William's side. General Mackay advanced against them with a small force which included the present 13th and 25th Foot. After toiling through the long pass of Killiecrankie they fell into an ambush at its northern end and were completely routed. The Highlanders relying mainly on sword and shield broke the lines of Mackay's force, which had only their slow loading muskets and the "plug bayonet" which fitted into the muzzle. The musket fire was not rapid enough to prevent a hand to hand conflict, and when once they were engaged at close grips the plug bayonet prevented them from firing. But Claverhouse himself was slain in the battle; the Highland force gradually wasted away and within a year the insurrection had died out.

Killiecrankie, however, produced some good out of evil. Mackay, realizing the necessity for combining in one weapon missile and shock action, introduced in his regiments a new type of bayonet which had recently come into use in France. This bayonet could be screwed on to the outside of the barrel of the musket, so that men could fire with their bayonets fixed. It was, however, another few years before all the British infantry received the new "socket bayonet," and before then they were destined to have another proof of its necessity at Steenkirk.

The War in Ireland

The struggle in Ireland was more serious. James had landed there in 1689 with many French officers and a supply of arms and money provided by Louis XIV. Practically the whole country declared itself in his favour, and siege was laid to the two important towns of Derry and Enniskillen, which alone held out against him and maintained a gallant defence in the face of enormous odds. William landed in Ireland in 1690; decisively defeated James at the Battle of the Boyne (July 1st, 1690); James fled to France once again, and though his followers kept up a stout-hearted resistance they were defeated at Aughrim. The remnants of the Irish force then took refuge in Limerick where they were besieged by Ginkel, one of William's generals. After a siege lasting 3 months they surrendered on honourable terms by which the Irish Army was allowed to sail for France there to take service, 11,000 strong, under Louis XIV. We shall meet some of them again, fighting against England and 60 years later we shall find the descendant of one of

them, Count Lally de Tollendal (Mullaly of Tullindally), attempting to thrust us out of India.

The Mutiny Act and Bill of Rights, 1689

In the meantime an event of great importance had taken place. Up to 1689 no powers existed by law for the punishment of military offences in time of peace, except by civil courts. Mutiny and desertion sometimes went unpunished, rather than that the machinery of civil justice should be used, and discipline suffered accordingly. Special attention was directed to this in 1689, when a Scots regiment, ordered for service by William III, in Holland, mutinied at Ipswich, declaring that James was their King and that they would live and die by him. The incident shocked Parliament into action. A Bill was hastily passed in April, known as the Mutiny Act, which legalized the use of military courts.

The preamble of the Act repeated some of the words of the Declaration of Rights which William had accepted when he came to the throne: "The raising of a standing army within the United Kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with the consent of Parliament, is against the law." These words were reiterated again and amplified in the Bill of Rights later in the year (December 1689). In short, Parliament now made itself the judge of the existence of an army; no standing force could be maintained unless Parliament approved, voted supplies for its cost, agreed to its size and passed annually an Act for its discipline. The Mutiny Act was only passed for a duration of 7 months in the first instance; thereafter it was passed yearly, and now is merged in the Army and Air Force Annual Act.

But, though Parliament could "vote the Army," its "government, command and disposition" were still parts of the Royal Prerogative. A long conflict was to ensue, extending over 200 years, before it was finally settled that this Prerogative should be exercised on behalf of the King by a Secretary of State for War responsible to Parliament. During that period, which ended in the War Office Act of 1870, there was, in fact, a dualism in control which led on occasions, as will be seen, to many absurdities and much inefficiency.

The Third Great Struggle for Empire

In the same year that the Mutiny Act was passed the third great struggle in our history as an Empire began. The struggle with Spain had occupied our energies in the 16th century; Holland was the next rival in the 17th, and now we were to embark on the greatest of the three, a war with France which occupied the greater part of 60 years of actual fighting, and was spread over a century and a quarter.

War in Holland against France	1689–1697
,, of Spanish Succession	1701–1712
,, of Austrian Succession	1741–1748
Seven Years' War	1756–1763
War of American Independence	1778–1783
Revolutionary War	1794–1802
War with French Empire	1803–1807
Peninsular War	1808–1814
Waterloo Campaign	1815

Though the very names of its separate parts show that each had its own causes, and though its battlefields were at different times in Europe, Asia and America, it was, like the Spanish and Dutch Wars, essentially a war for maritime supremacy, sea trade and Empire. Up to 1689 we had colonized without much necessity for force. Our settlements in America had expanded in trade and territory even during the unsettled years of civil strife at home. Thus Carolina had been founded in 1663 and Pennsylvania in 1680; and further north the Hudson Bay Company had opened factories or trading posts as early as 1670. Only in two cases had we to fight for possessions—Jamaica and New York. But now a new period was ushered in, wherein almost every addition to our territory was obtained as a result, sometimes indirectly, of war.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST ROUND WITH FRANCE, 1689–1697

THE ARMY

BEFORE narrating the events of the first round with France, it is desirable to sum up the main changes which had taken place in weapons and tactics during the 17th century, and which place the wars of the early part of the 18th century closer in type to the succeeding than to the previous era.

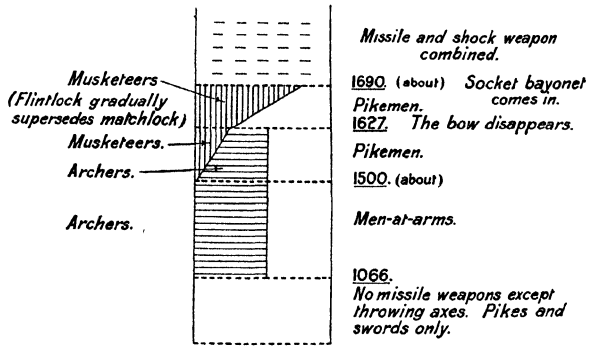
Two great advances had been made in the weapons of the foot soldier. The old matchlock had been gradually improved and later had been superseded by the flintlock or fusil which came into general use by 1675. This innovation halved the time required for loading and firing, so that a man could fire at least two shots a minute, thereby increasing the fire power and importance of the infantry.

Further, the invention of the bayonet during the same period altered the infantry organization in battle. Previously they were divided, as we have seen, into pikemen and musketeers. The " pikes " were drawn up in the centre of the line, the " shot " normally on their flanks, and upon the pikemen fell the main responsibility for such hand-to-hand fighting as took place. But gradually the importance of missile power as contrasted with shock power was realized and a progressive increase in the proportion of " shots " to " pikes " took place. Thus in 1600 this proportion was one to four ; in the New Model Army it was one to one ; by 1670 it was five to one.

In 1670, however, the " plug " bayonet was introduced, which fitted into the muzzle of the musket and gave to every infantryman a weapon for missile and close quarter fighting. A few years more and the pikeman ceased to appear in the ranks of the British Army, though serjeants carried pikes, or halberds, as an emblem of their rank, until after Waterloo. (The word " piquet " is the sole remaining survival in the Army of to-day of the pikemen of the past.) But the plug bayonet, important as it was at the time, had the serious defect of preventing the musket from being fired until the bayonet was detached—with disastrous effects at Killiecrankie in 1688—and was finally replaced in 1693 by the " socket bayonet " which could be screwed on to the barrel of the musket, and which had been in use in the French Army for some years previously.

By this invention, the old time clumsy division between missile

and shock weapons, which had hampered fire power, mobility and manœuvre, finally came to an end, and the infantry arrived at its own. The slow progress towards this final result is shown in the following diagram, which illustrates the development of missile power and the final combination of missile and shock weapons.



Another innovation to increase fire power was the introduction of the hand grenade, which led, in 1678, to the formation of a grenadier company in each regiment chosen from picked men of height and stamina who were armed also with an axe to break down palisades. Their weapons and mode of fighting and general elan are described in the second verse of the "British Grenadiers." (The regimental march of the Grenadier Guards and many other regiments.)

"When e'er we are commanded to storm the palisades,
Our leaders march with fusees, and we with hand grenades;
We throw them from the glacis, about the enemies' ears,
Sing tow, row, row, row, row, row, for the British Grenadiers."

Cavalry, too, had changed greatly. The development of firearms made armour less effective; gradually it was discarded, except the cuirass and helmet (as by Cromwell's Ironsides), and henceforward every change was in the direction of lightness and mobility. Lighter and faster horses could be used, and speed replaced mere weight, while it also gave more protection than armour. In fact, it had now been realized that "Speed is Armour."

Artillery, however, still lagged behind and its organization and weapons had changed but little during the century. There was no regiment of artillery. Field guns of 6 lbs. (the Saker) to 18 lbs. (the Culverin) were attached in pairs to each regiment and artillery was rarely concentrated under one commander. In battle, the guns—whose range was less than half a mile—were generally placed in front of the infantry and only used in the opening stages, to cover

their deployment and hinder that of the enemy. When battle was joined it was difficult to move them; as the drivers were civilians (and remained so until 1793) and the pieces themselves heavy and clumsy. Thus the practice was for the gunners to fire as long as they could, but when charged to bolt back, leaving their guns, and take refuge behind the infantry.

But perhaps the most important changes made during the 17th century were changes of organization which had profoundly affected the whole art of war and which are chiefly associated with the name of Gustavus Adolphus, the Swedish military genius and King, whose methods and victories astounded the military men of Europe during the Thirty Years' War. Realizing that small formations would give flexibility of manœuvre and greater fire control, he had replaced the old "tercios" of 3 or 4 thousand men (the descendant of the main battle of men-at-arms during the Middle Ages) by battalions of 400 or 500 men. His introduction of platoons as subdivisions of the company was directed to the same end and also to ensure by a special drill more continuity of fire. These changes were gradually adopted by all the Western European nations, and his methods, such as rapid marches, quick manœuvre, the direction to a common aim of armies operating in different areas, enfilade fire and shock action, were followed and developed by other great military leaders such as Rupert, Cromwell, Turenne, and Condé. The influence of these new ideas was very noticeable in the British Army where a progressive decrease in the size of regiments took place. At the beginning of the 17th century their strength was about 1,200 to 1,500; in the New Model Army it was 1,200; when the Standing Army was formed in 1661 this was reduced to 1,000, and by the end of the 17th century the normal establishment was about 700, and the actual strength about 450.

Gentlemanly Warfare

In many ways war was still a gentlemanly pursuit. Means of transport and the supply services could not be organized with the thoroughness of later days; and armies, on active service, lived as far as possible on the country in which they were fighting. This being the case, the first consideration of any commander was to select a theatre of war where his men and horses could find food, and to hold that area by occupying fortresses at strategic positions. Pitched battles were avoided unless the odds were overwhelming, because they were expensive in men and material, both of which were difficult to replace. A wet summer and bad harvest could bring operations speedily to a close on both sides. With the advent of winter the armies retired into their fortresses or into carefully prepared lines and all operations would be suspended for some

months, because of bad roads, frozen waterways and the lack of medical and sanitary arrangements which made campaigning difficult and the incidence of disease then more serious. Moreover, it was necessary for officers to return home to raise new recruits in order to replace casualties.

Roads, indeed, were almost non-existent in many areas, and commanders preferred to operate in countries where there were many rivers and canals which could be used for the movement of supplies, and war tended to be a struggle for fortified positions on these natural lines of communication. Every important junction of rivers in such a region was therefore the site of a fortress, and campaigns were rather a succession of sieges than of battles. This appealed to most of the commanders of the time, for it simplified supply arrangements and enabled both sides to enjoy some of the comforts of life together with the excitements of war.

The Spanish Netherlands—The Cockpit of Europe

The Spanish Netherlands (Belgium) was an ideal region for such a war. It was a fertile land, intersected by canals and rivers; food was plentiful and movement easy. At the end of the 17th century it lay central to the great antagonists. To the north was Holland, or the Dutch Netherlands, the home of the Protestant family of Orange; to its south, France, the most powerful Catholic and military State in Europe; to the east, that vast agglomeration called the Empire which comprised, in a loose allegiance to the Emperor at Vienna, the States of Germany and Austria, as well as part of Italy. To the west, only 80 miles across the sea, was England which then, as now, could not tolerate the ports which faced London being used as bases by a great naval Power.

The rivers of this buffer region flow north-eastwards, from the neighbourhood of the French frontier towards the Dutch frontier, and it was, therefore, a natural avenue of advance for the French northwards. In order to make movement more difficult Spanish fortresses occupied strategic position on every river. Ypres on the Knocke; Menin on the Lys; Tournay and Oudenarde on the Scheldt; Charleroi on the Sambre; Namur on the Meuse are a few out of the many names which this land of wars has made famous in military history.

The Campaigns of 1689–1697

For years the menace of Louis XIV had hung like a thundercloud over Europe. Possessed of a large and fertile territory, able ministers like Colbert, and Generals such as Turenne and Condé, and a large well organized and well equipped army, he had systematically bullied his weaker neighbours. Spain was in decline under a half-

wit. The unwieldy Empire was weakened by internal rivalries and preoccupied by Turkish aggression towards Austria. England was in the throes of civil dissension. No serious obstacle was present therefore to prevent Louis' pursuit of his ambition to extend the territory of France, eastwards and northwards to the Rhine by acquiring the Spanish Netherlands, except the fears of the Dutch and the determination of their Stadtholder, William of Orange. The odds in man-power and resources were, however, weighed heavily against William and, though he obtained temporary successes from time to time, the final issue could hardly be doubtful.

In 1688, however, William had become King of England and had become so mainly with the intention of using the resources of Great Britain against his lifelong adversary. Louis refused to recognize his accession; despatched French troops to assist the rebel Irish and declared war on the Dutch. Accordingly, it was decided to send 10 British battalions to join the Dutch and their Allies in the Netherlands, under the command of General John Churchill, who had recently been created Earl of Marlborough. On August 27th, 1689, this allied force encountered the French under Marshal d'Humières at Walcourt near Charleroi. Here the British infantry under Colonel Hodges of the 16th Foot beat off the attacks of the French, who were then charged by Marlborough at the head of the Household Cavalry and suffered a very nasty repulse. This action is important as the first occasion for a considerable period on which the British had found themselves opposed to the French, and also as the first instance in which Marlborough was confronted by a Marshal of France and displayed his genius. He was rewarded by the Colonelcy of the Royal Fusiliers.

Crossing to Ireland in the following year to settle accounts there, William III left the victor of Walcourt as Commander-in-Chief in England. In the autumn following the Battle of the Boyne, Marlborough obtained command of an expedition, which he had urged, against the Jacobite garrisons of Cork and Kinsale. Through these ports Louis might send reinforcements to strike at the rear of William's army which was investing Limerick. This task Marlborough brilliantly performed in less than 6 weeks, and the final success of the Irish campaign was now secure.

In 1691 the scene was shifted again to the Netherlands, where Marlborough accompanied William in command of a British contingent of about 23,000 men. No serious fighting, however, took place, except in a rather belated and unsuccessful effort to relieve Mons which was being besieged by Louis in person. In May of the following year Marlborough was arrested by William's orders and consigned to the Tower. The actual charge preferred was demonstrably false, but there is little doubt that he had, like most public men of his

time, endeavoured to ensure his future against any possible contingency by corresponding with the Jacobites. After a short time he was released, but received no command, and thus temporarily disappears from our narrative.

In the meantime the British and Dutch fleets under Russell had defeated the French fleet off Cape La Hogue (1692) and had thus removed all apprehensions of invasion and ensured freedom of passage for our military transports to and from Holland. There William III himself had taken command and in 1692 fought a gallant but unsuccessful action against the French Marshal Luxembourg at Steenkirk (August 3rd). Ten British battalions distinguished themselves by outstanding bravery at this battle, the Grenadier Guards and Royal Warwicks, in particular, suffering very heavy losses.

In the following year William, always unlucky in war, was again defeated at Landen (July 29th, 1693) in a battle which added greatly to the reputation of the losers. His force was inferior in strength to that of the enemy and was disposed over a position which was too extensive for its numbers. The Coldstream Guards and Royal Fusiliers held out for a time against repeated frontal attacks by five brigades of French infantry and flank attacks by the French Household Cavalry, but eventually, in spite of counter-attacks by the British cavalry, the overwhelming disparity in numbers told and the Allied force was routed.

In 1695 bravery and determination, however, had at last some reward. William attacked and took Namur, then as now one of the most strongly fortified towns in Belgium. Eleven British battalions which are still on the establishment took part and have the battle-honour " Namur "—the first battle honour won on the continent of Europe. The 18th Royal Irish, now disbanded, won particular renown and gained their title of Royal and the inscription " Virtutis Namurcensis Praemium " on their colours.

By 1697 both sides had fought themselves to a standstill and the war came to an end with the inconclusive Peace of Ryswick. It had, however, given the British soldier experience in European fighting ; had firmly established his reputation as a man of courage and determination and had given some foretaste of what his quality and achievements might be if he was led by a commander worthy of him.

Conditions of Army Life

That his quality should be so good was, indeed, miraculous when the circumstances of his life and training are considered. The men were enlisted for life ; there were no barracks, and apart from the 30 small garrisons of fortresses, the men were dispersed and

billeted in public houses over the countryside—a sore trial to the owners, and demoralizing for the men themselves. Collective training was almost impossible.

Regiments were known by their Colonels' names—as they continued to be until 1751 when they were numbered—and the Colonels were almost complete dictators within them. Discipline was maintained by severe and often inhuman flogging, which led the Colonists in North America later to call the British soldiers "the Bloody Backs."

CHAPTER IV

THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION, 1702–1714

THE peace which followed the Treaty of Ryswick was short-lived. In 1700, Charles II of Spain, whose death had been anxiously awaited, died without a direct heir and the Spanish Empire, which comprised Spain, the Spanish Netherlands, Naples, Milan, Sicily and Sardinia, and, in the New World, vast and valuable territories, was left without a ruler. Prior to his death a Partition Treaty had been arranged between William III and Louis XIV, by which the bulk of these lands was to go to the younger son of the Emperor, the Archduke Charles—Naples and Milan alone going to Philip of Anjou, the grandson of Louis XIV. Thus, it was hoped, the Balance of Power in Europe would be preserved against French aggression, and Holland would be protected by an Austrian buffer between herself and France. Unfortunately, however, Charles II had signed on his death-bed a will bequeathing all his dominions to Philip of Anjou, and Louis XIV, despite his promises, accepted the throne for his grandson and proceeded to throw French troops into the Spanish Netherlands, to occupy the fortresses on the borders of Holland. Theoretically, it is true, Spain and France were to be separate, but in practice, it was realized, France would control two-thirds of Europe, would possess the coastline of the North Sea up to the borders of Holland and would be supreme in the Mediterranean as well. The Dutch were alarmed to the verge of panic and William would have declared war could he have convinced the English Parliament that British security was seriously endangered. But he was unpopular, regarded as placing Dutch interests before British ; and the average Englishman of the time was unable to grasp the conceptions, later to become platitudes of British foreign policy, that the defence of Britain required both a Balance of Power in Western Europe and that Belgium should not fall under the control of a great Naval Power. The most the British Parliament would do was to agree to the despatch in June 1701 of twelve battalions to Holland under the Earl of Marlborough to give assistance which had been promised by a Treaty of 1678.

At this point, Louis XIV committed an act of incredible folly. The exiled King James II died at St. Germain, and Louis, in direct repudiation of the Treaty of Ryswick, acknowledged his son as James III. The English people were stirred to action and threw in

their lot with the Dutch and the Empire in a Grand Alliance. New regiments were hastily raised ; others which had been disbanded in 1697 were reformed, and reinforcements were despatched to Holland. The stage was set for a great European war. On the eve of its outbreak, however, the man who had devoted his life to curbing the ambitions of Louis died. William III met with an accident in February 1702 ; a fortnight later he was dead, and Anne, second daughter of James II and wife of Prince George of Denmark, reigned in his stead. The struggle against Louis was destined to be waged to its conclusion by a man whose courage and determination were no less than those of William and whose skill and subtlety were incomparably greater.

John Churchill—Earl of Marlborough

John Churchill, third son of a Winston Churchill of Mintern in Dorset, a country squire, man of letters and cavalry leader under Rupert, was born on June 6th, 1650, and was thus nearly 52 years of age when he was appointed Captain-General of the English forces at home and abroad on May 15th, 1702. Educated at the City Free School in Dublin, where his father held for a time a government post, and later at St. Paul's School in London, he became a page to the Duke of York and then, through James's influence, was gazetted as an ensign to the 1st Foot Guards (the Grenadier Guards) at the age of 17. Between 1668 and 1670, he served in Tangier, where he obtained his first experience of active service. In 1672 he was present at a naval action with his company which had been embarked on one of the British battleships (there were no Royal Marines in those days) and apparently distinguished himself for he was promoted to a captaincy in " The Maritime Regiment," then the 3rd of the Line (disbanded in 1688). From 1673–1675 he fought under Turenne, the greatest commander of the time and won his praise as a dashing young officer ; in 1678 he was gazetted Colonel at the age of 28. In 1682 he was raised to the peerage and appointed Colonel of the Royal Dragoons.

We have seen that to him was partly—perhaps mainly—due the defeat of Monmouth in 1685, when Churchill, then a Brigadier in command of a small force, played his part with greater vigour and enterprise in the preliminary movements and in the final débâcle of Monmouth's hopes at Sedgmoor than any other commander present. By 1688, he was a Lieut.-General and the most distinguished soldier in England.

Controversy must inevitably continue to range around his defection from James II in 1688, which, delayed to the last moment, left James in a hopeless position without an army and without a leader and with no time to reacquire either. This defection laid

Marlborough open to serious charges against his honour as an officer and as a gentleman, but no judgment on his action can be just without taking the circumstances into account. Churchill was a sincere Protestant; James had pursued a policy inimical to Protestantism, and religious beliefs were held hotly and tenaciously in those days. The Revolution was undoubtedly popular among the British people. They had had enough of James II. Churchill, therefore, had he stood by James, might have retained him on the throne but would have done so contrary to both the religious and the political feelings of the majority of the English people. This he well understood.

As to subsequent charges of disloyalty to William III, it must be remembered that the period was in reality one of civil war, open or disguised, and the penalty of belonging to the losing side was certainly ruin and possibly execution. It was therefore an ordinary —in fact general—measure of precaution to maintain some contacts with the other side, if it was in any way possible, in case of eventualities. The fact that in correspondence he professed repentance for his share in the deposition of James II does not necessarily mean that he regretted it. He merely insured himself, as did practically every other leading man of his time, against the vicissitudes of dynasties.

But on other matters there can be no dispute. In 1702 he had seen much service, had won a reputation in England as a very capable soldier and an adroit courtier. William III had discerned his capacity though he distrusted his loyalty. But no one realized that behind the mask of his almost perfect features and underlying the superlative charm of manner which he possessed was a cool and exquisite judgment, and a serene patience, allied to a swiftness of conception and of execution which only the greatest of commanders have possessed.

The Opposing Forces

The Grand Alliance formed by William before his death consisted of Austria, Prussia, most of the minor states of the German Empire, Holland, Denmark and Great Britain. On the other side was France with its Allies, Savoy which secured communications between France and the Italian territories which had been willed to Philip of Anjou—Milan and Tuscany; the Elector of Cologne whose territory lay astride of the Rhine between Holland and the upper reaches of the Rhine; and the Elector of Bavaria (who threw in his lot with France in 1702). In addition Louis could count to some extent on assistance from certain sections in Spain and the Kingdom of Naples, and he had made an alliance with Portugal. He had, also, as we have seen, thrown French troops into the Spanish Netherlands and occupied the fortresses there. In man-power and resources the two

combinations were fairly evenly matched, but Louis had the advantage that France and its allies, with the exception of Bavaria, formed a coherent central mass and were situated " on interior lines " compared with the Grand Alliance which was widely separated. The Grand Alliance had the advantage of possessing the combined naval strength of Britain and Holland which gave them supremacy at sea, enabled them to chose their points of attack and to move troops to Europe from England without danger. This advantage was later to have effects of permanent importance to Great Britain. On the other hand the Emperor was embarrassed by operations in Italy, a Hungarian insurrection, the defection of the Electors of Cologne and Bavaria and the ever present menace of Turkey on his south-east frontier. It was therefore obvious that Louis' best chance of success was to hold his position on the Dutch frontier and to join hands with the Elector of Bavaria in striking with their combined strength at Vienna, the capital of the German Empire.

The British military contribution to the Allied force had been fixed at 40,000 men ; the Emperor was to produce 90,000 and the Dutch 10,000, but as invariably happens these figures had to be greatly exceeded during the ensuing campaigns. Seventeen new regiments of infantry were raised in Great Britain and Ireland, of which those numbered the 28th to the 39th of the Line survive to this day.

The Campaigns of 1702–1703

War was declared on May 4th. A week later Marlborough started for the Hague as Captain-General of the British forces, where immediately difficulties arose with regard to the supreme command of the Allied force. The Dutch statesman, Heinsius, eventually persuaded his countrymen to agree to the appointment of Marlborough, but only on the condition that he was to be accompanied by two Dutch civilian field-deputies with great powers of obstruction and veto. In June he arrived at Nimuegen on the Waal to take command of a force of 60,000 men, of which about 12,000 were British, to face a somewhat larger French force under Marshal Boufflers, which lay with very extended lines of communication near Xanten, threatening the way into Holland by the Meuse and the Rhine.

Marlborough, in his characteristic way, immediately took the initiative though hampered sadly by the Dutch deputies who, ever fearful of the results of an action, wished him to remain on the defensive. He marched south in a series of swift movements to St. Hubert's Lille, threatened Boufflers' communications with Flanders and compelled him to retreat up the Meuse to Ruremond, where Boufflers found himself to his dismay, on crossing the river,

within 9 miles of Marlborough's force which he must pass in order to get to safety. At this stage the Dutch deputies intervened to prevent Marlborough from attacking the French as they passed by in confusion and disorder and so wrecked the final phase of a brilliant piece of work. Boufflers was allowed to get away to the safety of the Spanish Netherlands, and the first of many opportunities was lost.

A few weeks later he tempted the French Marshal north by using a convoy as bait and once again slipped in between the French force and its fortified positions. This time he had Boufflers in a trap, but the Dutch General Opdam refused to co-operate in an attack. So a second great opportunity was irretrievably lost. He had, however, cleared the French from the Meuse, and before operations were suspended in October he had recovered all the fortresses on that river up to and including Liége. In these siege operations the British regiments present greatly distinguished themselves. He returned to England where the Queen created him Marquis of Blandford and Duke of Marlborough and awarded him a pension of £5,000 a year for life.

In March 1703, he arrived at the Hague again, and, as usual, was determined on a swift and vigorous offensive. His plan now was to attack strongly in the Netherlands in order to prevent the French from pushing large forces eastwards from Alsace to join hands with Bavaria and threaten Vienna. By his energy and determination he had his troops in the field some weeks earlier than Villeroi (who had succeeded Boufflers) anticipated, and behind a covering force stationed between Liége and Maastricht proceeded to besiege Bonn, which he took early in May. This left the Rhine clear for movement from the Dutch frontier to Bonn, a result of great importance which materially affected the campaign of 1704.

Marlborough now unfolded the details of his plan. Simultaneously Antwerp was to be attacked by a Dutch force under Opdam, advancing from Bergen-op-Zoom ; the famous Dutch engineer and gun designer, Cohorn, was to attack Ostend; the British fleet was to threaten a landing at Dieppe ; while Marlborough kept the main French force under Villeroi pinned near the Meuse. Alas, Cohorn went off on a plundering expedition and Opdam allowed himself to be surprised, and routed. Marlborough wrote to Godolphin " that Opdam is beat. I pray God it be not so, for he is very capable of having it happen to him." So this plan too, like so many of its predecessors, was stultified by the obstinacy and stupidity of the Dutch. Limburg, it is true, was captured ; so also was Huy, but these were trifling gains compared to what might have been accomplished.

On no occasion, indeed, during 1702 and 1703 was Marlborough

allowed to carry out to its decisive conclusion the real plan which he had formed ; his successes, great as they were, were merely salvaged from the ruins of his great conceptions. Yet, throughout, realizing that on him mainly rested the solidarity of the Grand Alliance and that this solidarity could only be maintained by the exercise of the utmost tact, his patience and good humour never failed. He was supremely a diplomat as well as a commander.

The March to the Danube, 1704

When the campaign opened in the spring of 1704 circumstances, however, necessitated action which the Dutch, ever fearful of their own frontier, could not be prevailed upon by even his persuasive tact to accept. In 1702, the Elector of Bavaria had cast in his lot with France, thus confronting the Emperor of Austria with an enemy on the very threshold of his own capital. In 1703 the French Marshal Villars had entered Bavaria, joined with the Elector and defeated the Imperial force there. Unless help was speedily forthcoming, 1704 would see the capture of Vienna and the dissolution of the Alliance. Bavaria was indeed obviously the key to the situation, yet how could Marlborough unite with the Emperor's forces on the Danube when he was tied to the defence of the Dutch frontier ? The Dutch would never agree to the apparently immense risk which such a move would involve. Marlborough therefore decided to make the tremendous march, but to do it in such a way that the Dutch would never suspect his real purpose till it was too late to hold him back. Then, having reached the Danube, he could seek decisive action against the main forces of the enemy, untramelled by Dutch opposition.

He began by suggesting for 1704 a campaign on the Moselle, with the ultimate object of advancing towards Paris, to which the Dutch most reluctantly agreed. They felt that the Army would at least still be in touch with their frontier and could retire on it if needs be. In apparent pursuance of this plan he arrived at Maastricht on May 10th, leaving behind a small but sufficient Dutch army with a stiffening of British troops to watch and guard the frontier of Holland. On May 16th he reached Bedburg near Cologne. His force now comprised 90 squadrons and 51 battalions, of which 19 squadrons and 14 battalions were British. He had also a train of 36 guns. Meanwhile the French were kept guessing. They could not know with certainty what was his objective. He might strike up the Moselle towards Paris. Indeed their secret agents had heard that this was the plan on which he was determined. He had said so in a letter to the King of Prussia. On the other hand he might swing right and threaten Alsace. It was at least incredible that he would attempt to march across the front of

two French armies—Villeroi's on the Meuse and Tallard's which was at Kehl opposite Strasburg—would cut himself off from his chief line of communication, the Rhine, traverse the hilly forested State of Wurtemburg and effect a junction with the Imperial forces on the Danube. Until he left the Rhine his choice of objective could not be determined. While he was on it he could maintain his communications or if necessary drop downstream far more speedily than the French could move on the appalling roads.

On May 14th Coblenz was reached. Now it would be clear whether the advance was to be along the Moselle. He passed it and arrived at Cassel, opposite Mainz on the 29th, and at Ladenburg near Mannheim on June 3rd. Here the plan must be divulged. Still the French were uncertain. He had arranged for the construction of a bridge of boats at Philipsburg and sent his Hessians to Mannheim, which deluded the French into expecting an attack through Lorraine or Alsace. Tallard accordingly retired from Kehl and took up his position near Landau to face the invader.

Now all pretence was abandoned. Marlborough turned south-east. At Heidelberg the infantry was given four days well-earned rest. Supplies of boots and other necessities had been provided there by his forethought. At Mondelheim he halted for 3 days, as he had done at Mannheim, to allow the infantry and artillery to catch up on the cavalry. There he met for the first time his great colleague, Eugene, a cadet of the House of Savoy, who as a youth had been destined for the Church, but had vainly begged Louis XIV for the command even of a company, and had since devoted his life, in the service of the Emperor, to making Louis bitterly regret his contemptuous description "the little Abbé." Now he was an Imperial Field-Marshal, distinguished alike in Hungary and Italy, and with a fiery zeal accustomed to beat down obstacles. One such was already at hand, Prince Louis of Baden, the Imperial General, slow and jealous, but impossible to ignore because he was commanding his own troops. It was decided, at a council of war, that he and Marlborough should operate in Bavaria, taking command on alternate days, while Eugene endeavoured to hold off Tallard, who was coming with French reinforcements from the Rhine, and, at the same time to secure Marlborough's right flank. On June 14th Marlborough's cavalry joined the force of Louis of Baden; a few days later and the whole force, cavalry, infantry and guns, was near Ulm on the Danube. The 250 miles march was complete, in less than 6 weeks. Arrangements for the march had been so well thought out that the men were in fighting trim. Agents had been sent ahead to arrange billets, forage and food. The march was limited to 14 miles a day, and was carried out in the early hours before the sun was hot. The men were paid regularly; no plundering was allowed. "Surely,"

said one who took part in it, "never was a march carried on with more order and regularity and with less fatigue." And this in spite of mountainous roads and torrential rain in Wurtemburg. Some of the credit for the success must be given to Marlborough's brother, Charles, who was in charge of the transport and guns, and displayed all the qualities of a great administrative officer.

The Schellenberg

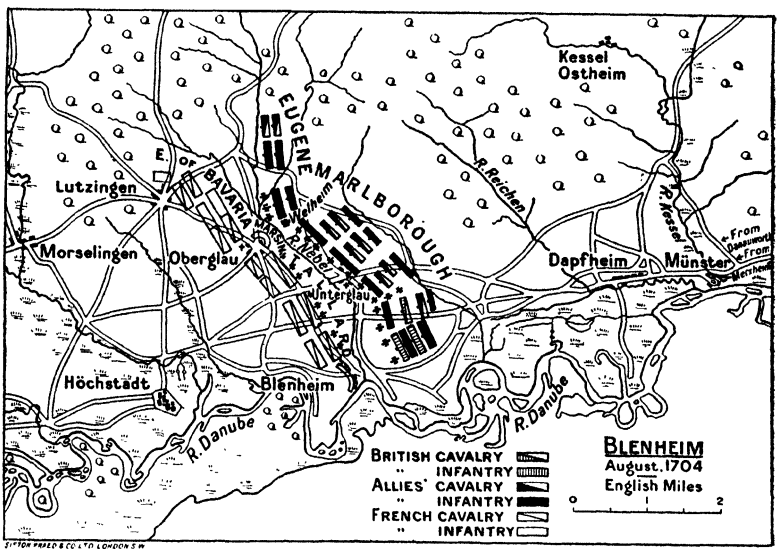
The key to the Elector's capital, Munich, was the bridge over the Danube at Donauworth, covered by the Schellenberg, a hill which the Franco-Bavarians had already started to fortify. This hill must be taken, and taken speedily or it would become impregnable. In any case, if it were left to the next day, Louis of Baden would be in command and nothing would be done. Marlborough therefore decided to attack it forthwith. The Army had had to march 15 miles in the morning, because of the dilatoriness of Louis of Baden, who had commanded on the previous day, and so the storming of the Schellenberg could not take place till late in the afternoon. Marlborough hurled the British infantry against the key to the position and they took it, the Guards, the 1st, 23rd, 24th, 26th, 27th and 37th of the Line performing prodigies of valour, as also did the 5th Dragoons and Scots Greys. The Franco-Bavarians were thrust down the hill on to the Danube and lost 10,000 men killed or drowned. The victory was mainly due to the British troops involved, yet no battle honour for it has ever been conferred on the regiments who took so gallant a part.

After this action Marlborough proceeded to lay waste Bavaria in order to make the Elector come to terms, using German and not British troops for the purpose. Meantime the Elector fell back with the remainder of his force on Augsburg to the south in hope of French reinforcements. These were speedily forthcoming, as Marshal Tallard joined him with 20,000 men on August 5th, and the French and Bavarians were now somewhat superior in numbers, but this disparity was reduced by the arrival of Eugene who, unable to prevent Tallard from advancing, had hastened to join Marlborough with part of his force. Prince Louis of Baden was now persuaded to undertake the siege of Ingoldstadt, lower down the Danube, with 20,000 German troops, Marlborough and Eugene considering his departure cheap at the price. On August 11th a junction of Marlborough's army and Eugene's main force took place. The French and Bavarians were only 3 miles distant in a position at Blenheim which Tallard considered was too strong for Marlborough to attack, especially as the French were numerically superior. Besides, Marlborough's movements had been so rapid and the

French " intelligence " so faulty that he did not know till the dawn of the battle that the junction had taken place. Marlborough had, in fact, marched 24 miles and crossed 3 rivers in 20 hours in order to join Eugene's main force. The two Allied commanders immediately made a reconnaissance and decided to attack, though they had only 52,000 men and 56 guns against the enemy's 56,000 men and 100 guns.

The Battle of Blenheim, August 12th, 1704

On the morning of the 12th the Allied force by 6 a.m. loomed out of the early mist. It had started to march at 3 a.m., and was within



deploying distance before the French knew it had moved at all. Tallard's Army lay behind a marshy stream, the Nebel, which flowed into the Danube. His right flank was on the Danube close to the village of Blenheim; his left was about 3 miles to the north where the ground became wooded and hilly. Tallard's infantry were massed in the village of Blenheim, close to the Danube, his cavalry linking up in the centre of the position with the troops of Marsin and the Elector, who filled the remainder of the gap below the hills. Since their two armies were separately organized with cavalry on the wings, this meant that only nine battalions of infantry were available to support the Franco-Bavarian centre, which was occupied by a great mass of cavalry, about 80 squadrons,

intended to charge the Allies if they crossed the Nebel, and thrust them back into its marshes. Realizing their object, Marlborough had in front of his centre 17 battalions of infantry; behind them, in two lines, 65 squadrons of cavalry; and another eleven battalions in reserve. On his right, facing the Elector and Marsin, was Eugene; and on his left, facing the 27 French battalions in and about the village of Blenheim, were 15 squadrons and 20 battalions under Lord Cutts, known as "the Salamander," in whose force were included the three brigades of British infantry.

The battle did not begin until after midday, but no time was wasted. Officer patrols were sent forward to reconnoitre and prepare ways across the Nebel. Five pontoon bridges were laid across it, in spite of gun-fire, and the cavalry provided themselves with fascines. Marlborough, in the meantime, went round, reviewed his dispositions and even saw to the position and field of fire of his own guns.

It was essential to attack and hold the hostile battalions in Blenheim lest they should sally out and assail the left of the Allied centre as it crossed the marshes, and also in order to drain the Franco-Bavarians in that direction. This was gallantly done by Row's British brigade, who advanced and held their fire until their brigadier actually struck his sword into the palisades surrounding the village. A desperate struggle ensued in which the tide of the battle ebbed and flowed, but gradually the British infantry, reinforced now by Hessians, lapped round the village to the north and held a much superior force jammed up and unable to deploy.

Meanwhile Marlborough's centre, horse and foot intermingled, was steadily pouring across the Nebel in spite of the difficult marshy country. They were partially across when Tallard launched his charge. Then was seen the skill of Marlborough's tactics. The French cavalry had the advantage of the ground, but they could not face the alternation of cavalry charges and infantry fire, and the Allied centre held its own. Meanwhile both the Prince of Holstein Beck attacking Oberglau on Marlborough's right, which was defended by the French-Irish Brigade (formed partly of the defenders of Limerick), and Eugene beyond him, attacking the other village of Lutzingen, were in difficulties. Marlborough sent aid to Holstein Beck; and Eugene, whose cavalry had been routed, led his stubborn Prussian and Danish infantry once more against the Elector.

Late in the afternoon Marlborough was ready for his final stroke. By repeated assaults the French reserves had been drained into Blenheim, leaving their centre weakened. Now a massed cavalry charge, routed the French horsemen in the centre and trampled down the nine unhappy battalions supporting them. The centre

was pierced and rolled back on the Danube behind Blenheim. At this stage Marlborough directed the Scots Greys and 5th Dragoon Guards to advance at a trot through the broken centre and then wheel left so as to cut off the retreat of the French infantry trying to get out of Blenheim and drive them back there. The French cavalry were thrust into the Danube and, after a short time, the garrison of the village, nearly 10,000 strong, surrendered to Lord Orkney, who bluffed them into thinking that they were surrounded by overwhelming numbers. Tallard was captured by the 5th Dragoon Guards when trying to get to the village and was deposited in Marlborough's coach. The Elector and Marsin managed to extricate themselves from Eugene's grip under cover of darkness, and fled across the Black Forest to the Rhine, where they arrived with a mere fraction of their Army. Their immediate pursuit was impossible because the Allied troops were exhausted by the battle and the hard marching before it. Marlborough allowed himself only 3 hours sleep after 17 hours in the saddle and then visited Tallard to console him on the loss of his army.

The total Franco-Bavarian losses amounted to 40,000 men and all their guns; Bavaria was in the hands of the Allies; Vienna was saved; the French tradition of victory had been ruined and the reputation of the British leader and his troops firmly established—and all this at a cost of some 13,000 casualties, of whom 2,234 were British.

At the end of August Marlborough and Eugene set out for the Rhine. Siege was laid to Landau which eventually capitulated. Meanwhile Marlborough marched into the valley of the Moselle and laid siege to Trarbach, which fell in December. These operations were intended to pave the way for the campaign of the following year which was to have Paris as its objective, and were hardly resisted by the French who were too shaken to offer serious opposition. Then, at length, the Army went into winter quarters and Marlborough returned to England to be loaded with honours and rewards.

1705

The year 1705 saw the prospects of a speedy end to the war wantonly thrown away. Marlborough had planned to advance up the Moselle while the Army of the Empire simultaneously invaded Alsace. But on returning to the Netherlands in April he found himself back once more in the miserable conditions of 1702 and 1703. The States-General and the German Princes were alike dilatory and obstructive; and Eugene was in Italy, in which the Emperor was far more interested than in the Low Countries, now that the Bavarian menace was removed. Marlborough had not sufficient forces to compel the French commander, Villars, to battle

on the Moselle, and was obliged to leave that area to combat an attack by Villeroi on Liége. Leaving Villars completely deceived, Marlborough arrived at Maastricht, and Villeroi promptly fell back behind the French defensive system stretching from Namur to Antwerp. Deceiving Villeroi in turn, Marlborough crossed the lines at the Little Gheete and occupied Thirlemont, after a brisk action, in July. An attempt to bring the French to action was frustrated by the Dutch generals, and the same thing happened again in August owing to the stupid jealousy of the Dutch general, Slangenberg. As Winston Churchill truly points out, it was the Dutch procrastination in 1705 which relegated them to the position of a second-class power for, as a result, they were condemned to a long dragging and costly war at the end of which their sea-power had vanished though their land-frontier remained intact.

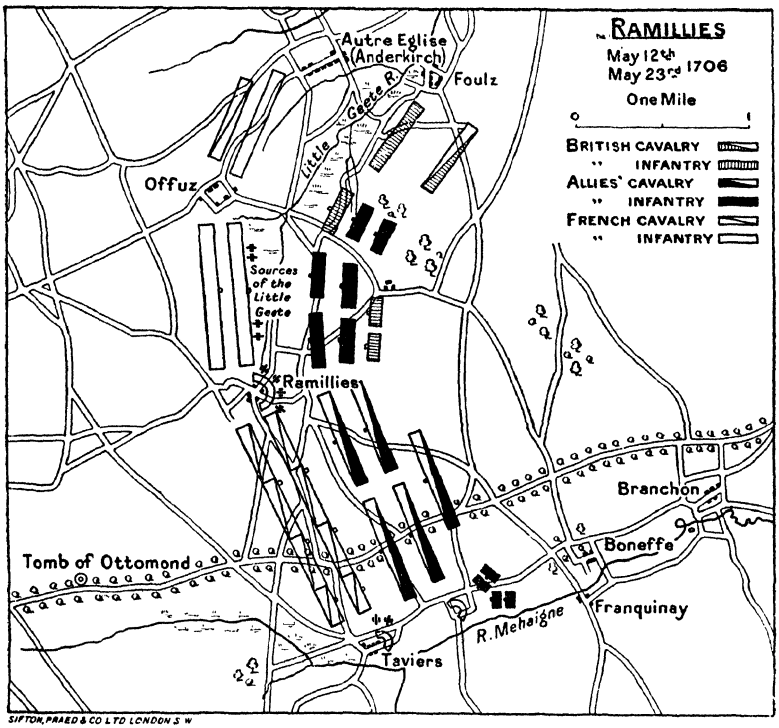
The Campaign of Ramillies, 1706

For the campaign of 1706 Marlborough, sick of the inefficiency and obstruction he had met with in the Netherlands, designed to transfer himself and a strong contingent to Lombardy, where he could co-operate with the able Eugene. But the proposal met with such opposition that he resigned himself to another campaign in Flanders. Here the French were commanded by Villeroi and the exiled Elector of Bavaria, who were in position behind the Little Gheete, but outside their defensive lines and obviously prepared to fight. Marlborough decided to oblige them and the Dutch field-deputies, who by now had the grace to be ashamed of their own generals, gave their consent.

The French position was very strong. They were facing east, as at Blenheim, and their left and centre was covered by the marshes of the Little Gheete, with their right extending from the village of Ramillies at the head of the valley of the Little Cheete to Tavières on the River Mehaigne. Villeroi did not mean to make the mistake which Tallard had made at Blenheim ; he held his centre at Ramillies strongly with infantry and mixed infantry with the mass of cavalry on the right between Ramillies and Tavières. But Marlborough had no intention of fighting Blenheim over again, though he skilfully took advantage of the fact that his opponent seemed to have expected him to do so. His design was much more subtle. He had detected the weakness of the French position, which was that their flanks were thrown too far forward so that the French line was crescent-shaped. It would therefore be possible for Marlborough to draw troops to the point at which he decided to strike more quickly than the French could bring up reinforcements to counter him. The two armies were practically equal, about 60,000 each, but Marlborough had 120 guns to Villeroi's 80.

He decided to demonstrate against the French left and centre by openly displaying British troops in their red coats in that quarter and by carrying out feint attacks across the marshes of the Little Gheete. But the coup de grâce was, this time, to be delivered on the open ground at the right of the French line.

At 1 p.m. on May 23rd Marlborough advanced. On the extreme left the Dutch troops took Tavières, and simultaneously on the



extreme right the British red coats had advanced as if to attack Autre Eglise, while the Earl of Orkney, with more British troops, struggled across the Little Gheete and attacked Offuz, between Autre Eglise and Ramillies—which though only a feint attack met with more success than was anticipated. This was, to all appearances, repeating the tactics of Blenheim, and Villeroi did what Marlborough expected him to do, reinforced his left and centre at the expense of his right. Marlborough now launched an infantry attack on the French centre at Ramillies, which kept the French pinned down there. A vast cavalry combat developed in the open

ground between Ramillies and the river Mehaigne to the south with varying success, and, covered by this and by the nature of the ground, Marlborough brought round his cavalry from the right, who had a shorter distance to go, owing to the shape of the opposing lines, than the French, even if the attention of the latter had not been distracted by Orkney's British infantry on that wing. There, by skilful use of the ground, an appearance was given of great British strength which led Villeroi to anticipate that the final attack would be at that part of the line. The arrival of the additional cavalry on the left flank proved decisive. The French between Ramillies and the river Mehaigne gave way; under a combined frontal and flank attack, Ramillies was captured, and the whole French line rolled up from south to north. Marlborough had still some fresh cavalry in hand and the pursuit was pressed relentlessly. The French lost 15,000 and 50 guns; the Allied loss was only a quarter of that figure.

Marlborough had now got the French on the run, and meant to use his victory to clear them out of the Netherlands. Louvain and Brussels were entered; then in succession, Malines, Alost, Ghent, Bruges and Oudenarde. Antwerp surrendered on June 17th and on June 28th siege was laid to Ostend, which capitulated in a few days. Menin, Dendermonde and Ath fell in turn. Mons was the Duke's next objective, but it was considered by the Dutch too late in the year for the enterprise.

1707

Yet in spite of these amazing successes, the year 1707 which followed was one of disappointment. In May, the Dutch field-deputies refused Marlborough permission to attack Marshal Vendôme near Louvain; and the dilatoriness of Count Tilly, the Dutch commander, enabled the French to evade an action again in August. Vendôme had no intention of fighting a pitched battle if he could avoid it and the year closed with this Fabian policy temporarily successful. The very elements had favoured it. A wet winter succeeded by a wet summer had turned large areas of Flanders into a quagmire; the infantry had to march "in clay and dirt up to their knees."

Oudenarde, 1708

Meanwhile the French had been making tremendous efforts to increase their forces and placed two armies in the field, one in the Netherlands under Louis' grandson, the Duke of Burgundy and Marshal Vendôme, the other on the Upper Rhine, under Marlborough's nephew, the Duke of Berwick (an illegitimate son of James II), and the Elector of Bavaria. Marlborough opposed the

first and Eugene was to face Berwick and the Elector, but with the object, if possible, of joining Marlborough, who was considerably outnumbered.

The French struck first and, suddenly advancing, captured Bruges and Ghent by bribery and then decided to lay siege to Oudenarde, on which depended Marlborough's direct communications with England. They also threatened Brussels, which Marlborough was obliged to cover, pending the arrival of Eugene, whose army was now approaching Maastricht, Berwick having been successfully deceived as to his intentions. Eugene arrived ahead of his army, and Marlborough, strengthened by the prospect of support, at once advanced south-west from Brussels to Lessines, so as to be across and threaten the French communications with France. He reached Lessines on July 10th, just before the French, and determined to force them to battle before they could get back again to the shelter of their positions in West Flanders. He accordingly followed them up rapidly taking his 80,000 men, 28 miles in 24 hours towards Oudenarde, where his advanced-guard crossed the Scheldt by pontoons just below the town on the morning of July 11th, while the French were also crossing at Gavre, just to the north. There was still time for the French to get away; but Marlborough knew that he had an advantage, lacking the previous year, in the presence of the young and impulsive Duke of Burgundy, who was nominally in command and might on this occasion overrule the prudent Vendôme. Trusting to this, Marlborough risked an encounter battle, which was entirely contrary to the ideas of the time, and risked also the throwing in of his men as they arrived, trusting to their mobility and to his own eye for the decisive point.

Cadogan's[1] advanced-guard of fifteen squadrons and twelve battalions, of which six were British, was across the Scheldt by 2 p.m. and in touch with a smaller force of the enemy who were quickly crushed. Burgundy lost his head and instead of remaining on his strong position west of Gavre and the Scheldt, from which he could have decamped during the night, ordered a general attack south-west towards Oudenarde. This was exactly what Marlborough wanted. The main body of the British infantry were now arriving under the Duke of Argyle (" Red John of the Battles " as he was known in the Highlands) and these Marlborough posted on Cadogan's left, also north of the river, which here runs from west to east. Eugene, with the British cavalry, was on Cadogan's right. Meanwhile the cavalry on Marlborough's left had been pouring over the bridge at Oudenarde and coming up on the left of Argyle. Now was seen Burgundy's mistake. He had committed himself to a general engagement facing south while his line of retreat

[1] Cadogan was Marlborough's Q.M.G. and right-hand man.

ran due west. North of Oudenarde itself extended a stretch of high ground and by advancing along it Marlborough's cavalry on the left could come in behind the French right flank and across their direct line of retreat. By the evening this position was reached unobserved and the French were outflanked. Only darkness saved them from a complete overthrow, but they lost over 9,000 prisoners and their total casualties amounted to about 18,000. The total Allied casualties were little over 3,000.

Eugene's army was now at Brussels; and Marlborough, had he been allowed, would certainly have ignored the French fortresses in Flanders and advanced directly into France. But the plan was too daring for his colleagues and for the motley army of the Allies; and Marlborough had to content himself with the siege of Lille, the most powerful fortress in northern France, for which a siege-train of 120 guns and 60 mortars and howitzers was brought up by road from Brussels, escorted by Eugene's army, and unmolested by the disheartened French commanders.

Berwick, who had now arrived from the Moselle, Burgundy and Vendôme were busy quarrelling among themselves and could agree on no efficacious measures to rescue Lille. This was as well, as the place was immensely strong and the siege, begun on August 27th, was soon hampered by a shortage of ammunition. It was imposible to bring up more from Brussels as Marlborough and Eugene had insufficient numbers both to maintain the siege and drive away Vendôme. In this dilemma Marlborough arranged to have a British detachment landed at Ostend and at the end of September a convoy of 700 waggons set out via Roulers to Lille. The French endeavoured to intercept it but were beaten off, with 4,000 casualties, by a much weaker flank-guard, commanded by General Webb, at Winendaele, and the convoy came safely into camp just as the besiegers' ammunition was practically exhausted. Other convoys arrived; and on October 22nd the commander of the French garrison, Boufflers, had to abandon the city of Lille and retreat into the citadel. The French made a last attempt to succour Lille by threatening Brussels but were surprised and dispersed by Marlborough on the Scheldt; and on December 10th Boufflers surrendered with the remainder of his garrison. The siege had cost the Allies 15,000 casualties, of which the five British battalions concerned had lost 1,500; but the blow to French prestige had been immense owing to the failure of Berwick and Vendôme, with their superior numbers, to prevent its successful conclusion. On December 18th Marlborough laid siege to Ghent, despite the wintry conditions; it capitulated on January 2nd; and Bruges was also recovered. Marlborough and Eugene had now a strong position in Flanders and Louis XIV began to meditate, asking terms of peace. But he could

not reconcile himself to accepting the stern conditions which the suspicious Allies unwisely demanded, and in August 1709 the long drawn out negotiations finally collapsed. France was now on the defensive, but the nation rallied round its monarch and Louis entrusted the command to the Duke of Villars, a commander of great skill with ideas, like Marlborough, ahead of his time. He took up a line roughly equivalent to that held by the British in 1915 against the Germans and then awaited Marlborough's approach.

The Campaign of Malplaquet, 1709

Marlborough and Eugene had a force of nearly 120,000 men available for the campaign of 1709, but it was first necessary to clear away the French fortresses which obstructed the advance on Villars' lines. Deceiving him by a threat against Ypres, they suddenly turned on Tournai, which was invested on June 26th. It finally fell on September 3rd, having cost the Allies over 5,000 casualties. The same day Marlborough started for Mons. Villars followed, but found his opponent already in position and covering Mons. The country to the south-west of Mons was then more densely-wooded than it was in 1914, and the gaps in the forest even more important than they were at the later date. There were two such gaps in 1709, one on the road from Valenciennes to Mons and the other on the road from Bavai to Mons. Villars began by threatening the first, and then turned off to the right and occupied the second, with the Bois de Sars and de Tanières on his left and the Bois de la Lanière on his right. This position Villars hastily fortified, with entrenchments across the gap and abattis in the woods.

This threat from the south-west to the besiegers of Mons was perhaps not so formidable as in previous similar sieges as the French numbered only some 80,000 as compared with 100,000 Allies available. Marlborough might very well have contented himself with merely covering the siege as he had done on previous occasions, but he knew that this was France's last army, and the prospect of crushing it away from its elaborately-constructed lines was too good to be missed. Moreover, twenty battalions from Tournai, under Withers, were approaching the French left and there was the possibility of using them to outflank the French if they could arrive in time. So he decided to attack, though Eugene was against it.

On the morning of September 11th the attack commenced, with Schulemberg and Lottem, with 58 battalions, advancing on the Bois de Tanières from the north and east so as to clear it and the Bois de Sars, and lay open the northern flank of the defile. This advance through the woods on the right was slow and desperately contested and was only finally successful owing to help given by Orkney's British troops from the centre.

Meanwhile the Prince of Orange, on Marlborough's left, who had been ordered merely to demonstrate against the Bois de la Lanière and the right flank of Villars' entrenchments, suddenly hurled his corps of 30 battalions into the re-entrant, which he had been told to avoid, in a dense mass. Assailed in front and on both flanks, the Dutch losses were tremendous, the Blue Guards, the favourites of William III, being practically destroyed. By the time they could be extricated by Marlborough with the reserves they had lost over half their strength and Marlborough's left wing was temporarily out of action.

At this desperate moment Withers' twenty battalions arrived on the French left, having struggled through the woods from St. Ghislain. They took Villars' counter-attack against Schulemberg and Sottem in the flank; Villars was wounded in the knee and carried from the battle-field. Now Orkney advanced in the centre and burst clean through the French entrenchments. Boufflers, who had succeeded Villars in command, hurled in his cavalry. Both sides charged again and again. Marlborough and Eugene brought up their reserves and the French right was driven back. Defeated all along the line, Boufflers was obliged to leave the field, which he did in fairly good order. The Allies had fought themselves to a standstill. Their losses were nearly 20,000, of which over half were Dutch, mainly thrown away by Orange's disobedience. The British share of the casualties was nearly 2,000, out of about 14,000 engaged. The French losses were about 12,000, and they left behind only 3,000 prisoners. Villars and Boufflers had staved off the final defeat which would have been fatal to Louis XIV. Still, Malplaquet was undoubtedly a victory. The French had been driven from an immensely strong position, and Mons surrendered on October 23rd.

Marlborough's Race against Time

At this point Marlborough asked the Queen to appoint him Captain-General "for life," a great mistake, for it was refused and gave a great handle to his enemies. Already the clouds of unpopularity which darkened his later campaigns were beginning to gather. It was now a question of whether he could break down the French resistance before the growing dislike of an expensive war in England compelled him to relinquish the attempt. His campaign in 1710 was therefore carried out under the pressure of heavy anxieties from home. The Duchess of Marlborough had managed to strain her mistress's patience too far, and her position with Queen Anne was being steadily undermined by her rival, Mrs. Masham. Were the Duchess and Godolphin to lose their official posts the foundations of Marlborough's power would be gone and his position most precarious. Nevertheless, he steadily persevered with his plans against the

French barrier-fortresses. In April he opened his campaign on the river Scarpe, designing to attack Douai, farther up the stream towards Arras. At daybreak on April 20th he passed the La Bassée lines; on the 22nd he crossed the Scarpe south-west of Douai and, having encircled the place, began its siege. Villars attempted various manœuvres for its relief, but Marlborough was always too quick for him, and Douai surrendered on June 26th. Next Marlborough laid siege to Bethune, which fell on August 28th. St. Venant was captured in September and Aire in November. Marlborough had now driven a gread wedge almost through the centre of the French fortresses covering Artois. But in the meantime Queen Anne had finally broken with Marlborough's wife and had dismissed from office his steady friend, Godolphin. The Captain-General held his command only while his enemies hesitated to dismiss him.

"Non Plus Ultra Lines," 1711

Unable to prevent the capture of the outlying fortresses or to face the Allies in the open field, Villars had spent the autumn of 1710 and the winter of 1710–11 in constructing a vast defensive system farther back, running roughly west to east from the Channel and stretching all the way from Montreuil on the river Canche (British G.H.Q. in the Great War) to Namur at the junction of the Sambre and Meuse. These "lines" were supported by the remaining fortresses, by marshes, inundations and canals, and Villars proudly called them Marlborough's "non plus ultra"—so far and no farther. It was Marlborough's task in 1711 to show him that he was mistaken.

Yet difficulties were thickening. The King of Prussia and the Elector of Saxony made objections about their contingents; the new Government in England withdrew five British battalions for an expedition to Quebec which was wrecked in the St. Lawrence with the loss of over 700 lives and never reached its destination; the Emperor died and Eugene was called off to the Rhine with all his troops. None the less, in June Marlborough faced Villars near Vimy Ridge, though the latter was considerably stronger in numbers. Marlborough's objective was the fortress of Bouchain, the first of the remaining fortresses on the way to Paris. But to isolate Bouchain he must cross Villars' lines by a causeway across the Scarpe beyond Arleux, and to do so with Villars on the spot would be impossible. Therefore he must both lure Villars away and make certain that the fortifications at Arleux were no longer standing when he needed to use the causeway. So he began by capturing and strengthening the covering fortifications of Arleux, put a weak detachment into the fort and moved his army two miles to the westwards, followed by Villars on a parallel course south of the non plus ultra lines. Villars, however, before moving had detached a force to attack Arleux

which it proceeded to do. The garrison there sent urgent messages to Marlborough for assistance and he despatched a strong force under Cadogan to relieve it, but, it was noticed, Cadogan did not move quickly and Arleux was taken by the French, who immediately razed the fortifications to the ground.

Marlborough now, for the first time in his life, expressed openly the utmost annoyance and dismay. He would, he said, be even with Villars. He would attack his entrenchments. French spies reported accordingly and Villars, delighted with the news, detached a force to add to Marlborough's difficulties by making a diversion in Brabant. Marlborough seemed now to lose his head completely. He despatched 10,000 men to Bethune, nearly 20 miles north of Arras and all his heavy artillery to Douai. He then proceeded to advance within 3 miles of Villars' line and to prepare for an attack with an army much inferior in numbers on a fortified position of great strength. During the hours of darkness on August 3rd all the field artillery and the remainder of the baggage were sent away, and on the 4th he rode out with his staff to reconnoitre the positions for the attack on Villars' army. His troops were filled with alarm and despondency. How could such an attack be successful with no artillery and a depleted force against the best Marshal of France sheltered behind formidable entrenchments ?

Just about sunset the French were intrigued by seeing a column of Allied and British cavalry setting out westwards. Then darkness fell and the order went round the Allied lines to strike tents and prepare to march—eastwards. At 9 p.m. the march began in four columns. At dawn, when they had marched 15 miles, a note reached Marlborough who was riding at the head of his vanguard saying that General Hompesch, with the artillery and troops from Bethune and Douai, had crossed the causeway at Arleux at 3 a.m. and had penetrated the enemy's lines there. And now a race began. Marlborough must get up his main force to reinforce Hompesch before Villars, who had received correct information about 11 p.m., could arrive on the scene. The two armies could see one another on the march. But Marlborough's genius and Marlborough's men, between them, won. By 4 p.m. on the 5th after a march of 40 miles in about 19 hours, the Allied infantry had crossed the Scarpe and lay in Villars' own lines between his army and the fortress of Bouchain. Bouchain itself was then besieged under the eyes of Villars and surrendered on the September 2nd. Only Le Quesnoy and Landrecies now stood between Marlborough and Paris.

But at the very time of this his greatest exploit, his political enemies in England were in full cry. Secret negotiations had been going on with Louis behind his back. At home the clamour for peace without delay was strong, and on January 11th, 1712, the

Queen announced that she " thought fit to dismiss him from all his employments." His enemies had won hands down.

The War in the Mediterranean

While the great events which have been related were taking place in north-western Europe, on Marlborough's advice expeditions had been sent to the Mediterranean also. Marlborough had a wide grasp of the value of sea power and the importance of the Middle Sea in relation to the whole war. An Anglo-Dutch expedition in 1702 to capture Cadiz and use it as a base for operations against the French fleet in the Mediterranean failed to achieve its objective largely owing to the incompetence of Ormonde, its commander, though it succeeded in capturing a Spanish treasure fleet at Vigo. In 1703, however, Portugal came in on the side of the Grand Alliance and thus provided it with bases at Lisbon and Lagos, and a British fleet appeared in the Mediterranean. In the following year an important success was achieved. Admiral Rooke in command of a mixed British and Dutch force attacked and captured Gibraltar and a few days later in a naval battle off Malaga defeated a French effort to recapture it. Eight British regiments include " Gibraltar 1704–5 " among their battle honours. In 1708 the British fleet conveyed a small force to Minorca, and captured it, and, henceforward for over half a century, Port Mahon in that island was an important British naval base.

The War in Spain

Meanwhile, in 1705 and 1706 a small force under an eccentric genius, Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough, carried out operations in Spain which were a marvel of cunning and mobility. The capture of Barcelona in 1705 and of Madrid in 1706 might well be battle honours, but, up to the present, have not been so commemorated. Lord Galway, who succeeded Peterborough was, however, defeated at Almanza in 1707 by a much larger force under Marlborough's nephew, the Duke of Berwick, in a battle in which the 6th and 9th Foot fought gallantly ; indeed from this action the 9th (the Norfolks) are said to have gained the figure of " Britannia " on their badge. Thenceforward the story in Spain was mainly one of muddle and disaster, interspersed by records of amazing courage and endurance on the part of the small number of British troops involved. At Almanara in 1710, the Allied force under an Austrian general was thoroughly defeated and the rearguard which was British, under Stanhope, was separated and besieged by a force ten times its size in Brihuega. It held out till the last of the ammunition had been used and took a large toll of the enemy. These various " side shows " in Spain from 1705 onwards, which absorbed troops, were regarded by

Marlborough as unsound. They were in his opinion a dissipation of the available forces and could achieve no decisive object.

The Peace of Utrecht, 1713

After Marlborough was dismissed in 1712 the politicians proceeded to give away rapidly many of the results of Marlborough's achievements. They appointed as C-in-C. that Duke of Ormonde who had failed to take Cadiz in 1702, and gave him orders which practically prevented him from opposing the French. By the end of 1712 the French troops had regained Le Quesnoy, Bouchain and Douai; their morale had risen again and the terms of the Treaty signed at Utrecht on April 11th, 1713, were far less favourable for the Allies than they would have been even a year previously.

By the Treaty, the crowns of France and Spain were definitely separated, and the Hanoverian succession in England recognized. Great Britain obtained Acadia, Newfoundland and the island of St. Kitts from France as well as a recognition of our rights to Hudson's Bay. From Spain, Britain gained the "Asiento" (a trading concession with Spanish America) and the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca. Britain was now a Great Power, and it was Marlborough who had made her so.

Marlborough

Marlborough, on his dismissal, charged on the flimsiest grounds with peculation, was found guilty and went into exile in Holland where the people, more mindful than his own countrymen of what he had done for them, greeted him with loving admiration. On the death of Anne he returned to England and was reappointed Captain-General and Master-General of Ordnance. But he was now an old man, worn out by many campaigns. He died on June 5th, 1722, and was accorded a public military funeral of great grandeur in St. Paul's. There, for the first time, was that impressive ceremonial drill, "Reverse arms; Rest on your arms reversed" witnessed. Then, too, did the artillery, not yet a regiment, take an important part—a tribute to the first great commander who could use artillery to further his plans in battle, as well as siege, and who, as Master-General of Ordnance was its chief.

No short account such as in the previous pages can do justice to the brilliance of Marlborough's military genius. To get any comprehension of it, the student must study at least one of his campaigns in detail, and if possible on the ground. Then will become apparent the full measure of his stature compared with other great commanders. Then too will be clear the truth that the practice of the military art varies from age to age, but its principles are invariable. Thus the principle of "concentration" was exemplified again and

again, as in the concerted junction of Marlborough's and Baden's forces at Ulm on the Danube and the subsequent junction with Eugene before Blenheim; "Economy of Force" was shown when he "contained" the French infantry in the village of Blenheim with a smaller force; "Surprise," the most used weapon in his armoury, was employed in almost every incident of every campaign and most notably in the attack on the "non plus ultra lines"; "Mobility" of which he was the greatest master, was illustrated in the march to the Danube, the march immediately preceding Blenheim and that great march of 40 miles in 19 hours which shattered Villars' impregnable line; "Offensive action," contrary to the customary tactics of the time, he always sought; "Co-operation" in the strategic and tactical spheres was constantly displayed, the former in his wide vision of the interplay of forces spread over a large part of western Europe, the latter as in the use of infantry with cavalry in the attack on the French centre at Blenheim, to help in the crossing of the Nebel and to repulse French counter-attacks when the cavalry was reforming; the principle of "Security" was illustrated in leaving a stiffening of British troops with the Dutch Army when he went to the Danube, in order to secure his rear, base and line of communication with England. These are taken almost at random. Every one of the principles of war will find a multitude of apt illustrations in his campaigns, but his chief claim to rank with the greatest commanders of all time is that he restored the offensive to war.

His infinite patience in the face of constant obstruction; his success with an army so diversified as to have presented almost insuperable obstacles to one less gifted with serene charm and forbearance; his energy and tact in holding a ramshackle Alliance together by long and tiring journeys to Courts of petty German princes and even to Sweden during the winter months, showed his gifts as a diplomat to be no less than his genius as a commander. Moreover, his grasp of naval strategy was unique among great soldiers of the time. The expeditions to the Mediterranean between 1702 and 1704 were his conceptions, and in the midst of his cares and preoccupations he cheerfully spared thought and resources to plant England's footsteps firmly in the Middle Sea.

Finally, and this is probably the chief foundation of his amazing success, he was never indifferent to the welfare of the men he commanded. They were a rough lot, enlisted for life, often the dregs of English towns. Indiscipline was rife, punishments were harsh, and conditions of service were abominable. But to Marlborough, almost alone among all the great commanders of that period, no trouble was too great to save the men avoidable hardships or loss. He saw to their clothing, their pay and their food; cared

for the wounded and got discipline by respect and not by fear. He was a great Quartermaster General, and they, in return, marched and fought for him with a devotion which British troops have never surpassed. Great as a commander in the field, a diplomat, and a strategist of the widest vision, the most personal tribute was the name given by his men—" Corporal John."

CHAPTER V

1714–1755

WITH the accession of George I (1714–1727), Elector of Hanover, Great Britain became for 123 years—till the accession of Queen Victoria—a partner with a continental State. This had important military consequences for the island Power for it rendered its people liable, however little they might like it, to their King's personal liabilities as Elector of Hanover on the Continent, and involved them in European campaigns. But it was not entirely a feeling of noblesse oblige which induced them to shoulder this responsibility; the question of sea power in the North Sea was closely concerned. For whoever controlled Hanover could control indirectly also the whole German coast from Holland to Denmark, including the ports of the Elbe, the Weser and the Ems. Moreover, the policy of Great Britain then, as for many years thereafter, was based on maintaining in Western Europe a balance of power, that is on preventing any State there from reaching a position of unchecked dominance; and the security of Hanover was an essential ingredient of this policy.

George I was, as befitted a typical German ruler, a competent military administrator, handicapped, however, in his dealings with his English subjects and ministers by a complete ignorance of the English language and English character. Nevertheless, he was instrumental in introducing certain improvements in the British Army, during a period when ferocious parsimony at the expense of the Army was prevalent. A uniform system of drill, regular inspections of units by general officers and the steel ramrod were some of these. But the lessons of the past were largely disregarded by the English people; regiments which had given a gallant account of themselves in the War of the Spanish Succession were disbanded wholesale; the soldier was miserably treated and systematically stinted, and this was the explanation of various episodes which are little gratifying to national pride.

THE REBELLION OF 1715

The policy of reduction was brought to a sudden, though temporary, stop in 1715. Backed by the moral support of France, a pathetic attempt was made by the exiled House of Stuart to regain the throne of England. The Earl of Mar, one of the most ineffective

leaders in history, raised the Stuart standard in the Highlands and encountered the government forces under the Duke of Argyle at Sheriffmuir. One wing on each side ran away and then both forces retired. The final stroke to the insurrection was given by the arrival of James himself—" the Old Pretender "—in Scotland. He had neither the charm nor the determination to retain his supporters, who quickly separated to their homes as he also did—to his in France. A school-boyish collection of Border lords and gentlemen and their tenants got as far as Preston in Lancashire, where they were rounded up by General Carpenter. The Government executed 2 peers and 26 commoners and the whole melancholy business was over. The only permanent result was that 21 regiments had to be hastily raised, of which there still remain to-day the 9th and 12th Lancers and the 10th, 11th, 13th and 14th Hussars.

The Rebellion of 1718–1720

Three years later a second rebellion broke out in the Highlands, this time supported by Spain who declared war on England. In 1719 the Spanish Prime Minister, Cardinal Alberoni, sent an armada to bring support to the Jacobites. Owing to storms only 300 Spanish soldiers got as far as Scotland. They were joined in Ross-shire by a few hundred Highland malcontents and dispersed by General Wightman at Glenshiel, a neat little engagement against odds. The Spaniards thankfully surrendered; the Highlanders vanished; and once again the Stuart cause had displayed its general inaptitude. The British government relieved its feelings by sending an expedition to Vigo; Alberoni was dismissed and peace signed in January 1720. Just at the beginning of this short episode two further additions had been made to the Army. Eight companies formed as a permanent garrison for Halifax and Newfoundland were united into a regiment which is now the P.W.V.'s; also, the Chelsea Pensioners were called out for service, as Fielding's " Invalids." To-day these remain as the 1st Bn. The Welch Regiment.

The Years of Comparative Peace, 1720–1738

There followed, under the guidance of Sir Robert Walpole one of the longest periods of almost unbroken peace that Great Britain has ever known. Her former opponents, France and Spain, were for the time being too handicapped by internal corruption to present much of a problem, and the former had ceased temporarily from being a menace to European security. So the Hanoverian dynasty consolidated itself; England grew rich and prosperous; and Walpole could congratulate himself on the skill with which he had kept out of European entanglements. Only the Army failed to keep pace with the general advance. Its strength remained at about

18,000 men, not including the Irish establishment ; and ill-discipline, neglect of their duty by officers, and scandalous ill-treatment of the men still prevailed. It was far too small for its responsibilities at home and abroad, the latter of which had been greatly increased as a result of the Treaty of Utrecht, and the former of which included police duties. There was no proper system for the relief of overseas garrisons, and regiments which went out of sight were almost forgotten. Thus, the 1st South Staffordshire Regiment had a period of 60 years' continuous service in the West Indies. Further, accommodation in overseas stations was generally non-existent ; even at home there were no barracks and troops were billeted in ale-houses. It is little wonder, therefore, that recruiting was difficult and discipline bad.

In 1722, however, one long delayed and most necessary step was taken by the establishment of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, with four permanent companies originally ordered in 1716 by Marlborough, while Master-General of Ordnance, but of which only two had been then raised. In 1741, the Royal Military Academy was opened at the Warren near Woolwich for the training of officers of this Regiment. It is significant of the neglect of the Artillery arm that the Royal Regiment's first Colonel was a Dane, Albert Borgard.[1] Some 60 years more were to pass before a Corps of Engineers was formed, but a beginning was made in 1717, when 50 engineers were appointed as " persons of scientific attainments, versed in attack and defence, in the cost of materials and capable of constructing fortifications and works." Moreover, in 1725 four companies of Highlanders were raised as some precaution against another rising of the disaffected clans and became known, from the dark colour of the tartan, as the Black Watch, but it was not until 1739, that four more companies were added and the whole formed into a regiment. Had the value of Highland troops been realized and the experiment continued on a larger scale the history of the " Forty-Five " might have been very different.

Meanwhile, George II (1727–1760) had ascended the throne. He was a gallant soldier who had done well against the Turks in Hungary in his youth and also under Marlborough at Oudenarde, but was obsessed by a passion for attractive-looking uniforms (which he thought helped recruiting), and let his desire for appearances outrun all ideas of utility and commonsense : sensible long stockings were replaced by tight-fitting white gaiters up to the thigh (" spatterdashes ") ; hair was to be worn in a pigtail and powdered ; grenadier companies were to wear side whiskers. These were only a few of

[1] The R.A. was different from other units in that it wore blue instead of red and officers could not purchase commissions or promotion. Civilian drivers and teams remained until 1793.

the absurdities which gave a superficial smartness at the expense of comfort and efficiency.

The War of Jenkin's Ear, 1739

In 1739 the period of peace came to an end. It had been broken only by one short war against Spain in 1727, in which Gibraltar was besieged for four months. For years, indeed, feeling had been mounting in England against the Spanish claim to a monopoly of trade with South America. English merchants who took the risk of trading in these waters were liable to arrest, imprisonment and possibly even torture. Whether the English smuggler, Captain Jenkins, who, having lost his ear in a fracas with Spanish coast-guards, said subsequently, "Then, Sir, I commended my soul to God and my cause to my country," is eminently doubtful, but war fever was in the air and Walpole had to give way to it. Admiral Vernon captured Porto Bello, and the enthusiasm was so exuberant that Walpole, in 1740, was compelled to send a military expedition to the Spanish Main. Eight battalions of British troops, mainly raw recruits, but with a stiffening provided by the West Yorks and South Wales Borderers, were collected; and four more raised in the American Colonies. They arrived in the West Indies, and by the beginning of 1741 nearly two thousand had died of disease.

Then followed the horrible drama of the siege of Cartagena. The general in command, Wentworth, was weak and pedantic; Admiral Vernon systematically bullied him; the assault was shamefully mismanaged; over a quarter of the troops were killed and wounded, and the survivors were lucky to escape to their ships. Then yellow fever got to work. The troops died by hundreds, and continued to do so when withdrawn to Jamaica. Reinforcements were swallowed up and it is estimated that 90 per cent. of the men perished. The enterprise of which so much had been hoped finally collapsed because there were no men left to execute it, and an attempt made to seize Darien on the Isthmus of Panama, using Porto Bello as a base, was a complete fiasco. At the beginning of the war, Walpole had said, "They ring the bells now. Presently they will be wringing their hands." He proved to be correct, which was not remarkable as no one was in a better position to know how criminally the navy and army had been neglected.

The War of the Austrian Succession, 1742–1748

And now England was about to be plunged into one of the greatest wars in her history which was to last with a short interval of peace for over 11 years and out of which she would emerge with a great Empire.

In 1740, the Emperor Charles IV died, leaving his throne and

territories to his daughter, Maria Theresa. France supported a rival to the Imperial throne, the Elector of Bavaria; and her price for so doing, it was guessed, was the Netherlands. Frederick the Great of Prussia seized the province of Silesia without any excuse, and France, Bavaria, Saxony and Spain united to plunder Maria Theresa's territory elsewhere. Only Hanover and Holland took her side; and George II, the Elector of Hanover, was quickly brought to heel by a French invasion of his hereditary possessions and compelled to promise a year's neutrality. He sought help from his British subjects whose sympathy with Maria Theresa in her desperate struggle was strong. Once again also the Balance of Power in Western Europe and the security of the Dutch Netherlands were being threatened, and it was evident that France was attempting to secure such additions to her territory as would make her predominant. Indeed the French and Bavarians were already in Bohemia and well on the way to Vienna.

The British Parliament now voted money for the despatch of a force to Hanover, and eleven new regiments were hurriedly raised in 1741 of which seven still remain as the 43rd (1st Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry), 1st Essex, Sherwood Foresters, 2nd D.C.L.I., 1st Loyal Regt. and 1st Northamptonshires.

Since, however, Britain had entered the conflict only as the ally of Maria Theresa, the country was not in the first instance supposed to be at war with the Empress's principal persecutor, France, a position both ludicrous and a sad handicap to the effective prosecution of operations. The commander selected was the Earl of Stair, one of Marlborough's veterans and an excellent strategist but doomed to be continually overruled by his master, King George, who kept the command of the Hanoverian forces at all times in his own hands and continually interfered with the general operations.

In the meantime the British government, ever anxious to remain on good terms with Prussia (as a make-weight to France and a protection to Hanover), persuaded Maria Theresa to cut her losses and buy over Frederick by the cession of Silesia to him. This was done and the French invaders of Bohemia were now in a very awkward position. Indeed, France could hardly have resisted effectively a march by the British and Hanoverian troops on Paris from the Netherlands, so deeply were they committed in Bohemia and the Danube. French troops had to be withdrawn hastily from the northern frontier of France to help to extricate their comrades in Bohemia and the road to Paris was practically open. Stair now wished to attempt a march on the French capital and to settle the war at a blow, but the King refused to give permission. War had not yet been declared between France and England and he wished to avoid it if possible. He insisted on operations being conducted

in South Germany in the region of Frankfort on the Main with the twofold object of covering Hanover and bringing in the South German minor states on his side. Thither, having secured a base in Dutch territory, Stair proceeded in the spring of 1743 with a mixed force of British, Hanoverians and Austrians. His intention was to cross the Main southwards to the Middle Rhine and so threaten the French, under Noailles, that they could render no assistance to the other French army retreating from Bohemia. But King George countermanded this also, with the result that when he himself arrived from Hanover in June to take command he found that the French had taken the offensive and crossed to the right bank of the Main above and below the Allied forces, which were in danger of being starved into surrender.

BATTLE OF DETTINGEN—"THE MOUSE-TRAP WHICH FAILED," 1743

It was indeed a pretty trap. The French held the left bank of the Main with artillery and no retreat was possible through the heavily-wooded hills on the farther side. Upstream and downstream were the French; and the only way out was to force a passage north-westward through the narrow gap to Hanau, where provisions were available. This, on June 27th, King George decided to attempt, though it meant marching along a defile, exposed all the way to the fire of the French guns from across the river. By midday a line was formed facing the French under Grammont who barred the way in front of the village of Dettingen. Noailles himself was upstream, ready to fall on the Allies' flank and rear as soon as they had been repulsed from Dettingen.

So far, as a general, Noailles had scored heavily; but he had failed to reckon with the indiscipline in the French army with which his successor, Marshal Saxe, had so often to contend. Grammont had moved too far forward, and was in front of the ravine running into the Main at Dettingen and not, as he should have been, behind it. The position which the British had to attack was therefore, though difficult, not absolutely impossible and they were desperate. The crushing platoon-fire which Marlborough had taught rolled forth, and the French infantry in the centre suffered severely. The French cavalry now charged the British left, which had been heavily enfiladed by the French guns from across the river, and a desperate struggle ensued, in which the British cavalry, particularly the 3rd Dragoons (now 3rd Hussars) and infantry (Royal Scots Fusiliers and Royal Welch) in turn, gradually forced the French back. A final cavalry charge against the British right also failed. Now a general advance thrust the French back on their bridges to the left bank; large numbers were drowned fording the stream; and the way of escape was clear. King George gladly took it; Hanau was reached;

and the monarch returned to England, the last British sovereign to command his troops in a pitched battle. It had stopped French operations in south Germany, and the scene of fighting was transferred to the Netherlands. Lord Stair, who had had enough of royal interference, was now succeeded by Field-Marshal Wade, the former road-maker in the Highlands, a slow, cautious man, handicapped in every way by his inadequate forces and with no assets but the devastating fire of the scanty British infantry.

Campaign of 1744–1745

The commander of the French armies in the campaign of 1744 was a very remarkable leader, their ablest between Turenne and Napoleon. A soldier of fortune, one of the numerous illegitimate children of Augustus the Strong of Saxony, Maurice de Saxe had finally elected to seek his fortune in the French service. A man of exceptionally clear military insight, he anticipated, in many ways, principles which have since been accepted as a commonplace and expressed them with great clarity. As a scientific soldier he stood head and shoulders above his contemporaries, and it was fortunate for Britain that, as a foreigner by birth, he had a difficult position in France and commanded an army which, though large in numbers, was rotten with corruption and privilege. Had Marshal Saxe wielded an instrument worthy of his ability it is certain that the mediocre British generals would have fared even worse than they did.

Early in April 1744 Saxe had massed 80,000 men in Flanders, while the Allies were still collecting their inferior forces, and the unhappy Wade was representing to his sovereign the futility of the Dutch and Austrians against Saxe's scientific tactics. Nothing was done, and finally, as the only way to secure some sort of subordination to a leader, because he was royal, the young Duke of Cumberland was appointed Commander-in-Chief early in 1745, at the age of 25 years.

Few generals in history have suffered more painfully in their reputations from the assaults of historians and novelists than the Duke of Cumberland. Brutality and incapacity are the customary charges against him, yet the facts remain that he was popular with his men, an honest and competent soldier though not a clever one, and possessed of a resolution which shrank from no obstacles. He had been wounded at Dettingen, when his horse bolted with him into the French ranks and he escaped with difficulty. He was now to measure himself against an older and vastly abler opponent, and, if prejudice be eliminated, it must be admitted that he did not disgrace himself.

FONTENOY, 1745

In April 1745 Saxe laid siege to Tournai and in May Cumberland advanced to relieve it, to find the French across his path behind the village of Fontenoy, just within the present Belgian frontier. Against a Marlborough, the French position would have been dangerous, for the Scheldt ran immediately in its rear, but it was otherwise very strong, resting its right on the fortified village of Anthoin on the Scheldt and its left on the Forest of Barry, which had been strengthened with redoubts, of which the Redoubt of St. Eu was nearest to the edge. The whole intervening space had been filled in with entrenchments and redoubts, and the scientific Saxe considered the position far too strong to be attacked. But Cumberland, though inferior in numbers (50,000 against 56,000) could not afford another indecisive campaign and determined to attack. He formed up his troops with the British (25,000) on the right, the post of honour, opposite the only practicable sector for assault, the gap of less than a mile between the village of Fontenoy and the Redoubt of d'Eu. The Dutch and Austrians made no progress against Anthoin and Fontenoy and soon relapsed into the position of spectators. The four battalions on the right, whom Cumberland had ordered to carry the Redoubt d'Eu, never moved, despite reiterated orders. Nevertheless Cumberland, trusting in the discipline and fire-power of his infantry, did not hesitate. Ten battalions of British infantry in the first line and seven battalions in the second, supported by some Hanoverians, strode steadily forward through a murderous artillery cross-fire right and left. At length they were within fifty yards of the French behind their breastworks and received the French fire. Down came the muskets from the shoulder, and the first French line was almost blasted out of existence. Fresh battalions shared the same fate, and the British continued their advance right into the French position.

But the village of Fontenoy and the Redoubt d'Eu were still untaken, and the British remained jammed between them. Saxe threw in his cavalry and they were repulsed. The British again advanced. Then Saxe, knowing that the French infantry would not face their fire, played his last card and threw in the reserves which he had kept intact for his final blow. Six battalions of the Irish Brigade, the successors of the " Wild Geese " from Limerick, were hurled against the British front. Slowly the British withdrew, in as good order as they had advanced and rolled back down the level slope which they had ascended. There was no effective pursuit, and Cumberland fell back to Ath and Messines. Saxe, who had been desperately ill all through the battle and had had to be carried in a litter, was glad to see him go. His losses had been not less than Cumberland's, possibly more ; but he had won the only pitched-

battle victory which the French can claim against the British since the days of Joan of Arc. The 15,000 British and Hanoverian infantry who had assaulted the gap had left nearly 6,000 killed and wounded behind them. The British soldier had done everything that indomitable courage could do to achieve victory.

Saxe improved his victory by the capture of Tournai, Ghent and Ostend, and Cumberland, now outnumbered by more than two to one, retired on Antwerp. Then came the news of the diversion which Saxe had since 1743 been planning.

Bonnie Prince Charlie and the "Forty-Five"

There can be little doubt that the French never expected Prince Charles Edward—son of James, the "old Pretender" and his Polish wife—to come so near to success as he actually did. The Jacobite cause, in England at any rate, was moribund, and the fact that neither Charles Edward nor his father—to do them justice—had ever allowed it to be thought for a moment that they would compromise on the matter of religion, would in itself have been sufficient to secure their expulsion before long had they ever been successful. But the French had nothing to lose by letting the Prince try his luck in Scotland. If he failed, it cost them very little in money and arms and nothing in troops; and the greater the success he gained the more certain the withdrawal of the British from Flanders. So, with the seven "Men of Moidart" on August 5th he landed in the Highlands, with nothing to help him but his own personality and the fact that there were always Highlanders ready to fight against any Government identified with Clan Campbell. Lochiel, Kippoch and Glengarry joined him with their clansmen, and were followed by the Duke of Perth and Lord George Murray, the latter a very able ex-regular officer.

"The Canter of Coltbrigg"

The Hanoverian commander in Scotland, Sir John Cope, had the sort of force which might be expected when almost everything had been drained off for Flanders. Among his 3,000 men he had but one trained battalion, and taking half the total with him he made for Fort Augustus, hoping to collect recruits on the way to crush the rebellion. But none came; so, marching to Inverness, he prepared to return by sea to cover Edinburgh. But Charles was too quick for him. Moving rapidly south he appeared outside Edinburgh. The two regiments of raw Dragoons, the only troops available, bolted in a panic to Preston; on September 28th Charles entered the capital and palace of his ancestors. The day previously Cope landed at Dunbar. Having collected the runaway Dragoons, he marched along the coast to recover Edinburgh.

Prestonpans

On September 30th the two small armies, approximately equal in strength, were in touch at the village of Prestonpans, due east of Edinburgh, with their opposing flanks resting on the sea. Cope's front was covered by a marsh, but Charles, having no artillery, decided to cross the marsh by a footpath on the night of October 1st and to stake everything on a Highland charge at dawn. The bold design succeeded to perfection; Cope's guns were rushed; the Dragoons bolted once again; and the Highlanders were on top of the infantry. With the exception of the Dragoons—and Cope himself—the whole force was practically wiped out. After some delay, to secure recruits, Prince Charles moved south at the beginning of November, having in the meantime received a certain quantity of arms and money and a few field-pieces from France.

The March to Derby

Three points were now clear. First, that the Highland rush, beginning at a walk, then a trot, and finally a run, would carry them over the ground in the attack far faster than any regular troops and so greatly minimize the effect of platoon firing; secondly, that they were vastly more mobile than any regulars could be; and thirdly that they were very skilfully commanded. How much of the credit for this is due to Prince Charles Edward himself and how much to Lord George Murray is a point still debated, but it is certain that both their advance and retreat were very cleverly conducted. By marching first to Carlisle and then south through Lancashire the Jacobite Army kept Field-Marshal Wade on the wrong side of the Pennines, impassable in the depths of that bitter winter. Manchester was reached; but the few recruits gained there made it clear that the enthusiasm of the English Jacobites was limited to drinking the health of the "King over the Water," and that they had no intention of risking their lives and property in a hopeless cause.

Meanwhile Cumberland's veterans were pouring over from Flanders with the Duke, at Lichfield, to lead them; a very disorderly collection of troops was assembled at Finchley Common to cover London; and Wade was moving south. Murray now cleverly side-stepped Cumberland by inducing him to believe that the Jacobites were making for Wales, and the invaders reached Derby. There the Highlanders' hearts failed them; and Charles Edward, against his better judgment exchanging a chance of success for the certainty of failure, was persuaded to consent to a retreat. The Jacobite army fell back as rapidly and as skilfully as it had come and, checking Cumberland's advanced-guard at Penrith, by the end of December was back in Scotland. Now, if the French were in earnest, was their

chance to invade the south of England, but the invasion never came, though Cumberland waited for it.

Falkirk, 1746

The command of the troops in Scotland was given to General Hawley, who found only about half of them fit for service and very ill-equipped. He managed to collect some 9,000, and with them marched to relieve Stirling Castle, which Charles Edward was besieging. The Prince advanced to meet him with about the same number, and caught Hawley in an unfavourable position on Falkirk Muir on January 28th. The same two regiments of Dragoons which had run away at Coltbrigg and Prestonpans again bolted, and the left of Hawley's line was swept away by the Highlanders. The only redeeming feature was that the right of the line stood firm and beat off all attacks. Hawley hanged deserters and cowards wholesale, and Cumberland, relieved of anxiety about the French, hastened to take over command himself. Charles Edward retired north to Inverness, and thither Cumberland prepared to follow him as soon as supplies and transport permitted. By April 26th he reached Nairn.

Culloden Moor, April 27th, 1746

The Stuart cause was ebbing fast, but Cumberland had no intention of risking another Prestonpans or Falkirk. His men were well-fed ; their confidence had been restored by his own presence ; and he had taught them how to meet the claymore and target by thrusting to the right, on the unshielded side. Also he had arranged for a section of guns, loaded with grape, to fill in the intervals between the battalions. Charles Edward had hoped, as a last resort, to repeat the surprise of Prestonpans and had advanced to Culloden Moor with that object, but the distance was too great, and on the morning of April 27th the Jacobite army stood to fight its last battle. The odds were hopeless ; grapeshot tore lanes through the Highland ranks ; only at one point did the Highland charge get home ; the Macdonalds hung back because they had not their customary place on the right ; and when the Dragoons rushed in all was over. Charles Edward's army was completely broken up, and, though he eventually succeeded in escaping to France, he was regarded there merely as a broken instrument and the French had no compunction in expelling him later from their territory in accordance with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. As befitted the grandson of the great John Sobieski, who had delivered Vienna from the Turks in 1683, Charles Edward was the only Stuart to display great military capacity, but he came too late to save his unfortunate House and left behind him only a romantic memory and the solid fact of having

used a new weapon, speed in the attack, in a way quite foreign to the traditions of his century. That the whole business was a French-inspired diversion, and recognized to be such, is clear from the shout of the troops to Cumberland after the battle: "Now, Billy, for Flanders!"

Roucoux, 1746 and Lauffeld, 1747

Meanwhile Saxe had overrun most of Flanders, and in October a small British contingent of 4 battalions serving under the Austrian commander, Prince Charles of Lorraine, was involved in the action of Roucoux, close to Liége, where they fought hard and helped to cover an orderly retirement in face of Saxe's superior numbers.

In the spring of 1747 Cumberland again took command under the usual conditions, inferiority in strength and lukewarm and incapable allies. The odds were so much in favour of the French that in July, at Lauffeld, near Masstricht, Saxe did not hesitate to attack and carried the village at the third attempt. The British infantry retired in good order, covered by a desperate charge by the Greys, Inniskillings and Cumberland's Dragoons, who suffered very heavily. The British losses were about 2,000 men, a quarter of the small contingent present, and the French, who had also suffered heavily, did not pursue.

Both sides were now thoroughly exhausted and the following year peace was signed at Aix-la-Chapelle, the French restoring their conquests. They had had throughout the advantage of superior numbers, a most able leader, and disunited and heterogeneous opponents, but it is clear that their army was on the downgrade as regards efficiency and it needed all Saxe's ability to disguise the fact. Once the skilled leadership was on the other side they would quickly pay the penalty.

While the events which have been narrated were taking place in Europe, contests were being fought out in India and in North America which were to have tremendous results for the British Empire. In neither of these cases did the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle bring these contests to an end even temporarily. The peace, itself, was generally felt to be little more than an inconclusive truce; and statesmen at home, in France and England, turned a blind eye to the struggle for colonial advantage which was being waged elsewhere. They preferred at any rate to regard it as something short of war, until they were ready to take up arms again.

Events in India, 1744–1755

In 1613 the first trading station or "factory" of the "Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading with the East

Indies " within the Mogul Empire was established, by permission of the Emperor Jahangir at Surat, north of Bombay. Two years previously a factory had been started at Masulipatam outside Mogul territory on the east coast. At first their position was uneasy for Portuguese naval strength, based on Calicut, Socotra and Ormuz was dominant in the Indian Ocean ; but a naval battle in 1615, between a small British squadron and a Portuguese one six times as large, ended in the collapse of Portuguese sea power in that region ; and henceforward for a century the only competitors were the Dutch, who had established important trading stations in Ceylon, Malacca and the East Indies, and ourselves.

Gradually the number of English factories in India increased. In 1640 permission was obtained from a local ruler to establish a fortified factory close to the small town of Madraspatam. This new settlement, Fort St. George, was ready for occupation in 1641, and soon became the chief centre of English trade on the east coast. In 1661, the island of Bombay, which the Portuguese had occupied, was given to Charles II of England as part of the dowry of his bride, Catherine of Braganza, and Charles sold it a few years later to the East India Company. An island, secure therefore from land attack, with a good anchorage and sheltered harbour, it speedily supplanted Surat as the headquarters of English trade of the west coast. Meantime in Bengal also factories had been established, of which the most important was at Hughli, so far up the river of that name that ships could not reach it. In 1685, however, Job Charnock, an eccentric English agent who had married a Hindu lady, moved the factory nearer the sea to a position where he rented three neighbouring villages, Satanati, Calicata, and Govindpur. A fortified trading station with a wall and moat was built and named Ft. William in honour of William III, and soon became the headquarters of English trade in Bengal.

Thus, by 1700, English trading settlements were dotted along the coastline of India. Those on the west coast were under the control of the Governor or " President " at Bombay ; those in Bengal under the President at Ft. William ; and those further south on the east coast under the President at Fort St. George ; and these three groups therefore came to be known as the three Presidencies. Though some of them were fortified there were few troops to guard them. A few European troops were enlisted by the Company in 1644 for this purpose ; in 1683 some native troops under native officers were raised, but these forces were very small and the situation of the three Presidencies became increasingly dangerous in an India which was rapidly dissolving into anarchy.

For the great Mogul Empire was in its death throes. Established in 1482, by Baber, a Mohammedan adventurer from Turkestan, it

had passed during his reign and those of his son, and grandson, Akbar, from glory to glory. With Akbar it reached its zenith. Afghanistan, Kashmir and all India, approximately north of latitude 20°, acknowledged his rule. But with his death in 1607, a decline, hardly apparent at first, began to set in. Endless wars for the succession to the throne at Delhi occurred at the death of each Emperor, for there was no proper law of succession. A new Hindu military power, the Mahrattas, began to raid the Empire from its mountain strongholds round Poona. The character of the Emperors deteriorated. Jahangir, who succeeded Akbar, was a man of strong contrasts, a wit, an artist and at times a drunken fiend. When he died in 1627, his elder son, Shahjahan, celebrated his succession to the throne by blinding his own brother and massacring all his near male relatives. Yet he was the builder of the Taj Mahal. Aurungzeb, Shahjahan's third son, murdered two of his own brothers, drove another into exile, imprisoned his father and succeeded to the throne in 1657. In him severity and religious intolerance were the most marked characteristics. He spent his life in endless campaigns against his Hindu subjects and particularly against the Mahrattas and their skilful guerrilla leader, Sivaji. In the Punjab, sheer desperation forced the Sikhs, till then a Hindu sect, to become a military brotherhood. When Arungzeb died in 1707, he had increased his territory but he had ruined his people and let loose forces of disunion which were to smash the Mogul Empire.

After his death, the Emperors became successively weaker. The Viceroys of the great Provinces took advantage of this weakness to carry on private wars. The passes of the North-West Frontier were left unguarded, and Nadir Shah of Persia invaded India in 1736, sacked Delhi, annexed Afghanistan and acquired loot to the value of £32 millions.

During these troubled times the French, like ourselves and the Dutch, had established trading settlements in India. With an eye to their sea communications they had first occupied Mauritius (Isle of France) and Reunion (Bourbon) in the South Indian Ocean, and later founded factories in India at Pondicherry, south of Madras, and at Chandernagore and Cozzimbazar on the Hughli in Bengal. At first unsuccessful and almost bankrupt, from 1730 onwards they grew more prosperous under several able governors, the most important of whom, Joseph François Dupleix, had arrived at Pondicherry as a young man of 25 years in 1722. Mauritius was converted from a useless overgrown island into a flourishing settlement and naval base by another Frenchman, Bertrand de la Bourdonnais in 1735 ; and by 1744, when the war of the Austrian Succession broke out, the French were, on the whole, rather in the ascendant in the Indian Ocean.

As soon as the news arrived that war had begun, Dupleix and La Bourdonnais struck a blow against England which might easily have been fatal to our interests in the East. Taking advantage of the absence of a British squadron, he and La Bourdonnais attacked Madras by land and sea and took it after a siege of one week (1746). Then occurred an event of great significance. The local ruler of the Carnatic (the strip of coast in which Madras was situated) claimed that Dupleix had promised him Madras as a price for non-interference. On receiving a curt refusal to hand it over, he sent a force, 10,000 strong, to take it from the French. They were met by a little army, consisting of 230 French soldiers and about 700 natives with French officers under a Swiss commander, Paradis. The battle lasted five minutes. The army of the Carnatic fled and the superiority of a disciplined force under European officers had been conclusively demonstrated.

And now, Dupleix, elated by victory, proceeded to attack the other English settlement nearby, Fort David. But there he was faced by a different proposition. Major Stringer Lawrence, a capable English officer, organized the defence; Robert Clive, a young clerk, ably assisted him, and with the arrival of an English fleet under Admiral Boscawen the siege was abandoned. Pondicherry was now, in turn, besieged by the English under Boscawen, but remained untaken; and news soon arrived that peace had been declared in Europe. By the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Madras was returned to us in exchange for Louisburg which the French had lost in America.

But, in actual fact, the Treaty only marked a short pause in hostilities in India. In the general chaos, into which India had fallen, rival claimants now appeared for the throne of the Carnatic, and Dupleix decided to support one of them. Believing in the proved superiority of his little French-trained force, he felt confident that he could place his claimant on the throne, and thus make himself the power behind that throne. Having done so, it would be easy to get rid of Dutch, Portuguese and English competition. The vision of a great French Empire opened before him.

Arcot, 1751

In mere self-preservation the English were compelled to support the rival claimant and a war began between French and English in India (1751). Affairs did not go too well for the English at first. Their small force with their native ally was hotly besieged by the French and their native ally in Trichinopoly, and there seemed little prospect of anything but disaster when the tide was turned by Clive, now a Captain and Commissariat officer in the little Madras Army. He realized that the only hope for Trichinopoly was to create a

vigorous diversion elsewhere, and that no better choice could be made for such an operation than Arcot, the capital of the Carnatic and the seat of the French nominee's government. Accordingly, with 8 officers, 200 British troops and 300 Sepoys he launched his blow; marched the 65 miles to Arcot in 5 days and took it almost without a shot being fired (September 1751). Chunda Sahib, the ally of the French, hearing of the loss of his capital, then detached a force of 10,000 men from Trichinopoly to recapture the town, and Clive and his men were now besieged in the fort of Arcot for fifty days. At length, the besiegers attempted to storm the fort, but were beaten off with such losses after a night of desperate fighting that they retreated in disorder.[1] Clive was not a man to let slip the advantages of a success. He followed them up; defeated them at Arni where he captured all their artillery, and then again at Covrepauk (1752). And now, in company with Major Lawrence, who had returned from leave, he marched against the army besieging Trichinopoly (1752). The town was relieved; the French were completely defeated; their commander, troops and guns were captured. For over a year more fighting went on but Dupleix's great plan had failed and the French were on the defensive. Reinforcements had arrived from England, and for the first time a British Regiment, the 39th Foot, " Primus in Indis " (the 1st Bn. The Dorsets), together with a small detachment of Royal Artillery, had landed in India (1754). In the same year Dupleix was relieved of his appointment and recalled to France, where, broken and disgraced he lived for only 9 years more, in great poverty.

Events in America

In the same year (1608) that the first English settlement was planted at Jamestown in Virginia the first French settlement was established by Samuel Champlain at Quebec on the St. Lawrence. Each expanded in a characteristic way and in accordance with the limitations imposed by geography. Thus, throughout the 17th century, thirteen separate English colonies developed, each independent of the others, each intensely jealous of its rights and each confined between the sea on the east and the rugged forest-covered Alleghanies on the west. Few attempted to cross this barrier and fewer still returned to tell their story. Beyond it, rumour said, was a vast fertile plain watered by great rivers, but haunted by fierce Indian tribes.

The French settlements on the other hand spread along the St. Lawrence in a climate less genial. All authority was vested in the French government; no immigrant might enter New France (as it

[1] " Arcot " is the first battle honour awarded in India.

was called) without the King's consent; no heretic without the consent of the Church. There was, it is true, the advantage of easy movement provided by the St. Lawrence, but this was in some ways a doubtful blessing, for it spurred the Frenchman onward and occupied his energy in exploration instead of in settlement. While the English colonies prospered the French settlements languished, and by 1744 the population of the British possessions in North America was over 2 millions, while that of New France was only 60,000. Nevertheless the French had a great object in view. Their explorers had crossed the comparatively narrow belt which lies between Lake Erie and the headwaters of the Ohio river, had sailed down the latter to the Mississippi and on to the Gulf of Mexico. established trading posts, and erected the flag of France. In 1682, one of these pioneers, the Sieur de la Salle, claimed the whole centre of the North American continent from Lake Erie to New Orleans as a French possession and gave to it the name of Louisiana. If they could accomplish this in reality and not merely nominally, then the 13 British colonies on the east coast would be prevented from expanding inland, and France, in possession of the whole great lake and river system of North America, would be dominant.

In pursuance of this conception the French pushed westwards and southwards, and where they went they built forts to act as links in the chain of military communications for their advance. Forts Frontenac[1] and Niagara at the eastern and western ends of Lake Ontario were constructed in 1682. Some time later Fort Duquesne was established as a link between Lake Ontario and the headwaters of the Ohio. Crown Point on the most practicable military route from New England to New France, by the Hudson and Richelieu rivers, became a formidable French fortification; and Louisburg on Cape Breton Island was made into a naval base from which the French Navy could operate in these regions. In the meantime, also, the Indians were conciliated and encouraged to fight for the French against the English.

The meaning of these French measures was unmistakable. While securing their own communications with France, by means of their Navy and Louisburg, and sealing up the chief avenue from New England to Montreal, they were thrusting out a line of fortresses along the western boundary of Pennsylvania to limit the expansion of the British territory and trade.

When war broke out in 1744, the French garrison of Louisburg sent a party to attack two small English posts in Nova Scotia which they did with success. The colonists of New England thereupon decided to retort by attacking Louisburg. With the help of a British squadron they took it after a short siege in June 1745, and

[1] Now Kingston, the seat of the Canadian Royal Military College.

retained it, in spite of several French efforts, until 1748 when it was returned to France by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in exchange for Madras.

But though war had ceased officially between France and England, the clash of French and British trading and other interests on the upper Ohio river was becoming more and more intense. The English colonies were calling loudly to England for help and, while awaiting a response, Virginia resolved to attack Fort Duquesne. Major George Washington with 400 Virginian militia men accordingly advanced towards it, but after an inglorious campaign were beaten and compelled to surrender. In the next year the British government responded to the appeal for help by sending General Edward Braddock with two British regiments, the 44th and 48th, to form the basis of an army of colonials which they exhorted the colonists to raise. The colonists, however, gave criticism instead of troops. They thought the English Guardsman General, with his passion for powder, pipeclay and barrack square drill, absurd, and the English soldier, with his tight-fitting scarlet uniform, his white spatterdashes, his powdered hair and his parade ground movements, farcical.

The Braddock Disaster

In June 1755, Braddock set out with his two regiments and 600 irregulars on a march to Fort Duquesne. Nine miles from it, in a forest clearing, he was ambushed by a small force of Indians led by French officers. His men, marching in close order, in their brilliant uniforms, were helpless against an enemy whom they could not see. Those who followed the natural instinct to take cover behind trees and shoot from there were driven back by Braddock and his officers into column in the open, only to be butchered. Braddock himself was shot through the lungs and died during the retreat, realizing in his dying moments that a new form of warfare, different from the routine of European battlefields, should have been used against such a foe. In America as well as in India, British troops were just beginning to learn the lesson that they must adapt their tactics, and their equipment, to circumstances far different from those obtaining in Europe.

The government now realized that another great war with France was inevitable and could not long be postponed. Indeed, it had practically begun, and all that was wanting was a declaration of hostilities which England was averse from issuing as it might place her in the position of being regarded as the aggressor. This would remove all hope of help from Holland, whose alliance with England only held good in the case of wars in which the latter was on the defensive. The British government, however, took some very

necessary steps. In January 1756 they raised 10 regiments, of which the following still remain : 1st Royal West Kent, 1st K.O.Y.L.I., 2nd Oxford and Bucks L.I., Ist Shropshire L.I., 2nd Dorset, 2nd Border, 2nd Essex, 1st Middlesex, 2nd Northamptonshire and 2nd East Lancs. Also, four battalions mainly recruited from Germans and Swiss, to be known as the Royal Americans, and later as the 60th Rifles, were formed under a Swiss Colonel-in-Chief, Colonel Bouquet.

Meantime, a notable change in Army designation had been made in 1751, when regiments ceased to be called by the names of their Colonels and were given numbers. These numbers they retained until the present territorial titles were conferred in 1881.

CHAPTER VI

THE SEVEN YEARS WAR, 1756–1763

THE shadowy borderland between a nominal peace with hostilities and open war was crossed in 1756. For some months France had been preparing a great scheme for an attack on Britain. Fifty-thousand troops were gathered at the French ports on the Atlantic, ready to take advantage of any dispersion of the British fleet, to cross the Channel under the protection of French warships and attempt a landing along the south coast of England. Meanwhile, in order to divert a considerable part of the British fleet from the Home waters, open preparations were carried on at Toulon for an attack by combined operations on the British naval base at Port Mahon in Minorca. The plan was a gamble, but perhaps a legitimate one, as the British navy was widely dispersed, carrying on convoy and other duties. But at the last moment the French government lost heart, and changed their plan. The attack on Minorca became the prime objective, and the troops and French squadrons on the Atlantic ports became merely a ruse to keep the main British fleet from the Mediterranean.

THE CAPTURE OF MINORCA, 1756

In the meantime, the British government, which had been apprised by their agents abroad of the original plan but not of the alternative, made their dispositions accordingly. The greater part of the available British naval strength was allocated to the duty of watching ports such as Brest, and a small force was placed under Admiral John Byng, an officer with a respectable though not a brilliant reputation, to sail to the Mediterranean for the purpose of preventing an attack from Toulon on Minorca. Arrangements were dilatory; Byng himself was no thruster and when he arrived off Minorca in May 1756 he found that a French force of 16,000 under the Duke of Richelieu had been convoyed by a French squadron approximately as strong as and rather faster than his own, had landed on the island and was besieging Port Mahon. An inconclusive naval action followed between the two squadrons. Had Byng been of the same metal as Nelson or other great commanders, he could at least have so harried the French lines of communication with Toulon as to have made the position of Richelieu's force extremely unhappy. But he was a man more prone by nature to see the obstacles than his

goal. He had a bare equality with the enemy, and so he retired to Gibraltar, leaving the unfortunate garrison of Port Mahon under its gallant and aged deputy-Governor, General Blakeney (who was 84 years old), to capitulate shortly afterwards with all the honours of war.

Much controversy has ranged round the subject of Admiral Byng, and the responsibility for the disaster has been frequently laid to the charge of the Newcastle Ministry which was in power. While they cannot be absolved of all blame, some must rest on Byng himself. A year later, in another connection, James Wolfe summed up in memorable words a maxim of the highest importance for all commanders faced by a similar situation. " In war something must be allowed to chance and fortune, seeing that it is in its nature hazardous and an option of difficulties ; that the greatness of an object should come under consideration as opposed to the impediments that be in the way."

As soon as the news of the capture of Minorca reached England panic and demoralization set in. A scapegoat was necessary to save the government ; and the unfortunate Byng was arraigned under the twelfth article of war for not having done his utmost against the enemy. Of this charge no body of naval officers could acquit him. He was found guilty and in spite of efforts by his judges, by Pitt, by the Duke of Richelieu and by Voltaire, he was shot on the quarterdeck of the Monarque in Portsmouth Harbour, " pour encourager les autres," as Voltaire said. General Fowke, the Governor of Gibraltar, who had refused to lend a battalion to replace marines which Byng should have had, was removed from his post and dismissed from the service. The gallant veteran, Blakeney, was, on the other hand, received in England with excited applause and was created a Baron.

War Begins Officially

As soon as the news of Minorca reached England the British government declared war on France (May 1756). The act of aggression had been French, and England, it was thought, could therefore rely on the assistance of Holland. But the Dutch refused their aid and declared a state of neutrality, and the panic-stricken British administration brought Hanoverian troops to England for the defence of our shores. The Powers began to line up—France, Austria, Saxony, Sweden and Russia on the one side ; England, Hanover and Prussia on the other. Bad news was coming in from India, where the loss of Calcutta and the horrors of " The Black Hole " had taken place. Nor was the news from America much better. Montcalm, the French commander in Canada, had captured Oswego, a British advanced post on Lake Ontario. The Newcastle

administration was reeling from a succession of blows and in October a new Cabinet was formed, under the nominal leadership of the Duke of Devonshire, but in reality under William Pitt, at that time 48 years old. "England," said Frederick of Prussia, "has been long in labour; at last she has produced a man."

William Pitt's Plan

With the advent of Pitt a new spirit and vigour were awakened in England. The Hanoverian troops were sent home. A Militia Act, rendering all males of military age liable for three years militia service, was passed. This was the first serious attempt to train the whole manhood of England, of military age, for service. Fifteen new battalions were raised, of which the following still remain: the 2nd Gloster, 1st Wilts., 1st Manchester, 1st North Stafford, 1st York and Lancs., 2nd Berks., 2nd Hampshire, 1st Durham L.I., 2nd Welch and 2nd East Surrey. In spite of serious criticism two battalions of Highlanders were enlisted. The Royal Artillery was increased. Forces were organized for war in brigades. Young officers of merit were promoted to positions of responsibility irrespective of seniority. The army was reorganized in other ways also. Food, pay and clothing were improved, and stores and reserves of ammunition were accumulated. And finally, a great and comprehensive plan was worked out.

Divested of all non-essentials the plan was as follows. America came first. A resolute and vigorous policy was to be carried out there, using our naval and military strength to the full. In India, the West Indies, Africa and elsewhere, we were to use our sea-power to lop off all the French interests, trade and territory. Our rôle in Europe was secondary, viz.: to assist our Allies, Hanover and Prussia, and so prevent the French from sending reinforcements to their possessions abroad, while our Navy harassed their trade and kept them on the jump by threatened raids on the coast of France. The basis of the whole was sea-power, and therefore the Navy was greatly increased. It was the dark ships that were never to be seen by the vast majority of the European peoples which would produce the inexorable pressure leading to victory.

The narrative showing how this plan was carried out to its splendid conclusion can best, in the interests of simplicity, be divided into four sections: (1) The campaigns in America, (2) Events in India, (3) Colonial campaigns, and (4) The covering operations in Europe and on the seas. Each of these will be described separately.

(1) North America

The plans were not sufficiently advanced for much to be done during 1757 in the North American Colonies. Eight battalions

were sent there and some operations took place. But in 1758 the plan began to unfold. There were three objectives for that year; Louisburg, the French naval base on Cape Breton Island at the entrance of the St. Lawrence; Ticonderoga, the chief fortress protecting Montreal from attack by land along the Hudson River-Lake Champlain route, and Fort Duquesne on the headwaters of the Ohio river. The first two if gained would open the most important doors into Canada; the third would have the moral significance of a great revenge for Braddock's disaster.

To General Jeffrey Amherst, with three Brigadiers, of whom James Wolfe was one, and 14,000 men, was assigned the attack on Louisburg. The troops were escorted by a fleet under Admiral Boscawen, and after a siege of 7 weeks, "The Gibraltar of the St. Lawrence" capitulated and its fortifications were destroyed. The success was due to a careful initial reconnaissance, two feint attacks and skilful co-operation between the force and the fleet. It was the first landing of a military force in the face of a prepared enemy position in British Military history.

For the attack on Ticonderoga, General James Abercromby was a less happy choice. Of the older generation of soldiers, he was unable to fit himself to new conditions of warfare. Unfortunately, also, he was deprived of a young and able Staff officer, Lord Howe, who was killed in a skirmish; and in the subsequent effort on the Fort threw his men in repeated frontal attacks against an almost impregnable position which had been carefully prepared by Montcalm. At the end, Ticonderoga remained untaken, and the English force had to retreat with a loss of nearly 2,000 killed and wounded. The Royal Highlanders (The Black Watch) had lost 500 in their gallant efforts to break through the enemy's position.

A staunch old Scotsman, Colonel Forbes, commanded the column whose objective was Fort Duquesne. With a handful of Colonials, Fraser's regiment of Highlanders and some of the Royal Americans (60th Rifles) he advanced against the fort. Braddock's mistakes were not repeated. The men marched through the forest two abreast for easy deployment, with carefully guarded flanks. At length, after a tedious march of 3 months, Forbes arrived within a few miles of Fort Duquesne; sounds of explosions were heard, and the following day the British force marched into the ruins of the fort which the French themselves had destroyed before retreating. Their communications with Lake Ontario could no longer be maintained because Colonel Bradstreet with a small force of colonials had taken Fort Frontenac (now Kingston) which guarded the eastern end of the Lake. In honour of the great minister, whose plan was now nearing completion, Forbes renamed Fort Duquesne, calling it Fort Pitt. To-day it is the city of Pittsburg.

QUEBEC, 1759

The French were now on the run in North America. The campaign of 1759 was aimed at their complete overthrow. General Amherst was to advance northwards on Montreal, while at the same time Quebec, which guarded that part of the St. Lawrence where the river narrowed to the width of a mile, was to be attacked by sea and land. For this latter and most hazardous task, Pitt chose James Wolfe, the young brigadier who had distinguished himself two years before, at the siege of Louisburg.

It was, many thought, an extraordinary choice. In appearance he was every inch unlike a soldier,—tall, narrow-shouldered, with long spindly legs, a receding forehead, a receding chin, a turned-up nose, untidy red hair, a pale freckled face, an unhealthy body and a hot temper. Only 32 years of age, he had already served in 7 campaigns! Some said he was a "meddlesome young fool"; others that he was "a fanatic"; still others that he was "too full of books and theories," and one busybody told the King "that man Wolfe is mad." "Mad is he," said George. "Well, I hope he'll bite some of my other Generals."

The expeditionary force under his command was 8,000 strong, divided into three brigades under Generals Monckton, Townshend and Murray, and consisting of the following: 15th, 43rd, 58th Foot and Fraser's Highlanders (disbanded in 1763); 28th, 47th, 2-60th Foot; 35th, 48th and 3-60th Foot. There was also an interesting innovation. A battalion made up of the best marksmen from various regiments, encumbered with little equipment and called the Light Infantry, was included. And lastly, the rifle made its appearance. For some time German rifles had been used by American sharpshooters, and later were introduced in small numbers into the 60th Rifles (about 16 per battalion). Now each officer carried one, from the General himself downwards. (Wolfe's own rifle may be seen in the R.U.S.I. Museum in London.)

Convoyed by a fleet under Admiral Saunders and piloted by James Cooke (afterwards the famous explorer) the expeditionary force arrived on June 26th off the Isle of Orleans opposite Quebec. There they had a view of the town, perched on a rocky bluff, and strongly fortified. To the west the bank of the river was a rugged cliff, to its east the ground rose in a steep incline to a French entrenched position known as the Beauport lines. The eastern flank of this position was protected by the gorge of the fast running Montmorenci River. Between the Beauport lines and Quebec was the River St. Charles, a more sluggish stream, across which a bridge gave access to the city.

A landing on the Isle of Orleans was accomplished without difficulty, but nothing could be done from there against either the

Beauport lines or Quebec itself, and Monckton's Brigade was therefore disembarked at Pt. Levis, which faced and was only a mile from the lower part of Quebec. On July 12th, with the firing of a rocket, the bombardment began. Satisfying as it was, however, to register hits on the gables of Quebec it could do little real damage to the defending force entrenched in the Beauport lines; the short Canadian summer was passing; by November the river would be closed by ice, and it was vital to come to closer grips. Wolfe therefore landed a detachment on the east bank of the Montmorenci, but here again he was checked. There was no bridge; the river was too deep and rapid to cross. Nor did a direct assault on the Beauport lines fare better. There, on July 31st, the Grenadier companies, the 15th, some of the 60th and Fraser's Highlanders landed for a surprise attack, but before they could be formed into any order, broke into a run and with much shouting clambered up the heights, on the crest of which the French Army lay in wait. The attack was a complete failure. Discipline and fire control were absent; and no individual or collective bravery could balance the lack of these. Still the spirit to win, given the chance, was there, a spirit shown in the song composed by Sergeant Ned Botwood of the 47th.

"Come, each death doing dog who dares venture his neck,
Come, follow the hero that goes to Quebec:
And ye that love fighting shall soon have enough:
Wolfe commands us, my boys: we shall give them hot stuff."

And now to make matters worse, the army was weakened by disease and casualties. Wolfe himself was ill throughout most of August; over 1,000 of his men had been killed or wounded, and leaving out the detachments on Pt. Levis and the Isle of Orleans, only 5,000 men were available for any action against the 7,000 defenders of Quebec. With this little force, on September 6th, began the plan, largely attributable to Admiral Saunders, which to Wolfe and his three brigadiers seemed almost a forlorn hope. On that evening they embarked on some vessels of the fleet, sailed past Quebec up the river for 8 miles, along the frowning line of cliffs. The French followed their movements with surprise and interest and turned out to man their fortifications. When the tide ebbed the fleet swung round and came down the river; while the puzzled French troops and their leader, Bougainville, raced along the cliff top to keep watch on them.

Day after day this took place. Bougainville and his men were exhausted. The French Commander-in-Chief, Montcalm was puzzled, but on the whole felt sure that it was a feint and that the main attack would be on the Beauport lines.

At twilight on September 12th the final plans were ready and

Wolfe issued his last orders, concluding with a phrase ringing strangely like that used later at Trafalgar. " Officers and men will remember what their country expects of them." Under cover of a bombardment of the Beauport lines the plan was put into action. Five thousand men were in the vessels which had gone up as usual beyond Quebec ; as usual, no doubt argued the French, they would sail down with the ebb.

At 1 a.m. on September 13th the ebb set in. Two lanterns were swung to the maintop of H.M.S. Sutherland and 30 boats carrying Wolfe and 4,500 men began to creep down the river under the shadow of the cliffs. Once, a French sentry's voice called, " Who goes there," and a Scotch officer replied in French " Provision boats. Don't make a noise. The English will hear us."

By and by they came to that small bay in the cliffs about two miles from Quebec, now called " Wolfe's Cove," and there Colonel Howe and 24 volunteers of the Light Infantry Regiment landed and clambered up the cliff face. At the top they found a French sentry group, overpowered it, and before sunrise the last of Wolfe's men were wending their way in single file on to the Plain of Abraham. Montcalm heard the news at dawn and during the next three hours, in haste and confusion, his regiments poured from the Beauport lines, through Quebec out into the Plain of Abraham.

By 9 a.m., in drizzling rain, the two armies faced one another about 500 yards apart on the Plain. Fortunately for Wolfe the French commander decided to attack immediately, instead of waiting for Bougainville who was 8 miles away behind the English Army. Had he waited a few hours, or had he waited a month and starved out the British force, the result might have been very different. A little before 10 o'clock the French, superior in numbers, advanced to attack, stopping from time to time to fire a volley at the stationary English line. Not till they were 35 yards away did Wolfe give the command to fire, and then there burst forth at point blank range a murderous volley, a triumph of discipline and fire control, from the British regiments which were drawn up in two ranks. The French wavered, fell into disorder, and Wolfe, having given the order to charge, put himself at the head of the 28th Foot. A few minutes earlier he had been wounded in the wrist. In the charge he was wounded in the groin ; a minute later was shot through the lungs, and fell unconscious in the arms of an officer of the 28th. Just for a few moments did he recover consciousness. The cry " How they run, they run " stirred him. " Who run ?" he asked, raising himself on his elbow. " The French," was the reply. " They give way everywhere." " Go one of you to Colonel Burton," he said, " and tell him to march Webb's regiment (28th) to the Charles River to cut off their retreat."

The French line had been completely broken, and in wild confusion they were flying to the town bearing with them Montcalm, who had been shot through the body.

Thus ended the battle of Quebec. "It was," said Horace Walpole, "a very singular affair. The Generals on both sides slain, the seconds-in-command wounded; in short, very near what a battle should be—in which only the Generals ought to suffer." The French force retreated 30 miles up the St. Lawrence, and five days later Quebec capitulated. Before winter set in, Brigadier Murray with a British garrison was in occupation, and the British fleet had set sail for home bearing Wolfe's body and the tale of victory.[1]

1760

But Canada had not yet been won. During the winter the English garrison suffered severely from cold and disease and by spring less than 3,000 were fit for duty. In April the French, under Levis, with 9,000 men advanced to recapture Quebec, and once again the Plain of Abraham was the scene of a battle. This battle of Sainte Foy was fiercely contested, but the losses of the British were so heavy that they had to retire and take refuge within the walls. It was, indeed, touch and go. But now spring had come. Fresh food was available; the scurvy abated, and at last a British fleet arrived with reinforcements and supplies.

And now the curtain rose on the last act. Amherst, with supreme patience, worked his way to Lake Ontario and thence by boat into the St. Lawrence. One of his brigadiers, Haveland, advanced northwards by Ticonderoga; and Murray westwards by boat from Quebec. Thus a net began gradually to close round Montreal, and almost to a day, at the end of August, the three English forces met outside that city—a combination of 17,000 men against a French army now reduced by disease, hardship and desertion to less than 3,000. Resistance was hopeless, and on September 8th, 1760, Montreal capitulated and with it French Canada passed into English keeping. To the cautious and skilful Amherst, rather than to the romantic Wolfe, must be ascribed a large share of credit for this achievement.

(2) Events in India

And now we must return to 1756 and to India. There a great outrage had occurred, "memorable," as Lord Macaulay says "for the singular retribution which followed it." Fort William, the Headquarters of the British trading settlements in Bengal was

[1] The British Regiments which were present at the battle wear a thread of black in their gold lace in full dress to this day as a sign of mourning for Wolfe; and the Loyals wear black braid in their mess waistcoats.

attacked and taken by Seraj-ud-Daulah the ruler of Bengal, in spite of a gallant defence put up by a handful of clerks led by John Zephaniah Hollwell, a civilian. On April 19th, when after three days siege they capitulated, the 146 survivors were confined in a small guardroom about 20 feet square, and there throughout a hot tropical night they were slowly asphyxiated. When the next day dawned and the door was opened, only 23, including Hollwell, were alive.

The news of this tragedy reached Madras in August, and it was decided that vengeance and reparation must be exacted, even if it meant leaving Madras largely devoid of troops, and open therefore to the possibility of a French attack from Pondicherry. A small force was gathered together and placed under Clive, now 32 years of age; it was to be escorted by a naval squadron under Admiral Watson.

The force included about 250 men of the 39th, 100 gunners and about 500 other European troops who belonged to the East India Company. (The latter became subsequently European regiments of Madras Infantry and when India came under the Crown in 1857, they came on the British establishment as the 101st to 104th of the Line.) In addition to the European troops there were about 2,000 Sepoys with British officers, dressed in white tunics, in contrast with the scarlet of the British. Their knowledge of drill or manœuvre was elementary and little more than would bring them from line into column or column into line. But they had proved their value under British leadership, and as long as the British troops stood firm the Sepoy followed suit. Normally therefore the British occupied the centre of the line in battle where they were easily visible and the Sepoys formed the wings.

The Royal Tiger superscribed "Plassey"

The little force sailed from Madras in the middle of October 1756 and arrived off the mouth of the Hughli about Christmas Day. By the end of December Fort William had been recaptured by Captain Eyre Coote of the 39th Foot and Seraj-ud-Daulah, thoroughly frightened, had abjectly agreed to restore all its privileges and property. But now Clive was faced by two serious problems. The French at Chandernagore showed signs of assisting Seraj-ud-Daulah, and the addition to his army of 300 French soldiers with field guns would greatly increase the morale of the Nawab's troops. Such a possibility must at all costs be prevented and therefore Clive advanced against the French settlement at Chandernagore and took it.

The second problem was Seraj-ud-Daulah himself. Obviously he could not be trusted. Once Clive's army was out of the way he

would undoubtedly break every promise and would again attack Fort William. Yet for a little force of 3,000 to advance towards the centre of a province as large as France and meet an army 20 times as great in numbers as itself was an enterprise not to be lightly undertaken. At this stage circumstances played into Clive's hands. Among the Nawab's subjects a conspiracy to overthrow him and place on the throne his Commander-in-chief, Mir Jafir, was gathering force. Mir Jafir sought Clive's help and got it—on terms; all French factories in Bengal to be handed to the English, and full compensation to be paid for the damage inflicted by Seraj-ud-Daulah. But even with the promise of English support, Mir Jafir was chicken-hearted and it became necessary for Clive to take the initiative. Accordingly, on June 13th he advanced along the Hughli in the direction of Moorshedabad the Nawab's capital. The rains were beginning. The men had to march, sometimes up to their knees in water. Ammunition had to be kept dry by tarpaulins. The damp steamy heat of lower Bengal was trying in the extreme to both men and animals.

On June 20th, no news had come from Mir Jafir and it was still uncertain whether he would honour his word and fight for Clive. A council was held by Clive at which for a time his heart failed him and he voted for a retirement. After an hour's reflection, however, he reversed his decision and issued orders for the force to cross the river and to advance on Moorshedabad by way of the village of Plassey. By the evening of the 22nd they reached Plassey, a small Indian village, situated at a bend in the river and about 12 miles south of the Nawab's capital. There they saw, to the north of the village, a long line of entrenchments behind which Seraj-ud-Daulah's force was encamped, and heard throughout the night the noises of a great undisciplined mass of men and the beating of the inevitable "tom tom." Clive and his men lay during the night under the trees in a mango grove, and at daybreak took up their position in front of the grove facing the line of entrenchments, the European infantry in the centre, the Sepoys and guns on the flanks. By 8 o'clock in the morning Seraj-ud-Daulah's force of 60,000 had left the entrenchments and formed a huge semicircle round the little invading army. Some French gunners fighting for the Nawab placed their guns on the mound of a water reservoir facing the centre of Clive's line. Mir Jafir, the conspirator, showed no signs of joining Clive, and his Division was still part of Seraj-ud-Daulah's army.

The action which took place can hardly be called a battle. The French gunfire caused a few casualties among Clive's men and he withdrew them into the mango grove. Then a torrential downpour of rain damped the spirits and powder of Seraj-ud-Daulah's men.

His chief general, Mir Murdin, thinking that Clive's ammunition, like his own, was wet, advanced against the grove but was met by a volley which sent his men flying and mortally wounded himself. Seraj-ud-Daulah, at this stage, asked another General for advice. He was told that a King's place was in his capital and heartily agreeing with this, he mounted the swiftest camel that could be found and was soon in Moorshedabad.

At 3 in the afternoon his army began to follow him and Clive, who had been snatching some rest in a hunting lodge nearby, confirmed the orders already given by Captain Kirkpatrick for their pursuit. By 5 p.m. the battle was over. Mir Jafir, who had sat quiet with his Division all day waiting to see which side would win, now marched over to Clive's side with his troops and publicly embraced him. The total casualties in Europeans had been only 7 killed and 13 wounded.[1]

By the next day Clive was in Moorshedabad, Seraj-ud-Daulah had fled and Mir Jafir had been saluted as Nawab of Bengal, Orissa and Behar. Placed on the throne by Clive, he knew that he could only remain there with Clive's help. British officials were to be responsible for the taxation of the Provinces and were therefore to hold the purse strings. Thus, to Mir Jafir was given the shadowy pomp and dignity of King, but to the East India Company in Bengal henceforward belonged the real substance.

Condore, Badara and Wandewash

And now we must return south again to Madras, where our troubles were not over. French reinforcements had arrived from Europe under a French-Irish officer, the Count Lally of Tollendal (whose real name was Sir Arthur Lally or Mullaly of Tullendaly). Lally had had a distinguished career in the French Army; had been a staff officer to Noailles, an A.D.C. to Prince Charles in the Forty-five rebellion, a secret Jacobite agent in the south of England and the founder and Colonel of one of the most gallant Irish regiments in the French army. But he was quick-tempered, intolerant and overbearing, gave great offence to the Indians in Pondicherry by his contemptuous disregard of their caste and religious customs, and to the French also by his general attitude of contempt for their lack of energy. His natural ability was therefore handicapped to begin with by an atmosphere of hostility all around him even from his own subordinates. Further, the French fleet in the neighbourhood was defeated by a smaller British fleet. Lally's project for an attack on Madras was consequently a complete failure. That was the beginning of the end of French hopes. Clive sent one of his young men,

[1] "Plassey" was the first battle honour given to King's troops for services in India.

Colonel Forde of the 39th Foot, to attack the French settlements in the Circars, and he fought and won the battle of Condore (December 1758), and then attacked and took the French settlement at Masulipatam (April 1759). Ten months later, Eyre Coote beat Lally in a decisive battle at Wandewash (1760) near Pondicherry, and the French ambitions to attain mastery of India were finally and absolutely destroyed. Meantime the Dutch had been giving trouble in Bengal by helping our enemies. We were not at war with Holland in Europe, but that—as we have seen earlier—was no obstacle to an unofficial colonial war; and Clive was not the man to be deterred from a decision by fear of remote consequences. He authorized Colonel Forde to attack the Dutch, which he did with an inferior force at Badara in November 1759, and completely routed them. Henceforward, we were the only European race which counted in India.

(3) Other Operations

In the meantime British naval power was being used to its full elsewhere. The French settlement at Senegal and the island of Goree were attacked and captured in 1758; Guadeloupe in the West Indies in 1759; Belleisle off the St. Lawrence in 1761 and, in the same year, Dominica. In 1762, Martinique, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada were taken, and Spain having now come to the assistance of France, Havana was besieged and fell after a siege of two months. An unsuccessful attack was made on Buenos Ayres, almost the only failure in these crowded years of victory. In the Far East, the East India Company at the request of the Home government and with the assistance of a few ships of the Navy launched an attack under General Draper on Manila in the Philippines and took it, and a British expedition under General Burgoyne with some Portuguese infantry saved Lisbon from the Spanish and then even advanced, against overwhelming odds a short distance into Spain. In 1762, a small French force from Brest eluded the British blockade, crossed the Atlantic, landed in Newfoundland and took St. John's which was garrisoned by only one Company; three months later it was recaptured.

(4) Operations in Europe

The essence of Pitt's plan was, as has been explained, that operations in Europe should be secondary to the main idea, but sufficient to prevent France and Austria from crushing Hanover and Frederick of Prussia, and also to deter France from sending reinforcements to America, India or her colonies. It might be asked why should the latter object have been kept in view at all if Britain had command of the seas. The answer is that this command did

exist in a general sense, but not to such a degree that French fleets were all confined permanently to their ports. To achieve that an enormous preponderance of naval power would have been necessary; and, even then, the absence of rapid communications, and climatic conditions of gales and fog would have frequently enabled small French naval forces to elude the British blockade. Further, the coastline of France on the Atlantic is long and it was undesirable to disperse the British Navy and subject it to the danger of attack in detail.

In actual fact we had not an enormous preponderance of naval strength; we suffered minor naval reverses owing to the necessary dispersion of our blockading forces at various times, and even in 1762, as we have seen, a French squadron was able to escape our vigilance and sail from Brest to Newfoundland with a force to attack and take St. John's. And this was despite the fact that in 1759 Admiral Boscawen had defeated the French off Lagos and Admiral Sir Edward Hawke at Quiberon Bay, near the entrance to the River Loire, in two great naval battles. The campaigns in Europe were therefore, though secondary, extremely important. They frittered away French strength and incidentally restored the prestige of British military art which had dwindled in Europe in the long period of peace that followed the Wars of Marlborough. On the other hand, at the beginning, they did not add to the reputation of British generalship. This was, however, largely due to the fact that Pitt selected his best Generals for the American campaigns.

When the war began, the Duke of Cumberland, the victor of Culloden, was in command in Hanover. His function was to defend Hanover and thereby to protect the western flank of Frederick the Great. Cumberland mishandled the whole business; was driven back by the French, defeated at Hastenbeck and almost pushed to the northern coast near Hamburg. He signed an agreement at Klostersevern which almost amounted to a capitulation. One half of the Hanoverian army was to be interned; the other half was pledged to strict neutrality; Hanover, to all intents, was out of the war and now France and Austria could combine against our ally, Frederick. The British people were horrified and the government disowned the agreement of Klostersevern. Cumberland was superseded by Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, a skilful general, gifted with infinite tact and forbearance who was lent by Frederick. His tact and patience were solely tried in the ensuing campaigns and let it be set against Marlborough's difficulties with the Dutch, that British officers, the situation being reversed, behaved hardly better.

Pitt poured money and men into Hanover. In 1758 six regiments of British cavalry and six battalions of infantry arrived to increase Ferdinand's army. At this time Ferdinand had two French forces

to deal with, one based on Wesel and the other on Frankfort. Were they to combine he might be driven across the Weser and Western Germany would be lost.

MINDEN, 1759

By July 1759 the contingency which Prince Ferdinand had feared was very nearly a fact. The French commanders, Contades and Broglie, advancing from the Rhine in superior force, by a series of skilful manœuvres pushed Ferdinand right across Westphalia, over the Tentoberger Wald, and back to the Weser. They were now in a very strong position, with their right based on the river at Minden, their front protected by marshes and their right by an offshoot of the Tentoberger Wald. The capital of Hanover was less than forty miles away, and unless Ferdinand could win a victory the Electorate was lost. It was, so tradition ran, in this very neighbourhood that the German leader, Arminius, had destroyed the legions of Augustus, under Varus ; and George the Second's German General determined to fight.

He had one advantage, in that a German detachment, advancing from Osnabruck, had got across Contades' communications with Kassel at Herford, so that the French might be tempted to strike quickly before their provisions ran out. So indeed it happened. Contades, on August 1st, came out to offer battle, with his cavalry in the centre, flanked with infantry on both wings. They had about 51,000 men to Ferdinand's 41,000, but were slightly weaker in artillery. Ferdinand drew up his forces to meet them, the five regiments of British cavalry, together with some Germans, being on the right under Lord George Sackville, and the six battalions of British infantry in the centre, facing the mass of French cavalry. With the British were three battalions of Hanoverians.

Prince Ferdinand's preliminary instructions had been that the advance, when made, should be with beat of drums. The British infantry interpreted this as implying orders for an immediate advance with beat of drums, and marched straight upon the French cavalry. Three times over the French horsemen charged down upon the steady lines of infantry, and thrice in succession they were crushed by its dreadful fire. Between the second and third charge, four French Brigades advanced to attack their flank, but they stood immovable. Now was the time for the British cavalry to charge, but Sackville, actuated it seems by mean jealousy of his foreign commander, refused to move. He paid no attention to repeated messages, and checked his second-in-command, Lord Granby, who would have responded to Ferdinand's appeals.

But the French had had enough, and when Ferdinand advanced with his German troops their whole army broke and fled. Their

flight was hastened by two British batteries of artillery, who displayed mobility amazing for those days and did the work the cavalry should have done. The French fell back towards Frankfort, abandoning almost all their gains in Westphalia, and by this single battle the whole character of the war in Western Germany had been changed. The British infantry had done what had previously been deemed impossible, attacked fresh and unbroken cavalry in line in the open and shattered them into ruin. It is little wonder that the battle honour "Minden" is greatly prized by the six British Infantry regiments who took part.[1] The miserable Sackville escaped being shot, as he should have been, but, with the inconsequence inevitable in those days of privilege, turned up again as Secretary of State for War to mismanage the campaign against the American colonies in the next reign.

Emsdorff, 1760

For the campaign of 1760 seven additional regiments of British cavalry were sent to Germany, the command of the mounted arm being given to Lord Granby, and eight more battalions of infantry. The French were now greatly superior in numbers but so great was the confidence inspired by Minden, that Ferdinand did not hesitate to attack against heavy odds at Sachsenhausen, where he had to fall back, the retirement being covered by four British battalions.

Another clash between detachments followed at Emsdorff in the middle of July, between six French battalions and six of Ferdinand's, the latter being accompanied by the 15th Light Dragoons (Hussars)[2] and a German regiment. The French were driven to retreat, and in the course of it were three times charged by the 15th, who chased them for twenty miles and finally compelled their surrender, one of the most astonishing feats in the whole history of cavalry.

Warburg—"The Marquess of Granby," 1760

At the end of July Broglie advanced on an extended front near Kassel, thereby giving Ferdinand the opportunity to strike at a temporarily isolated corps of about 20,000 men. The operation was a difficult one, owing to the necessity of watching Broglie's main force, and it became clear that the bulk of the infantry could not be up in time and that the French might escape. Ferdinand therefore took the risk of ordering Lord Granby, Sackville's successor, to attack with the British cavalry and artillery unsupported. Ten regiments of cavalry against 20,000 men was heavy odds, but Granby was determined to wipe out Sackville's disgrace and led the charge in

[1] The Suffolks, Lancashire Fusiliers, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, K.O.S.B., The Hampshire Regt., K.O.Y.L.I.

[2] The 15th Hussars and 16th and 17th Lancers were raised in the previous year.

person. It was an amazing success, and the French were completely routed with the loss of about a third of their number. This exploit of Granby's is still indirectly commemorated in Britain for, after the war, he helped some ex-cavalry N.C.O.'s to open taverns for a living and in gratitude they put his name on the signboards. It is a curious commentary on British forgetfulness that British exploits in Western Germany—in their way not less remarkable than Frederick the Great's contemporary deeds in Eastern Germany—find recollection only in the commemorations of individual units and on the sign-boards of inns.

Kloster Kampen, 1760

At the end of September Prince Ferdinand sent a detachment to lay siege to Wesel on the Rhine which involved crossing to the western bank to cover the siege. The French unexpectedly sent a stronger force to raise the siege, and it was decided, as the only solution, to deliver a night attack on them, a type of operation then very unusual. The attempt very nearly succeeded; the French were surprised but pulled themselves together, aided by the fact that the attacker's reserves were not up in time. Only the desperate fighting of a small British detachment and a charge by the 15th Light Dragoons saved a minor disaster. The whole enterprise was very risky, and it is a proof of the ascendancy which had been gained against the French that it should even have been attempted.

Vellinghausen, 1761

In July 1761 the French armies of the Rhine and the Main effected a junction, thereby giving them a numerical superiority over Ferdinand of about two to one. The Prince therefore stood on the defensive with his 50,000 men on the River Lippe and the French summoned up resolution to attack him. Broglie advanced on the evening of July 15th and at first gained some success, but was checked by Granby's corps. Fighting again took place on the 16th, but the French were again repulsed with much heavier losses and gave up the attempt. The campaign of 1761 ended shortly afterwards.

Wilhelmsthal, 1762

In June 1762 the French advanced near Kassel, thereby giving Ferdinand an opportunity to surround them, though his total force was considerably inferior in numbers. The attempt failed, owing to the mistakes of subordinates, and the French hurriedly retreated, covered by a strong rearguard. Granby attacked this force with eight British battalions and practically destroyed it. The Royal

Northumberland Fusiliers greatly distinguished themselves at this battle and captured prisoners three times as numerous as their own strength.

Finally in September came the desperate little action at Amoneberg, in which Granby's corps again distinguished itself; and in November Ferdinand captured Kassel shortly before the conclusion of peace.

The Treaty of Paris, 1763

France and Spain were now anxious for peace, a feeling which was reciprocated by George III who had succeeded to the throne in 1760. Pitt's influence in England was being undermined by the King and a party of the new King's friends who wished to terminate "this bloody and expensive war." It was better, they argued, to conclude a peace on liberal terms than to drive the enemy to desperate straits and wring from them concessions which could not be permanent. And so, Pitt, the organizer of victory, was thrown overboard, and negotiations were opened at Fontainebleau in November 1762.

The ensuing Treaty of Paris began, like so many similar documents since that time, with the declaration that "there shall be a Christian, universal and perpetual peace and a sincere and constant friendship" between the several countries. Its more practical results were as follows: Canada was ceded to Great Britain. France being allowed to have the islands of St. Peter and Miquelon near Newfoundland as a shelter for French fishermen provided they did not fortify them. The Mississippi from its source to the sea was to be the line dividing British and French territories in North America. Guadeloupe, Maria Galante, Desirade, Martinique and Bellisle were returned to France. Certain West Indian islands which had been called "Neutral" were divided so that France got St. Lucia and Great Britain obtained St. Vincent, Dominica and Tobago. The island of Goree was restored to France, but Senegal was ceded to Great Britain. In India the French possessions were handed back on condition that France did not erect fortifications or keep troops at Chandernagore in Bengal. Minorca was restored to Great Britain and the fortifications of Dunkirk, on the Straits of Dover, in accordance with previous treaties, were to be demolished. With regard to Spain, Havana and Manila were returned, but Great Britain obtained Florida.

An Empire had been won in seven years, and the people of England, in their characteristic way, now turned their minds to the practical matters of finance. The most heated debates in the House of Commons in 1763 related to a proposed tax of four shillings a hogshead on cider and perry.

The Part of the Army

Sea power was the foundation of this triumphant peace, but by itself it could have accomplished little. The Army not merely assisted the Navy in obtaining and maintaining command of the seas but was also the means by which the conquests of territory were made. Without the military forces the war would have dragged on; France would have overrun Hanover; the responsibilities of the Navy in the North Sea would have been consequently increased to to a degree almost unbearable; and no decision would have been reached in Canada or India. Without the Navy the Army would have been useless. The victory was due to that proper co-ordination of our naval and military strength which Pitt, like Marlborough, understood and applied. Indeed, the very essence of Pitt's system was a thorough co-ordination under his personal direction of England's foreign, naval and military policy. In the truest and widest sense he was a Minister of Defence.

By his driving power the Regular Army had been increased to 150,000. Men of merit were promoted, and one, at least of these, James Wolfe, possessed an original mind which looked ahead of current military practice. Indeed, in his views on fire power, fire control and of light equipment, Wolfe was a forerunner of Sir John Moore. His use of a formation in two ranks at the battle of Quebec was later taught at Shorncliffe Camp by Moore and was an innovation which gave Wellington a great tactical advantage in the Peninsular War. As has been seen, with the early harquebus it was necessary, in order to obtain continuous fire, to form troops in 8 to 12 ranks which fired in succession, each filing to the rear in turn and reloading. As the weapon became handier and its number of rounds per minute increased, the number of ranks diminished gradually and by Wolfe's time was three. Wolfe's use of a two-rank formation was an innovation which was destined to lapse for forty years more.

One permanent result of the experience gained in the Seven Years' War was the disappearance of the hand grenade in pitched battles. By 1760 it had gone out of use almost entirely, not to reappear again, except in siege operations, until the Sudan War of 1884–1885.

CHAPTER VII

THE LOSS OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES, 1763–1783

EVER since their foundation the American colonists, too distant from England to be effectively controlled, had ruled themselves very much as they chose. They had governors appointed from England, but no kind of union among themselves. They had assisted Britain on occasions in the past with their militia, but as seldom as they could manage, preferring to rely on British regulars, to whose pay they did not contribute, to protect them from the Indians and the French, as was the case in Colonel Bouquet's expedition against the Red Indians in 1763. Now, as Wolfe had foreseen, the French menace being removed, they had no motive for remaining within the Empire. Any attempt at strengthening British control was certain to be resisted by the lawyer-politicians who abounded on the other side of the Atlantic. Unhappily, this was the very moment chosen by the King and his Prime Minister, Lord North, to provide them with the necessary pretext.

For some years past an undignified wrangle had been going on as to the Americans' contribution towards the cost of the last war, which had, after all, been waged largely for their benefit. They declined to contribute voluntarily, so taxes, trivial in amount but none the less contrary to the principle of "no taxation without representation," were imposed by the British Parliament. That on tea was the chief grievance, and at the end of 1773 a party of Boston citizens, inadequately disguised as Red Indians, boarded three ships in the harbour and threw their cargoes of taxed tea overboard. As a result the King and North imposed penal measures on the port of Boston and the colony of Massachusetts. The disaffected element in the colonies—for it must not be forgotten that the King had many supporters in America as he had many enemies in England—met in Congress at Philadelphia and drew up a "Declaration of Rights." War was now inevitable, a war of the King supported by part of his subjects in Great Britain against approximately one-third of his subjects in the American colonies. About one-third of the Americans, particularly in the South, were "Tories" (i.e., supporters of the King) and about one-third were neutral, or reluctant to declare themselves.

THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, 1775–1783

The opening shots were fired in April 1775 at Lexington, outside Boston, where a British detachment, sent by General Gage to

destroy some military stores at Concord, was met by a body of American militia. These were dispersed and the stores destroyed, but on their return march the British were sniped at from behind every wall and tree and suffered heavy loss from assailants whom they could not bring to action. As a result of the check thus sustained, Gage was soon surrounded in Boston by a considerable force of revolted colonists. In order to drive them off, Gage ordered an attack on a force entrenched on a spur of Bunker's Hill commanding the harbour, a position actually quite untenable by the Americans if Gage had only used the fleet, which was available, to isolate the peninsula on which Bunker's Hill stood. Relying instead on the superiority of regular troops, he ordered a frontal assault. Only a portion of the force was used, and the men were encumbered with full marching order (24 lbs. heavier than the marching order of to-day) and even three days' rations. As the scarlet ranks struggled up the hillside with the officers in front, conspicuous in gorget and sash, they were met by a devastating fire from American riflemen. Again they attacked and again they were repulsed with heavy loss. For a third time they advanced and at last took the hill, with a loss of over 1,000 officers and men. It was a barren victory for the Americans withdrew with no considerable damage, as they had been protected by breastworks, and the British casualties were so heavy that no further operations could be undertaken until the arrival of reinforcements from England.

The Rival Commanders and their Problems

It now became clear that the difficulties in the way of subduing the revolted colonists would be immense. The whole area was so vast and there was no means of compelling the enemy to fight a decisive battle if they did not choose to do so. Nor was there any centre the occupation of which would be decisive. The only hopeful strategical move was the occupation of the line of the River Hudson, thus isolating New England from the remainder of the Colonies, but to do this effectively would require a very considerable force.

The British leaders seemed content rather to assert the superiority of regular troops in the limited number of contested battles for which they had barely sufficient men, and to leave to the Government in England the responsibility for the ambitious general plans which were constantly being thrust upon them. Lacking the troops to carry out these plans, they would have undoubtedly preferred to hold strategic points, as General Howe, Gage's successor, did when he occupied New York, and to rely on a naval blockade for ultimate success. But they were overruled by the politicians and found themselves committed to designs for which they had no

adequate means and in which they had no real confidence. And there was always the difficulty about reinforcements. Recruiting was a constant problem, for the soldier's pay barely kept him from starving and there was little enthusiasm for the war so long as it was only against Americans. The raising of Howe's original expeditionary force of 25,000 men was a matter of the utmost difficulty. Hence the employment of Hanoverians and Hessians. The Hanoverians could be justified, as King George, the hereditary ruler of Hanover, was quite entitled to employ his subjects there against his revolted subjects in America. But the Hessians are difficult to defend. They were frankly mercenaries, hired at so much a head from the Elector of Hesse. All that can be said is that it was the customary practice of those days in Europe and that it was not till after Waterloo that Britain relied entirely on British subjects as soldiers. Even as late as the Crimean War foreign troops were raised, though not actually employed.

It is worthy of note also that one of the chief difficulties against which the British commanders had to contend was an entirely new type of fighting, completely contrary to all their previous experience. They had fought the French in Europe in open country, where solid formations and volley-firing were decisive against enemies who used the same methods. But the Americans, realizing that their troops were no match for British regulars in open battle, shunned pitched engagements except when in very superior numbers, and relied instead on elusive and mobile tactics, fighting singly or in small groups whenever possible. Only the younger generation of British leaders, men like Lord Rawdon, Tarleton, Ferguson and Simcoe, attempted to meet the Americans at their own game and often with remarkable success. But they, being junior in rank, had no responsibility for the general conduct of the campaign.

Nor was the position of General Washington, the American Commander-in-Chief, much better. He was extremely ill-supported by Congress, which never ceased to hamper him and to expect impossibilities from the most inadequate means. By far the wisest man among his countrymen, he fought only when he could do so at an advantage, relying on the immense size of the theatre of operations, and the difficulty the British had in maintaining their armies, to prolong the struggle until at length the French should intervene. The French, however, would make no move without some definite American success, and that success was hard to gain. Canada was loyal, since the Roman Catholic French-Canadians had been given far better terms by Britain after their conquest than they would ever have received from the Americans. An American invasion consequently got no help from them and broke down hopelessly before the walls of Quebec. After the

occupation of New York, General Howe won the battles of Brooklyn and White Plains, and forced Washington to fall back towards Philadelphia. Congress then adopted the Declaration of Independence, under the name of "The United States of America," asserting their right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," but they left Washington's army starving in the snows of Valley Forge while they squabbled amongst themselves. Only his iron determination held the American army together at all.

Saratoga, 1777

In May 1777 Lord George Germaine, the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies who, as Lord George Sackville had been cashiered from the Army for refusing to charge with his cavalry at the battle of Minden, played right into Washington's hands. He ordered General Burgoyne to advance south from Canada with 7,000 men down the line of the Hudson to New York, in the expectation of meeting a force under General Howe, which was to come up the river from New York to meet him. At the same time he failed to cancel his instructions to General Clinton, now in chief command, to send Howe to attack Philadelphia, precisely in the opposite direction. Howe defeated Washington at Brandywine, but Clinton, left with insufficient forces in New York, could give no help to Burgoyne.

The result was that Burgoyne found himself, in October 1777, surrounded at Saratoga on the Hudson by 18,000 Americans, and, after many gallant efforts to break through, was compelled to surrender with his remaining 3,500 men. The real credit for this American success was due to Benedict Arnold, who afterwards changed sides, thinking his services insufficiently recognized; the nominal commander, Major-General Horatio Gates, was a poor general, always the enemy of Washington and seeking to undermine his position. The provisions of the capitulation were deliberately ignored, and the rank and file were retained in captivity, being atrociously treated by the American Congress to force them to change sides. Much to his honour Washington protested, but in vain. Congress knew the fighting value of the British soldier and meant to compel his services if starvation and ill-treatment could effect it. Meanwhile the King's Government recruited American loyalists, wherever possible, till at the end as many as 40,000 were fighting in the British ranks.

Saratoga decided France; early in 1778 she joined the Americans.

Britain with her Back to the Wall

The disaster of Saratoga and the intervention of the hereditary enemy, France, created a most dangerous situation and a

corresponding increase in resolution on the part of Britain. The war had ceased to be a mere extension of political quarrels into the field of arms and had become perilously near a struggle for independence on the part of the Mother Country. Fresh units were raised in Great Britain (including the H.L.I. and Seaforths), and in May 1778 Howe was superseded by Clinton, who decided to withdraw from Philadelphia, which Howe had occupied towards the end of 1777, and concentrate his forces at New York and Rhode Island. This was successfully accomplished in July and was probably a wise move, as immediately afterwards 4,000 French troops arrived in America. The contest was henceforth against a Franco-American army and with the even more dangerous possibility of a French fleet securing temporary command of the sea, upon which the maintenance of the British troops entirely depended.

It was now decided to stand on the defensive in New York, and to send an expedition to the Southern states, where loyalist sympathizers were believed to be numerous. This was probably a mistake as it involved a division of the British forces and, without abandoning New York, it was impossible to provide a really adequate field-army for these new operations. Nevertheless, in January 1779, General Prevost seized Savannah, and at the end of the year beat off an attack by the French and Americans, who were compelled to raise the siege. The British forces, about 27,000 all told, were now about equally divided between New York and the South. At the end of 1779 Clinton, leaving a garrison in New York, sailed with the remainder for Charleston. The enterprise was successful and, in May 1780, the city surrendered with a loss to the Americans of between six and seven thousand men, the largest numerical surrender in the war. But Clinton could not afford to remain in the South on account of the danger of a French attack on New York, so he almost immediately returned there by sea, leaving Lord Cornwallis with 4,000 men to maintain the campaign in Georgia and the Carolinas.

The Partisan Warfare in the South

In August 1780 Cornwallis completely defeated Gates at Camden against odds, practically destroying his force, and Major Tarleton followed this up by surprising and routing the American partisan leader, Sumnter. These successes gave the British a base in South Carolina, but in September Major Ferguson who commanded a force of about 1,000 loyalists, was isolated and he himself killed by a superior force of backwoodsmen at King's Mountain. This was a great loss, for Ferguson was one of the younger British leaders who were engaged in turning the Americans' war of the rifle and guerrilla tactics against themselves. The Americans

now sent Greene to the South, their ablest commander after Washington and Arnold.

In January 1780 the American leader, Morgan, defeated Tarleton at Cowpens, but in March Cornwallis succeeded in bringing Greene to action at Guildford and defeated him, though his force was less than half the strength of the Americans. In April Rawdon inflicted another reverse on Greene at Hobkirk's Hill, but then, owing to sickness, had to hand over command to Colonel Stuart, who fought a drawn battle with Greene at Eutaw Springs in September.

Yorktown, 1781

Cornwallis, largely on his own responsibility, now determined to quit the Carolinas for Virginia. This was, for several reasons, a most unwise step. The campaign further south had largely been maintained with the help of the " Tories " who had taken sides with the British. But trust in these had, on occasions, proved fallacious, and in Virginia, Washington's own state, Cornwallis could expect no recruits at all. Also, such an advance would still not bring him into touch with Clinton but would, on the contrary, bring him with his inadequate force within striking distance of the regular French troops who had received reinforcements and were now in considerable strength in the Middle Colonies, as well as Washington's main force. In August Cornwallis established himself at Yorktown, on the York River, leading into the mouth of Chesapeake Bay, with about 7,000 men. At the end of the month the French admiral, de Grasse, arrived in American waters with 28 ships of the line, a force considerably superior to the British fleet available. Spain had joined our enemies in June 1779 and Holland in December 1780, and the British Navy had also the task of endeavouring to relieve Gibraltar, which was being besieged. Britain had, for the time being, lost command of the seas.

This was Washington's chance, for Clinton could send no aid to Cornwallis by sea from New York. Concentrating every available man, the American leader marched south with 16,000 French and Americans and, at the end of September, invested Cornwallis at Yorktown. The latter's position was hopeless, and on October 19th he was obliged to surrender with his whole force. The British troops marched out with their bands playing a popular tune— " The World Turned Upside Down."

On the news of Yorktown Lord North resigned ; leaving the King to face the Whigs, who came back to office intent only on making peace at the first opportunity, as they had opposed the war from the start and continued to do so even when their country was in the gravest danger.

But if the war in America was practically over the contest at

sea was not, and without some striking success only a humiliating peace was in sight.

In August 1780 a joint Franco-Spanish expedition had laid siege to Minorca, recovered by the peace of 1763, and for the second time a scanty British garrison had to defend that fortress against overwhelming odds. Scurvy broke out, and in February 1781, the British commander, General Murray, had to surrender with the remnants of his garrison. If Gibraltar, still stubbornly resisting, were to follow suit, then all seemed to be lost.

Then came the turn of the tide. On April 12th, 1782, Admiral Rodney won " the great victory of the Saints " in the West Indies, capturing de Grasse himself in his flagship the *Ville de Paris*, and recovering unmistakably for Britain the command of the seas. Never was a victory more badly needed, and it gained for the Welch Regiment, serving as marines, a naval crown on their colours. An equally striking success was to follow.

Siege of Gibraltar, 1779–1783

The commander at Gibraltar was General Elliott, the officer who had originally raised the 15th Light Dragoons (now the 15th Hussars), which had done so well under Prince Ferdinand in Germany. A determined and resourceful leader, he had not contented himself with a passive defence, but by a daring rally had done much damage to the Spanish batteries. Now he had to face the full effort of France and Spain conjoined by sea and land, in the course of which their batteries fired no less than 100,000 shots.

The most critical moment was September 13th-14th, 1782, when the besiegers attacked with ten specially-constructed floating-batteries, believed to be impregnable and designed to drive the British gunners from their batteries on the water-front. The British used red-hot shot, which sank into the thick timbers protecting the sides of the floating batteries; gradually during the night these took effect and by the morning every battery had been destroyed. After the failure of their great assault the besiegers fell back on starvation, but in October Admiral Howe managed to reprovision the Rock by sea under the noses of the French and Spanish fleets, and the siege then virtually collapsed. Elliott was raised to the peerage as Lord Heathfield and the Rock remained impregnably British. It was during this siege that the batteries, still to be seen, were hollowed out of the rock, and the Royal Regiment of Artillery particularly distinguished itself. Five existing regiments gained from this siege their cap-badge, showing the Rock of Gibraltar and the motto, " Montis Insignia Calpe."

The Peace of Versailles, 1783

The American Congress was bankrupt and Washington had not the resources to expel Clinton from New York, now that the latter's communications were secure behind him with the recovery of the command of the sea. So, at the end of 1782, the Americans were glad to sign a separate peace, without troubling about their allies. By this they gained the acknowledgment of their independence but had to give up their original design of incorporating Lower and Upper Canada, the latter of which became the refuge of many United Empire Loyalists, who had fought on the King's side during the seven years' contest. The remaining members of the coalition made peace early in 1783, gaining comparatively little. France got back Senegal and Goree, the beginnings of her present West African empire, and St. Lucia and Tobago for the time being. Spain kept Minorca, replaced as a British base by Gibraltar, and recovered Florida. Holland received nothing. All three countries were in financial difficulties, France particularly so, for the money lent to aid America was never repaid and the French monarchy never recovered its financial solvency. The example of a successful revolt against a monarchy was a powerful incentive to the French Revolution, and in the case of Spain the North American precedent led directly to the revolt of Spanish South America under the South American Washington, Simon Bolivar.

It is justifiable to state that, in the actual fighting, the British were more often successful than the Americans; but the conditions were such that, as we have seen, American defeats were not necessarily fatal to their cause, whereas Saratoga ruined any chances of reconquering the Colonies and Yorktown made the continuance of the war impossible. Only a few nicknames of individual units which took part survive to remind us of the courage displayed and successes now forgotten. Alone of all our conflicts since the institution of the Regular Army, the American campaign is commemorated by no battle-honours.

The Beginning of New Things

Although one of our very few unsuccessful wars, this contest is important as the start of new developments. As we have seen, the most formidable element in the American forces consisted of the backwoods riflemen. These were unsuited to the traditional form of fighting in the open, since the long hunter's rifle was so much slower to load than the smooth-bore musket, but these weapons had a vastly longer range and were extremely accurate. To meet them we began to raise light companies from battalions, composed of men specially selected and trained. Although these special formations

were disbanded at the end of the war, they were a signpost to the future, the discontinuance of solid formations and the succession of ponderous volleys. And it is worthy of note too that a young officer, who particularly distinguished himself at the outset of his career in America, was John Moore, the trainer, *par excellence*, of the British Army.

Noteworthy also is the distinguished service of small detachments of British troops in the West Indies and particularly the extraordinary success of a force of light infantry under General Medows in the island of St. Lucia in 1778. Outnumbered by four to one the British, by the crushing nature of their fire, inflicted on their French opponents a loss greater than their own total strength, a victory which the battle-honour " St. Lucia " worthily commemorates.

Looking back now, we see that the separation of America was inevitable. The colonies were too populous as compared with Great Britain, too far away for the then speed of communications, too independent from the circumstances of their growth, to be controlled by any kind of political system then possible. We learnt wisdom there and, undismayed, set about building up a new Empire, in the creation of which we avoided the mistakes which had lost us the old. We still had the expansion of Canada before us, and we turned to Asia, Africa and Australasia to build up afresh the British Commonwealth of Nations.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GAINING OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE, 1763–1818

Building on Clive's Foundations

The victories of Clive and Sir Eyre Coote in Southern India had deprived the French of the right to keep regular military forces in India, and the triumph of Plassey had given the East India Company the dominance in Bengal; but hard struggles were still to come. We had established ourselves firmly in the eastern and least warlike portion of India, but in the south, west and north there were martial powers who would not succumb without hard fighting. Added to this, there were still French military adventurers in India prepared to train the infantry of Indian rulers on European lines; while the British had few cavalry to oppose to the clouds of native horsemen; their transport was obtained locally, was unorganized and insufficient and they enjoyed no technical superiority in artillery or arms. Everything therefore depended on the dogged courage and the discipline of our few European troops and their sepoy comrades, and these could not be fully effective without the most-skilled leadership which was generally, though not always, forth-coming. We fought, therefore, always against heavy odds. Furthermore the governments of Madras and Bombay had little foothold inland and were generally weak and incapable. The one man of supreme ability, Warren Hastings, Governor of Bengal from 1770–1784, (i.e. throughout the period of our difficulties in America) was continuously exposed to the bitter opposition of those English-men whose rapacity and incompetence he had checked, and fell a victim ultimately to charges of oppression which he had really done more than any man to prevent. It is not surprising therefore that we contended always against difficulties which were only very gradually overcome.

An attempt of the nominal ruler of India, the Mughal Emperor of Delhi, to recover power in Bengal was defeated without great difficulty; but trouble followed with Mir Kasim, the Company's nominee as Nawab of Bengal, who was finally crushed by Major Hector Monro at the battle of Baksar (1764). Bengal was now secure, but matters were far otherwise in Madras and Bombay, isolated by land from each other and from Bengal. Even after the Act of 1773, by which Warren Hastings as Governor-General of Bengal had been given general supremacy over both Madras and

Bombay, their "presidents" and councils frequently got into trouble through pursuing their own ill-advised policy.

The Mysore Wars

In Southern India a Mohammedan adventurer, Haidar Ali, had gained possession of the Hindu state of Mysore. The Madras government quarrelled with him; fought two indecisive campaigns in 1767–8; and then made peace, leaving him as powerful as ever. Our forces in the Carnatic were dangerously weak and nothing was done to prepare for the storm which broke in 1780. In April of that year, Haidar Ali launched his hordes into the plains and ravaged the country up to the walls of Madras. A force under Colonel Baillie was overwhelmed at Conjeeveram and the survivors horribly treated. Hastings at once sent every available man to Madras under the aged Eyre Coote, the victor of Wandewash. The situation was desperate. A French fleet was off the coast of Madras under Suffren, the only French admiral who ever showed himself a match for the British in fleet actions. Luckily Coote defeated Haidar Ali at Porto Novo, killing or wounding 10,000 of the enemy, and followed up his success at Pollilur and Sholinghur. Even the overwhelming of another British detachment under Colonel Braithwaite could not conceal from Haidar Ali that he had failed. Before his death in 1782 he said, "I have committed a great error. I shall pay dearly for my arrogance . . . the defeat of many Braithwaites and Baillies will not destroy them. I can ruin their resources by land but I cannot dry up the sea." He was succeeded by his son Tippu, less able but even more ferocious. Peace was signed in 1784, Tippu surrendering most of his prisoners, though he still kept some whom he amused himself by torturing.

The Tiger of Mysore

The third Mysore War broke out in 1789. This time the Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis (the same who had surrendered at Yorktown) came himself to take command, and found himself faced by immense difficulties. A British force in those days in India—and indeed for many years after—could not move without an immense train of transport and a vast horde of followers. Tippu therefore utilized his superiority in cavalry to sweep the countryside bare of provisions so as to starve the British out. In 1791 Cornwallis almost reached Seringapatam, Tippu's capital, and then had to retire with victory nearly in his grasp. In 1792 he tried again, aided by an army from Bombay. This time he was more successful, securing a cession of territory, a large indemnity and the release of all prisoners. Among these was David Baird, whom Tippu had

kept fettered for years to another officer. Baird's mother is alleged to have remarked: "Heaven help the lad that's chained to oor Davie!" Though defeated, Tippu was not yet crushed: he began to prepare for another war.

The fourth Mysore war began in 1799, Lord Wellesley being now Governor-General. The British commander was General Harris, a veteran of Bunker Hill. Among his officers was Colonel Arthur Wellesley, brother of the Governor-General. The army advanced on Seringapatam in a vast square, covering an area of about twenty square miles. Inside, protected from Tippu's cavalry, were 120,000 transport bullocks and all the followers. A day's march was about five miles. On April 5th the vast mass reached Seringapatam. This time there was no mistake. By May 4th the breach was ready. Baird, who had much to repay, led the stormers. It was the day of reckoning. The British poured over the ramparts and Tippu died fighting. Order was at last restored by the heavy hand of Colonel Arthur Wellesley, and Mysore divided between the Company and a Raja from the original Hindu dynasty which Haidar Ali had dispossessed.

The Plague of India: The Mahrattas

If the Mysore Wars showed the Madras Government in an unfavourable light, the same equally applies to the dealings of the Bombay Government with the Mahrattas, who were an even greater problem. Tippu had at any rate a capital which could be stormed, but the capital of a Mahratta prince was the saddle of his steed. The Mahratta base was the whole of western India, and the fortresses of the Western Ghats, perched on inaccessible rocky pinnacles. Secure in these, they sallied forth with waves of horsemen over the length and breadth of India, plundering, slaying and levying tribute as they rode. Even distant Calcutta feared them, as the "Mahratta Ditch" bears witness. In form they were a loose confederacy, under the Peishwa of Poona, though he was in reality less powerful than his nominal subordinates after the crushing defeat at Panipat in 1761 at the hands of the Afghans. The other Mahratta princes were Sindia of Gwālior, Holkar of Indore, the Bhonsla of Nagpur and the Gaikwar of Baroda. The early experiences of the Bombay Government with these rulers were distinctly unfortunate. A desultory war was waged with them between 1775 and 1782, during which, in spite of Colonel Keating's victory at Aras, the Bombay Government concluded the disgraceful Convention of Wargaon, which Hastings said "almost made me sink with shame as I read it." During this war the impression made on Māhādajī Sindia, the greatest of the Mahrattas, by the effectiveness of British-trained infantry, induced him to raise

infantry under European leaders, mainly Frenchmen. Though in a sense this was to sacrifice the old Mahratta nobility, these troops were dangerous opponents. Soon Sindia had twenty-four battalions of regular infantry, and a strong train of artillery, which passed to his successor. Holkar followed suit. The Mahrattas were building up a formidable military power.

The Struggle with the Mahrattas

The Mahratta princes frequently fought amongst themselves in the intervals of war with the British. Underneath this confusion lay the fact that they neither could nor would live without plundering their neighbours, and this, now that we had conquered Mysore and taken the Nizam of Hyderabad under our protection, was bound to lead to a decisive trial of strength. Luckily the occasion brought forth two British commanders of exceptional ability—Wellesley and Lake.

Arthur Wellesley had been busy in the south suppressing a free-booter named Doondia Wao. While so engaged, he had worked out a system of transport far superior to anything the British in India had yet had. With the famous trotting-bullocks of Mysore now at his disposal there was no need of the snail-like crawl of Cornwallis, and with the pontoon-train he had established he could cross any river. Wellesley also showed his characteristic power of clear thinking by the time he selected for his advance. The traditional campaigning-season in India had always been the "cold weather" (October to March), when the climate is excellent, the rainfall over and the rivers consequently low. But Wellesley realized that under these conditions he could never hope to overtake the extremely mobile Mahrattas, with their clouds of horsemen, for they would be over the rivers and away long before he could hope to come up with them. So he advanced instead during the "monsoon" (July to September) when the heavens are opened and the smallest stream a raging torrent. Even the Mahrattas could not cross rivers under such conditions, whereas, with his pontoons, Wellesley knew that he could, even if with difficulty. In this way he could pin them down and force them to fight, thus using surprise to offset their superior numbers. Let the Mahrattas ride as hard as they liked, he could catch them in the end. He first showed his mettle by an extraordinarily rapid march to Poona to rescue the Peishwa from the clutches of Holkar, who thereupon retired northward to his own dominions. But Sindia and the Bhonsla maintained a threatening attitude, resulting in war in August 1803. Only the sword could decide whether Britain or the Mahrattas should dominate India.

THE BATTLE OF ASSAYE, 1803

To secure a base Wellesley stormed Ahmednagar, a fortress considered among the strongest in India. Fortescue quotes the remark of a Mahratta chief: "These English are a strange people and their General a wonderful man. They came here in the morning, looked at the fortified wall, walked over it, killed all the garrison, and returned to breakfast." But a sterner test was at hand. To the north-east were mustering the great armies of Sindia and the Bhonsla, and these must be met. Wellesley set out, acting in conjunction with a force under Colonel Stevenson which was some little distance off on account of the difficulty of supplies. On September 23rd, 1803, while Stevenson was still about eight miles away, Wellesley came in sight of the Mahratta army, encamped in an angle between two rivers. But whereas Wellesley had with him but seven thousand men, British and Indian, the Mahrattas had united their forces and were fifty thousand strong. There were sixteen regular battalions, disciplined by foreign adventurers like Pohlmann and Depont; a hundred guns, served by excellent artillerymen; and a host of cavalry and irregulars. It was impossible to retreat; the only course open was to attack. The problem was how to do so without being outflanked and so overwhelmed. At this crisis Wellesley noticed two villages on opposite banks of the river close to the extremity of the peninsula between two streams in which the Mahrattas were encamped. Arguing that there must be a ford between them, Wellesley planned to use that ford to wedge himself into the angle of the peninsula in such a fashion that his flanks would be secure and the enemy unable to deploy their full strength. This he succeeded in doing, but the course of the battle did not go altogether as planned. The Mahrattas changed front very cleverly to meet him, and Wellesley with his far smaller forces found himself committed to an attack in the teeth of their powerful artillery ranged on a front of less than a mile and stretching right across the peninsula. Through a blaze of fire, Wellesley's men broke clean through the line of guns, bayoneting the Mahratta gunners, who continued to serve their pieces till the last moment. The Mahratta horse charged again and again, only to find their masters in the small force of British cavalry, who fought magnificently. At last the Mahrattas had had enough and drew off, leaving behind them all their guns and casualties, estimated as equal to Wellesley's entire strength. Wellesley had two horses shot under him and lost 1,566 officers and men killed and wounded, nearly a quarter of his entire force. He had fought and won his first and possibly his hardest battle. A truce was now arranged with Sindia, and Wellesley turned to deal with the

Bhonsla of Nagpur, whose forces were completely crushed at the Battle of Argāon (November 29th).

Lake's Campaign in the North

While these victories were being won in the south, a campaign no less wonderful was being waged in the north. Here the command was in the hands of General Gerard Lake, a Guards officer who displayed an amazing talent for light cavalry warfare. He began by storming the fortress of Aligarh, surrounded by a moat deep enough to float a line-of-battleship ; and followed this up by winning the battle of Delhi (September 10th, 1803). Here again the British infantry marched right up to the Mahratta guns, capturing nearly seventy of them. Lake was able to push home his victory more effectively than Wellesley, having introduced "galloper-guns," the forerunners of the Horse Artillery. "I really do think," wrote Lake, "the business was one of the most gallant actions possible ; such a fire of cannon has seldom been seen, if ever, against which our men marched up within one hundred yards without taking a firelock from their shoulders, when they gave one volley, charged instantly, and drove the enemy. I do not think there could have been a more glorious day." On October 18th he captured Agra, described as the "key of Hindustan." On November 1st the French-trained battalions of Sindia were brought to bay at Laswari. The British who had marched 65 miles in 48 hours immediately prior to the fight, charged up to the muzzles of seventy guns and drove the enemy clean off the battlefield. Lake reported : "I was never in so severe a business in my life, or anything like it, and pray to God I never may be in such a situation again : their army is better appointed than ours, no expense spared whatever . . . these fellows fought like devils or rather like heroes."

The Campaign against Holkar

These battles, severe as they had been, were at least against an enemy who stood to be fought. An even more dangerous enemy had next to be dealt with in Holkar, who relied on the traditional Mahratta tactics of fighting with cavalry only. Only extreme mobility and the longest marches could cope with such tactics ; and Holkar was successful against a detachment under Colonel Monson, who lost nearly his entire force before taking refuge in Agra. Delhi was besieged and nearly taken before Lake could come to the rescue. Beating the Mahrattas at their own game, his cavalry rushed the camp of Holkar at dawn on November 13th, 1804, and sent him flying. Four days before a desperate battle had been fought at Deig, where Monson redeemed

his previous failure by plucking victory from the jaws of defeat. The fortress of Deig was captured and on January 2nd Lake sat down before the fortress of Bhurtpore. On four separate occasions the British assaulted, and four times they were driven back. Three thousand men had fallen and Lake had to raise the siege. Peace was made, but Lake's career of victory had been checked. For twenty-one years longer the British had to stomach the taunt: "Go and take Bhurtpore!" However, Lake still kept Holkar on the run and ended by driving him far north into the Punjab. For the next few years the Mahrattas remained quiet.

In 1806 there was a most disturbing incident at Vellore in the Madras Presidency. An Indian battalion, aggrieved at a new regulation forbidding the wearing of caste-marks when in uniform, suddenly mutinied and attacked the few British troops in the fort. The outbreak was quelled by the extraordinary personal gallantry of Colonel Rollo Gillespie, reputed to be the bravest and most reckless man in the Army, who dashed to the rescue with his cavalry regiment and arrived just in time in the famous Gillespie's Ride.

The Mastery of the Indian Ocean

Since the death of Tippu and the defeat of the Mahrattas the French had ceased to be a direct danger on the mainland of India, though individual French officers still continued in the service of Indian States; but they and their unwilling allies, the Dutch, still retained outlying possessions in the Indian Ocean which served as bases for privateers, which preyed on East Indiamen. In 1810 the Governor-General, Lord Minto, determined to make a clean sweep of these. In July an expedition captured the French island of Bourbon and in November a force of 6,000 British troops and 4,000 Indians were sent to capture Mauritius. This was successfully accomplished in December and a constant thorn in the side of the British removed. It was also a retort to Napoleon's "Berlin Decrees" and Eastern ambitions.

It was now the turn of the Dutch. Their minor settlements having been subjugated,[1] in April 1811 the Governor-General proceeded in person to Java with the most considerable expedition that had ever left India, the military command being in the hands of Sir Samuel Auchmuty. The Dutch had a strong force in the island, including a number of Frenchmen, but on the arrival of the expedition at Batavia the city surrendered, the enemy preferring to make their stand inland. The Dutch military station of Weltwreden was captured at the beginning of August, and at the end of the month a daring assault carried the fortified lines of Cornelis. The enemy were 17,000 strong, Dutch, French and

[1]Amboyna and Banda were captured in 1810

Javanese, but the whole force was destroyed or captured in the pursuit. The Dutch general, Janssens, capitulated, and the enemy flags vanished from the East. The administration of Java was entrusted to Stamford Raffles, whose methods the Dutch were wise enough to imitate when, at the Treaty of Paris, 1815, they received back their East Indian possessions. If Raffles had had his way the immensely valuable possession of Java would have been retained, but, finding that the East India Company were resolved to relinquish it, he obtained the island of Singapore from the Sultan of Johore in 1819, thus establishing the British control over Malaya instead.

The First and Last Fight with the Gūrkhas

This was in many ways one of the most difficult campaigns the British ever had to wage in India. The Gūrkhas, a warlike race whose only interest was fighting, had gradually extended their sway over Nepal, and the hill country to east and west of it, and were threatening the lowlands also. They relied for defence on stockades in the mountain passes, which they held with the utmost gallantry. Attempts to take these out of hand failed on several occasions in 1814 and 1815, until Sir David Ochterlony (known to the sepoys as " Loneyackty ") advanced on the Gūrkha capital of Kāthmandu at the beginning of 1816 and forced them to sign a treaty of peace. By this the Gūrkhas surrendered the territory they had overrun on condition that, with the exception of the British Resident at their capital, they should be left absolutely alone. The treaty has ever since been strictly observed, and to this day Nepal remains the least-known part of Asia. Gūrkhas soon began to take service with the British, and now comprise twenty of our best battalions. Both in the Mutiny and the Great War the Nepalese government rendered the most valuable assistance, but always on the same terms. They will aid in a crisis and provide recruits for the Gūrkha Rifles, but those recruits always come to India; no British recruiting-officer may ever enter Nepal.

The Pindārī War, 1817–1819

It was no longer possible to ignore the atrocities committed by the Pindārīs, a horde of robbers recruited from the irregular followers and stragglers of the Mahratta armies routed by Wellesley and Lake. They numbered many thousands and were largely Mahratta in origin though their numbers were swelled by all the riff-raff of the countryside. They operated in large bodies and were rapidly bringing India to the same state of misery and devastation as that to which China has been reduced by similar hordes

to-day. An Indian soldier, writing of that time, said: "Hindustan was at this time tormented by demons from the lowest hell. I cannot describe the horrors of those days—may they never come again! The very name of Pindārī, or of Chītū, their chief, was accursed. Merchants trembled when they heard it; young women wept; no one felt safe. I have heard too of the frightful punishments the Pindārīs inflicted, burning the eyes out with a heated spear-blade, cutting the ears, nose and lips off, and other horrible mutilations." Large areas of Central India were completely devastated by their ravages. Though nominally acting on their own, they were secretly supported by the Mahratta chiefs, who gave them shelter and shared their plunder. A campaign against them would therefore lead inevitably to a final war with their Mahratta accomplices.

At last, in 1814, the Governor-General, Lord Hastings, who, in his youth, as Lord Rawdon, had distinguished himself in the American War, decided to deal with this pest once and for all. To do so he mobilized an army of 120,000 men, of whom 13,000 were British. With this enormous force he systematically swept the countryside, driving the Pindārīs before him and destroying their gangs. By 1817, the work was done, and the Pindārīs completely broken up. The fiendish Chītū was hunted into the jungle where he was appropriately devoured by a tiger.

The Mahratta princes now threw off the mask. The first to do so was the Peishwa, who attacked and burnt the British Residency at Poona. On November 5th, 1817, his army of 26,000 was defeated by Colonel Burr, with but 2,800 men, at the battle of Kirkee. Next came the Bhonsla of Nagpur. A tiny force of 1,400 men under Captain Fitzgerald won the amazing victory of Sītābaldī, where they defeated 18,000 Mahrattas in a fight lasting eighteen hours. As a result the Bhonsla was deposed, but his dynasty remained till just before the Mutiny. Then came the turn of Holkar. He was defeated at Mahīdpur and compelled to submission.

Once more the Peishwa tried the fortune of war. His last army was beaten at Ashti on February 20th, 1818, and he became a fugitive. Perhaps the most wonderful example of heroism in these wars was that of Captain Staunton who, with 750 Indian troops and twenty-four British gunners, held Koregāon against 20,000 Mahrattas. He lost one-third of his men, but gained the day.

At last the long struggle was over. The Peishwa's dominions were annexed, and he died in exile near Cawnpore. His adopted son, Dhandu Pant, inherited some of his estates, to end as the Nana Sahib of the Mutiny. Holkar and Sindia were established

with a fixed and definite territory, as was the Gaikwar of Baroda, whose dynasty had never adopted an attitude hostile to the British. It is worth mention that these last three great Mahratta princes benefited greatly by having territory to rule instead of merely territory to plunder. Their dynasties became much richer and this they repaid by subsequent loyalty.

Britain Dominant in India

With the downfall of the Mahrattas British power was paramount in India, but it must not be forgotten that it took seventy-five years of hard fighting after the battle of Plassey to achieve this. These wars are little remembered now, but they saved India from misery and anarchy. The scanty handfuls of British soldiers, both King's troops and the Company's, together with their Indian comrades, fought and won time and time again against the most overwhelming odds. The thin red lines, all dressed alike in scarlet so that the enemy should not know till too late where the few British troops were posted, advancing under a burning sun in the teeth of overwhelming artillery fire against armies many times their number and just as well armed, bought with their blood the Indian Empire. They are forgotten now, save by their successors in the British and Indian armies, who still bear the old battle-honours, but they won victories unsurpassed in the history of warfare.

CHAPTER IX

BRITAIN'S FIGHT AGAINST REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE 1784–1802

THE YEARS OF PEACE, 1784–1793

IN March 1784 William Pitt, the younger son of the great Chatham, came into power with a huge majority at the age of 24, thereby rescuing King George from the hands of the Whigs. But the monarch had learnt his lesson, and the policy pursued was definitely Pitt's and not the King's. Pitt was curiously unlike his father in every respect but patriotism. He was by instinct a social reformer, as far as circumstances permitted, and a most able financier. He restored the national finances and placed the military budget on a much better footing. But he had no gifts for the conduct of war, as we shall see in due course, and his best work was done in the period of peace.

His Whig predecessors had, as usual, disbanded many regiments on the conclusion of peace, leaving only 7,000 men available in England. They had also allowed the militia to fall into decay.

Pitt did what he could. He ended the system by which a colonel was, in a sense, the proprietor of his regiment, by making the War Department responsible for the pay, equipment and recruiting of units, and increased the soldiers' pay. But he left the officers' pay unaltered, a source of great hardship to impecunious juniors.

He also, in 1793, started the building of barracks, a proceeding stupidly denounced by his opponents as the foundation of tyranny, as the troops were still the police force of the country, but a measure far superior to the old system by which soldiers were billeted in ale-houses, with the natural consequence of excessive drunkenness. The barracks were grossly overcrowded but they were capable of being improved, which the ale-houses were not. The first military manuals were issued—the famous "Eighteen Manœuvres" of General David Dundas.

The Corps of Royal Engineers was formed and, in 1793, the first troops of R.H.A. were raised. Drivers were, for the first time, enlisted for the Royal Artillery instead of utilizing civilians and the teams were no longer hired. Bugle-calls were regularized, and all Light Dragoon regiments were clothed in blue, still the full-dress uniform of their successors, the Hussars. A beginning

had been made, but there were still many serious deficiencies which Pitt, engrossed in domestic affairs, failed to remedy.

The French Revolution

In 1789 Louis XVI, without any capable advisers and with a system of finance which had hopelessly broken down, called together the States-General, the nearest approach to a Parliament which France had ever had but which had not met for 200 years. From that moment the doom of the old absolute monarchy was sealed. Everything was to be changed and the King was too weak to resist. Then followed the storming of the Bastille and the destruction of all aristocratic privileges. In 1791 the King tried to escape across the frontier with his family, but was captured and brought back a prisoner. Next the mob stormed his palace at Versailles and led him captive to Paris. A Republic was proclaimed and war declared on all the monarchies of Europe. "Aristocrats" and all suspected of sympathizing with them were guillotined wholesale, and finally Louis XVI and his queen, Maria Antoinette, shared their fate in 1793. Europe, including Britain, was horror-stricken and deeply alarmed for its own safety, for the new rulers of France were the most extreme of revolutionaries, who had attained power by the slaughter of their more moderate rivals and who announced their intention of spreading their principles by any means available. The regular French army was disorganized by the death or exile of its royalist officers, so the National Convention ordered a levy en masse and hurled their fanatical hordes across the frontier of the Austrian Netherlands. The "Terror" was in arms and the governments of Europe must meet it or become its victims.

Nor could Britain disregard the situation. She was in the process of becoming a great industrial nation, with great colonial responsibilities, and stability in Europe was essential for the continuance of our progress. Any sympathy Britain might have had for the redress of grievances in France had now vanished, and our attitude steadily became more hostile. On February 1st, 1793, the French declared war.

Pitt's Military Policy

Pitt looked at the problem from the standpoint of a financier. He knew that the French could only pay their way by issuing worthless paper-money, and he believed that, if their final bankruptcy could be accelerated, the Revolution must collapse. What he did not realize is that a completely revolutionary government starts with the initial advantage of having repudiated all previous

liabilities and that starving troops, if sufficiently desperate and well-led, may find food and pay at their enemies' expense.

He therefore proposed to support the European opponents of France by subsidies while utilizing the Navy to cut off the French colonial possessions and protect British commerce. There was also the consideration that the revolutionary principles of "Liberty and Equality" had precipitated risings by the negroes in the French West Indies and the conflagration was threatening to spread. The West Indies were then immensely valuable, and there was the prospect that all Europeans then, irrespective of race, would rally to any nation which could protect their lives and property. We see now that this policy was wrong, for it violated the principle of concentration of force and prevented us from having sufficient troops to intervene effectively in Europe. Also it involved fighting on a large scale in the West Indies where the death-roll from sickness under normal conditions of our garrisons averaged a thousand men per annum and on service would be vastly greater. But, on the information Pitt possessed, this policy of "side-shows" appeared a hopeful one and only bitter experience exposed its futility.

The Campaign in the Netherlands, 1793–1795

Pitt soon found, of course, that he could not restrict the British effort entirely to subsidies, ships and sideshows. The French, desperate for money, turned their eyes on the wealth of Holland and the Bank of Amsterdam, and the invasion of the Austrian Netherlands was the first step towards this objective. Austria, though naturally anxious to retain her Belgian provinces, was more concerned with possibilities in Poland and with strengthening her power in Germany. Therefore, as Marlborough had found, the Austrians were unwilling to devote their main resources to the Low Countries. The Dutch, who were hampered by a pro-French-revolutionary party, displayed their usual apathy and incompetence, even in their own defence. So two brigades of British infantry, all in fact that were available at the moment, were sent hurriedly and unprovided to Flanders under the command of Frederick, Duke of York, aged twenty-five, the second and favourite son of George III. This force, together with the Austrians and eked out with the King's Hanoverian troops and Hessian mercenaries, would, it was hoped, be able to capture the strong French fortress of Valenciennes and open the way to Paris. The plan was a good one but the force provided was quite inadequate and the British and Austrian commanders were always at loggerheads.

Valenciennes was indeed taken, but then the British Cabinet, despite the Duke of York's remonstrances, insisted that he

should undertake the siege of Dunkirk, partly for sentimental reasons (it had been in British occupation in the past) and partly because they wanted to see some tangible result for their efforts.

On the way to Dunkirk a brilliant little action was fought at Lincelles, when a small British detachment defeated a much more numerous body of French. The engagement showed that the British soldier was as stubborn a fighter as ever, even when wretchedly provided and with little care taken for his leading and discipline.

Although the promised naval assistance had not materialized Dunkirk was besieged for three weeks, when the Duke of York had to beat a retreat, having lost in the campaign 10,000 casualties, mostly from sickness and neglect. As the force fell back a gallant rearguard action was fought at Nieuport.

The campaign of 1794 again took place in conjunction with the Austrians along the Franco-Netherland border. Three brilliant cavalry actions were fought at Villars-en-Cauchies, Beaumont and Villars, the British and Austrian troopers charging down masses of French infantry. The action at Beaumont, in particular, is considered by some historians as the greatest day in the annals of British cavalry, and is a lesson in the correct use of ground.

But these successes did not avail against the immense numerical preponderance of the French, and the defeat of Tourcoing followed, owing to the non co-operation of the Austrians. The latter, who had all along considered that their real interests were elsewhere, now utilized this defeat as an excuse to draw off towards the Rhine, leaving the Duke of York, with 40,000 men, confronted by 150,000 French. The paper strength of the Regular Army at this time, at home and abroad, was 175,000 including foreign troops, and there were 90,000 Militia, Fencibles and Volunteers. But organization was so bad that reinforcements were not available and nothing was possible but retreat, covered by a fine rearguard action by one brigade at Tournai. The retreat continued through the bitter winter of 1794–95 right across Holland and Hanover, till the remnants of the force finally succeeded in reaching Bremen, where they embarked for England. This retreat may fairly be described as the most disastrous in our military history. The cold was excessive, the supply services completely collapsed, the medical arrangements were a scandal and discipline broke down owing to the incompetence of many officers. Pitt's desperate expedient of granting commissions to practically anyone who could afford to pay the price exacted by " crimps " for providing recruits was exposed in all its shamefulness.

Among those who saw from painful experience in this campaign how war should *not* be waged was the young lieutenant-colonel—he had attained the rank at twenty-four of the Thirty-third

Foot (now the Duke of Wellington's Regiment)—Arthur Wellesley, with whose later victories in India we have dealt in the previous chapter. A younger son of the Earl of Mornington, his military education had been limited to what he could learn at a military school at Angers in France, but he had gained rapid promotion by his brother's help in purchasing his " steps " without ever having seen a shot fired. Now, in this disastrous retreat, he did so well that he was selected to command the rearguard. It is significant, though, that in later life he never referred to this period.

The Rise of Napoleon

At the same time as Wellesley began his service in disaster for which he was not responsible, his great rival first made his name in success. Napoleon Bonaparte, born in 1769, the same year as Wellesley, and a member of the Corsican nobility, was admitted to the Military School at Brienne and became a French officer of the old army. When the revolution broke out he saved his commission and his life since, though an " aristocrat "—he could never under the old rules have been commissioned if he had not possessed the necessary " quarterings "—he did not belong to the French aristocracy. He therefore had the great advantage, shared by very few of his French rivals or subordinates, of having started as a trained officer. It was this technical knowledge which first brought him to the front. A mixed force of British, Sardinians, Neapolitans and Spaniards had occupied the French naval base of Toulon at the same time as the Duke of York landed in the Netherlands. This force was far too small to hold the very extensive position round the harbour, but the French troops were too raw to drive them out. Napoleon, appointed as a lieutenant-colonel to command the French artillery, soon detected the point on which, if captured, guns could be placed so as to render the harbour untenable. It was taken; the guns emplaced; and Toulon had to be evacuated. The " Man of Destiny " was launched on the career which was to lead to an empire —and St. Helena.

The base for the British Expedition to Toulon had been Napoleon's native island, Corsica. Little was effected then owing to disputes between the naval and military commanders. The interest is that in this campaign served both Nelson and Moore, now rising rapidly in their respective professions and already looked on as coming leaders.

Britain's Blank Period

The next few years are a melancholy period in British history. Pitt and his advisers never seemed able to realize that troops who are never at the decisive point when they are wanted are of very

little use. They persisted in sending such troops as could be collected to the West Indies to capture sugar-islands, where the men died off from yellow fever almost as soon as they arrived. The troops fought well at Martinique 1794 and St. Lucia 1796, but Fortescue calculates that from first to last we sacrificed there nearly 100,000 men dead or disabled. Our only consolation was that the French were just as foolish and probably lost just as many in their own similar expeditions, notably in Santo Domingo. The explanation in both cases seems to be that as the only considerable source of sugar at that time these islands were extremely valuable and the planters, who were making fortunes, were politically very powerful. At length, the French, beaten out of the islands at enormous cost, discovered how to extract sugar from sugar-beet, and so were able to support their loss.

With regard to this policy of raids, when these were directed at points of strategic importance like Malta or Minorca, there was something to be said for them; when intended to expel the French or their temporary allies, Spanish or Dutch, from their colonial possessions, they at least added to the Empire. But when, as was usually the case, they consisted in embarking inadequate forces in hired transports and sending them wandering miserably round the coasts of Europe, hampered by fresh instructions every time a bright idea occurred to one of Pitt's advisers, the farce became tragic. It is difficult to estimate the extent to which the struggle was prolonged by these feeble tactics.

More justifiable than most of Pitt's expeditions was the first conquest of the Cape of Good Hope, by Major-General Craig in 1795. Holland now being in French occupation, we were obliged to consider the Dutch possessions as hostile, and the seizure of their territory in Ceylon and Malaya shortly followed. We had by this time no allies; there was a grave financial crisis owing to the difficulty of providing funds for war expenditure; naval mutinies took place at the Nore and Spithead; and Ireland was seething with rebellion, inspired and aided by the French. In 1797 the French even managed to land a small force at Fishguard, which promptly surrendered when confronted by the yeomanry, an additional cause, it is said, being the Welsh women assembled on the surrounding hills, whose red cloaks were mistaken by the French for the red coats of British infantry. However, the incident gained for the Pembrokeshire Yeomanry the only battle-honour ever awarded for service in the United Kingdom.

The North Holland Expedition, 1799

In 1799 an attempt was made to expel the French from Holland itself. The inducement seems to have been that Tsar Paul of

Russia was annoyed at Napoleon's seizure of Malta on his way to Egypt, as he wished himself to be elected Grand Master of the Order of St. John. He therefore offered to send 40,000 men to Holland, though actually only 15,000 arrived. The British contributed 13,000 at first, good material since the Militia was now being drawn on for recruits, but largely untrained and very poorly supplied.

At first everything went well. In August 1799 the best available British commander, General Sir Ralph Abercromby, landed on the sand-dunes of North Holland, south of the Helder, in the teeth of a mixed Franco-Dutch force; drove them back and established his force across the peninsula of North Holland, thereby securing the surrender of the Dutch fleet in its base. Moore was one of his Brigade commanders, and always unlucky in action, was seriously wounded in the landing. Then in September the Duke of York arrived as Commander-in-Chief, bringing with him reinforcements which, with the Russians, made the total force available up to 30,000 men. An advance southwards was now undertaken but failed owing to the lack of training of the reinforcements sent out, the extremely difficult nature of the country which was intersected with dykes, and the inefficiency of the Russians. A second attempt was at first more successful and we won the battle of Egmont-op-Zee, but had then to retire to our original positions. The troops were naked and starving, and the setting in of the winter gales would render re-embarkation impossible. Under these circumstances the Duke of York was glad to conclude a convention in October by which we kept the Dutch fleet, restored our prisoners and evacuated the country. By this time nearly half the force disembarked had become casualties, mostly from sickness, and the Duke was fortunate that the French did not realize the trap in which the politicians at home had placed him by this ill-conceived side-show. This was his last enterprise as a military commander in the field. From now on he confined himself to the task of army reorganization at home for which he was much better fitted.

The Egyptian Campaign, 1801

In May 1798 Napoleon had sailed for Egypt with a large expedition, capturing Malta on the way. On the part of the Directory, now in power in France, this enterprise was probably favoured because they hoped by it to rid themselves of Napoleon, who, they realized, was becoming a danger to themselves; on the part of Napoleon the design was almost certainly to gain some spectacular success which would enable him to return to France in triumph by land via Constantinople and seize supreme power. Whether

he ever seriously intended to threaten India may well be doubted. One great difficulty Napoleon had to face. The command of the Mediterranean had been secured by the British as a result of the naval victory of St. Vincent in 1797, when the Welch Regiment again obtained a battle-honour while acting as marines. The whole enterprise was therefore extremely hazardous as, if not intercepted on the way, the French would find their retreat cut off as soon as they arrived.

Evading Nelson's fleet, Napoleon landed at Alexandria and marched inland, defeating the Mamelukes[1] (mentioned later) at the Battle of the Pyramids (actually about seven miles from the site of the engagement) and entered Cairo in triumph. He was busy explaining to the population that he had no religious prejudices and had always thought that the Mohammedan religion had a great deal to recommend it, when the news arrived that Nelson had returned ; caught the French fleet at anchor on August 1st in Aboukir Bay, and practically annihilated it. With his army now cut off from France, Napoleon set out for Palestine, and in March 1799 undertook the siege of the port of Acre, close to Mt. Carmel. It was desperately defended by the Turks, aided by a party of British seamen under Sir Sidney Smith. The French attacked again and again, and finally fell back with the loss of three thousand men, leaving the town still untaken. It was Napoleon's first serious check. He retired to Egypt and, having restored his prestige by the complete destruction of a Turkish army which had landed at Aboukir, sailed unostentatiously with a small party for France, leaving his army to get home the best way it could.

Obviously Britain could not feel secure with over twenty-five thousand French troops in Egypt ; and a force under Sir Ralph Abercromby, with Moore in command of the Reserve, was sent to turn them out. This was no light task. The French troops in Egypt, if united, amounted to nearly double Abercromby's strength. There was only one practicable landing-place—the small bay of Aboukir, about twelve miles from Alexandria, in which Nelson had recently destroyed the French fleet at the so-called " Battle of the Nile " ; and the French had had ample leisure to fortify the sandhills. The position was very similar to the stretch of coast in North Holland on which Abercromby had forced a landing under fire in 1799, and there was to be no similar example till the Gallipoli landing at Cape Helles in 1915.

In spite of these difficulties the British plan, thanks to Abercromby's determination and Moore's attention to detail, was successfully carried out. The troops, who had been sedulously prac-

[1] V.P. 124

tised in similar landings at Marmora Bay in Asia Minor, were rowed ashore on March 8th, 1801, in nearly two hundred boats provided and manned by the fleet. Passing through a tempest of fire they landed on the beach; fell in as coolly as on parade, and marching with Moore at their head straight at the sandhills, drove the French in rout before them. Soon the whole army was on shore and preparing to advance along the sandy strip of ground between Lake Mariut and the sea, at the other end of which stands Alexandria.

A sharp engagement was fought on March 13th at Mandora (or Mandara as it is now called) in which the French were repulsed, and, on arriving outside Alexandria, Abercromby gave orders for his troops to dig themselves in as a precaution against a night attack by the garrison. This was a wise measure, for on the night of March 20th–21st the French did attack. The British were ready for them and, led by Moore, drove them back on the city after a confused struggle in the early dawn. It was here that the Gloucestershire Regiment gained their back "badge"; charged front and rear by the French cavalry, the rear rank faced about and the French were driven off. The battle of Alexandria is noteworthy as for it the first general medal issued (in 1839) to the Army was gained by the troops concerned, though the East India Company had been granting medals to their own troops for some time previously.

Unfortunately the victory was marred by the death of Sir Ralph Abercromby, who fell mortally wounded at the moment of success. The site of the battle is now the barracks of the British battalion stationed at Alexandria, where a monument commemorates his death. Moore was also wounded but recovered.

The command now devolved on General Hutchinson, who left a force to watch the French in Alexandria while, with the remainder, he marched to Cairo where 13,000 French troops surrendered, as soon as the British reached the city, on condition that they should be evacuated to France. Hutchinson then returned to Alexandria, where the French garrison also surrendered, after the fort of Marabout had been stormed, on the same conditions. The French troops in Egypt, even after the battle of Alexandria, were greatly superior to the British in number but there is no doubt that, abandoned by their leader and with his successor, Kléber, assassinated by a fanatic in Cairo, they were only too glad to return home on any terms they could get.

One very interesting feature of this campaign was the co-operation from India. An Anglo-Indian force under General Baird sailed from Bombay; landed at Koseir on the shore of the Red Sea and marched 100 miles across the desert to Kena on the Nile so as to take the French in the rear. Actually they arrived too

late to take part in the fighting, but the event is noteworthy as the first instance of Indian troops serving in Egypt, and for their excellent water discipline which alone made the march possible. The " well of the English " which they dug half-way, still exists.

Our opponents lost because their leader, General Menou, dispersed his forces, but otherwise they had every possible advantage, superior numbers, cavalry, and horses for their artillery. The British had only 320 horses for the cavalry and to horse one battery. The remainder of the guns had to be manhandled by seamen.

And, in particular, the landing at Aboukir Bay was a most skilfully conducted operation and showed what difficulties British soldiers could overcome when so competently led. The success of Abercromby and Moore was the first really effective blow dealt at the French since the beginning of the war.

The Duke of York's Reforms

We now turn to a process which was of very gradual development but which made all the difference between the army which fought against revolutionary France and that which served under Wellington. On his return from Holland, the Duke of York applied himself earnestly to his duties as Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards. He realized that the Army was in a bad state and correctly attributed it to the lack of discipline and training on the part of officers. They had been accustomed to take leave practically whenever they liked, on " Secretary-at-War's letters " or even without them. The Duke of York now compelled all officers to apply through the proper channels and the same rule applied to any other requests they wished to make ; neglect of the correct procedure had been a fruitful source of indiscipline in the past. He established annual confidential reports, at first considered an atrocious piece of tyranny. He also held regular levees, which enabled officers to approach him and made it possible for him to know them personally. He also checked the worst abuse of the purchase-system by laying down that no one could become a major until he had served for six years.

With the same intention he opened the Senior Department of the Royal Military College, so that poor and ambitious officers could qualify there for promotion by merit. The College was moved to Farnham from High Wycombe and then to Camberley in 1820, and occupied its present building, the Staff College, in 1857.

The Junior Department, to train cadets, was founded at Marlow and moved in 1812 to the present Old Building, for which the labour of French prisoners from the Peninsula was utilized, as were German prisoners in the Great War for clearing the new playing fields. The selection of Camberley appears to have been influenced by the consideration that it was sufficiently far from London to

preclude the possibility of cadets' studies being interrupted, an advantage which modern methods of transport have somewhat modified. A circumstance peculiarly to his credit is that he was the initiator of the Duke of York's Royal Military School at Chelsea for soldiers' children which still flourishes at Dover, whither it has been transferred.

Remembering the main cause of his own failure in the Netherlands, the Duke of York established the Corps of Waggoners, the first regularly organized system of transport which the British Army had ever possessed. He also improved the medical service and established the principle that each unit was to have its own doctor, with commissioned rank. The responsibility for all medical stores and hospitals was also assumed by Government. Similarly each cavalry regiment was to have its own veterinary officer, saddlers and armourer. He also introduced a uniform system of drill for the cavalry, which, however, still remained liable to two besetting faults, bad scouting and headlong charges, which made it impossible to rally, as Wellington found in the Peninsula.

The Chaplain-Generals' Department was also started, which, if not a great success at first owing to the recruitment of unsuitable chaplains, was at any rate a beginning. The Duke of York also began to collect a proper Headquarters staff. He started the Adjutant-General's and Military Secretary's Departments and laid the foundations of the Operations and Intelligence sections. And finally, he took the administration of discipline at home out of the hands of the Secretary of State for War and into his own.

To sum up, the Duke of York gave to the Army what it had seldom enjoyed before, an honest and practical direction and hope for the future.

CHAPTER X

THE WAR WITH THE FRENCH EMPIRE, 1803–1807

The Lull in the Struggle

Shortly after the expulsion of the French from Egypt the Treaty of Amiens was signed, March 25th, 1802. The British Cabinet hoped for a permanent settlement; Napoleon, now First Consul, for time to prepare fresh plans. By the treaty Britain agreed to hand back all her acquisitions except Trinidad and Ceylon. Even Malta was to be returned—of course to the Knights of St. John—though actually this had not been done when war broke out again as the administration of the Order was in confusion after the French occupation. We may notice the surrender of the French garrison of Valletta to a small mixed British naval and military force, under Captain Ball, R.N., and the native Maltese. Malta remained therefore in British hands and this was made by Napoleon his excuse when war was declared again in May 1803. Actually he had been continually violating the terms of the treaty himself and a renewal of the struggle was inevitable.

The Camp at Boulogne

From 1803 to 1805 Napoleon remained at Boulogne, preparing for the invasion of England which he asserted was his intention. One hundred thousand men, assembled in camps along the opposite side of the Channel, were constantly practised in embarking in flat-bottomed boats. Everything was in readiness except command of the sea and a sufficient number of calm days. Meanwhile a medal was prepared, depicting Hercules strangling a sea-monster and hopefully inscribed "Struck at London." The effect of this enormous concentration within sight of our shores was naturally very great. Recruiting for the Regular Army improved and enormous numbers of Volunteers were raised considering the then size of the population. How effective they would have been had Napoleon ever landed it is impossible to say; what we have to consider is the new spirit which was stirring in the minds of British soldiers.

Sir John Moore's System

The sector immediately facing Boulogne and now in process of being fortified by the erection of martello towers and the digging of

the Hythe Military Canal had its headquarters at the camp at Shorncliffe and was under the command of Sir John Moore. Of him Fortescue has said: "No man, nor Cromwell, nor Marlborough, nor Wellington, has set so strong a mark for good upon the British Army as John Moore." Whether he was a really great general is still a matter for dispute, but no one can doubt that he was a supremely good officer. Whatever he had to do he did as well as it could possibly be done. We have seen how he bore himself in America, in Corsica, in Holland and in Egypt. Though a strict disciplinarian he was popular with his men and the secret undoubtedly was that, like Marlborough and his own leader, Abercromby, he was invariably solicitous for their welfare. But Moore went further than this: he was the first to conceive of the individual private as an intelligent being, capable of doing his duty efficiently because he understood the reason for what he was doing. Now Moore had the opportunity to put his belief into practice.

The Camp at Shorncliffe

In 1801 an Experimental Corps of Riflemen (now the Rifle Brigade) had been formed to test the new Baker rifle, the first official rifle introduced into the British Army, as a weapon for light troops. Under Colonel Coote Manningham and Lieut-Colonel Stewart this force increased rapidly in efficiency, and in October 1802, now numbered the 95th, together with the 43rd and 52nd Light Infantry, it was formed into a brigade at Shorncliffe under Sir John Moore.

Here, in the words of Napier, "he so fashioned them that afterwards, as the Light Division under Wellington, they were found to be soldiers unsurpassable, perhaps never equalled." Moore himself wrote: "Their movement in the field is perfect. It is evident that not only the officers, but that each individual soldier knows perfectly what he has to do; the discipline is carried on without severity, the officers are attached to the men and the men to the officers."

This was the keynote of Sir John Moore's system; the idea that it was possible so to train units that even the smallest formation could act with perfect efficiency even when on detached duty, and fire without wasting ammunition. Previously no commander had thought in terms of anything less than a battalion. Only when all the companies were drawn up actually under his eye, and firing at the word of command, could he feel that ammunition was not being squandered. Now, under the new system, "a Company was made a real command, and the Captain given the full responsibilities of such a command." It is true that the new system had a very gradual growth in the Army as a whole. The traditions of centuries are not to be upset in a day, and not till the South African War

were they completely overcome. Two points are notable in this connection. Because musketry was so all-important in light-infantry tactics, Moore made his system of discipline conform to those tactics. He aimed at appealing to the men's self-respect and pride in their unit, not to their fear of punishment. Secondly, the new system extended to whole units and was capable of being extended to other units. It did not involve diminishing the efficiency of battalions by taking away their best men to form grenadier or light companies, who might often be serving away from their own units, as had hitherto been customary.

These principles we have described are so universally recognized in the Army of to-day that we take them for granted. But till Moore came on the scene they were not so recognized, and it is interesting to consider how long ago our present system of training began and how slowly it prevailed.

Trafalgar and its Military Results

For three years the antagonists had watched each other across the Channel, Napoleon grimly waiting for his chance ; the British as grimly determined that he should never have it. Now, at last, in 1805 Napoleon thought his chance had come. He had a considerable number of ships blockaded in French and Spanish ports (Spain was at this time his reluctant ally) and if they could only get out, combine, and by a feint to the West Indies draw Nelson away and then slip back, the control of the Channel might be secured. What Napoleon failed to realize was that crews blockaded for years in harbour are no match in seamanship for sailors constantly at sea.

His plans partly succeeded. Villeneuve did get out of Toulon and made a dash for the West Indies with Nelson in hot pursuit. Once there he turned, having gained some days on Nelson, but his ships were slow, and off Cape Finisterre he fell in with a British squadron under Sir Robert Calder. An indecisive action followed, after which Villeneuve lost his nerve and instead of sailing Channelwards, turned south to Cadiz, where he was reinforced by some Spanish ships. Nelson was soon outside and Napoleon saw the game was up. He hurled his Grand Army across Europe to surround the Austrian General Mack at Ulm and to crush the united Austrians and Russians at Austerlitz, a blow the news of which finished the overworked and sickly Pitt. *En route* Napoleon relieved his feelings by sending orders to the unhappy Villeneuve to leave Cadiz harbour and fight at all costs. He did so, and on October 21st, 1805, in Trafalgar Bay his fleet was completely shattered by Nelson, who gave his life in gaining for Britain the mastery of the seas. The French *Moniteur* did its best by claiming a

glorious victory : " Thirteen sail of the French and Spanish line got safe to Cadiz ; the other twenty have, no doubt, gone to some other port and will soon be heard of . . . Our loss was trifling, that of the English was immense. We have, however, to lament the absence of Admiral Villeneuve, whose ardour carried him beyond the strict bounds of prudence, and, by compelling him to board the English Admiral's ship, prevented him from returning to his own. . . ."

The military consequences of Trafalgar were great. Britain had now undisputed command of the sea ; she was free at last from the menace of invasion, and could strike by sea at any objective she chose. One requisite alone was still lacking, a military organization sufficiently developed to provide, not merely an expeditionary force, but the means to keep it in the field for years on end, should this be necessary.

The Line versus the Column : Maida, 1806

For a considerable portion of the Napoleonic Wars small British forces were engaged in desultory operations against the French in the western portion of the Mediterranean seaboard. These operations were not particularly important in themselves or particularly successful, mainly owing to lack of competent leaders and sufficient resources. Had these been available, it is conceivable that Italy and not Spain might have been the seat of the principal British effort against Napoleon, for which indeed, owing to its geographical configuration, it was much better suited.

One, however, of these abortive expeditions, that which led to the battle of Maida in 1805, is noteworthy as the first example of a formal engagement in which British tactics and formations definitely proved their superiority to those adopted by the Revolution and Napoleon.

In July 1806, a small British force of some 5,400 men left the island of Sicily, which British arms and sea-power kept throughout free from French penetration, and landed in Calabria. Its object was to co-operate with the government of King Ferdinand of Naples, which had not yet been entirely driven from the mainland. Its leader was Major-General Sir John Stuart, described by Fortescue as a vain and superficial man, much troubled by the antics of another of the same kidney, the naval commander, Sidney Smith. This force advanced from Reggio up the toe of the peninsula as far as Maida, where on July 4th it was attacked by a somewhat superior French army under Reynier. Confident of victory, the French advanced in their usual formation of dense columns with a narrow frontage, an array which had seldom failed to bear all before it against Continental opponents. The British, on the other hand, were drawn up two deep, with every musket available, and, as the French approached, poured in crushing volleys and then charged

with the bayonet. The effect was overwhelming. The British lost little more than three hundred men, while the French were routed with the loss of five or six times that number. The action had no particular results, partly owing to the feebleness of the Neapolitans and partly to the quarrels of Stuart and Smith, and the British forces were soon withdrawn again to Sicily; but none the less an action had been fought, though on a small scale, which pointed the way decisively to Wellington's subsequent triumphs in Spain. The British had learnt that their own natural battle-tactics were definitely superior to those of the French, and that in any stand-up fight against reasonable odds they might fairly expect a victory. The confidence thus gained was never afterwards lost, and the line went into action against the column from now on knowing, precisely what to expect and confident of success.

The Cape and South America

In accordance with the Treaty of Amiens in 1802, we had handed back the Cape of Good Hope to Holland, but as the Dutch, who were still under French control, had taken pains to strengthen their hold on the Cape since its restoration it became necessary to face the possibility that it might be developed into a French base on the route to India, where they still held possession of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean till 1810. So a second expedition was sent in 1806 under General Baird, the same who had led the assault on Seringapatam and commanded the Indian contingent in their march from the Red Sea to the Nile in 1801. The enterprise was successful, and the "half-way house to India" passed permanently into British possession.

Then occurred a curious succession of incidents. The Cape was within striking distance of South America, still, except for Brazil and Guiana, the empire of Napoleon's Spanish allies. The Argentine in particular was believed to be very rich and prize-money was the one subject on which soldiers and sailors, both poorly paid, held similar views. The capture of Buenos Ayres might mean immense riches for those concerned and could be justified as in the interests of British trade. The originator of this plan appears to have been Admiral Popham, commanding the naval forces at the Cape. He persuaded General Baird to lend him the services of one battalion (now the H.L.I.) and, having borrowed a few more from the garrison of St. Helena, with 1,500 men he captured Buenos Ayres, a city of 70,000 inhabitants. But the Argentinos were already beginning to think of independence from Spain and had no wish to become British subjects. Finding only one battalion in garrison, the inhabitants rose in revolt and, after suffering heavy losses in the street-fighting in which Spaniards excel, the H.L.I. were forced to

surrender. To retrieve this disaster, Sir Samuel Auchmuty was sent with 3,000 men from England and 2,000 more were added from the Cape. Auchmuty decided that Buenos Ayres was too much of a problem for the force at his disposal, so he attacked Monte Video, on the Uruguayan side of the Rio de la Plata. The place was stormed by a gallant night attack, the 95th particularly distinguishing themselves and gaining the battle-honour, " Monte Video."

General Whitelock then arrived from England with 5,000 reinforcements, and decided to attempt Buenos Ayres. The operation involved advancing from the waterfront into a mass of streets all running at right angles. The houses were all barricaded and the troops met with a storm of fire from the roofs and every kind of missile. It was impossible for the columns into which the force was divided to preserve their alignment and only two or three reached their objective in the centre of the city, where they had to surrender. Casualties were heavy and it was obvious that the attempt had failed. The Buenos Ayres authorities then suggested that we should withdraw our forces from the Rio de la Plata if they restored their prisoners; and Whitelock agreed. For this he was bitterly denounced—hence the Army toast: " Success to grey hairs but confusion to white locks "—and he was cashiered on returning home. Actually he had done the only thing possible under the circumstances, and the expedition was one which should never have been attempted in the first place or subsequently sanctioned and continued by the home authorities.

The Second Expedition to Egypt, 1807

The British had evacuated Egypt in March 1803, leaving the country to be fought over by the Mamelukes (a set of feudal barons who had all originally been purchased as slaves and who handed down their power to their own slaves in the same way), the nominal owners, the Turks, and the Albanian faction under Mohamed Ali, originally an officer in the Turkish Army and the ancestor of the present King of Egypt. The Turks being now under French influence—a fleet under Admiral Duckworth passed the Dardanelles in 1807 but could effect nothing off Constantinople as it had no landing force and got badly knocked about by the Turkish batteries in the Narrows on the return journey—a force was sent that year to Egypt under General Fraser. He occupied Alexandria and advanced towards Rosetta, reversing the direction of Abercromby's march. But the attack on Rosetta failed. Mohamed Ali was a stern fighter and a second attempt also failed, with still greater loss. So Fraser evacuated Alexandria, having lost all the prestige in Egypt which the first expedition had gained.

The Berlin Decree and the Orders in Council

By 1807 Napoleon was dominant on the continent of Europe, with the exception of Russia, and, having since Trafalgar no effective means of striking at Great Britain herself, he now launched his famous "continental system." By this he proclaimed the British Isles to be in a state of blockade, all British property on the Continent liable to confiscation and all British residents prisoners of war, and the admission of British goods into any territory under French control forbidden. The object of this plan was to ruin the finances of Britain by ruining her trade, but it had two weak points. It was ineffective against our real weakness, the necessity for imported food owing to the rapidly increasing industrial population, because it did not prevent food supplies coming into Great Britain. Had Napoleon concentrated on this, which he did not do, he might have starved us out.

And secondly, owing to the immense smuggling trade which immediately sprang up—for the Continent could not do without British manufactured goods and colonial produce—Napoleon's plan must fail unless he could enforce it over the whole of the Continent. Any unoccupied territory meant a leak through which British goods would pour into the remainder. Napoleon must therefore gain effective control over the smaller countries on the outskirts of the Continent or see his system collapse. The British Government, for its part, retaliated by "Orders in Council" declaring a blockade of all ports which did exclude British goods, and, having the mastery of the seas, was able to make this blockade a reality. The minor powers were therefore forced to choose: either they must see themselves excluded from the outside world by the British blockade or they must risk a French invasion.

The Expedition to Copenhagen, 1807

The Danes, being easily accessible by land from Germany, were under the influence of Napoleon. It was the same danger as had resulted in Nelson's bombardment of Copenhagen in 1801, when the Royal Berkshire Regiment and the Rifle Brigade secured their battle-honour of "Copenhagen" while serving as marines. Now the Danish fleet had been rebuilt, and there was the further danger that the Tsar Alexander had temporarily taken sides with Napoleon. The Russian and Danish fleets conjoined might command the Baltic, on which we principally relied for naval stores. In August 1807, therefore, a joint naval and military expedition was sent to Copenhagen under Admiral Gambier, General Lord Cathcart and Sir Arthur Wellesley. The troops landed, and Wellesley defeated the Danes at Kjöje Bay outside the city. Copenhagen was again

bombarded, this time from the land, and the Danes surrendered their fleet, which was carried off to England. This is not an exploit of which we can be particularly proud, as Denmark was technically a neutral, but a small country, as Britain then was, fighting for its existence against a vastly more powerful adversary, cannot afford to be quixotic.

Castlereagh's Military Organization

We have seen how handicapped our previous military enterprises had been by the lack of any coherent or well-thought-out organization in England for maintaining the strength of an expeditionary force once it had been despatched. Britain had, in the past, relied on the "crimps" for regular soldiers, on Volunteers who took men away from the Regular Army, and on "fencibles" for home defence only.

The man who first endeavoured to see the problem as a whole was Castlereagh, the Secretary of State for War. He it was who provided Britain at last not only with an adequate striking force but with the means to keep it in the field.

In the first place, by offering a bounty on transfer to the Regular Army he raised 25,000 men for overseas service from the Militia. These were excellent material, once they had received adequate training.

Next, by the ballot system, he raised 38,000 men for the Militia, which he designed as the first line reinforcement for the Regular Army.

Thirdly, by instituting compulsory service—the first instance in our military history, not repeated till late in the Great War—he raised 350,000 local Militia for home defence. There was thus a regular flow of reinforcements, based on a system designed to that end. As a result, by the commencement of Wellington's campaign in the Peninsula, the total strength of the British forces was as follows:

Regulars and General Militia	280,000
Local Militia and Volunteers	390,000
Seamen and Marines	130,000

Of the Regulars, 110,000 were abroad and 105,000 at home (a curious anticipation of the Cardwell System) and the General Militia numbered 65,000.

It was on this foundation that the final victory was obtained.

CHAPTER XI

THE PENINSULAR WAR, 1808–1814

Napoleon's Aggressive Policy and its Results

The Berlin Decree had been issued in November 1807 ; in the same month a French army under Junot marched through Spain—the wretched King, Ferdinand, being afraid to deny it passage—into Portugal and occupied Lisbon, the Portuguese Regent with his family and treasure sailing for Brazil on British ships. The excuse for this unprovoked aggression was that the Regent had failed to seize British merchantmen, as Napoleon wished.

The fact was, of course, that both Portugal and Spain had no wish to quarrel with Britain and would have much preferred to trade with her instead. Next Napoleon lured the Spanish King, the Queen, the heir to the throne and the Prime Minister into visiting him at Bayonne and then, taking advantage of their mutual dissensions, announced in May 1808 that they were prisoners and that his brother, Joseph, would become King of Spain.

The result was a frenzied outburst of fury in the Peninsula. The Spaniards sprang desperately to arms ; drove the French troops in Spain back across the R. Ebro ; and even succeeded in compelling the surrender of an isolated French corps of 18,000 men at Baylen in Andalusia.

But they were no match for Napoleon's war-machine ; their armies were scattered ; and they appealed to Britain for help. We at once sent arms, ammunition and money, and prepared to send an expedition as well. Castlereagh reinforced the garrison of Gibraltar by 8,000 men, thus enabling General Spenser to place a force on shipboard and threaten a landing on the Spanish coasts. Britain was now about to undertake a new campaign, at first as an auxiliary only, but ultimately in a position which she had never held on the Continent since the days of Henry V. Under Marlborough and throughout the eighteenth century British troops had only formed a minority in the Allied armies fighting in Europe. Now they were to take a principal part.

The Theatre of War

Spain was a country in which, as Henry IV of France observed, small armies get beaten and big ones starve. The country was immensely difficult. Parallel ranges of barren mountains, looking

from the sea as if modelled out of brown cardboard and forming difficult barriers to the passage of armies; swift rivers rushing between them with few fords or bridges; few roads, and those very bad; great variations of temperature; little rainfall except in the extreme north and west; large areas which can only be geographically described as "steppes"; and but a few fertile regions; all these made up a terrain of peculiar difficulty.

The Spaniards and Portuguese, though their regular armies were scattered, had still very considerable resources. The Spaniards were adepts at guerrilla warfare, and every French victory but added to the hordes of irregulars hanging on to the French lines of communications. The Portuguese, too, were good soldiers, given good leading and good treatment, so that, although the French had 80,000 men in Spain and 65,000 in Portugal, there were none too many for the task ahead of them. They controlled no more than the ground on which they stood. Stragglers were everywhere cut off and murdered and detachments overwhelmed. For the first time on the continent of Europe, two entire nations were in arms against French domination. Here at last was the chance for the small British army to intervene with real effect. Napoleon had thrust his hand into a hornet's nest.

The Landing in Portugal

Sir Arthur Wellesley was the Government's candidate for command. Since his early tribulations in Holland he had won amazing victories in India and displayed great powers of organization. He was lucky—which Moore was not—the son of an earl and brother to the Marquess Wellesley, one of the greatest of Indian Governor-Generals, while Moore was the son of a Scottish doctor. Nevertheless, Moore was senior to Wellesley as a lieutenant-general, and this fact threw away the fruit of the latter's first victories in the campaign of 1808.

Landing at Mondego Bay on the coast of Portugal, Wellesley was joined by 4,000 men of Spenser's force from the reinforced garrison of Gibraltar and advanced on Lisbon. A French detachment under Delaborde was defeated at Roliça on August 17th, the last battle fought by the British Army in powder and pigtails.[1] Delaborde retreated very skilfully and Junot then came up with the main body and attacked Wellesley at Vimiero, suffering a crushing defeat (August 21st). Isolated and far from France, the French could have been compelled to surrender at discretion had not two senior British generals arrived in succession, sent to outrank Moore, who was also on the way. Ministers had not forgiven Moore for his action in

[1] The "flash" worn to keep the powder off the back of the tunic is still retained by the Royal Welch Fusiliers.

withdrawing his force of 10,000 men from Sweden that year on his own responsibility, having discovered that our royal ally, King Gustavus, was frankly mad and his schemes absolutely impracticable.

Between them Burrard and Dalrymple granted Junot the Convention of Cintra, by which the French were allowed to return to France in British vessels, incidentally taking with them the loot of Lisbon under the guise of "private baggage." The result was an outcry in England, exemplified in derisive rhymes, and a Court of Enquiry, which exonerated Wellesley as having signed the Convention under orders. But in the meantime Moore had arrived, and Ministers at home did not now dare to deprive him of the command.

Corunna Campaign, 1808–9

Napoleon now entered Spain with 150,000 men. The Spaniards, always foolishly optimistic, persuaded Moore, who had moved into north-western Spain to collect a detachment under Baird, which had landed at Corunna, to co-operate with them; but before he could do so Napoleon's blow fell with shattering force. The Spanish armies ceased for the time to exist, and Moore with 35,000 men was left to face Napoleon's hosts single-handed. He decided to strike at an isolated French corps under Soult in the north, so as to give the Spaniards a chance to pull themselves together. This was a bold move but covered by careful reconnoitring and the preparation of a line of retreat to Corunna and Vigo. Soult's cavalry had just been defeated at Sahagun when the news came that Napoleon was hastening his troops northward to cut off Moore. The Emperor had moved 50,000 men 200 miles in ten days from Madrid to threaten Moore's right flank. This included the crossing of the Sierra de Guadarrama in the depth of winter, when Napoleon went on foot at the head of his grenadiers to trample down the snow, and a day spent in negotiating a river.

The Retreat to Corunna

Seeing that his stroke had to some extent succeeded in its purpose, Moore at once gave the order to retreat on the port of Corunna. He moved too rapidly for Napoleon to intercept him, and the latter, hearing of a conspiracy in Paris, returned instantly to France, leaving Soult with 45,000 to follow up Moore, who checked the French cavalry sharply at Benavente and resumed his retreat.

It was now the depth of winter, and Moore realized that if he failed to reach Corunna as quickly as possible, his men would perish of cold and hunger in the mountains of Galicia. The troops, however, resented having to retreat and at such a speed, and this fact, added to the hardships which they suffered, produced a relaxation of discipline in some units. There were many stragglers

who were naturally snapped up by the pursuing French. The rear-guard, under an iron brigadier, Robert Craufurd, did magnificent work and held off the French whenever they sought to close. At length, on January 11th, 1809, the army reached Corunna, ragged, shoeless and starving, but still burning to fight. This was necessary, since without a definite check to Soult, embarkation would be impossible, as the transports had been held up by adverse winds at Vigo. On January 14th the transports arrived, and it was possible to begin the embarkation. On January 16th the cavalry and most of the guns being now safe on board, Moore stood at bay with the infantry on the heights above the harbour. Soult attacked and was beaten off, but in the moment of success Moore was mortally wounded by a round-shot. Like Wolfe, he had no thought but victory. "Are the French beaten?" he asked. Then, "I hope the people of England will be satisfied! I hope my country will do me justice!"—that justice which he had not had from Ministers. In the evening he died and was buried under the ramparts of Corunna, "alone with his glory." The last detachment then embarked, leaving Soult to set up a monument to "John Moore. Leader of the English Armies. Killed in Battle."

The Corunna campaign was not really a failure. By drawing the French away to the north-west, Moore had given the Spaniards a chance to rally. Also his stroke at their lines of communication had made the French for the rest of the war very nervous of any threat from the north-west against the road to Bayonne. It was that weakness which Moore's successor so skilfully exploited in his Vittoria campaign.

The Walcheren Expedition, 1809

The last and most unfortunate example of the old strategy was the great expedition to Walcheren Island in Zeeland in 1809. The conception was not a bad one. Napoleon was absent from France at the time, and, had the force managed to emerge from the island and capture Antwerp and the French vessels, then it might have precipitated a revolution in France. Austria, the lawful owner of what is now Belgium, had again taken up arms against Napoleon and, had the Austrian army been in a position to co-operate, an advance on Paris was not impossible. But the enterprise was badly conducted and too long delayed. The French had time to pull themselves together and quickly put large forces in the field, mainly owing, strange as it may seem, to the energy of Napoleon's Minister of Police, Fouché. While the British were engaged in capturing Flushing, Antwerp was made impregnable. The general in command, Lord Chatham (Pitt's elder brother) was as incapable as his naval counterpart, Sir Richard Strachan. Between them they

delayed until 4,000 men had died of fever and thousands more were incapacitated. To save the remainder from perishing, the expedition had to be withdrawn, having wasted 40,000 men who should have been serving in the Peninsula.

Wellesley's Campaign, 1809

On April 9th Wellesley arrived at Lisbon, this time in chief command, and took up the task which he was never again to relinquish till he had carried it to a triumphant conclusion.

Wellesley's outstanding characteristic was the sense of discipline. Trusted by all, admired by many, he was loved by no one. Supremely competent himself, he knew that hardly one of his generals, save Hill or Graham, could be trusted to conduct an operation independently, yet they were the only ones available. He knew that his army was Britain's last, and that one lost battle would bring the order to retire from the Peninsula with the loss of everything. He knew that his men were magnificent on the battlefield, but that either victory or retreat might dissolve their discipline, since money for pay and supplies was always short. An extremely ambitious man as Wellesley certainly was, faced with such difficulties, can hardly be amiable. Almost one has the impression that he regarded the efforts of the French generals as among the least of his troubles. A kind of suppressed fury at his difficulties with his own army breathes through his letters and orders, and may possibly account for one unpleasant characteristic, a lack of sympathy with his men and a disinclination, when in high office, to do anything to promote their interests.

He was confronted by two opponents, Soult at Oporto and Victor on the Tagus. He decided to deal with Soult first as it was important to clear the French out of Portugal. To do so would raise Portuguese morale and render possible the reconstitution of the Portuguese army. It would also deprive Soult of the fertile area in which his army was living at free quarters and, once expelled, the French would find few supplies in north-western Spain. Only he would have to be quick about it, lest Victor should slip in behind him and attack Lisbon.

Marching northwards, Wellesley's advanced-guard met the enemy eighty miles south of the Douro. In four days he pressed them right back to the river, behind which they retired, feeling perfectly secure as the bridge had been destroyed and boats removed to the opposite bank. But Wellesley had managed to collect a few boats and, watching to see where the French vigilance was relaxed, he crossed secretly and suddenly, completely taking Soult by surprise and forcing him to retreat across the mountains with the loss of all his guns and transport. Fortescue has described this crossing

as the most daring exploit of that nature in the history of the Army.

Soult's army was now temporarily out of action and Wellesley turned south to meet Victor, who was threatening his right flank. Not fully realizing as yet what lay behind Spanish boastfulness and readiness to promise anything regardless of realities, the British commander advanced up the Tagus in co-operation with a Spanish Army under Cuesta. The result was that at Talavera 20,000 British and 30,000 Spaniards had to face 50,000 Frenchmen. The British cavalry charges failed owing to the ground not having been reconnoitred. The French delivered three determined attacks, though they never used their reserves. The Spaniards ran away, their imbecile old commander having done everything possible to lose the battle beforehand by constant changes of plan. The Light Division, under Craufurd, arrived just in time to counter-attack and drive the French back, after an exceptional march. Victor then retired, having lost 7,000 men as against the British 5,000. The French description of the battle was: "The English were beaten but would not run."

Meanwhile Soult, from the north, was threatening the British communications with Lisbon and a retirement on Portugal was unavoidable. Victor, for his part, fell back to Madrid.

Talavera is the least impressive of Wellesley's victories. Nevertheless the campaign gained him a peerage as Viscount Wellington, and the knowledge that the Spaniards, useful as they were as guerrillas and heroic in the defence of cities like Zaragoza, could not stand up to the French in a pitched battle. They still tried to do so periodically, but not with Wellington's encouragement. There was, however, one consolation. Every Spanish army defeated meant more recruits for the guerrilla bands which never ceased to hang on the flanks and communications of the French and subjected them to constant and serious loss, estimated as amounting on an average to one hundred men per diem.

The Reorganization of the Portuguese Army

In 1809 began the first example of a process since repeated in other parts of the world, the reorganization of a foreign army on British lines. This task was entrusted in Portugal to General Beresford, who received the Portuguese rank of Marshal, and was assisted by a staff of British officers who divided the command of companies, battalions and brigades with Portuguese officers. The example of these British officers soon improved the efficiency of the Portuguese troops, for the rank and file were not lacking in military qualities once they were regularly paid, clothed and fed. Eventually about 40 per cent. of Wellington's fighting force consisted of

Portuguese, inter-brigaded with British, and on occasion they did extremely good work. Their best troops were the twelve caçador battalions (light infantry) who, with the British riflemen, provided Wellington's skirmishers. In 1809 Wellington had also one cavalry regiment and four battalions of the King's German Legion, i.e., the representatives of the old Hanoverian Army whom we had managed to withdraw from the continent as a result of an expedition to the R. Weser in North Germany in 1805, an enterprise otherwise not successful.

Wellington's Military Policy

Back in Portugal, Wellington had leisure to mature his plans. His difficulties were great, but so also were those of his opponents. In the first place, Spain, as far as the guerrillas were concerned, was still unsubdued. As, however, Napoleon had appointed his brother Joseph king of it, some attempt had to be made to establish French authority generally. Three hundred thousand Frenchmen were not enough to deal with guerrillas spread all over the country and at the same time drive the British out of Portugal. When they concentrated to provide such a force, revolts broke out everywhere ; when they dispersed to suppress them, Wellington could begin to advance. Added to this, the French marshals and generals were nearly all self-made men and bitterly jealous of each other. Only Napoleon's own presence could compel them to co-operate, but he could not risk an absence in Spain again.

On his retirement from Talavera, Wellington learnt that Napoleon had defeated the Austrians and was now in a position to concentrate a larger force in Spain. He accordingly ordered the Lines of Torres Vedras to be constructed to cover his base at Lisbon. These lines were 20 miles north of Lisbon and stretched from the sea to the Tagus, a distance of 25 miles. The three successive lines of fortifications were eight miles in depth, and the first line contained 120 redoubts with 600 guns. Roads were made to facilitate the passage of troops to any threatened point. The country in front was swept as bare as possible ; the sides of hills and streams were " scarped," roads destroyed, woods cut down and villages razed so that the French could find no cover for an attack. Naval squadrons watched both flanks, particularly to prevent a French crossing of the Tagus behind the lines.

Wellington's base was now secure, and, as England had command of the sea, he was sure of his reinforcements, supplies and money.

He knew that the French system was to live on the country, a practice started in the French Revolution when they had no money to pay for supplies, and that they had an exposed line of

communications with France. This meant that as soon as they were brought to a standstill they must disperse to look for supplies, which Wellington had taken care should be swept away in advance. The more they extorted food from the peasants by threats and torture the more hostile the latter would become, thus necessitating a further dispersion of force to deal with them.

Wellington also prepared a good supply-train of mules—wheeled vehicles were no use in a practically roadless country—and he took care to have shipping on the rivers of Portugal. Thus, when the French were at last compelled to fall back, he could follow them up, concentrated and mobile. He determined only to offer battle on a favourable opportunity, where he could inflict loss on the French while suffering little himself. He knew that the Government at home were still lukewarm about the campaign, and he could not afford any incident which might result in orders for its abandonment.

For a year Wellington occupied himself with these plans and preparations, and the French did not advance. Then Napoleon decided that the British in Portugal must be dealt with.

"DRIVE THE LEOPARDS INTO THE SEA!"

Such was the Emperor's order (a reference to the British Arms, leopards, not lions) to his new commander, Masséna, an unpleasant person but an extremely able commander. Towards the end of the summer of 1810 the Marshal began his advance with the "Army of Portugal," 65,000 strong. To the south was Soult with the "Army of Andalusia," of about the same strength, while King Joseph nominally commanded the "Army of the Centre," based on Madrid, with the tasks of maintaining such authority as he could and of keeping open the line of communication with France.

Wellington, in accordance with his plan to deal the enemy a blow when he could do so with security, advanced to meet Masséna and took up a position on the crest of the steep ridge of Bussaco with about 50,000 British and Portuguese. Masséna, assuming the Portuguese to be of negligible value, attacked on September 27th with less than half his force and was sharply repulsed by about one-third of Wellington's.

Having inflicted a loss of nearly four times his own, Wellington withdrew in good order behind the impregnable lines of Torres Vedras, of the existence of which, owing to the close watch kept by the guerrillas, the French commander had heard absolutely nothing.

Before these "Lines of Torres Vedras," Masséna sat down on October 14th and hoped for something to happen. Nothing did, except that his troops found it impossible to live on a countryside from which Wellington had carefully cleared all provisions. At

length, completely starved out, he fell back on Spain, fighting a series of skilful rearguard actions all the way. Only once did Wellington get in a telling blow at an isolated French corps under Reynier at Sabugal (April 3rd, 1811).

Barrosa, March 7th, 1811.

Meanwhile a joint Anglo-Spanish sortie had been made by sea from Cadiz, blockaded by a portion of Soult's army, to relieve the situation by operations in the neighbourhood. The allies advanced down the ridge of Barrosa to attack the blockading force, but the Spanish commander, La Peña, had not reconnoitred and did not know that the French were hidden in the woods on each side of the ridge. As the Anglo-Spanish force advanced, Marshal Victor suddenly attacked on both flanks. The situation was only saved by General Graham, in command of the British portion of the force, 5,000 men. In five minutes he formed front to meet the attack and then led his men straight at the French. The latter were defeated while La Peña stood looking on, made no attempt to assist, and did not pursue. The blockade of Cadiz therefore still continued, but this was the last occasion on which any Spanish commander was allowed to jeopardize the safety of British troops.

Fuentes de Onoro, May 3rd–6th, 1811

Of the two pairs of frontier fortresses, Almeida and Ciudad Rodrigo in the north and Elvas and Badajoz in the south, only Elvas was not in the hands of the French and Wellington now sought to profit by Masséna's retreat by directing a force under Beresford to lay siege to Badajoz. Having seen operations begin, he himself proceeded northwards, where his principal force was besieging Almeida. Meanwhile Masséna had pulled his army together at Salamanca and marched to relieve Almeida. Wellington met him at Fuentes d'Onoro where, on May 3rd and again on May 6th the French commander exerted all his skill in manœuvre, but his attacks broke down, largely owing to the resolution of Craufurd and his Light Division and the gallantry of the British Horse Artillery and cavalry. Masséna now retired on Salamanca, and the French garrison of Almeida managed to escape and join him.

Napoleon did not like unlucky generals, and his defeat at Fuentes d'Onoro led to Masséna's replacement by Marmont, more of a gentleman but less wily. It is probable that Wellington was very content to see him go, as no French general, save Napoleon himself, ever showed against the British such a combination of resolution and skill as Marshal Masséna.

Elsewhere, however, Wellington's inability to be everywhere at once was exposing the British cause to grave risk.

Albuhera and the Fusilier Brigade, May 16th, 1811

On May 15th, 1811, Beresford, learning that Soult was on the march from the south to relieve Badajoz, marched out with 7,000 British and 10,000 Portuguese to Albuhera, where he was joined by some Spaniards. Soult's force was superior in numbers to the Anglo-Portuguese, and from previous experience of the Spaniards he made little account of their presence. Though a brave man personally, Beresford was by no means fitted to conduct an independent battle and Wellington, aware of this, was already on the march from the north to join him. Before he could arrive, Soult, realizing from Beresford's mistakes in drawing up his men that they were in the wrong position to hold the ground, on May 16th delivered a most determined attack.

The French cavalry, covered by a fog, rode into Beresford's position, and the Spaniards on the right failed to manœuvre properly. The situation was desperate when Captain Hardinge, on Beresford's staff and later, as Lord Hardinge, Governor-General of India, ordered up the Fusilier Brigade on his own responsibility. Sir Lowry Cole's Fusiliers had just marched 18 miles to the fight, but without hesitation he concurred. Counter-attacking, along with Harvey's Portuguese, the fusiliers recaptured the guns which had been lost and saved the day for Beresford. In Napier's words: "Nothing could stop that astonishing infantry."

The French mass surged backward, and, again to quote Napier: "eighteen hundred unwounded men, the remnant of six thousand unconquerable British soldiers, stood triumphant on the fatal hill!" Beresford had won, but at the cost of half his British troops. Wellington was furious, and replaced him in command of the southern force by Hill.

Wellington now resumed the siege of Badajoz, but an assault failed and Marmont came south from Salamanca to join Soult to the south-east of the fortress. Wellington thereupon raised the siege and retired to his old position north of the Tagus, while Marmont took up a position along the Tagus and Soult went south again.

In July Wellington threatened Ciudad Rodrigo hoping to find it short of supplies, but the French managed to reprovision it and Wellington retired to El Bodon, where, on September 25th, Marmont with his cavalry attacked the British retiring across an open plain but was thwarted by the admirable steadiness of the British troops. During the remainder of 1811 nothing of importance happened in the northern sector, Wellington and Marmont continuing to watch each other across the Spanish-Portuguese frontier.

Arroyo dos Molinos, October 28th, 1811

In the south, however, Hill with his detachment carried out a brilliant little operation before the conclusion of the year's campaign. In order to link up the armies of Marmont and Soult a French division, under Girard, had been left isolated in the region between the Tagus and the Guadiana; and Hill, from across the Portuguese frontier, was of opinion that by a sudden blow he could destroy this force. Wellington's approval having been obtained, Hill set off at the end of October, and, marching swiftly and secretly—for the French, surrounded by a hostile population, could obtain no intelligence of the British movements—at daybreak on October 28th completely surprised Girard at Arroyo dos Molinos, a village some 40 miles beyond the Spanish frontier. Out of 2,600 French only four or five hundred got away; and thus the campaign of 1811 closed very satisfactorily.

At this point we may pause to consider the progress of Wellington's organization which made possible the successes of the following year. Wellington had by now trained and organized his staff and army as he wished. He had an excellent supply service of mules and river transport, and the loss of men through inefficient medical service had been largely overcome. Napoleon had been obliged to withdraw some of his best marshals and troops for the Russian campaign and Wellington was at last in a position to take the offensive.

Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz

In 1812 came the turning-point of the war. Hitherto Wellington had held his own but no more, but on January 7th, he suddenly advanced and invested Ciudad Rodrigo. The fortress fell to a sudden assault on January 19th, though with heavy loss to the assailants. The captures included the siege-train of Marmont, who had never expected that Wellington would begin the campaign so early.

The British leader now turned south and again laid siege to Badajoz on March 16th. By Napoleon's orders, operations to the south were to be the business of Soult, who was in no hurry to move to rescue Badajoz; Marmont, who had had 15,000 men detached from him for service in eastern Spain, kept aloof. Wellington had therefore a limited amount of time in which to measure himself against Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz. Here we come to Wellington's only possible weakness as a general. Whether his Indian experiences had made him unduly contemptuous of fortresses or whether, as is more probable, being in inferior numbers to his opponents he had to make one army serve quickly for both sieges and field-operations, he was over-inclined to rushing tactics where

fortresses were concerned. Against Ciudad Rodrigo this policy had succeeded, but Badajoz was another matter. The place was strong and most stubbornly defended. On April 6th a breach in the bastion of Trinidad was at last considered practicable, and from ten o'clock till midnight the British troops swept forward again and again to the assault of a narrow gap on which every art of defence had been lavished. The losses were frightful and the attack came to a complete standstill in spite of unexampled heroism.

But in the meanwhile help was at hand. The Third Division, led by Kempt in Picton's absence, was assaulting the castle and adjoining wall. Placing the long scaling-ladders against the ramparts, the troops swarmed up them, but the first assault was beaten back. Then, to quote Napier, " the heroic Colonel Ridge, again springing forward, called with stentorian voice on his men to follow, and seizing a ladder raised it against the castle to the right of the former attack, where the wall was lower and where an embrasure offered some facility : a second ladder was placed alongside by the grenadier officer Cauch, and the next instant he and Ridge were on the rampart, and shouting troops pressed after them, and the garrison, amazed and in a measure surprised, were driven fighting through the double gate into the town : the castle was won. Soon a reinforcement from the French reserve came to the gate, through which both sides fired, and the enemy retired ; but Ridge fell, and no man died that night with more glory—yet many died and there was much glory." Similarly at San Vincente the troops poured over the ramparts, and then, maddened by losses amounting to over five thousand men all told, for three days the survivors were completely out of hand.

Soult now retired to Andalusia, and Wellington, having restored discipline in his army, turned north again to protect Ciudad Rodrigo, which was in danger of being isolated by Marmont.

In May, Wellington's able general, Hill, who was acting as a right flank guard in the Tagus valley to the main force, advanced with a mobile detachment and captured and destroyed the bridge of boats at Almaraz, retiring swiftly before the French could assemble to catch him. This further protected Wellington's right, and, as he had repaired the bridge at Alcantara, close to the Portuguese frontier, he now had secure communication across the Tagus, while the French would have to go a long way upstream to Toledo before their northern and southern armies could combine.

The Battle of Salamanca, July 22nd, 1812

Freed, for the time being, of any menace from the south, Wellington was able to prosecute operations in the north. He took Salamanca, but the destruction of the forts which protected it occupied ten days, thus giving Marmont time to concentrate. Wellington

then advanced north towards the river Douro, hoping to find an opportunity to attack Marmont. He then learnt that 14,000 men were on their way to reinforce Marmont, thus making him superior in numbers. Wellington accordingly fell back to cover Salamanca and his line of communications south-west to Ciudad Rodirgo. He did not intend to fight unless absolutely necessary. Marmont, however, intercepted one of Wellington's messages, from which he learnt that the latter intended to retire, so he decided to attack at once before Wellington could slip away. Marmont could not see Wellington's dispositions, as the British were hidden by reverse slopes, woods and villages, Wellington's normal dispositions.

Wellington sent off his baggage down the Ciudad Rodrigo road and Marmont, seeing the dust-clouds, thought that the main retreat had already started. He accordingly sent off a division under Thombière to move round Wellington's right flank so as to reach the road and cut off the retreat. But he could not do this without opening a gap between his own centre and left, and this was Wellington's chance to change rapidly from the defensive to the offensive, his favourite tactical move, observing: "By God! That will do!" He hurled Pakenham's division into the vacant space and attacked all along the line. Marmont fell badly wounded, and the British cavalry charged, Major-General Gaspard Le Marchant, who had been the first commandant of the Royal Military College, being killed at the moment of victory.

Wellington had defeated 40,000 men in forty minutes and the French losses in the battle and the pursuit amounted to nearly half their total strength.

Clausel, one of the best of the French subordinate leaders, took Marmont's place and led off the remnants of the French forces very skilfully. The pursuit was, however, energetically pressed, and had the Spaniards intercepted the retreat as ordered it is difficult to see how any of the French could have got away.

Salamanca was Wellington's most striking victory in the Peninsula and definitely established his position as a general of the first rank.

The Attempt to follow up the Victory and its Results

After Salamanca Wellington advanced to Valladolid, on the French line of communications, where he captured quantities of stores. From Valladolid he turned south-east towards Madrid, which he entered in a blaze of triumph, King Joseph retiring before him to Toledo and finally taking refuge in Valencia. Having occupied Madrid, Wellington found that he could not remain there as he had not sufficient resources to purchase stores, an essential point on which his strategy always depended.

So he advanced north again on Burgos, midway between Valla-

dolid and Bayonne, an important point on the French lines of communication, and strongly fortified. Wellington probably hoped to starve the place out. He was very short of siege-artillery and did not wish to incur the losses of another Badajoz, so he refrained from ordering any determined assault.

Meanwhile King Joseph had returned to Madrid and was advancing against Wellington's right flank with a strong force. Wellington realized that with such a tremendous gap intervening between Burgos and his own base in Portugal, his position was very vulnerable. So he determined to retire, drawing off very quickly in the night with all wheels wrapped in straw.

His retreat from Burgos was very skilfully conducted He held off the French by ably-conducted rearguard actions in his usual manner, and this long retirement across the front of the advancing French has been considered by foreign military historians as one of Wellington's greatest achievements. But naturally his troops, accustomed by now to victory, did not like the idea of retreat. There was much drunkenness and straggling, and discipline broke down in some units, as it had during the retreat to Corunna. By the time he reached the Portuguese frontier, Wellington had lost 7,000 men.

Still, Wellington had accomplished a great deal. He had shown the French at Salamanca that he could attack as well as defend; the frontier fortresses of Almeida, Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz no longer barred his way; he had been joined by Hill's force from the south, and to collect troops to drive him back, the French had had to abandon all southern Spain. Most important of all, he had inflicted on them very heavy losses. Napoleon's "Spanish ulcer" was exacting its price. Thus ended the campaign of 1812.

The Campaign of Vittoria, 1813

Meanwhile, vital events had been happening elsewhere. Napoleon had led half a million men into Russia, from whence only a few thousand starving stragglers had emerged. At all costs he must hold his own in Germany, and his Spanish armies soon felt the drain. At the beginning of 1813 Wellington, with his Anglo-Portuguese, for the first time had equal numbers, including some 20,000 Spaniards. Also, for the first time, his army was well-equipped and well-provided. Wellington determined to take full advantage of these favourable conditions and at the beginning of May he entered Spain for the final advance. Now was felt the advantage which Britain possessed in the command of the sea. The French line of communications entered Spain by the gap between the western end of the Pyrenees and the Bay of Biscay. By continually thrusting forward his left wing Wellington could threaten this gap, since he was nearly as close to France as the

French main army, and he could do so with the hope of reinforcements and supplies by sea as soon as the Biscayan ports like St. Sebastian were occupied. Thus he may be said to have anticipated Allenby's strategy in Palestine in the final advance in 1918.

King Joseph and his assistant, Marshal Jourdan, in vain attempted to stay his progress. Their right was outflanked on the Douro and again on the Ebro. Finally they stood at bay at Vittoria, only sixty miles from their all-important frontier gap. Here on June 21st Wellington attacked them. The result was decisive. All their guns, 143 in number, and all their baggage, laden with the loot of Spain accumulated for years, fell into the hands of the British. Jourdan even left behind his marshal's baton ! Wellington sent it to the Prince-Regent, who in return sent him that of a Field Marshal. A marquess after Salamanca, he was made a duke in May 1814.

The Battle of the Pyrenees

Wellington was now at the head of a really considerable force. He had, all told, some 90,000 British, Portuguese and Spaniards under his command, some of the last being by no means bad troops, as Wellington in his capacity of Spanish generalissimo (the title had been given him after Salamanca) had full control over them. The French had lost the whole of Spain except the fortresses of Pamplona and San Sebastian and the portion of Catalonia occupied by Marshal Suchet.

Realizing that the south of France itself was in danger, Napoleon sent Soult, who had previously been withdrawn from Spain owing to his quarrels with King Joseph, back again in supreme command. Soult was a very able strategist, if inclined to be over-cautious, and with him came large reinforcements. He decided to strike through the Pyrenees, at the right of the British line, towards Pamplona. This was a skilful move and obliged Wellington to convert the siege of San Sebastian, which had been unsuccessfully assaulted on July 25th, into a blockade, so as to deal with Soult. This he successfully accomplished ; defeated him at Sorauren ; and recovered the positions in the Pyrenees which Soult had temporarily gained. The battle of the Pyrenees lasted five days and Soult, though successful at first, had lost 13,000 men. The siege of San Sebastian was now resumed in earnest. The fortress did not fall without heavy losses to the attackers. It was desperately defended by General Rey, and the assault on August 31st is remarkable as the first instance of overhead covering fire. The experience of the Peninsula had so increased the skill of British gunners that they took the risk of concentrating the fire of fifty guns at the crest of the breach while the stormers attacked from below. The garrison retired into the citadel and finally surrendered on September 8th.

The Invasion of France

On October 7th Wellington forced the passage of the frontier stream, the Bidassoa, taking Soult by surprise. The French fell back on the Nivelle, within their own territory, to avoid being outflanked. On October 31st Pamplona surrendered, and Wellington, being now secure in Spain, advanced on November 10th and drove Soult from the Nivelle with heavy loss. The line of the Nive, the next stream, was carried on December 9th, and Soult now made his last offensive, attacking both wings of the British in succession, but in vain, though the losses on both sides were considerable. Wellington at this stage returned his Spanish troops to Spain. They had much to avenge and had they been retained would have presented an obstacle to the peaceful obtaining of supplies on which Wellington insisted. Wellington was now in a position to blockade Bayonne and, the Navy having been called in to bridge the Adour, the place was closely invested. Soult then fell back eastward, so as to place himself on Wellington's flank, but the British commander followed him up and defeated him again on February 27th, 1813, at Orthez. Wellington had left two divisions to besiege Bayonne and now detached two more to occupy Bordeaux, the great French port on the Garonne, which gave excellent communications by sea with England.

Soult now tried to cover Toulouse, the most important city of the south of France. Here Wellington attacked him on April 10th, and a sharp engagement ensued, which Soult claimed as a victory. The fruits of the battle, however, remained in Wellington's possession, for Toulouse surrendered on April 12th.

Already Napoleon's resistance to the allies in the north-east had collapsed and Paris was in the hands of the Austrians, Prussians and Russians. Napoleon abdicated and was sent to Elba. On April 18th an armistice was signed in the south. The long struggle in the Peninsula was over.

Importance of the Peninsular War

In the great contest of Europe the Peninsular War was of course a "side-show!" Napoleon only once entered Spain himself, and the battles there were on a smaller scale than such titanic struggles as Borodino and Leipzig. Yet its influence on the final result was very great. The drain on Napoleon's resources was constant and immensely serious, as is shown by the succession of commanders whom he sent to that theatre of war. Junot, Victor, Masséna, Marmont, Jourdan and Soult all strove in vain against the commander "who never lost an English gun." After the peace he was sent as Ambassador to Paris, where it is said that the new king, Louis XVIII,

apologized to him because at a reception the French marshals had ostentatiously turned their backs on him. "Pray do not disturb yourself, Your Majesty," Wellington is alleged to have replied, "it is by their backs that I have generally recognized them."

And as regards the men he led, in Napier's words, they "won nineteen pitched battles and innumerable combats, had made or sustained ten sieges and taken four great fortresses; had twice expelled the French from Portugal, once from Spain; had penetrated France and killed, wounded or captured two hundred thoussand enemies—leaving of their own number forty thousand dead, whose bones whiten the plains and mountains of the Peninsula." The Peninsular War gained for the British Army 24 battle-honours.

Wellington's Tactics

The view which considers Wellington solely in the light of a defensive general is wrong. No one attacked more rapidly or skilfully when a chance afforded, but it must be remembered that he was almost invariably outnumbered and had the greatest difficulty in replacing casualties. He therefore certainly did like his opponent to make the first move, relying on the steadiness of his men and on a more flexible system of tactics to take him at a disadvantage. He always aimed, if he could, at giving battle in a position with a gentle slope behind and a steeper one in front. The French always delivered their attacks in heavy columns, masked it is true with skirmishers, but in the nature of things with a majority of their men unable to fire their muskets except in the air, which they frequently did to hearten themselves up. As to this formation the French generals really had no choice, for the French soldier of those days, brave as he was, liked always to feel that he had support behind him. This the British soldier, then as now, did not worry about, provided only his flanks were secure.

Posted, then, in such a position, with his skirmishers at the bottom of the slope, his main body close to the crest, and his reserves tucked safely out of sight on the reverse slope, Wellington awaited the French onslaught. It duly came, driving back the skirmishers until within close range of the ominously silent red ranks. Then, at the word of command, came the first crashing volley which, since every man in the British line could see to use his musket, usually swept away the heads of the French columns. These in vain tried to deploy in order to develop greater fire, but the task was hopeless in the face of the British rolling volleys by half-companies. Unable to endure the punishment any longer the columns began to recoil. Now, after three hearty cheers, the British were after them with the bayonet, hunting them to the foot of the slope, but only so far, and then returning to their original position. Meanwhile the reserves,

of whose precise position the French were ignorant, were ready to exploit any tactical opportunity which Wellington's eagle eye could detect, thrusting into a gap or at the flanks.

To this plan of battle, which was all Wellington's own, the French never found an effective reply. Their own method had so often succeeded against continental troops that they were unwilling to change it, and in any case the disposition of their men would have forbidden such an attempt. Thus we see a progressive diminution of spirit in the French commanders and men opposed to Wellington. In the early battles they came on as if confident of victory; in the later battles, even under so skilled a commander as Soult, they manœuvred with a doubtful mind. They still fought bravely till the end, but Wellington was their master, and both he and they knew it.

To the long tale of victories, other things beside the skill of the commander and the musketry and spirit of his infantry contributed. The cavalry added immortal lustre to their record. The Royal Artillery though its guns were somewhat outranged by the heavier French guns, had the new shrapnel shell invented in 1802 by Major Shrapnell, R.A., which proved very effective at ranges up to 1,200 yards. The newly raised troops of Horse Artillery or "Galloper Guns" as they were called performed the most amazing feats, as when Norman Ramsay with his section of two guns went at full gallop through a French Cavalry Brigade at Fuentes d'Onoro.

The Repulse at Bergen-op-Zoom

The fatality which attended our operations in Holland lasted till the end. In March 1814, when Napoleon's resistance in France was collapsing, a small force under Sir Thomas Graham, the victor of Barrosa, was sent to Holland to act in conjunction with our European allies. These failed to play their part and Graham decided to attack Bergen-op-Zoom to open the way to Antwerp. His plans were well laid, but the French were not quite beaten yet. They put up a stout resistance, and though the British got into the town, they were expelled with heavy loss, including a considerable number of prisoners. These were soon released as the war had finished, but this, and a similar occasion, when the French garrison at Bayonne made a successful sortie on April 14th, 1814, were the only occasions in the Napoleonic Wars on which the French ever captured British troops other than stragglers.

Graham's troops remained on in Holland after the conclusion of peace and became the nucleus of Wellington's army for the Waterloo campaign.

Wellington's Peninsular army mostly embarked from Bordeaux for England on the conclusion of peace though some units marched

across France to the Channel ports. But there was little rest for some of the Peninsular veterans. They were at once despatched to Canada to take part in the war with which we have now to deal.

The Second American War, 1812–1814

During the last two years of the Peninsular War and for a portion of the respite in Europe which preceded Waterloo, Great Britain was also at war with the United States. The blockade measures of the belligerents had, as in the first part of the Great War, provided the Americans with many grievances, and at one time the United States was within measurable distance of declaring war on France. But finally, dislike of British "Orders in Council" and the impressing of British seamen from American ships (a leakage very dangerous to the Royal Navy), and also the hope of conquering Canada, carried the day, and in July 1812 America declared war on Britain, a result which was also contributed to by Napoleon's intrigues.

The garrison in Canada was small, not more than 7,000 men, including only four British battalions and the Militia in Lower Canada untrained and largely unreliable. Canada would probably have been lost at the outset but for the leadership of Brigadier Isaac Brock, in command in Upper Canada and the valour of the few British regulars he commanded. The British cause also received the hearty support of the United Empire Loyalists in the upper province, representing the population which had been driven from the States at the end of the Revolutionary War and who were consequently bitterly anti-American. The Americans had a considerable superiority in numbers but they found no competent generals for their invasion of Canada, and their troops were hastily raised and badly trained.

Realizing that, with the odds against him, it would be useless to stand on the defensive, Brock attacked the American general, Hull, at Detroit, and captured the entire garrison, some 2,500 in all. In October he again attacked at Queenston and defeated the Americans with the capture of nearly 1,000 more prisoners, but was killed while leading on his men. Colonel Proctor won a brilliant little action at Brownstown in January 1813, and the first period of the war ended with general success for the British.

In 1813, however, the Americans secured the command of Lake Erie, and Proctor was badly defeated at Moravian Town in October. The Americans followed up their success, but were checked by the French-Canadian colonel, de Salaberg, at Chateaugai, with a force of Canadian Militia; and in November a British colonel, Morrison, again defeated the Americans at Chrystler's Farm. The American invasion of Lower Canada had definitely failed.

In December General Drummond took the offensive in Upper

Canada, crossed the Niagara River, and captured Fort Niagara on the American side, which was held by the British until peace was signed. This engagement secured the safety of Upper Canada also.

The following year the British, having more troops available, attacked the American seaboard. An expedition under General Ross defeated an American force at Bladensburg, outside Washington ; ate up the dinner which the American President had prepared to celebrate the expected victory, and burned the public buildings of the capital in retribution for the destruction of York (now Toronto) by the Americans in their invasion of Upper Canada the previous year.

The contest could now, from the British point of view, well have been terminated, as the Americans were feeling the results of the British blockade ; the New England states had never been in favour of the war, and Canada was secure. It was, however, decided to undertake the war on a larger scale, and, the campaign in the Peninsula having come to an end, Wellington's brother-in-law, General Pakenham, was sent with a moderate force of veterans whom he threw away by a disastrous frontal attack on New Orleans. The American commander, Andrew Jackson, " Old Hickory " as he was known by his admirers, used his riflemen and guns cleverly behind cotton bales, and the attack failed with the loss of two thousand men out of six thousand engaged, including Pakenham himself. This was in January 1815, though peace had really been signed at Ghent the preceding month, a fact of which neither army was aware. The principal importance of the American War was that it caused the dispatch across the Atlantic of some of the best Peninsular troops, who were consequently absent from the Waterloo campaign, where their presence would have been invaluable. The American War gained five battle-honours for the British Army.

CHAPTER XII

THE WATERLOO CAMPAIGN, 1815

NAPOLEON surrendered at Fontainebleau on April 6th, 1814; his marshals would follow him no more. The Bourbon King Louis XVIII returned, as the French said, "in the baggage of the Allies." The Congress met at Vienna and talked for a year. Suddenly the news came. Napoleon had escaped from Elba and landed in France with about 700 of his Guards on March 1st, 1815, and arrived in Paris on March 20th. The army, hostile to the Bourbons, and leaders like Ney had gone over to his side; and Europe was faced by another struggle against Napoleon and his veterans.

WELLINGTON'S PROBLEMS

On receipt of the news that Napoleon had again seized power in France, the Allies ordered their armies to be reassembled and Wellington was sent to Belgium, where he made his headquarters at Brussels. The selection of Belgium as the probable theatre of operations was the result of several considerations.

The former Austrian Netherlands had, by the Treaty of Vienna, been combined with Holland to form the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and it would be Napoleon's first and most obvious objective to upset this arrangement. Secondly it was the area on which the British could most easily combine with the Prussians, advancing from their Rhine Provinces, while the Austrians and Russians undertook the invasion of France from the east. Thirdly, Belgium had for a considerable period been a part of the French Empire; the population preferred the French to the Dutch for reasons of race and language, and many troops raised there had served in the French army; speedy action was therefore necessary to prevent them going over to Napoleon. Lastly, the King of France, Louis XVIII, had taken refuge in Ghent and it was important to restore him to his throne as quickly as possible and so prevent him from being regarded the second time as an exile returned from England.

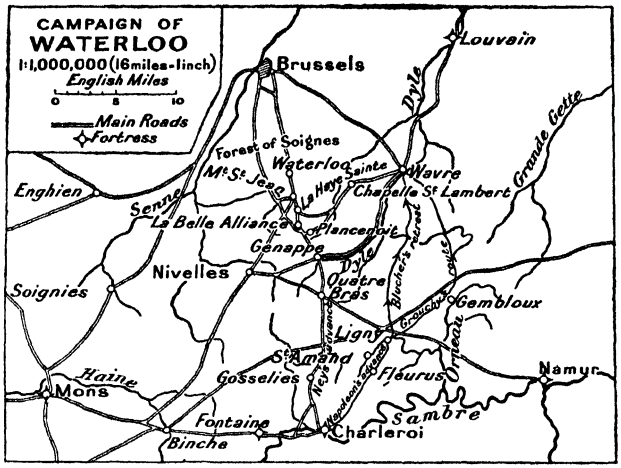
It is probable that, on military grounds, Wellington would have preferred to invade France at once before Napoleon had time to gather his army. But for various reasons this was not possible. His own preparations were far from complete; the Prussians had not yet arrived; and war had not formally been declared as, for political reasons, it was desirable that Napoleon should show himself

as the aggressor. He would at once be stamped, not as the ruler of France returning by the free-will of its people, but as the inveterate disturber of the peace of Europe.

Wellington therefore determined to remain on the defensive; complete his preparations; and wait for the arrival of the Prussians.

Napoleon's Plans

Faced by the certainty that he would have to meet before long the 735,000 men whom the Allies had pledged themselves to put into the field against him, the Emperor had two courses open to him. He could have appeared as the defender of the choice of the French nation, resisting invasion, and manœuvred for time to



complete his organization and augment his numbers; or he could take the offensive at once with such troops as he had available, trusting to gain some striking success before the bulk of the Allies were ready. The latter course, he decided, was preferable, as he needed a speedy victory to establish his position in France, which was none too secure, and it was, moreover, more in accordance with his own genius. He decided to attack at once and in Belgium. There were his nearest and most dangerous enemies; he was superior in numbers to either the British or the Prussian army; and he hoped, by defeating each of them singly before they could concentrate and combine, to bring over the Belgians to his side. Then he could turn on the Russian and Austrian armies which were slowly advancing towards the eastern frontier of France.

For his field army he could rely after providing for the defence of

the frontiers and for a garrison in Paris on about 120,000 men (with 370 guns), largely composed of veterans who had returned from the garrisons surrendered in Germany the previous year. They were of far higher quality than the armies he had commanded in 1812 and 1813, fanatically devoted to his cause, and burning to re-establish themselves as the masters of Europe.

Napoleon's army was therefore, for its size, the best he had commanded, but many of his most distinguished marshals were for various reasons not available. In particular he was short of commanders who could act intelligently on independent tasks. Bernadotte, now Crown Prince of Sweden, was in arms against him; Masséna, whom he had appointed Governor of Paris, was too old; Davout, " the little smooth-pated man like a dancing-master," the real hero of the Prussian overthrow at Jena, he could not spare from the Ministry of War. He was therefore compelled to rely for detached operations on men like Ney and Grouchy, who had previously only occupied somewhat subordinate positions. Worst of all, his invaluable Chief-of-Staff, Berthier, the only man capable of translating Napoleon's inspirations into orders which ordinary men could understand, had fallen out of a window at Bamberg and broken his neck. His place was taken by Soult, an able commander but unaccustomed to Napoleon's ways and inexperienced as a Chief-of-Staff.

Wellington's Dispositions

Wellington's decision to remain on the defensive was largely conditioned by the composition of his army. His total strength was 106,000, including 14,000 cavalry and 100 guns. He had however only six battalions of his Peninsula veterans with him, and the ranks of the remainder were largely filled with young recruits recently drafted from the militia, some of whom still wore the numbers of their militia regiments, good material and full of determination to uphold the traditions of the Peninsula, but not experienced soldiers like those in the many battalions lately disbanded or sent to America. Even so, the troops on whom Wellington could really rely numbered only some 36,000 British, The King's German Legion (much reduced in numbers by the discharge of the non-Hanoverians), the Nassauers and some of the Brunswickers. The remaining third of his army was composed of Dutch-Belgians, many of whom had previously served, as we have seen, under the French eagles. Also he had not his Peninsula staff nor all his old divisional commanders, and, on the whole, his staff was inexperienced.

Wellington's headquarters were at Brussels; most of his cavalry was there and his force held the line Ath to Braine-le-Comte with an outpost at Mons: Blücher's army of 117,000 with 296 guns was

about Dinant and Namur, with an outpost at Charleroi. It contained many young soldiers who were inexperienced but fired by a hatred of Napoleon. Their great disadvantage was that their lines of communications ran in opposite directions, Wellington's through Ghent to Ostend, and Blücher's through Liége to the Rhine. Partly in order to protect these and partly to solve the problem of supplies and billeting, the Allied armies were spread out over a front of 100 miles, and would have to make a very speedy concentration once the direction of Napoleon's advance was definitely known.

Napoleon's Advance

The Emperor, having decided to stake everything on the offensive, took skilful advantage of his opponents' difficulties. Concentrating swiftly and secretly near Philippeville, he made demonstrations from Lille to make Wellington apprehensive about his line of communications to Ostend. Then, thrusting in between Wellington's outpost at Mons and Blücher's at Charleroi, he advanced rapidly up the Charleroi–Brussels road, which separated the two armies. His plan was to strike at the Prussians first; defeat them and drive them back along their line of communications to their base at Namur away from Wellington. Meanwhile he would send a force to Quatre Bras, the junction of the cross-roads across the Charleroi–Brussels route on which the Allied armies depended for mutual support, to hold off Wellington while he dealt with Blücher. Having achieved this, he would turn on Wellington and drive him successively away from Blücher. This was Napoleon's normal method of attack and it very nearly succeeded once again. It was not until 10 p.m. on June 15th that Wellington had definite information as to the French advance and objectives. He at once issued orders to concentrate at Quatre Bras.

Now it was possible for Napoleon to deal with his enemies in detail. Blücher rapidly concentrating at Ligny was the nearer; Wellington advancing to Quatre Bras, which was held by Dutch-Belgian troops, was somewhat further off. Napoleon therefore decided to place the two infantry corps of D'Erlon and Reille, together with the cavalry corps of Kellerman, under Marshal Ney, to whom he gave instructions to drive back Wellington's advanced guard from Quatre Bras, while the main body, under himself, attacked Blücher at Ligny.

Battle of Ligny, June 16th

Wellington on the morning of June 16th had ridden over from Quatre Bras to Ligny (8 miles) to confer with Blücher, and at once realized that the latter had committed the one fault most dangerous

against Napoleon. The Prussians were on the forward slope and every man was visible ; they were therefore specially vulnerable to artillery ; any weak spots which occurred would be seen and the use and movements of Blücher's reserve could not be hidden. There was no doubt that they would be, as Wellington put it " damnably mauled." But Blücher was known to be obstinate and his Chief-of-Staff, Gneisenau, singularly self-opinionated, and it was impossible to say very much. The event, however, proved Wellington's wisdom.

Napoleon's troops south-west of Ligny numbered 68,000 with 210 guns ; the Prussians numbered about 87,000 with 224 guns, but many of the men were young and untried soldiers. After some stubborn fighting, in which the Prussian reserves (which were under the corps commanders and not under Blücher) were used, Napoleon hurled the Imperial Guard, which he had kept fresh and intact, at the Prussian centre ; the centre broke and the whole army fell back in disorder. Blücher himself had his horse shot under him, was ridden over and finally rescued in a battered condition. For the moment the Prussians were out of action. Meanwhile, in the direction of Quatre Bras important events had been happening.

One serious muddle had occurred ; Soult, acting for Napoleon, had ordered Ney, already engaged with Wellington's advanced-guard, to despatch D'Erlon's corps from Quatre Bras to aid in the final overthrow of Blücher by enveloping his right wing. The message reached D'Erlon himself and he marched eastwards without Ney's assent and then, later, in obedience to imperative demands from Ney, countermarched westwards again. As a result his corps was effective on neither battlefield. Had it taken part either at Ligny or Quatre Bras the result might have been very different.

Quatre Bras, June 16th

The value of Quatre Bras lay in the fact that it was the cross-roads, the retention of which was essential to the maintenance of effective communication between Wellington, while south of Brussels, and Blücher until the latter had been driven from Ligny. Hence Ney's attack on it and Wellington's stubborn defence. If Ney had been less dilatory in attacking he would probably have been successful. At first the advantage lay with him, since he had more than twice as many men as the Dutch-Belgian division holding the position ; but he was deceived by the Allied Commander, the Prince of Orange, into thinking that he was faced by a much larger force, an opinion which his experience in the Peninsula, where the British troops were never seen until they attacked, reinforced. He consequently delayed, and did not attack until 2 p.m. on the 16th, and as the British reinforcements came up and D'Erlon's corps was detached, the balance inclined the other way ; and, finally repulsed,

he had to draw off a mile or so to the south at Frasnes on the evening of the 16th. The British had suffered heavy losses, as they were compelled to throw forward each successive reinforcement to stem the tide, but they had held their ground, and Wellington was able to move off behind cavalry rearguard actions particularly at Genappe, on the 17th to the battle position which he had selected and prepared at Mount St. Jean, south of the Forest of Soignies and on the way to Brussels. He was still in communication with the indomitable Blücher, who was as determined as ever to unite with Wellington, "not with two corps only but with my whole army." Napoleon, delaying at this critical moment, perhaps to give his troops some rest and perhaps also because he underrated his opponents, was dilatory in giving orders and allowed the British to slip away under cover of cavalry rearguard actions during the afternoon and evening of the 17th June.

The Fog of War

Napoleon's great miscalculation was concerning the nature of the understanding between Wellington and Blücher. He did not believe that either would risk being cut off from his base—Wellington to the west, Blücher to the east—in order to help the other. Therefore, having successfully dealt with Blücher at Ligny with his centre, right and reserve, while his left under Ney met Wellington's advanced-guard coming up at Quatre Bras, he now essayed to reverse the process. Knowing that Wellington would probably stand to cover Brussels, he considered that his own left, centre and reserve could deal with him; whilst his right, consisting of 30,000 men under Grouchy, completed the victory over the retreating and —as he thought—demoralized Prussians. What he did not know was that Blücher had retired not towards Namur to the east, but was steadily ploughing his way over bad roads through pouring rain to Wavre in the north. The result was that Grouchy's thirty thousand men, instead of being between Wellington and Blucher, so as to drive the latter further away, were actually on the farther side of Blücher (i.e. more towards the east) and so could take no active part in the main battle. Grouchy has been made the French scapegoat for the defeat of Waterloo, but the fault was really that of Napoleon himself. After his victory at Ligny the Emperor had ordered Grouchy to follow up the Prussians and find out in which direction they had retreated, but his instructions were so couched as to convey the impression that Napoleon definitely believed that they had withdrawn eastwards. Only a single reference to Brussels suggested that they might have taken a northerly direction. Napoleon had fallen into the error of supposing that the Prussians must have turned east, because he wished them to do so. Later he asserted that he

had expected Grouchy to take the Prussians in the rear and so ensure a decisive victory. Grouchy did indeed attack towards Wavre on the 18th, but owing to his delay[1] in starting on the 17th, the circuitous route via Gembloux which he had taken in accordance with Napoleon's instructions, and the bad conditions of the roads in the wake of the retreating Prussians, the main body of the Prussians had already passed out of his reach towards the west, and the decisive battle was in process of being lost.

The Battle of Waterloo, June 18th, 1815

Meanwhile on the evening of June 17th, Wellington's army in its retreat northwards, had halted and taken up its position on a low ridge which lay across the Brussels road, just south of the wood of Soignies, and due south of them about a mile away on the opposite slope of the shallow valley Napoleon disposed his troops. Wellington's strength was 67,000 with 160 guns; Napoleon's 74,000 with 250 guns, but this did not fully represent the disparity for only 23,000 of the Allied troops were British and many of the remainder were of doubtful value. It was therefore a case of standing on the defensive until the promised assistance from Blücher should arrive. For this purpose the position, unremarkable in appearance, had many valuable qualities. The low ridge on which Wellington had drawn up his force was sufficiently high to slow down any French cavalry attacks upon it; he could keep most of his force invisible and particularly could carry out movements on the rear slope without being seen; the Château of Hugoumont with its grounds and orchards were held by him well in advance of his right, and as strongly protected as possible, and fire from it would enfilade any French advance in that quarter; the farm house of La Haye Sainte and the village of Papellotte were also held by him in force and gave additional strength to his centre and left respectively. The rôle of these advanced positions was to break up an enemy attack on the main position. A sunken road ran most of the way along his front and provided a sort of natural trench in front of which were stationed Wellington's guns. The right flank was protected by broken ground; his left by closed country and the promised approach of the Prussians. Ten miles north-west at Hal he had left a detachment of 18,000 Dutch–Belgians, as he was apprehensive of a movement round his right to cut the communications with Ostend.

The battle began at 11.30 a.m., as soon as the ground had dried sufficiently, by attacks on Hugoumont and a general artillery cannonade on the Allied line. This was followed by a great artillery attack on the centre carried out by 80 guns, a typically Napoleonic

[1] He received his orders at 11 a.m. but did not set off until after 1 p.m.

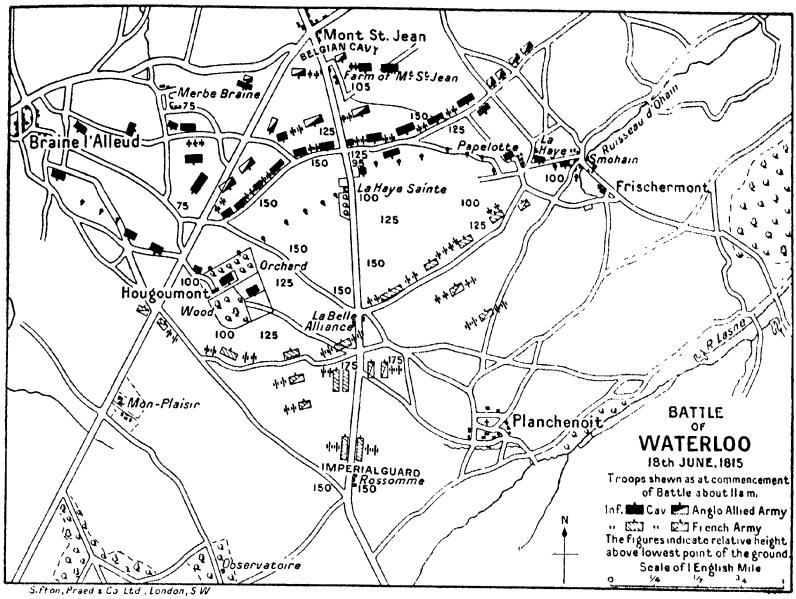
overture to the real drama which was to follow. Its object was to weaken the Allied centre which could then be further attacked and perhaps pierced by a great infantry advance. At 2 p.m. this movement was launched. D'Erlon's Corps advanced almost up to the sunken road ; a Dutch-Belgian Brigade who were in front vanished off the scene ; some French got into the orchard of La Haye Sainte, and the situation looked serious. At this juncture, the 5th Division under Picton volleyed and charged forward. The Union Brigade (so called because it consisted of the Royals, Inniskillings and Scots Greys) charged down on the French. The columns of D'Erlon's Corps were shattered and retreated and the Union Brigade even galloped as far as the French artillery on the opposite slope, where they were counter-attacked by French cavalry and driven off. In these homeric contests Generals Picton and Ponsonby were killed.

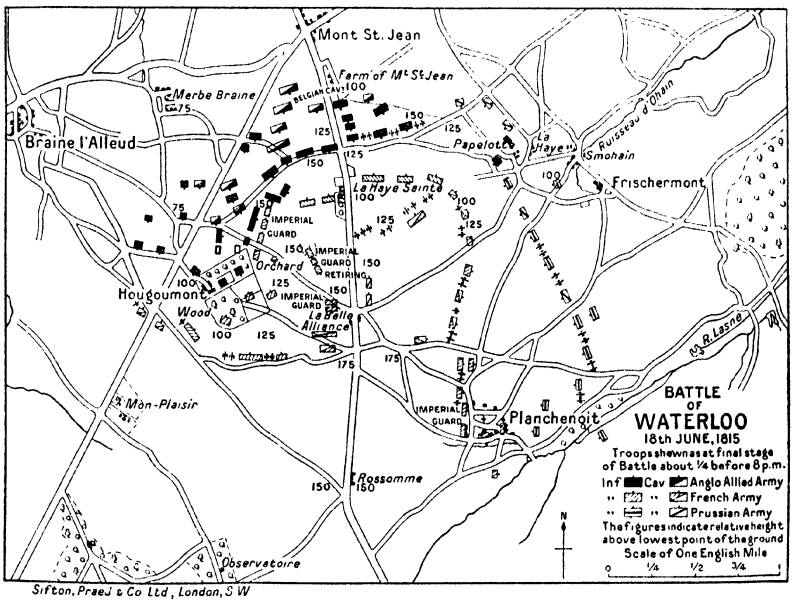
At 4 p.m. the third phase of the battle opened with a terrific bombardment of the whole Allied right, and this was followed by a great attack by French cavalry. The attack could only move at a trot, owing to the slope, and the British battalions met it by closing up and forming squares or oblongs which presented to the advancing French a chessboard pattern, bristling with bayonets and unbreakable. As the cavalry advanced, the British batteries double shotted with grape and round shot tore great lanes in the French masses of horse. Those who reached the squares could make no impression on that imperturbable infantry. As they fell back in disorder, the British gunners who had taken cover within the squares or under the bayonets of the infantry rushed back to their guns and completed the discomfiture of the retreating French horsemen.

By now Prussian troops were appearing out of the wood of Paris on Napoleon's right and were slowly moving towards Planchenoit. It was essential for Napoleon that he should shatter the British resistance before the pincers began to close upon him. At 6 p.m. D'Erlon's Corps advanced to pierce the centre. For a few minutes it looked as if they had done so, but they too had to fall back before the steadiness of the Allied line. But the position of La Haye Sainte in the centre was lost, and Hugoumont on the right partially so. The main position however of Mont St. Jean, carefully chosen by Wellington and a typical example of the battle-ground he preferred, as already described, was held with grim determination ; and all the time Napoleon's position was steadily becoming more critical.

The Advance of the Prussians

Hampered by deep mud and rain-soaked fields, the Prussians were steadily pushing across-country from the east and coming in


Mont St. Jean
BELGIAN CAV.
Farm of Mt St Jean
Merbe Braine
Braine l'Alleud
Papelotte
La Haye
Smohain
Frischermont
La Haye Sainte
Orchard
Hougoumont
Wood
La Belle Alliance
R. Lasne
Mon-Plaisir
Planchenoit
IMPERIAL GUARD
Rossomme
Observatoire
BATTLE OF WATERLOO
18th JUNE, 1815
Troops shewn as at commencement of Battle about 11 a.m.
Inf. Cav Anglo Allied Army
" " French Army
The figures indicate relative height above lowest point of the ground.
Scale of 1 English Mile
N
Sifton, Praed & Co Ltd., London, S.W.


Mont St. Jean
Farm of Mt St Jean
BELGIAN CAV.
Merbe Braine
Braine l'Alleud
Papelotte
La Haye
Smohain
Frischermont
La Haye Sainte
IMPERIAL GUARD
Orchard
IMPERIAL GUARD RETIRING
Hougoumont
Wood
La Belle Alliance
R. Lasne
Mon-Plaisir
Planchenoit
Rossomme
Observatoire
BATTLE OF WATERLOO
18th JUNE, 1815
Troops shewn as at final stage of Battle about ¼ before 8 p.m.
Inf Cav Anglo Allied Army
" " French Army
" " Prussian Army
The figures indicate relative height above lowest point of the ground
Scale of One English Mile
N
Sifton, Praed & Co Ltd, London, S.W.

on Napoleon's right flank. As the day wore on, more and more French troops had to be sent in the direction of Planchenoit to hold them off. Whereas in the morning the battlefield had disclosed only the two armies of Napoleon and Wellington facing each other in two long lines, now, by 7.45 p.m., Napoleon's front was bent round in the form of a right-angle. Soon, if he could not break the British resistance in front, the Prussians would be pressing in on the road to Charleroi—and France.

Defensive to Offensive

At this stage, Napoleon threw in his last reserve, 3,500 of the Imperial Guard, the veterans who had broken the Prussian centre at Ligny and decided the issue on many a stricken field. In two dense columns they crossed the valley and rolled up the slope, Ney, " the bravest of the brave," in front leading them on. Above them on the crest were the British Guards, lying down to lessen the effect of the French artillery. Nearer and nearer came the tall bearskins, the " eagles " and the cry " Vive l'Empereur ! " At twenty yards Wellington gave the order " Now, Maitland ! Now's your time ! " Up sprang the Guards ; down came the long muskets. A crash shook the French masses from end to end ; then the awful rolling musketry at targets which could not be missed. For the first time in their history, the Imperial Guard staggered under the fire of the British line formation which stood their shock when Austrians, Russians and Prussians had failed. Now Colborne with the Fifty-second (Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry) was on their flank and firing into them. Napoleon had shot his bolt. The Imperial Guard rolled backward down the slope, and, as they did so, the whole British line advanced. Only a few squares of the Old Guard still hung together ; elsewhere all was panic-stricken flight. The Prussian cavalry, still fresh, was on their heels and showed no mercy. Only a disorderly mob reached the French frontier. The greatest military genius the world has ever known had failed at last, and beyond all hope of repairing the disaster. The method which he had so successfully employed against other commanders, of compelling them to use their reserves while keeping his own intact for a final and devastating blow, did not succeed against the British troops and their imperturbable commander. He had almost had the game in his hands, and had he made more use of cavalry and infantry attacks closely combined, so that the British line could not form squares, instead of separate attacks with considerable intervals of time between them, he might have succeeded. But he despised Wellington as a commander and the British troops as fighters, and thought that either cavalry or infantry ought to be able to sweep the British Army away. Indeed, it was a campaign of lost oppor-

tunities. The muddle with regard to D'Erlon's Corps on the 16th; the delay on the morning of the 17th; the ambiguous orders given to Grouchy were examples of bad staff work which contributed to the final debacle. Further, Grouchy's force was too strong if its purpose was reconnaissance; it was too weak had the Prussians stood and fought. The attacks on Hugoumont were wasteful of man-power; so also were the cavalry and infantry attacks which were launched against Allied infantry who had not been shaken by artillery fire-power. And lastly, Napoleon made the fatal mistake of underestimating his opponents.

The fog of war was, however, not all on the French side. Liaison between the British and Prussian armies was not perfect; messages and orders were lost or delayed and, had it not been for the determination of Blücher, the Prussians might not have arrived in time. It was, as Wellington put it "The nearest run thing that ever you saw."

The pursuit continued to the frontier. The French lost about half their total strength in killed, wounded and prisoners. Once back on French soil, the French commanders pulled their men together and even fought some rearguard actions, but all was in vain. Like the Kaiser in 1918, Napoleon left his beaten army to indulge in desperate political manœuvres, and in so doing forfeited his prestige. The French would fight no longer, and the Allies were inexorable. Napoleon attempted to make his escape from the port of Rochefort to America, but the coast was too closely guarded by British ships. Finally, twenty-one days after Waterloo, he surrendered to Captain Maitland on board the *Bellerophon*.

Louis XVIII returned to his throne and Napoleon was sent to Saint Helena, where he occupied himself till his death in 1821 in explaining that he was a very much misunderstood and ill-appreciated man.

Britain's Share in the Final Victory

Wellington's losses both at Quatre Bras and at Waterloo were very heavy. Fifteen thousand men, nearly a quarter of his total strength, were casualties, and of these the great bulk were sustained by the British and the King's German Legion. Some battalions lost more than half their officers and men. And this was not spread over a wide front or a considerable period, but in a very narrow space and a few hours only. It is not surprising that Wellington said that he hoped he had fought his last battle, as indeed he had. On half his army he had been unable to rely, and yet he had held his own and advanced at the finish.

In the Napoleonic Wars as a whole, Britain took a part to which Continental writers have never paid full justice. Our population and

army were small compared with those of our allies, and yet confidence in the final victory was never lacking. In the later campaigns of the Austrians, Prussians and Russians there was the unmistakable feeling that they would be lucky if they faced the French and escaped death; in our case the attitude was that it would be surprising if we did not win. It was in this spirit that we won through to victory.

The Peace Settlement and its Results

Britain gained much less territory than might have been expected. In theory the war had been in the first instance against the Revolution and afterwards against Napoleon and his dynasty. We could not demand too stringent terms against France, now under its legitimate king, without making his position impossible. Nor could we keep everything we had originally conquered from his unwilling allies who had eventually fought on our side. We retained the islands of Malta, Heligoland (later exchanged with Germany) and the Ionian Islands (afterwards handed over to Greece). We took from France, Mauritius, St. Lucia and Tobago; from Spain, we obtained Trinidad; and from Holland, part of Guinea, the Cape of Good Hope and Ceylon (paying the Dutch £6,000,000 as compensation). Everything else was handed back. No country has ever voluntarily abandoned so much.

Our real gains were in another sphere. A broad belt across Europe, extending from Lisbon to Moscow, with the exception only of central France, had been ravaged time and again by contending armies. In the well-nigh universal destruction only Britain had escaped. As a result our carrying-trade and manufactures had enormously expanded, since we had no competitors except the Americans. Even Napoleon, despite his "Berlin Decrees" against British trade, could not advance to Moscow till he had surreptitiously purchased British cloth for his men's greatcoats. It was the wealth derived from our manufacturers which enabled us to maintain the long war and subsidize our allies. And lastly, it is worthy of note that, though left with a National Debt of over £700,000,000 (relatively much larger than our debt of over £7,000,000,000 to-day) we forgave our allies all our loans to them.

A British force, commanded by Wellington, remained in occupation of part of northern France till 1818 when the moderate indemnity required by the Allies from the French Government was finally paid.

CHAPTER XIII

THE NEW EMPIRE OVERSEAS, 1815–1852

Imperial Expansion

The remarkable thing about the British Empire is that its growth was largely unsuspected by those who lived when it happened. The contest with France for eastern Canada was dramatic; the conflicts in India brought wealth to some and glory to many; but elsewhere we see the greatest results from small and almost unpreceived beginnings. This was so since they came from no elaborate plans for Empire settlement, no grandiose dreams of "painting the map red." In fact, in so far as they were noticed at all, these beginnings were strenuously resisted by politicians as entailing responsibilities which we should avoid. One such effort had already failed. The American Colonies, the outlet for nearly two hundred years for such surplus population as we had to spare, in the stress of party strife had broken away. It seemed plausible therefore to deprecate a renewal of the effort lest the colonies so formed should "cut the painter" in the same way. Indeed, after the war of American Independence, the very post of Secretary of State for the Colonies had been abolished, and it was not till 1801 that the duty of looking after them was added to the other duties of the Secretary for War.

Yet none the less this view was short-sighted and wrong. In the first place, no British Government, lacking in vision though many were in the nineteenth century, would allow a situation to develop into disaster like the American War, and secondly, the process was too inevitable to be prevented.

Before the Industrial Revolution, which began on a big scale with Pitt's administration in 1784, Britain was a small trading and agricultural country, powerful indeed at sea, but as regards population and wealth definitely of the second rank. Then, in the latter portion of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, came the great discoveries in manufactures and transport. No longer was the population limited to that which could be maintained on the land or in a few ancient towns and cities; even during the Napoleonic wars it increased from 14,000,000 to 19,000,000, a gain of 35 per cent. in twenty-two years. For a while expansion overseas was dammed back by the necessities of war. Ships were too valuable to be used for the transport of impecunious emigrants

when they were wanted for military expeditions or the profitable Indian trade; but with peace came a vast difference. A war-stricken and hungry country must find an outlet for those whom manufactures, requiring fewer hands with improved machinery and depressed by the cessation of war demand, could no longer support, or agriculture, hard-hit by falling prices, maintain on the land.

Britain after the Napoleonic Wars

Conscious as we are of our difficulties to-day, we find it hard to realize that our ancestors, after a far longer strain and with far less resources, went through a far worse time. To win the war taxation had been imposed, crushing in amount and extending to every commodity which could possibly be taxed. Not merely was trade bad, but what was regarded as the inexorable law of supply and demand tolerated and indeed encouraged low wages and bad conditions for those who could find work. Such philanthropy as existed was mainly concentrated on the picturesque woes of negro-slaves abroad who, being valuable property, were in no danger of the semi-starvation which was the lot of millions of Englishmen at home. Added to this, the country was flooded with disbanded soldiers, whose only trade was fighting and for whom the public conscience accepted little responsibility. Perhaps worst of all, our legal system, undeveloped by reason of the wars, lagged far behind the times. At least two hundred "offences," many of which would nowadays be dealt with by admonition and help, were still technically "felonies" and as such punishable by the gallows or transportation.

The Lot of the British Soldier

The same insensitiveness to atrocious conditions which permitted the transportation system had an equally discreditable manifestation in the treatment meted out to the Army. Owing to financial difficulties, economy was all the cry after the Napoleonic Wars. By 1821 the Army had been cut down to 101,000 all told. The Volunteers had disappeared and the laws for raising Militia were in abeyance. Of the Regulars, 31,000 were in the Colonies, 19,000 in India, and 51,000 at home.

Even this diminished force was treated with extreme parsimony. The men were wretchedly paid and herded together in overcrowded barracks with monotonous and badly-cooked food, no attention to decency and no opportunities for recreation. Their only relaxation was drink and this naturally produced indiscipline, dealt with by wholesale flogging. There is no doubt that the majority of commanding officers honestly believed that discipline could not be maintained in any other manner. They did not realize, as Sir

John Moore had done long before, that it was the whole treatment of the troops that was wrong and not the men themselves. The system could not be put right without more intelligent handling, and particularly without expenditure of money. But this money Parliament, bent on economy in military expenditure, simply would not grant, and so the system dragged on. Gradually more reasonable notions prevailed, and by 1837 flogging had been considerably diminished, and food and quarters in colonial garrisons were also improved.

In 1837 also a belated medal was awarded to the survivors of the Egyptian campaign of 1801, the fighting against the French in Martinique in 1809 and the Peninsular War. That is why no medal issued to the British soldier bears on the obverse the head of any British monarch prior to Queen Victoria. The East India Company, as we have seen, issued medals to troops much earlier, and it was their action in issuing one for the First Afghan War which induced this tardy measure of justice to British veterans. Queen Victoria did not like to see medals being granted without her permission and so the official issue of war medals was started.

A circumstance which probably helped to increase the popularity of the Army in peace time, and so helped indirectly to alleviate its lot, was the establishment of the Metropolitan Police in 1829. Prior to this date, the Government had no effective force with which to deal with riotous assemblies except the troops. This meant that they were constantly liable to be brought into conflict with the populace in the performance of distasteful duties, and this naturally did not add to their popularity. With the gradual establishment of an efficient police force over the whole country the need for calling on the troops at all became most exceptional and they were therefore much more sympathetically regarded by the mass of the population.

"Westward the Course of Empire takes its Way."

Canada, alone of the settlements overseas, was never threatened with transported convicts. The country was too close and had already a considerable settled population. These, in Lower Canada (Quebec), were mainly descendants of the original French, but in Upper Canada (Ontario) and the Maritime Provinces the leading element was to be found in the "United Empire Loyalists," the victims of the War of American Independence. In that conflict many colonists, often of the wealthiest and best-educated classes, fought bravely on the British side. In consequence the fury of the successful party was particularly directed against them. They lost everything, and the corpses of some who failed to escape in time were seen dangling on the waterfront of New York in 1783, as the

last British fleet sailed out on the conclusion of the struggle. Helped by the British Government, the survivors, some forty thousand in number, took refuge in Canada. There, filled with a bitter hatred of everything American, the United Empire Loyalists had stood nobly by the few British regulars in the war of 1812–14; and their deeds at "Lundy's Lane" and "Chrystler's Farm," where they repaid their wrongs with interest, are remembered with pride to this day in Canada. Nor were the French Canadians behindhand. They fought for their religion and language, secure under the British flag, and routed the invading Americans at Châteauguay. By 1814 not an American had been left on Canadian soil. Canada is a nation to-day because her people fought to make her one. By the end of the Napoleonic wars there was a population of 180,000 in Lower Canada and 80,000 in Upper Canada.

Now set in a great tide of immigration from England and Scotland, which was destined to make the population of Canada predominantly British. Many disbanded officers and men received grants of land at the conclusion of the war, mainly in Upper Canada. This cost the Government nothing and planted a military colony in a fertile region most coveted by America. They were followed by a flood of unemployed workmen and agricultural labourers, also seeking homes in the wilderness. In one year as many as fifty thousand immigrants are said to have landed at Quebec. Among these were many settlers from the Highlands, abandoning at last the task of attempting to wring a living from the barren glens. Canada is the Scotsman's paradise; that is why there are so many there, but he does not forget:

> "From the lone shieling in the misty island
> Mountains divide us and the waste of seas.
> But still the blood is strong, the heart is Highland;
> And we in dreams behold the Hebrides."

"Two Nations Warring within a Single State"

The united effort which saved Canada from conquest was followed by an unhappy period. The French in Lower Canada had been given representative government in 1791, but as time went on they utilized this to demand such power as would have placed the British minority in Quebec in a most unfavourable position. In Upper Canada, too, there was a violent dispute between the United Empire Loyalists, who held the reins of government, and the subsequent American settlers, whom they accused of disloyalty to the Crown. The result was a flare-up in both provinces in 1837, the revolt being led in Upper Canada by a Scotsman, William Lyon Mackenzie (grandfather of a recent Prime Minister of Canada), and in Lower Canada by a French-Canadian, Papineau, both with

republican views. Luckily, the military command was in the hands of Sir John Colborne, who had distinguished himself both in the Peninsula and at Waterloo. The Canadian militia rallied to his aid, and both rebellions were promptly put down. Obviously it was impossible to continue a state of affairs in which French and British, as " Loyalists " and " Reformers " were at daggers drawn. The result was the sending of Lord Durham in 1839, who produced his famous " Report." In this he advocated a single Parliament for both provinces and a single government. This was put into force in 1842, and gradually the bitter feeling died away. The foundations of Canada were laid and the way paved for the federation of all the provinces in the " Dominion of Canada," by the British North America Act of 1867.

The Half-Way House to India

Though the Portuguese were the first Europeans to round the Cape of Good Hope there was little to attract them there. Their search was for gold and spices which the Cape did not appear to offer, and therefore, though they explored Angola on the west coast and Mozambique on the east, they left the Cape alone. Francis Drake passed it in June 1580, on his voyage round the world, and ships of the English East India Company touched there in 1591. In 1620 another fleet annexed it in the name of James I, but the claim was not sustained. So, when in 1652 the Dutch East India Company sent out a ship's surgeon, Johan van Riebeck, with three ships to establish a settlement it was still unoccupied. The intention of the Dutch was to use the Cape solely as a means of providing fresh meat and vegetables (scurvy was then the great problem) for Dutch vessels on their way to the Indies and as a place to land the sick. The settlement was therefore deliberately restricted in numbers, and the Dutch population of South Africa is almost entirely descended from the few hundred early settlers, together with two hundred Huguenots who were allowed to settle there at the end of the seventeenth century but not allowed to retain their language. This explains the French names so often found in South Africa. There was also a considerable German element among the early settlers who were likewise absorbed by the Dutch.

The purpose being so limited, colonization was discouraged. The settlers were purely the servants of the Dutch East India Company, which had the first claim on all their produce. They were allowed no printing-press and had hardly any books beyond the Bibles their ancestors had brought with them in 1652. So when the British finally took over the Cape of Good Hope in 1815 they had to deal with a community which, though European in origin, was to all intents and purposes a hundred-and-fifty years behind the times.

This fact largely explains the subsequent history of South Africa. At the outset the native population in Western Cape Colony was small, consisting only of a few Hottentots and Bushmen. Till about 1750 the settlers had not come into contact with the warlike Kaffirs who were spreading southward down the coast from East Africa. In the original area of settlement, therefore, the European preceded the Kaffir.

In 1820, as a part of the policy of settling unemployed persons and their families overseas, some five thousand British emigrants were settled in the eastern portion of Cape Colony (i.e., nearest to the Kaffirs). They had a hard struggle to establish themselves, and bore the brunt of numerous wars with the cattle-stealing Kaffirs, but they won through in the end; and it is their descendants of the "1820 Settlers' Memorial Association" who still furnish the greatest assistance and the best advice to Britons following in their footsteps. From 1820 onwards, therefore, there were two European races in South Africa, a fact which immensely complicated the task of government.

The First Kaffir War, 1834

Before long the British Government, much against their will, were compelled to send a force to deal with the Kaffirs. Its leader, Colonel Harry Smith, had been one of the most brilliant junior officers in the Peninsula, and soon made his mark in the difficult bush warfare which the nature of the country necessitated. Having overcome, as far as possible, the difficulties of supply and transport, he formed rapidly-moving mobile columns which beat the Kaffirs at their own tactics and brought the war to a successful conclusion. A man of marked individuality, he showed just that ability to adapt means to ends which marked the best type of Peninsula officer.

The legislation which abolished slavery was part of a larger and less creditable movement. Many worthy people in England in their zeal to be just to the African, forgot that all the wrongs were not on one side. The settlers, British and Dutch, who had sought to make their homes in the almost empty eastern portion of Cape Colony, had on their flank a territory becoming yearly more densely populated by aggressive Kaffir tribes. A region originally only inhabited by a few Hottentots or Bushmen was now to be fought over by invading Europeans and invading Kaffirs. And in this conflict philanthropic sentiment at home was not on the side of the Europeans. Farms might be burnt or pillaged (eight hundred suffered this fate about Christmas Day 1834, in a sudden onset of the Kaffirs) and stock swept off to a total of 112,000 cattle and 162,000 sheep, but a man like Lord Glenelg, the Colonial Secretary, had no hesitation in showing that his sympathy was entirely with the Kaffirs, and in

ordering the abandonment to the marauders of the frontier districts without a penny of compensation for the settlers' losses. Such a "settlement" was too preposterous to last, and it did not last; but the mere fact that it was ever officially ordered shows the difficulties under which men like Sir Benjamin D'Urban and Sir Harry Smith laid the foundations of British South Africa. The two ideas that the interior of South Africa was not worth having and that in any conflict with the Kaffirs the latter must invariably be in the right nearly lost South Africa. The climax came in 1852 when Sir Harry Smith, whose skill and determination had alone saved eastern Cape Colony in a series of desperate Kaffir wars, was recalled as lacking energy and judgment, the very qualities which ever since the siege of Badajoz he had most prominently displayed. But he had done his work and Cape Colony was safe.

The Cape War of 1850–52 is interesting, from a military point of view, as an extension of the principles followed by Sir Harry Smith in his first campaign. The country was extremely rugged and covered with dense forests, the result of torrential rains along the narrow strip of eastern South Africa. Regulation uniforms and boots soon wore out, so the troops were equipped on what we should consider modern lines, loose garments of a nondescript colour and more attention paid to efficiency than show. A trial was also made, on a small scale, of the new Minié rifle, which had an accurate range of 500 yards and an extreme range of 900 yards, a Kaffir being actually shot at that distance.

The task of developing a territory predominantly Dutch as regards its European population and threatened by hostile Kaffirs on the east would have been easier had the Home Government displayed greater wisdom. Unfortunately, in their zeal to do right they were frequently unwise. The Cape Dutch were, and always had been, slave-owners. The Hottentots they considered as the "Gibeonites" of the Old Testament, "hewers of wood and drawers of water," from the fact of their race. Now in 1833 all slaves under the British flag were freed, and for the 39,000 slaves in Cape Colony was paid a sum which their owners considered grossly inadequate. They had had grievances before, but this was the last straw. In 1835 after the first Kaffir War at least 10,000 "Boers" (or farmers) left the Cape Colony in search of a land beyond the Orange River and the Vaal, where the British Government and its missionary and abolitionist friends could never reach them. With them went a young boy, Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, whom we shall meet again. Once across the Vaal they were soon in contact with the Zulus, recently welded into a formidable fighting machine by the Zulu Napoleon—Tshaka. In February 1838 Pieter Retief and a party of Boers arrived at the kraal of Dingaan, Tshaka's brother and

successor. There they were treacherously attacked and slaughtered to the last man, and this was followed up by the massacre of over five hundred men, women and children at Weenen, the " Place of Weeping." The Boers vowed vengeance, and led by Pretorius set out to exact it. They were enormously outnumbered, but possessed horses and " elephant-guns," which the Zulu impis did not. Galloping up to close range they poured in a volley and then galloped away to reload, repeating the process again and again. Thus, on December 16th, 1838, they crushingly defeated Dingaan at the battle of the Blood River, an anniversary still commemorated by Dutch South Africans. The Boers had discovered their military strength and henceforth became a serious problem to the British authorities. In 1842 they attacked the small British settlement at Durban or Port Natal, which they considered to be within their territory. The nearest British force from which Captain Smith and the handful of soldiers holding Port Natal could expect help was at Grahamstown, six hundred miles away. Dick King, a transport rider, volunteered to make this journey through the heart of the territory of the hostile Kaffirs. His famous ride took ten days, and is commemorated by a statue on the Esplanade at Durban. Help was sent by sea and the Boers retired farther inland. Natal remained British, but the interior of South Africa had passed largely into the hands of the revolted Boers, who persistently refused to recognize the authority of Great Britain. In 1848 Sir Harry Smith, then Governor of Cape Colony, proclaimed the territory between the Orange and the Vaal as British and followed this up by defeating the insurgent Orange River Boers at Boomplaats on August 29th, 1848. This was the British chance and it was thrown away.

Beyond the Vaal were the more irreconcilable Boers under Pretorius, and during the desperate struggle of Sir Harry Smith with the Kosa Kaffirs, these Transvaal Boers threatened to invade the Orange River sovereignty unless their own independence was granted. The British Government failed to see whither this would lead, and on January 17th, 1852, the Sand River Convention was signed, granting the Transvaal Boers what they asked. In 1854, by the Convention of Bloemfontein, a Republican Government in the Orange Free State was set up also. These two Conventions marked the policy of " non-intervention " and led to half a century of political conflict and the first and second Boer Wars. British and Dutch South Africa were now definitely divided.

New Zealand

Cook in his voyages surveyed the coast of New Zealand in 1769, 1773, 1774 and 1777, and left traces of his matter-of-fact mind on the map. Names like Cape Turnagain, Kidnappers Point, Poverty

Bay and Bay of Plenty recall his actions and experiences. He was followed by sealers, whalers and various other pioneers, who carried on a precarious intercourse, never knowing, owing to their ignorance of Maori mentality and complicated customs, whether they were likely to receive a warm welcome or be clubbed and put into the pot. The introduction of firearms, too, led to much indiscriminate slaughter. The Maoris were constantly fighting among themselves, but the fact that they were still in the Stone Age and had no metal weapons had hitherto imposed some check on wholesale slaughter. Now the more intelligent chiefs began to realize that the possession of double-barrelled guns would enable them to wipe out their enemies with deadly effectiveness. These they could obtain from traders in exchange for the valuable phormium flax, and soon whole tribes were desperately scraping flax in order to obtain guns before their enemies could do so. Chiefs like Hongi and Te Rauparaha carried out most revolting massacres, and soon it became apparent that if effective measures were not taken to establish authority, the whole Maori race would end like the Kilkenny cats. This intervention was warmly advocated by the missionaries, who were doing their utmost to counteract the evils resulting from the combination of Polynesian mentality and European weapons, and there was another reason in the suspicious interest which the French, forestalled in Australia, were taking in New Zealand affairs. So, in 1833, the Colonial Office sent out James Busby as Resident, though with little real authority.

The Land Question

Land in a country so favoured by nature as New Zealand was obviously valuable, but the difficulty was that it was almost impossible to purchase it. The land really belonged to the whole tribe in occupation of it at the time, and though a chief might make his mark on a document in exchange for an assortment of trade goods, his nominal assent actually bound no one but himself. This was the difficulty of the New Zealand Company, inspired by the indefatigable Gibbon Wakefield. They claimed to have purchased vast areas, but actually their rights were not worth the paper they were written on. Disputes arose; and the British Government accordingly annexed New Zealand to New South Wales in 1840 and sent out Captain Hobson as Lieutenant-Governor. In 1840 Hobson concluded the Treaty of Waitangi with the Maori chiefs, by which the sovereignty of the land was vested in Queen Victoria; the chiefs and their tribes were recognized as owners of their lands, which they were not to sell except to the Government, and they were recognized as British subjects. This was of course strenuously resisted by the New Zealand Company, who bitterly opposed Hobson and continued

to pour shiploads of would-be settlers into the North Island, in the teeth of the warlike Maoris, instead of into the South Island where there were very few Maoris and the land was almost empty. The result of these forcing tactics was to place Hobson's successor, Captain Fitzroy, in an impossible position. He had only about two hundred and fifty troops and must rely on the settlers for support. If he checked them in any way this support would not be forthcoming, whereas, if he did not, war with the Maoris was certain. The New Zealand Company's officials attempted to seize some land they claimed on the Wairau River in 1843 and a number of settlers were killed. Fitzroy held that the Maoris were in the right as they had not fired the first shot, and took no action, but at the beginning of 1845 a Maori chief named Hake raided the township of Russell, which he had previously attacked and hostilities became inevitable. Troops were sent for from New South Wales and England.

The First Maori War, 1845

British troops had now to contend with the most intelligent set of savages they ever encountered. The essence of Maori warfare was the defence of the "pa," or fortified stockade. This was composed of successive lines of tree-trunks, planted firmly in the ground and laced together with creepers, similar to the stockades in the first Burmese War. It was impossible to attack without a preliminary bombardment by heavy guns, which often did little damage to the stockade and less to the Maoris who lay hidden in shelter pits, armed with American rifles and always ready to make a counter-attack when the British attacked. At the "pa" of Ohaeawai two assaults by three battalions did fail, and then the Maoris showed the other side of their strategy. Fighting was their main interest in life, but they had no sentimental attachment to any particular "pa." When the battering of the guns had sufficiently weakened the stockade and they thought it was likely to fall, they merely withdrew to another "pa," previously constructed in the forest behind, and the whole business had to be gone through again. The conditions were most difficult, thick forest, no roads and an almost complete lack of transport.

Fitzroy was succeeded by Captain George Grey, a soldier, an explorer and a man of far-seeing mind. He sympathized with the Maoris, but realized that a settled peace was impossible until they had been shown that the British were their masters. Under his direction the British attacked the "pa" at Ruapekapeka, first taking care to bombard it thoroughly with really heavy guns. It fell, and its fate was shared by the "pa" of the chief Rangihaeata which was surrounded and its supplies cut off. Then, after another

victory at Wanganui, peace was made and Grey turned his attention to winning over the Maoris by treating them justly and steadily seeking their interests. He announced that he meant to stand by the Treaty of Waitangi, and when Gibbon Wakefield and his friends induced the Home Government to condemn it, Grey persuaded the Colonial Secretary to cancel his instructions and to leave the Maoris in possession of the lands for which they had fought so gallantly. Grey was made a K.C.B., and the New Zealand Company at last turned its attention to the empty areas of the South Island. Otago and Canterbury were founded, the former by the Free Church of Scotland and the latter by the Church of England. In later years the discovery of transport by cold-storage, said to be the invention which of all others has made the biggest difference to the life of the ordinary man, was destined to make them famous as the source of "Canterbury lamb."

In 1841 New Zealand had been separated from New South Wales, and in 1852 a Constitution was granted which (except for the change of title to the Dominion of New Zealand in 1907) has remained unchanged to the present day. In 1852 Grey returned home, though he returned later to grapple with the Maori problem which less wise handling than his own had again allowed to drift into war. Still, by 1852, New Zealand was firmly established, and if the credit is due to any one man that man is George Grey.

The Resumption of Military Reforms

The fact that, from 1815 to 1854, the British Army saw no service in Europe, was responsible for the longest period of stagnation in our military history. The great name and authority of Wellington was invoked to maintain the idea that no improvement was even possible. Actually, of course, the Army at the end of this period was by no means as efficient as it had been in the Peninsula. It was merely a collection of isolated units, without supply, transport or adequate medical services. Everywhere was neglect and the reforms of the Duke of York had been forgotten. One technical improvement was made in 1839 with the introduction of the percussion cap. The use of a fulminate to ensure that a musket would go off was the invention of a Scottish minister, Forsythe, during the Napoleonic Wars. But a change of officials had resulted in neglect for both invention and inventor. The use of the percussion cap reduced misfires from 40 per cent. to 4 per cent. The calibre of all small-arms was also made uniform in the Army, thus greatly facilitating ammunition supply.

In 1852 peace manœuvres were held for the first time at Chobham, an innovation which attracted much attention from sightseers.

Finally, in the same year, died the Duke of Wellington. No man

ever rendered greater services to his country and yet, paradoxically, there is little that can be placed to his credit as regards the Army in the period succeeding Waterloo. He was the one man whose prestige and influence were so great that, had he declared himself wholeheartedly for Army reform, the nation would probably have listened. But he did not so declare himself. His latter years were spent primarily as a politician, and the word which he alone could have spoken with effect was never uttered.

CHAPTER XIV

BRITISH SUPREMACY IN INDIA, 1818–1852

In previous chapters we have seen how the British first established themselves in India, then how they came to be recognized as an important power in India, and at last, with the overthrow of the Mahrattas, as the most important force in India. But they were not yet the paramount power of India in the sense that the Governor-General was able to dictate to all the "country-powers" as a master whose right to do so was recognized. There were still important military states whose rulers negotiated with British authority as with an equal, and the stages by which Britain became supreme everywhere between the Himalayas and the sea were difficult and at times precarious.

The Kandyan War, 1818

In 1818 came a small campaign which completed the British occupation of the island of Ceylon. What we had taken over from the Dutch by the Treaty of Paris was only the coastal plains; the interior had always been independent under the Kings of Kandy. Indeed, our first attempts to assert our authority there, owing to few and inferior troops and bad leading, had met with humiliating checks. Now a sufficient force was sent which, in spite of the difficulties of the climate and dense jungles, entered Kandy and established British power over the whole of Ceylon. The sacred throne of Kandy was carried off to England: it has lately been restored to the Kandyans by the Duke of Gloucester, as the representative of the King-Emperor.

First Burmese War, 1824–26

The next extension of British power was outside the boundaries of India proper. No Indian monarch had ever extended his sway over Burma, separated from India by dense jungles and rugged mountain ranges, to this day untraversed by either road or railway, and inhabited by a Mongolian people with no Indian characteristics. The Burmese, under a new dynasty, had become aggressive and, threading their way through the jungles, had appeared in the frontier districts of Assam, Cāchār, and Manipur. They now claimed possession of Eastern Bengal, and their attitude was such that war became inevitable. Hostilities began in February 1824.

It was obvious that the main expedition would have to go by sea to Rangoon, but here a difficulty occurred, since the sepoys of the Bengal Army were unwilling to cross the "black water." Indeed the 47th Native Infantry mutinied at Barrackpore, outside Calcutta, sooner than go. The mutiny was quickly suppressed, but it was an ominous incident. Hence the Indian troops for the first Burmese expedition were furnished almost solely by Madras.

A force of 11,000 men under Sir Archibald Campbell took Rangoon easily enough in May 1824, only to find that this was no Indian expedition with supplies, transport and followers easily available. The centre of the Burmese power was far inland, at Ava on the Irrawaddi. Moreover, the Burmese had a system of war of their own, curiously like that of the Maoris, and based on the lavish use of stockades and constant "digging-in." The Burmese were the first enemies whom we had met who practised this art; at the first encounter 30,000 men disappeared from sight in two hours. Luckily for us, though far more numerous than the Maoris, they were far less resolute in holding these positions, and depended as an army entirely on the ferocity and resolution of one leader, Bundoola. A good deal of fighting took place at Kemmendyne, outside Rangoon, in which Bundoola, who had previously scored a success over the British on the Arakan border, away to the west, showed himself a very resourceful commander. Finally, on April 1st, 1825, Bundoola was killed by a shell, and the Burmese, who then retired 50 miles upstream, never found another leader. This was as well, since, owing to sickness, the expeditionary force had only 1,300 men fit for duty. Reinforcements then arrived and Campbell steadily pushed forward up the Irrawaddi to Prome, where he waited till the conclusion of the rainy season. The advance, when resumed, was very difficult. The country was all thick jungle and cholera was raging. By February 1826 the force arrived at Yandabo, within forty-five miles of Ava and 400 miles from Rangoon, where a final action was fought. The Burmese court thereupon capitulated, paid an indemnity, agreed to leave the eastern border of India alone, and ceded Assam, Arakan and Tenasserim. But the cost in lives to the British had been deplorable. There had been several minor disasters, particularly in ill-judged attempts to enter Burma through the impassable land frontier, and the losses from hardship, starvation and fever had been immense. The British regiments who originally landed at Rangoon had practically been wiped out. Altogether it was one of the most painful campaigns in which the Army in India has ever engaged, six out of every seven men engaged becoming casualties, mainly through sickness. Still, it was a success in the end, and the north-eastern frontier of India was now secure.

Siege of Bhurtpore, 1824–25

Ever since Lake had been repulsed from Bhurtpore in 1805, the fortress had been a standing challenge to British supremacy. It was believed that the British were afraid to attack it, and this belief was strengthened when, on a usurper seizing power in 1824, Lord Amherst, the Governor-General, recalled and censured Sir David Ochterlony, the hero of the Nepal War, for moving a force towards it. However, it was impossible to shirk the issue, and at the end of the year Lord Combermere, the Commander-in-Chief and former leader (as Sir Stapleton Cotton) of the cavalry in the Peninsular War, advanced from Agra on Bhurtpore with a powerful force, very strong in artillery. The ramparts were battered far more effectively than Lake had found possible and mines were driven under a projecting bastion. On January 18th, 1825, these were exploded with tremendous effect; the stormers rushed forward and Bhurtpore, the supposedly impregnable, was taken. Our casualties in the siege numbered 569. Bhurtpore was the first occasion on which Gurkha troops were in action with the Indian Army and they gained a battle-honour. The prestige gained was immense, and this was fortunate, for events were on their way which were to test British power in India very severely.

First Afghan War, 1839–1842

The close of the Napoleonic Wars had left Russia the principal military state of Europe. She had absorbed at last the greater part of Poland and her boundaries on the west now adjoined Prussia and Austria. No further accessions of territory could be expected there, and so henceforward she began to look more and more to the south and east. Her influence was strong in Persia and her envoy was received by Dost Mohammed, a strong and able soldier who had seized the throne of Kabul from the representative of the old dynasty, the Saddozais, Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk (known to the British soldier in years to come as " Sugar-and-Milk "). Visions of Russian armies descending on the plains of India began to haunt the nervous mind of Lord Auckland, now Governor-General. These fears were fantastic. The Russian frontier was still hundreds of miles distant from Afghanistan and Dost Mohammed was well able to look after himself. To plunge into the mountains beyond the Indus would be merely to divert on to ourselves the fanaticism which, if undisturbed, would at any rate hinder the Russian advance, supposing it took place. None the less, this was the course into which Auckland was impelled by his enterprising young " political " officers, John Colvin, William Macnaghten and Alexander Burnes. If a grateful Shah Shuja could be reseated on the throne of his ancestors at Kabul by

British aid, the gates of India would be safe. Never was an enterprise launched on such a flimsy foundation or with so little excuse. Yet it could be launched, for in those days the Governor-General was still distant from London by all the time it took for a sailing-ship to round the Cape and back again. The Government at home never seem to have been consulted till it was too late to draw back. The Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Henry Fane, pointed out the strategical difficulties but was overruled.

The Lion of the Punjab

One consideration alone which should have made Auckland pause was the fact that the frontiers of British India were still far distant from Afghanistan. The lower course of the Indus was controlled by the independent Amirs of Sind, and the upper basin, the Punjab (the " Land of the Five Rivers "), was dominated by the warlike religious sect of the Sikhs under their redoubtable leader, Ranjit Singh. One-eyed, crafty and relentless, he had carved his way to power and held it for many years, but now in 1838, the " Lion " (Singh = Lion) was old and could not last much longer. But his brain was as keen as ever, and so was his appreciation of the situation. With the British he had never fought, for he respected their power, but as a Sikh he was the mortal enemy of the Afghans, and in particular of Dost Mohammed the Barakzai, from whom he had torn Peshawar, at the mouth of the Khaibar Pass. So when he was asked to sign the famous " Tri-partite Treaty " with the British and Shah Shuja, by which the latter was to be put back on the throne of Afghanistan and Dost Mohammed deposed, he did so, stipulating that the main British force should not pass through the Punjab, the direct and obvious route. The fierce Sikh soldiers of the Khalsa (literally " pure " or " sincere ") had not yet met their match, and he feared they would not stomach it.

Wandering through Asia

Since it was impossible to send the main body through the Punjab, the Bengal contingent, under Sir John Keane, was sent by an immensely circuitous route to Sukkur on the Indus where the force arrived in January 1839, and at the foot of the Bolan Pass was joined by a division from Bombay. There was also a force of sepoys called " Shah Shuja's Levy," paid in reality out of Indian revenues. The whole army, encumbered by hordes of followers, then entered the mountains. The passage of the desert and the ascent of the Bolan involved frightful hardships; supplies and water ran short, and about 20,000 camels perished. The sepoys, already despondent at having to cross the Indus, which they regarded as the boundary of India, were full of misgivings. Still the army pressed

on. Quetta was reached, and then Kandahar, which fell without resistance in April. Sir John Keane now started out for Ghazni, expecting that it would be surrendered in the same manner. He was mistaken. The fortress was held and the British siege-guns were far behind at Kandahar. Provisions were almost exhausted and disaster was imminent. In this crisis some young engineer officers undertook to blow in the Kabul Gate. The attempt succeeded; the city was stormed and the army rescued from the jaws of destruction. Dost Mohammed was a brave man but his nerve temporarily failed at this disaster. The advance of the British seemed too superhuman to be resisted. He abandoned Kabul and fled to the mountains of the north. In August the British force entered Kabul in triumph, bringing with them their unpopular puppet, Shah Shuja, who was solemnly installed on the throne. In the face of all probabilities the gambler's throw had for a time succeeded.

Living in a Fool's Paradise

Had there been anyone in authority with a vestige of strategic insight the British force would then have been immediately withdrawn. If Shah Shuja had been in any way acceptable to the population and in any way a ruler he could have held his own, and the more so since, in November 1840, Dost Mohammed, feeling it useless to resist, surrendered to the British and was sent into exile in India. To leave an army of only ten thousand men, of whom very few were British, at Kabul, separated from British India by the whole breadth of the Punjab by one route and by the deserts of Sind and Rajputana by the other, was sheer lunacy. Apart from a force under General Nott at Kandahar, the lines of communication were very weakly held and most precarious. But Macnaghten and his fellow "politicals," vested with almost absolute power and ordering the troops and their commanders about as they chose, had got the bit between their teeth and indulged in the rosiest visions. Taking their cue from authority, the officers sent for their wives and families from India, and laid out a racecourse at Kabul. To all appearances the British were in Afghanistan indefinitely.

Shadows of Impending Tragedy

The appointment of General Elphinstone as commander-in-chief in 1841 was a fatal step. He had been a good soldier but was now old and infirm, and in fact was only selected because he was an officer of the Queen's Army and unlikely to oppose Macnaghten in any way. Nott, a far abler man, was cantankerous and hated the "politicals," and was, besides, only a general in the Company's service. So he was passed over, and the doom of the army at Kabul

was sealed. On every side the Afghans broke into revolt against Shah Shuja and the infidel invaders who had put him on the throne. Attempts to suppress them failed, and the position of the force at Kabul became immensely critical. There were still two faint chances. One was to attempt at once to reach Jalalabad, held by a garrison under General Sale, and from thence force the passage of the Khaibar Pass and so to India ; the other was to stand a siege in the citadel of Kabul, the Bala Hissar, which was strong and could have been amply provisioned. Elphinstone, now a dying man, did neither. The months dragged on, and the army, apart from a few determined men like Shelton, Broadfoot, Durand and Pottinger, lost all heart and discipline. The situation became more and more hopeless. The Afghans destroyed the unprotected provision depot, and no attempt was made to save it. The force was now practically starving.

The Saddest Chapter in British Military History

In December 1841 Macnaghten, the evil genius of the Army, sought an interview with Mohammed Akbar, the principal Afghan leader and son of Dost Mohammed. Macnaghten himself is not free from the suspicion of treachery, but Mohammed Akbar was an Afghan and more treacherous still. In a fracas the envoy was murdered. Then came the final disgrace. On the promise of a safe conduct to India, Elphinstone handed over the treasure, nearly all the guns, and British officers (naturally the Afghans demanded the ablest) and even their wives as hostages. On January 6th, 1842, the doomed army, now numbering only 4,500 men of whom only seven hundred were British, set forth, dragging with them over 12,000 Indian followers. The Afghan promises were worthless, and they were attacked all along the route. Only eight hundred survived the Khurd Kabul Pass ; only two hundred reached Jagdalak ; the last survivors stood at bay at Gandamak and were overwhelmed. On January 13th one man, Dr. Brydon, struggled into Jalalabad with the awful news. Except for this one man and some prisoners, including Elphinstone himself, who died in captivity, the whole of the Kabul force had perished.

"The Illustrious Garrison"

Jalalabad was held by Sir Robert Sale with the 13th Light Infantry and some sappers. It was now surrounded by hordes of Afghans, and the general hopelessness resulting from the Kabul disaster for a time induced Sale to contemplate evacuation. Luckily he was dissuaded, and the place held out gallantly, even when the walls were shattered by an earthquake. Kandahar was safe in the strong hands of Nott, and Khelat-i-Ghilzai, on the way to Kandahar, was

bravely defended by an Indian battalion which gained thereby the title "The Regiment of Khelat-i-Ghilzai." Ghazni, however, had to surrender, and its commander, Colonel Palmer, was tortured by the Afghans to force him to reveal the whereabouts of non-existent treasure. Among the junior officers taken there was John Nicholson, afterwards so famous in Indian history.

"The Avenging Army"

Auckland's plans had collapsed in misery and disaster; his nominee, Shah Shuja, had been murdered, and he himself was now superseded by Lord Ellenborough. The latter at first ordered immediate evacuation, but as this would have involved leaving the prisoners and hostages to their fate he was persuaded to allow his generals to adopt their own method of retiring. This was enough for the gallant Nott. Instead of falling back on Quetta, he advanced on Kabul, rescuing the garrison of Khelat-i-Ghilzai en route, and destroying Ghazni. At the same time General Pollock with his "Avenging Army" advanced up the Khaibar (the Sikhs had reluctantly agreed to our troops crossing the Punjab), relieved the "Illustrious Garrison" of Jalalabad, and reached Kabul on September 15th, just before Nott from Kandahar also marched in. The bazaar of Kabul was blown up as a punishment, the prisoners recovered, and the whole force then returned to India via the Khaibar. On reaching British territory from the Punjab the army paraded in November 1842 before Lord Ellenborough, who greeted them with pompous proclamations which ill-disguised the fact that, though successful in the end, the British had sustained the biggest disaster which ever befell our arms in Asia till the siege of Kut-al-Amara.

The tragedy of Kabul must be regarded as the penalty of overconfidence resulting from previous success. British arms had been so consistently triumphant against overwhelming odds that it had come to be thought that imbecile plans, senile generals, too few British troops, a preposterous baggage-train and indifferent arms hardly mattered. Had, for instance, the troops been armed with muskets fitted with the recently-introduced percussion cap, which practically prevented misfires, they would have fought on very different terms. As it was, they had no advantages over their enemies but discipline and the tradition of success; and when these were destroyed by the feeling that they had been abandoned to their fate, only a few heroic men were strong enough to stand out against disaster. A futile and unjustifiable war thus led to the restoration of Dost Mohammed to the throne from which he should never have been deposed, and to a lessening of British prestige which only hard fighting in years to come could recover.

Outram and Napier

The next intervention of the Indian Government was hardly more respectable than the Afghan affair, though it was more successful. The whole lower course of the Indus between the Punjab and Karachi was in the hands of the Amirs of Sind, a confederacy of Baluchi chieftains who misgoverned a subject population very badly. On their merits they deserved little consideration, though they had allowed a free passage through their country to the Afghan expedition at a time when their hostility might have been dangerous. But to many British officers and officials of that period any form of Indian government seemed bad, and this view was strongly held by General Sir Charles Napier, an extremely able and in many ways an heroic soldier who had spent his lifetime quarrelling with nearly every superior authority he had ever encountered. He commanded a force in Lower Sind, and opposed to him on the question of principle, though personally the two were friends, was the British Commissioner, Colonel James Outram, known as "The Bayard of India," the man "without fear and without reproach." Outram considered that the deposition of the Amirs, unsatisfactory as they were, could not be justified from the treaty point of view. Lord Ellenborough decided in favour of Napier, who thereupon advanced with a force of less than three thousand men, of which only one battalion, the 22nd Foot, was British.

"Meeanee"

On February 16th, 1843, Napier with his scanty band found himself face to face at Miani with the army of the Amirs, thirty thousand determined fighting men. No more amazing battle was ever fought. The enemy occupied a deep river-bed, and for four hours the Twenty-Second, drawn up along the edge, exchanged periodic volleys at ten yards range with a sea of enemies, who would have swallowed them up had they entered the nullah, but who could not get at them. Napier meanwhile rode up and down between the lines encouraging his men. In Fortescue's words "His appearance was so strange that the Baluchis might well have mistaken him for a demon. Beneath a huge helmet of his own contrivance there issued a fringe of long hair at the back, and in front a large pair of round spectacles, an immense hooked nose and a mane of moustache and whisker reaching to the waist."[1] He remained by a miracle untouched, and the Baluchis, having lost two thousand killed and three thousand wounded, at last gave way. The British loss was small, though throughout the fight they had

[1] Sir Charles was nicknamed by disrespectful officers "Fagin," after Dickens's character.

been literally on the brink of destruction. Another remarkable action of the same type was fought at Dabo near Hyderabad on March 24th, and again Napier was victorious. Soon the Amirs surrendered and the country was annexed. "Punch"—and not Napier—summed up his final victory in Sind by the single word "Peccavi" ("I have sinned"). From Outram's point of view he had done so in both senses, though he himself maintained that the conquest was just and necessary, and he ruled the country wisely and well till 1847. In 1849 he became Commander-in-Chief in India. Throughout his life Napier was the champion and friend of the British soldier, the man who fought and died in the ranks, and whom he had led through two such astonishing victories. On his death a statue was erected to his memory in Trafalgar Square. It was by public subscription and on it may be read the greatest compliment ever paid to any general, in the words: "the most numerous contributors being private soldiers."

The First Chinese War, 1841–42.

During the Afghan War a desultory campaign was proceeding in the Far East. For many centuries China had been almost completely isolated from the rest of the world. Her government and people alike conceived themselves as the centre of the universe, surrounded by outer barbarians who might indeed be permitted to approach the footstool of the "Son of Heaven" with appropriate tribute and "kow-tows," but who were too savage and ferocious ever to be dealt with on even terms. Of all these "foreign devils," whose existence—but not whose rights—they reluctantly admitted, the most troublesome, because the most anxious to trade, were the "red-haired" variety, the agents of the East India Company. Till 1833 the Company had the monopoly of the China trade, which was immensely valuable. Indeed it was largely the profits of this trade which paid the Company's dividends and financed its operations. To retain it the agents put up with much humiliation and "squeeze" from the rapacity of the Chinese officials. This was the real reason for the Indian opium traffic. The demands of the officials were so extortionate that trade in commodities which made only a moderate profit was impossible. Only opium could provide the "squeeze" and still show a profit. So vast quantities of opium were imported, which the Chinese population eagerly bought. Thus matters went on till the Company's monopoly was terminated by the British Parliament in 1833. The British Government could not submit to Chinese arrogance in the same way, and so a seizure of opium by the Chinese authorities in Canton precipitated war in 1840. A force was sent from India under Major-General Sir Hugh Gough which, after wandering vaguely about the China seas,

occupied in February 1840 the barren and rocky island of Hong Kong, at the mouth of the Canton River. The Chinese remained contemptuous, and so Canton was attacked in 1841 and the Chinese troops compelled to evacuate it. Some further operations took place on the Yangtse-Kiang in 1842, when the Chinese, finding that their troops and methods of fighting were quite useless and that they were constantly being defeated, even when in overwhelming numbers, submitted and made terms. An indemnity was paid, the island of Hong Kong ceded, several ports were opened to trade, and—most important of all—British representatives were recognized on equal terms. It was a sharp but necessary lesson, and talk about the " Opium War " should not blind us to the fact that the Chinese had only themselves to thank for it.

Maharajpur and Paniar

In 1843 trouble broke out in the Mahratta state of Gwalior, which had been spared after the last Mahratta War. The Maharaja Sindia had died, and in a dispute about the succession all power had passed into the control of the army, which was 40,000 strong and thoroughly out of hand. Gough, now Commander-in-Chief in India, advanced with 20,000 men, whom he divided into two wings, one under himself and one under Sir John Grey. The two wings came separately into conflict with the Mahrattas on the same day, December 29th. Both Gough at Maharajpur and Grey at Paniar were victorious, but the former only after considerable loss in a mismanaged engagement, which did not augur well for his skill in the much more serious battles in which he was shortly to command. Gwalior was not annexed, but its army was reduced, though not sufficiently, as events in the Mutiny were to show. Maharajpur is remarkable in that the Governor-General himself had accompanied the army, together with several ladies, and was sitting down to breakfast when he found the Mahratta cannon-balls uncomfortably near. Lord Ellenborough left his mark on the Army in one way, however, by continuing the practice of the East India Company in giving medals to all ranks for a campaign. He gave medals for both the Afghan and Mahratta Wars to all combatants.

The Challenge of the Khalsa

We now come to the most desperate series of battles that the British ever fought in India. In 1839, Ranjit Singh had died. His son followed him and his grandson was murdered. Another son (alleged, but on very doubtful authority) succeeded, but was soon murdered. There remained only a child of five years, Dalip Singh, whose mother, a dancing girl, affirmed that Ranjit Singh was his father. She now became Rani of Lahore, the power behind the

throne being two Dogra Hindus from Jammu, Dhian Singh and Ghulab Singh. Dhian Singh was murdered, and Ghulab Singh betook himself to Jammu, power passing to Lal Singh and Tej Singh. These ministers were no substitute for Ranjit Singh. The Sikh army, 60,000 strong, was completely out of hand. Unless Lal Singh and Tej Singh could find some means of distracting attention from themselves their days were numbered. They offered the loot of Delhi as a bait, and the Sikh army crossed the Sutlej into British territory.

First Sikh War

The situation was dangerous. Not only were the Jat Sikhs, who formed the bulk of the Khalsa army, exceedingly stubborn fighters, but Ranjit Singh had succeeded in turning them into disciplined regular infantry, armed, trained and uniformed as a close copy of the Company's sepoys. This was achieved by employing French and Italian officers who had served under Napoleon. There was no question of sweeping such men away at the first shock, and the sepoys of Oudh, who lacked the fighting power of the men of Wellesley and Lake, were definitely afraid of them. For this reason a disproportionate amount of the fighting and casualties fell on the British troops. The Sikhs had, moreover, a numerous artillery, comprising many heavy guns and served with the utmost determination. All that they lacked was resolution on the part of their commanders, which was not surprising in view of the risks those commanders ran from their own men, and it is probable that this mainly led to their defeat.

Mudki and Ferozeshah

The first fight took place at Mudki, on the British side of the Sutlej, on December 18th, 1845. Gough, who was accompanied by the Governor-General, Sir Henry Hardinge, himself an old soldier and therefore inclined to interfere on occasion in military operations, attacked the Sikhs in a belt of jungle and succeeded in driving them back, though with heavy loss to his own men. The Sikhs retired to a strong position at Ferozeshah, a short distance in the rear, where three days later, late in the afternoon, Gough again attacked them. The Sikh artillery was more powerful than Gough's and was fought with the utmost courage. The attack was delivered in the teeth of a tempest of "grape." An Indian officer who was present wrote: "This was fighting indeed; I had never seen anything like it before. Volleys of musketry were delivered by us at close quarters and returned as steadily by the enemy. In all former actions I had been in one or two volleys at close distance were all that the enemies of the Sirkar (Government) would ever stand; but these Sikhs

returned volley for volley, and never gave way until nearly decimated. They had their regiments placed between their guns and behind them; their fire was terrible, such as no sepoy had ever been under. The Sirkar's guns were almost silenced and the ammunition waggons blown up. I saw two or three European regiments driven back by the weight of the artillery fire; it was like the 'rains'; they fell into confusion; several sepoy regiments did the same. One European regiment was totally swept away; and I now thought the Sirkar's army would be overpowered, and fear filled the minds of many of us.

"When it was almost dark, a loud shout was heard, which did not sound like that of the Sikhs; a roaring noise of cavalry came next and the Third (Light) Dragoons rushed right through into the enemy's entrenchment, and rode over and cut down their gunners. This change was so sudden, and the cavalry charging right into batteries such an unheard-of thing, that for a few moments the Sikhs left their guns in perfect amazement.

"It now became quite dark, and the Sirkar's army left off fighting, but the Sikhs continued firing wherever they saw a light. The force I was with was commanded by General Littler Sahib, and lost its way in the darkness. For fear of marching right into the Sikh camp, we were ordered to lie down. This night was nearly as bad as some of those in Kabul; we dare not light a fire for fear of the enemy's round-shot, no water was to be procured, and we had nothing to eat but what few 'chuppaties' some men had put in their haversacks. The Sahibs said this was real fighting, and that the Sikhs were noble enemies; still they looked anxious, wondering what the morning would bring forth."

There was every reason for anxiety, for only the army of Lal Singh had been fought; the remainder of the Sikh forces, under Tej Singh, had been watching Littler, who had slipped away and joined Gough just before the battle. Tej Singh might soon be expected and Gough was in no case to fight another battle. However, with great determination he advanced again in the early morning on the Sikh camp and captured it, together with seventy guns. No sooner was this accomplished than the army of Tej Singh was seen approaching. Gough, with hardly a charge left for guns and muskets, stood at bay, and after a period of suspense Tej Singh drew off. British supremacy in India had been within an ace of destruction.

Aliwal and Sobraon

The battle of Aliwal, fought on January 29th, 1846, was a smaller but much more skilfully managed affair. Sir Harry Smith, to whose career in South Africa we have already referred, had been sent with a small force to cover the transport of Gough's siege-train, when he

came into contact with a superior force of Sikhs near the village of Aliwal, on the banks of the Sutlej. Realizing that they had their backs to the river and could not easily retreat, Smith at once attacked. The Sikh resistance was broken down, the most notable incident being a most gallant charge by the Sixteenth Lancers. It is characteristic of the spirit of the Sikh infantry that they did not merely stand to await the Lancers' attack, but actually advanced to meet them. But Smith's handling of his troops had been too skilful for the Sikhs, and they were driven across the river under the fire of the British guns, with heavy casualties and the loss of over fifty cannon. Aliwal was a badly-needed success of the right kind, for it showed that with proper management the Sikhs could be thoroughly defeated.

The Sikhs now fell back on Sobraon, their last position on the British side of the Sutlej, again making the mistake of standing with the river immediately in their rear. On February 10th, 1846, Gough attacked them with the main army. His siege-train had now come up, but not sufficient ammunition. The guns had soon to cease fire, but Gough attacked with the bayonet. The infantry burst through the Sikh entrenchments and were followed by the cavalry, the Third Light Dragoons again distinguishing themselves. The bridge of boats across the river was broken down, and the whole mass of the enemy driven pell-mell into the stream. Over eight thousand Sikhs perished and sixty-seven guns were taken. The challenge of the Khalsa had been met and defeated. Our losses in these four battles were over six thousand men, more than half falling on the few British units present, who had to do the bulk of the fighting. To quote again from the Indian subadar: "The Khalsa fought as no man ever did in India before, but it was evident that their leaders knew not how to manage an army; when they had decided advantages in their hands they failed to make any use of them; their cavalry never came near the battlefield that I ever heard of; and when I was at Lahore I heard many Sikhs loudly proclaim Sirdar Tej Singh to be a traitor. . . . In a few days the Sirkar's army marched on Lahore, and the whole Punjab was at the feet of the mighty Company Bahadur (= 'brave,' a title of respect) whose power none could withstand and whom it was useless to attempt to resist."

The Punjab a British Protectorate

Every effort was made, now that the menace of the Khalsa had apparently been overcome, to avoid the formal annexation of the Punjab. A Council of Regency was set up on behalf of the Maharaja Dalip Singh, comprising four Sikh chiefs and four British officials. Colonel Henry Lawrence was appointed as first Resident at Lahore,

and was aided by men like John Nicholson and Herbert Edwardes. Everything looked hopeful, and Hardinge, now, together with Gough, a peer, assured Lord Dalhousie, on handing over to him in January 1848, that it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come. But he was wrong. The pride of the Khalsa was not yet completely broken, and they were determined to fight again at the first favourable opportunity.

The Murders at Multan

Mulraj, the semi-independent governor of Multan, had been giving trouble, and in April 1848 a new Sikh governor was sent to take his place, accompanied by Mr. Vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson. On April 18th these officers were attacked and wounded by Mulraj's men, and on April 20th were brutally done to death. Mulraj now threw off the mask, and the south-western corner of the Punjab was in revolt. Herbert Edwardes, though only a lieutenant, was in charge of the wild Pathans of the Derajat, beyond the Indus, who, although included in the Sikh dominions, had no liking for Sikhs. He called the tribesmen to arms, twice defeated Mulraj, and shut him up in Multan. It was the hottest season of the year in the hottest part of India, and Gough was reluctant to send troops. At last, in September, a British force, together with a Sikh contingent, appeared before Multan. On September 14th these Sikhs went over to Mulraj, and the British had to fall back to the south to await help from Bombay. This was the signal. Everywhere the Sikhs sprang to arms, to fight for the victory of the Khalsa.

Ramnagar, Chilianwala and Gujrat

Gough, marching from Lahore, fought Sher Singh, the Sikh commander, on October 22nd at Ramnagar on the banks of the Chenab. Both sides lost heavily and the Sikhs fell back on Chilianwala, near the River Jhelum, to await reinforcements. Here, on January 13th, 1849, Gough attacked them. The Sikh position was in dense jungle and very strong. The preliminary cannonade was ineffective and the assault disjointed. The Sikhs suffered far more heavily than the British and lost several guns, but they captured four guns and several colours. Then it came on to rain and further fighting was impossible. In the interval Multan was captured by the British, and the Sikh reinforcements came up, bringing with them various political officers who had fallen into their hands. One of these was sent with the Sikh proposals for terms. "He says," wrote a British subaltern, "that Sher Singh treats him like a brick; he has twenty men to guard him all day and night, and such is their idea of us, a bottle of brandy is placed on his breakfast-table every

morning. They boast that they are not at all afraid of us, and that if it were not for those madmen of Europeans they would thrash our sepoys hollow." The terms were rejected and the Sikhs moved off to Gujrat, close to the banks of the Chenab. There, on February 21st, 1849, came the final trial of strength. The Sikhs had 60,000 men and Gough 25,000, but now for the first time he had a powerful artillery, including the long eighteen-pounders which had been used to batter down Multan. There was no premature assault, and throughout the morning the British artillery steadily crushed the fire of the Sikh guns. Then the British lines swept forward, and the Sikhs were driven into overwhelming flight. The pursuit was continued relentlessly; Rawal Pindi, Attock and even Peshawar falling into the hands of the British. The power of the Khalsa was broken at last, and the Sikhs everywhere laid down their arms. A witness of the surrender at Rawal Pindi relates: "One old fellow I noticed in particular: he stood for a long time looking wistfully at his arms and the pile before him, and evidently could not make up his mind to give them up. At last the officer on duty came up and touched him on the shoulder and ordered him to move on; he then threw down his sword and matchlock with a crash, and turned away, saying with tears in his eyes, 'All my work is done now.'" It is gratifying to think that this was not altogether true of the bravest opponents we ever met in India, for it was these Sikh soldiers, previously in arms against us, who were our strongest supporters in the crisis of the Mutiny.

The attempt to control the Punjab as a protectorate had failed. It was annexed, and with it the "Koh-i-Nur" (The Mountain of Light), which Shah Shuja had formerly possessed and which he had been compelled to surrender to Ranjit Singh. It was sent to England and is now set in the Imperial crown. The Punjab was placed under a Board of Administration directed by Henry Lawrence, his brother John (famous in India as "Jān Lārnce") and Robert Montgomery. The long struggle was at an end.

The Second Burmese War

The defeat of the Burmese in 1826 had not lowered their arrogance. They were still as insulting as ever, and in 1852 an expedition under Major-General Godwin was sent to Rangoon. The lessons of 1826 had not been forgotten, and Lord Dalhousie personally made sure that the transport and equipment were as good as possible. The great Shwe-da-gon pagoda at Rangoon was stormed on April 14th, and General Godwin advanced to Prome, half-way to Ava. The whole of the province of Pegu, including Rangoon, was annexed and the court of Ava restricted to Upper Burma, which was now completely cut off from the sea.

Supremacy but not Security

The whole of the coastline of India, from Karachi to Tenasserim, was now under our control, and there was no state in India able to resist us. In the Indian phrase, "the mantle of rule descended upon the Sirkar, the Great Company Bahadur." But to achieve that conquest an immense Indian army, 200,000 strong, had been called into being. What if that army, seeing but 40,000 British soldiers in the whole of India, were to deem itself the real master of the country?

CHAPTER XV

THE CRIMEAN WAR

The Long Peace and its Results

The thirty years which followed Waterloo mark a period of great expansion but of practically no improvement in the means to maintain it. Britain, in common with the rest of Europe, was exhausted by the Napoleonic Wars and interest was mainly centred on political and economic problems. There were no wars of the first importance on the Continent, and the campaigns overseas whose course we have related were fought by only about one-quarter of the British Army or by the troops, British and Indian, of the East India Company. There was little public enthusiasm for the Army; indeed the opening of the Great Exhibition of 1851 was considered by many to herald a period of universal peace. Parliamentary dislike of the Army, still in theory the affair of the monarchy apart from the grudged provision of money to maintain it, was a grievous handicap. As much at times as three-quarters of its total strength was in garrisons abroad, partly in order to keep it out of the sight of Parliament and partly owing to the necessity of having troops always available in danger areas since reinforcements took so long to arrive. The result was that in the middle of the nineteenth century the Army was still a collection of units, and less experienced, less organized and worse provided with all auxiliary services than it had been at the close of the Peninsular War. Its courage and discipline were no less, but in every other respect, apart from the introduction of the percussion cap, there was no advance, even where there was not actual retrogression. Under these conditions it had to face two very severe tests.

The Colossus of the North

Russia had become by the overthrow of Napoleon the most dictatorial and the most feared state in Europe. Ruled by an autocrat, Nicholas I, who, besides being head of the state, was immensely powerful as the protector of the Orthodox Church not only in Russia but everywhere in the Near East where Orthodox Christians were to be found, her influence and ambitions spread steadily outwards. It was not realized that, owing to lack of organization and driving-power, Russia had never successfully waged an offensive campaign single-handed against serious opposi-

tion, and that her strength lay essentially in the vast bulk which made her defensively so strong. Her aggressive propaganda, then as now the real Russian weapon of attack, was unmistakable in the Near East and particularly in the dominions of the Sultan of Turkey. Soon it produced its results.

The Napoleonic Idea

Napoleon, in exile at St. Helena, had devoted his last years to manufacturing a moral mantle which might cover his designs and his dynasty with a glamour. He depicted Napoleonism as intelligent, liberal and, above all, glorious. This mantle fell on his nephew and heir Louis Napoleon, a tireless conspirator and pamphleteer and a vaguely well-meaning but unscrupulous man. Covered with this mantle, Louis Napoleon became in December 1848 Prince-President of the French Republic, which had replaced the stodgy and middle-class monarchy of Louis Philippe. In December 1851 he carried out the famous " coup d'état," arresting and exiling his principal opponents. In December 1852 he was proclaimed Emperor. He was now in the saddle, but no one knew better than himself the uncertain nature of his mount. To prove himself his uncle's heir he must avenge his overthrow on the powers responsible for it. Britain he could not afford to quarrel with at first, for he needed her help. Russia, Austria and Prussia were left. Twice he succeeded ; the third time he went down in irretrievable ruin.

" The Sick Man of Europe "

To gain British co-operation against Russia Louis Napoleon, now, " by the Grace of God and the Will of the French People," the Emperor Napoleon III, needed a pretext, and that was provided by the Tsar himself. His description of Turkey to the British Ambassador in 1853 as a " sick man," whose property on his decease would require suitable division, implanted a deep suspicion of Russian designs in the public mind. Nicholas followed this up by demanding a protectorate over all Orthodox Christians in the Sultan's territories, a right which, if conceded, would have put Turkey at his mercy, and would have eventually planted Russia on the Mediterranean. It was naturally refused. Russia then invaded the Turkish territory north of the Danube which now forms part of Roumania and, Turkey still proving recalcitrant, on November 30th, 1853, the Russian fleet based on Sevastopol attacked and destroyed a Turkish squadron in the Black Sea. This was decisive. The threat to Constantinople and a desire to divert Russian attention from India and Afghanistan drove Britain into the arms of the French Emperor, who thus secured the help he needed to avenge the retreat from

Moscow. On March 27th, 1854, Britain and France declared war on Russia, a war which Napoleon III had all along foreseen and planned. In the meantime the Turks had gained several successes on land and the peril to Constantinople had been averted by their own efforts. The Allied armies, which had been landed in Bulgaria, were consequently diverted to the Crimean peninsula by their governments.

This move was not so foolish as it is sometimes alleged. To plunge into the interior of Russia was obviously impossible, but the Allies had command of the sea and could attack where they chose. Projecting into the Black Sea was the great peninsula of the Crimea with the Russian naval base and fortress of Sevastopol (" City of Victory ") at its extremity. It was separated from " Great Russia," the centre of the Tsardom, by hundreds of miles of then uncultivated steppe, across which all Russian reinforcements, supplies and munitions would have to come. There was no railway to it and very indifferent roads. Could the Allies but fix their teeth in this outlying portion of Russia they would actually be nearer in point of time to Sevastopol, in virtue of their command of the sea, than would the Russians. Then Sevastopol would be at their mercy and the Russian Fleet in the Black Sea could be destroyed at leisure. But the Crimea was no place for long campaigning in the open. Hot and waterless in summer, it was bitterly cold and exposed in the winter. Everything, therefore, turned on the speedy capture of Sevastopol, which would provide shelter for the troops and, above all, a good harbour. A determined general at the head of a united and well-equipped army would probably have succeeded and left the Russians to wear themselves out with trying to evict the invader. Unhappily the requisites for such success were lacking. Nothing was known of the country or its garrison and there was no supreme commander to co-ordinate the work of the two allied forces.

Regiments but not an Army

The force sent out from England was in many ways deserving of respect. Though small (26,000), since it was not at the time within the power of Britain to despatch a large army, it was well-drilled, confident, and composed of long-service troops. For a single battle, within close reach of its barracks, it would have been admirable. But it had no transport whatever, no practice—except for a camp of exercise at Chobham the previous year—in even brigade manœuvres, and was in process of being rearmed with the new Minié rifle. This, though a muzzle loader, was far more effective than the old " Brown Bess," but required different ammunition. Few of the officers, with the exception of some Peninsula veterans, now almost too old for active service, had seen any fighting, and they and their

men alike were quite unaccustomed to fending for themselves in the field or provided with the means to do so.

The British commander-in-chief, Lord Raglan, was a high-minded gentleman, unselfish and self-effacing almost to a fault. For many years he had been Wellington's Military Secretary at the "Horse Guards," but had had no practice in handling troops directly and was too old to change his ways. Though invariably courteous to his allies, it is said that at times he slipped back into the old days of the Peninsula and Waterloo and inadvertently referred to the enemy as "the French." He deserved a better fate than to be sent to wear himself out in the Crimea. The French commander-in-chief, St. Arnaud, was one of Louis Napoleon's ambiguous friends of the "coup d'état," with a rather shady past. The Turkish commander, Omar Pasha, said to have been really an Austrian renegade, was probably the most capable of the three.

The Landing in the Crimea

The preliminary period on the Bulgarian coast had caused a considerable loss of life from cholera and a general weakening of vitality from dysentery and other diseases, and when the allied forces were embarked on transports and set sail for the Crimea the strength was much reduced. Between September 14th and 18th they were landed without opposition on the open beach south of Eupatoria, on the eastern shore of the Crimea, and a considerable distance north of Sevastopol. This was in itself a good move, since from thence it should have been possible to cut off Prince Menshikov, the Russian commander in Sevastopol, from reinforcements from the interior. He had in Sevastopol only about 50,000 men, exclusive of sailors and marines from the fleet which had taken refuge in the harbour, while the British numbered 26,000, the French about 30,000, and the Turks about 4,000. Unwilling to be shut up in the fortress, Menshikov marched out with some 40,000 men, and took up a position on some heights on the Sevastopol side of the river Alma, about fifteen miles north of the fortress and with his left flank resting on the sea. There, on September 20th, the Allies attacked him.

The Battle of the Alma

This was the last full-dress deliberate battle fought by the British Army with all the old pageantry of war. The author of *Famous Modern Battles* describes it as follows: "Out on the extreme left there was the flash and glitter of Lord Lucan's brigades of British cavalry, red and blue and gold in profusion—hussars, lancers, dragoons and horse artillery. Then with a swarm of dark-green-uniformed riflemen thrown out in front, four red-coated infantry

divisions marched arrayed in two lines, each more than a mile and a half long, with a fifth division in column behind them as a reserve. The men were formed two deep, with field batteries in the intervals between the divisions. The Russians from the heights saw for the first time the famous ' thin red line.' On the left it was formed by the Duke of Cambridge's splendid division, the Brigade of Guards—three battalions of tall bearskin-capped Grenadiers, Coldstreams (sic) and Scots, with Colin Campbell's Highland Brigade on their left, an array of brilliant tartans and nodding plumes." The French and Turks were on the British right, filling up the space as far as the beach.

The actual battle was a curious affair. The French attack on the right was held up, and the British pushed on in a gallant but disjointed fashion. Once across the river, they advanced up the rugged slopes in as near parade-ground formation as possible—indeed, it was the only formation they knew—with the result that they had constantly to halt to re-establish their dressing. At length this became absolutely impossible in many places, and correctness was abandoned in the effort to get forward. Raglan himself, once the battle was joined, seems to have made little effort to direct its course. He rode forward with his staff, and at one time appears to have been quite isolated in a gap in the centre of the Russian line. Fortunately Menshikov was no general and his nerves gave way on finding himself opposed to a kind of fighting to which his troops could make no adequate reply. As in the Great War, the Russians were compelled to adopt very solid formations because they could not control their troops in any other way. This, in the Crimea, meant that the fire of a comparatively few men was opposed to that of every man in the British line wherever that line could be maintained. And, in addition, the British had the Minié rifle, which was far superior to the Russian musket. The result was that the Russians lost about 6,000 men from comparatively few units, the casualties of some amounting to half their strength. The Russians, the French having at last crowned the heights also, gave way in disorder, and fell back under the devastating fire of the British artillery, which had at last come up. The British lost about 2,000 men and the French rather less.

The first Victoria Cross was awarded for valour in this battle to Sjt. Luke O'Connor of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, who afterwards became Colonel of the Regiment.

Poorly as the battle of the Alma had been directed, it at least proved one thing. In any stand-up fight in the open the inferior tactics and weapons of the Russians and, above all, their marked reluctance to attack, even when locally much more numerous, would put the Allies in a position of definite superiority. But in order to

win another Alma the Allies must in the first place maintain their armies in the field and, in the second, compel the Russians to fight in the open at some distance from their fortresses. As we shall see, such a chance as the Alma was never again presented to them.

The Critical Decision

The Russians had been fairly beaten and were falling back in disorder on Sevastopol. Now if ever was the time to follow them up; attack Sevastopol from the north, where the defensive works were still unfinished, and cut off the city on the south side of the harbour from the rest of Russia. Raglan, it appears, was anxious to do so, but was dissuaded by his technical advisers and particularly by the opposition of St. Arnaud. The Allies had no base but the open beach and it was considered imperative to find some sort of a harbour without delay. If Sevastopol did not at once capitulate the naval harbour there could not be utilized. It was therefore decided to march round Sevastopol and occupy the small peninsula of the Khersonese to the south of it, where there were small coves which might shelter some of the shipping. Of these Balaclava was selected as the British base and port of disembarkation. It was 8 miles from the camp; there were no roads and all the stores had to be manhauled.

Meanwhile Menshikov, on September 22nd, had blown up the warships in the harbour of Sevastopol, so that the entrance was blocked, and withdrawn the majority of his troops into the interior of the Crimea. Actually, as the Allies moved round to the south side of the harbour on September 25th, they found themselves crossing the track behind Menshikov's army as it moved out, but both sides were so surprised that no fighting took place. The Allies took up their position in the Khersonese south of the city. Sevastopol was now unthreatened on the north and east and Menshikov soon regained touch with it. The combatants had, indeed, reversed their original directions, the Allies now facing north and the Russians south. From that moment the whole character of the campaign changed.

The Besiegers Themselves Besieged

Sevastopol was not at the outset particularly strong, but as a naval dockyard and arsenal there were guns and munitions which could be made available. There were the crews of the sunken warships, and, most important of all, a very able Russian engineer, Todleben—like so many Russian generals, of German origin—who not only improved the existing works but pushed others forward in the direction of the besiegers. The Allies from henceforward were striving to fulfil a double task; on the one hand to break down the

Russian resistance and on the other to protect their own right flank across the base of the small peninsula, where it faces the interior of the Crimea, against the attacks of the Russian field army. This did not so much affect the French on the left, who were wedged in between Sevastopol and the sea, but it bore with special heaviness on the British on the right, who had both to attack the fortress and hold off the Russian attacks. In addition, the British base at Balaclava was uncomfortably close to the inland area controlled by the Russians. In spite of this, the British guns did succeed by October 17th in crushing the fire of the Redan and the Malakoff on their own front, and the place might have been successfully assaulted but the French refused to co-operate and the chance was lost. The indefatigable Todleben continued to strengthen his defences and the chances of a speedy Allied success became less and less.

The Battle of Balaclava

On October 25th a Russian force under General Liprandi, which had pushed in close to Balaclava, delivered an attack on some redoubts near Balaclava, which were held by the Turks, and took them. Then occurred the stand of the Ninety-third Highlanders, (commanded by Colin Campbell) a single battalion drawn up two deep, which alone lay between some Russian cavalry and the defenceless harbour of Balaclava. After receiving a couple of volleys, the Russians drew away from the "thin red line," and Balaclava was saved. As the Russian cavalry fell back, General Scarlett at the head of the Heavy Brigade delivered a most gallant attack on a body of Russian cavalry several times his strength. Luckily the Russians, with that lack of aggressive spirit which they almost always displayed, halted to receive the charge, and the successive shocks of the British squadrons shook and finally routed the enemy. This charge though less well-known than the one which followed it, was most successful and might have been decisive had the Light Brigade which was close at hand joined in at the right moment. Its commander, Lord Cardigan, however, took no action.

Shortly afterwards, a mistaken order, aided it would seem by a good deal of personal ill-will between the officers concerned, led to the famous charge of the Light Brigade. This, unlike the charge of the Heavy Brigade, had no proper purpose or objective, and was merely a "death-ride" into the middle of the Russian guns, under fire from three sides all the way, and led to an eventual retirement among masses of Russian cavalry which involved fighting all the way back. Only the astonishing gallantry of all ranks redeemed an episode of which a French general who saw it said: "It is magnificent, but it is not war." The losses on this occasion amounted to over four hundred out of a total of less than seven

hundred. Scarlett's far more effective charge cost less than eighty. The net result of the whole battle, with all its gallantry, was that the Russians were now more firmly established on the British right flank than ever.

Inkerman, "The Soldiers' Battle"

The next Russian attempt to loosen the Allied grip on Sevastopol was even more serious. At the beginning of the campaign, as we have seen, the Allies were somewhat superior in numbers, but their losses had been considerable and few reinforcements, especially for the British, had arrived. Meanwhile more Russian troops had toiled across the steppes, and Menshikov now had, including the garrison of Sevastopol, which formed the right of his line and was really part of his army, a considerable superiority of force. On November 5th he delivered an attack in great strength on the vulnerable point on the British right where they faced the end of Sevastopol Harbour, part of the Russians issuing from Sevastopol itself and part crossing the Tchernaya River from the interior of the Crimea. The Russian advance took place in the early morning and was covered by darkness, fog and drizzle. On encountering the British piquets, the Russians opened fire with their artillery on the British camp, and Raglan found himself committed to an unexpected engagement with dense Russian columns far superior to his own scanty numbers and with no means of setting his men in array. The whole battle seems to have borne a close resemblance to Ludendorff's attack in March 1918, except that, fortunately, the Russians showed far less enterprise and power of infiltration. The result was that the British units were pushed piecemeal into the fight as they came up, and found themselves confronted with massive hostile columns looming out of the fog whom they desperately struggled to hold back. In these trying circumstances only British determination and Russian lack of initiative saved the day. However great the odds the British units never hesitated to attack, and once again found their linear formation and Minié rifles of the utmost advantage Throughout the morning the fight swayed to and fro. Owing to the fog no one could see exactly what was happening, but all alike, in small parties or large, with their own regiments or with others, followed the only sound rule under the circumstances and assailed the enemy wherever visible. At last, with some assistance from the French, the Russians were pressed back, and after midday sullenly retreated. In this hand-to-hand struggle the British casualties amounted to nearly 2,600 and the French considerably less, while the Russians are said to have lost about 20,000. Once again it was proved that their formations and methods of fighting were hopelessly inferior.

The Tragic Winter

Serious as these trials had been, they were nothing compared with what was to come. Owing to the failure to capture Sevastopol, the British had to face the winter on a bleak exposed upland, in one of the most trying climates in the world, and with at first hardly the barest necessities of existence. The authorities seem never to have realized the possibility of this, and even had they done so they had no organization in any way prepared to meet the crisis. From cold, rain, sickness and hunger the army perished as it stood. By the end of the winter, not counting thousands of dead, there were more men in hospital than nominally fit for duty. No attack on Sevastopol was possible, for the British portion of the Allied army was literally a wreck. A storm had destroyed the British shipping in Balaclava, the tracks from the port to the camp became almost impassable. There were no medical arrangements. The nearest hospital was 300 miles away at Scutari. The hospital ships were disgraceful. Thirty years of parsimony and neglect had exacted their price. Luckily winter and lack of supplies prevented the Russians from again attacking.

The Awakening of the National Conscience

News of the tragedy filtered through to England, since, for the first time, war correspondents had accompanied the force. They wrote of what they had witnessed and the nation was appalled at the tidings. Lord Palmerston succeeded Lord Aberdeen as Prime Minister, and desperate efforts were made to succour the survivors. Now, when the disaster had happened, money was freely poured forth. Huts, clothing, food and boots was sent, even material for a light railway to bring up stores from the base at Balaclava to the British lines. A party of female nurses were sent out under Miss Florence Nightingale to the charnel-house at Scutari, opposite Constantinople, miscalled a hospital, where nearly half the sick and wounded had perished from sheer inefficiency and neglect. From that moment no British soldier died unregarded by the nation for which he fought.

An Army without Reserves

With the passing of winter the Allied forces in the Crimea steadily increased in numbers and equipment. Heavy guns for the siege arrived, more French troops, more Turks and even an allied force of Sardinians, sent by the House of Savoy, whose Prime Minister, Cavour, was anxious to establish claims of gratitude on powers who might help to liberate Italy from the Austrians. In March 1855, died the Tsar Nicholas I, heartbroken from the consciousness that

even his boasted " Generals January and February " had failed to help him expel the invaders from Russian soil. But from the British point of view, there was serious cause for disquiet. The original force had been Britain's best, the long-service troops who garrisoned the Empire in peace. Their losses in that awful winter had been shocking, and there were few, save young recruits and these not too easily obtained, to take their place. The weaknesses of our peace-time system were disclosed, and from now onwards the French, continually increasing in numbers, became the predominant partner. They took over the right sector of the old British line, leaving the British sandwiched in the middle. Raglan was in an impossible position, for now the French were ready to attack and he was not. Yet, as a matter of pride, he would not admit it.

The Change of Command

In spite of the constant interference by cable—for the first time used in war—of Napoleon III, the French command improved. Canrobert, who had succeeded St. Arnaud, was now himself succeeded by Pélissier, a strong determined commander who pressed on the siege and paid little heed to wires from Paris. Raglan seconded him as far as his resources allowed, but an attack by the French on the Malakoff and the British on the Redan, fixed for June 18th, broke down with considerable loss. This was Raglan's death-blow. Sent with insufficient means and constantly badgered by civilian ministers at home, he had done all that was possible to uphold British prestige, and the long strain finally killed him. He was succeeded by General Simpson.

The Duel of the Siege Guns

Now came the contest of material. Though the British were unable to find old soldiers to replace those who had perished, the recent advance in science had given them far more powerful artillery. Heavy rifled Lancaster guns battered all day at the fortifications of Sevastopol and mortars all night. The Russians were in a terrible dilemma. To keep the narrow space of Sevastopol and south of the harbour fully manned involved enormous losses; to reduce the number exposed by keeping the north of the harbour meant the risk of a sudden assault with fewer men to meet it. So with grim determination fresh units were constantly marched in; swept away wholesale, and replaced by more who shared the same fate. The Russian losses in the whole campaign are estimated at anything up to 100,000 dead, most of whom perished from shot and shell in the shambles of Sevastopol.

The Malakoff and the Redan

On September 8th all was in readiness for the final assault. The French rushed the Malakoff and held it in the face of all counter-attacks, but the British failed to capture the Redan, though a few men got inside it. There seems little doubt that such an assault in the teeth of a tempest of fire was too severe a test for the young and poorly-trained recruits who now filled the British ranks. The Russians counter-attacked and the assault failed with a loss of nearly 2,500 men. We had to face the uncomfortable fact that the French had succeeded, though with heavier losses, where we had failed.

But the Russians had had enough. With the Malakoff in French hands, Sevastopol was untenable, and that night the army of the Tsar retreated across the harbour by their pontoon bridge. The year-long siege had ended in victory at last.

This was in fact the end of the war. No further serious fighting took place, and early in 1856 peace was concluded. Russia signed various agreements, all of which she subsequently broke, and the allied forces were withdrawn from the Crimea. If Moscow was not exactly avenged, Napoleon III had gained the military success for which he craved.

Britain's Prestige Lowered in Europe

The main result of the Crimean War was a great increase in French military prestige, intensified by victories over Austria in 1859. Russia had been humbled, for the war had shown that not all the legions of the Tsar could save Sevastopol or expel a very moderate invading force from the soil of Holy Russia. Britain's prestige had also suffered. Continental powers were convinced that with all the gallantry and discipline of individual units, we had no real military organization and no trained reserves to replace losses in our small striking-force. The Navy, unfortunately, was at that time not particularly efficient, and very short of men. It had been unable to bring the Russian fleet to battle, and its operations against Russian fortifications in the Baltic and the Black Sea had been necessarily indecisive. Nevertheless, from this time onward British naval and military efficiency steadily increased, for the lesson had to some extent been learnt, but the mischief was done. It is no exaggeration to state that the subsequent difficulties we encountered from European powers in our colonial expansion were largely due to their conviction that as a military power we were not to be feared. The prestige of Waterloo had been expended and till the Great War it was never really replaced. Such was the judgment of foreign military opinion, yet the fact remains that at the close of the campaign Britain had 80,000 men in the Crimea.

Some Army Reforms

Though some ten years were to pass before the question of Army organization was to be really attacked, the Crimean War led to some important immediate results. There was a movement towards greater co-ordination, and more unified control. The Artillery, Engineers and Ordnance which had been under a Civil Board, and Supplies and Commissariat which had been under the Treasury were transferred to the War Department (which was now called the War Office and housed in one building at Pall Mall). The shortage of clothing and replacements during the campaign had been an open scandal. An Army Clothing Factory was therefore established, and colonels of regiments were to be no longer responsible for this essential service. A Small Arms Factory was erected at Enfield. The present Staff College was built, as a development of the Senior Department of the R.M.C., which had previously been the home of staff training. Staff appointments were limited to a tenure of 3 years in order to ensure that officers would not lose contact with troops. Proper camps of instruction were founded at Aldershot, the Curragh and Colchester. (The troops returning from the Crimea were detrained at Farnborough and went into camp at Aldershot, which was to be henceforward the great military centre.) A School of Musketry was established at Hythe, and a School of Gunnery at Sheerness. The Army Medical Service was put on a more satisfactory footing and many military hospitals were built. A considerable sum of money was allotted to coast defences, especially at the naval bases of Portsmouth and Plymouth, a sign of some apprehension with regard to Home Defence. This was shown also a few years later (1862) when Parliament decided that henceforward the self-governing Colonies should be prepared to manage their own defence, and that the British garrisons there should be gradually withdrawn.

CHAPTER XVI

THE INDIAN MUTINY

INDIAN MUTINY, 1857–1858

ONE of the results of reports of heavy British losses in the Crimea was to assist in bringing to a crisis the dangerous situation then existing in India. The Company's army was mainly Indian, and of these 311,000 Indians (including local levies), two-thirds belonged to the Bengal Army in which Purbiahs[1] from Oudh formed a very powerful element. Their attitude had for years been unsatisfactory and several minor mutinies had taken place, but belief in the " good fortune " of the Company had prevented a general outbreak. Now that belief was waning. Discipline was lax ; regulations diminished the power of commanding-officers ; and the sepoys began to consider themselves the real masters. " The chief thing that bred the rebellion," subsequently stated an Indian officer, " was the knowledge of the power the sepoys had, and the little control the Sahibs were allowed to exert over them. They naturally from this fancied the Sirkar must be afraid of them ; whereas it only trusted them too well." There were of course other important contributory causes, such as discontent in certain areas over Lord Dalhousie's annexations, notably Jhansi, Satara, Oudh and the wide territories of the Bhonsla of Nagpur (now the Central Provinces), which lapsed to Government on the failure of direct heirs, but these would not in all probability have led to serious trouble had the sepoys been loyal. And in all India there were but 40,000 British troops. Further, there was Brahman antagonism to the march of modern invention, such as railways, telegraphs, etc., which they considered subversive to their influence.

In January 1857 a grievous mistake of the Home Government applied a spark to the tinder. The introduction of the Enfield rifle, an improved pattern of the Minié, necessitated the use of greased cartridges, and there is little doubt that the grease used at Woolwich Arsenal for the cartridges sent out to India, the ends of which had to be bitten off, was derived from " bovine-tallow." To British troops this would not matter, but to the Hindu the cow is sacred, and to bite cartridges so greased would certainly lead to the loss of a Hindu's caste, with all that that implied. Realizing the danger, the Indian Government directed that the men should use only grease of which

[1] i.e. " Easterners " (from the Punjab point of view).

they themselves approved, but in vain. An Indian embroidery on the original fact was that pig's fat had also been used, thus uniting Mohammedan with Hindu in a common opposition. Sepoys refused to handle even ungreased cartridges, and several cases of open defiance on parade occurred. These were dealt with, but not very decisively, and on Sunday, May 10th, 1857, the big outbreak at Meerut took place. It was timed for the hour of church parade when British troops would be unarmed. Officers were murdered, houses burnt, and prisoners released, and the revolted regiments hurried off to Delhi, where dwelt Bahadur Shah, the aged representative of the Mughal dynasty and—in title at any rate—the "Kaisar-i-Hind."

An Outworn Army

Even now the outbreak might have been confined within moderate limits had active and energetic men occupied the senior positions; but in the Bengal Army the objection of the Government to paying pensions until the recipients were practically on their death-beds rendered this impossible. Had, for instance, the Commander at Meerut taken resolute action the Mutiny might perhaps have been nipped in the bud. But the higher ranks were filled with officers who, twenty or thirty years previously, had been efficient enough, but who had only attained responsible positions when they were far too old for decisive measures. Now, under the strain of active service they rapidly collapsed and died. The Commander-in-Chief, General the Hon. George Anson, was in the hills at Simla with his whole staff, and so was cut off from the Governor-General, Lord Canning, at Calcutta, where British reinforcements must land and plans be made.

This, fortunately, was not the whole of the picture. There were many young and able officers in India like Lawrence, but these had largely sought advancement in political posts or in the newly-raised Frontier Force stationed in the Punjab and beyond the Indus. They could not therefore prevent the outbreak of the regular sepoys down-country, but it was they and the men they commanded and raised who largely saved the situation. On May 27th General Anson died of cholera and was succeeded by General Barnard, who himself died of cholera on July 5th.

The Heroic Handful

The outstanding fact of the Mutiny is that the bulk of the hard fighting was done by the very limited number of British troops and loyal Indians available at the outset. Troops were brought back from the Persian Gulf, where a small expedition under Sir James Outram had just been brought to a satisfactory conclusion[1], and others were intercepted on their way to China, where the second

[1] Battle honours for Reshire, Bushire, Kooshab and Persia were given.

Chinese War had began in 1856, but no considerable force was available for the best part of a year, by which time British reinforcements from home had arrived and fresh Indian units had been raised. Vast, therefore, as was the stage, the fighting was numerically against tremendous odds till right at the end, and during this critical initial period it is probable that only the fact that the rebels had no one capable, with the exception of a civilian and a woman, of any real leadership saved the situation.

Delhi, the ancient capital of India and recently refortified by British engineers, had fallen into the hands of the rebels on May 11th, when the mutineers from Meerut had arrived and been joined by the troops in the city. The Europeans who could not manage to escape were massacred. The arsenal, held by three subalterns, four warrant-officers and two sergeants only, was held against hordes of mutineers for three long hours and was finally blown up, inflicting heavy loss on the rebels. Five of the heroic defenders succeeded in escaping and were each awarded the Victoria Cross. Sir George MacMunn has recently brought to light the important fact that this "arsenal" only contained fifty barrels of gunpowder for practice ammunition. The main magazine in the cantonments was not blown up and fell into the mutineers' hands with 3,000 barrels of gunpowder. It was this enormous reserve which enabled Delhi to be held against the British and made it the mutineers' natural rallying-point.

The Holding of the Ridge

Delhi must at all costs be speedily recaptured and soon a small force from the Punjab, only 3,500 strong, appeared on the Ridge outside Delhi, having defeated rebel detachments on the way at Ghazi-ud-din Nagar and Badli-ki-Serai. Its commander was General Barnard, who soon found himself in the position of besieged rather than besieger. The mutineers continually issued from the city and attacked the position, and the constant tale of losses was barely made good by the reinforcements which John Lawrence, deliberately running great risks in his own province, steadily sent down from the Punjab. Throughout the summer the British barely held their ground.

In and around the recently-conquered Punjab were the fighting races who form the bulk of the Indian Army of to-day. The work of John and Henry Lawrence and their helpers had borne its fruit, and a martial population respected the British and despised the caste-ridden sepoys of Oudh. And—to be frank—there were the riches of Delhi, the wealth of the Chandni Chauk, the famous "Silver Street," to urge them on. Together with the British regulars they marched swiftly on Delhi, at their head the man whose name was an

inspiration, Brigadier-General John Nicholson. Soon there were nearly twelve thousand men before Delhi, of whom over a quarter were British. None the less the odds were tremendous. Delhi had acted as a magnet to the revolted sepoys from the surrounding stations; the city was full of them; they were well-provided with artillery and ammunition and had been joined by thousands of lawless individuals who saw their chance in anarchy and the breaking-up of laws.

The Decision to Assault

At this crucial moment the strongest wills came to the front. One after another, the elderly generals died, went sick, or were overborne. The real power was in the hands of younger men, Baird-Smith, Chamberlain, Daly of the "Guides," Alexander Taylor, the brilliant engineer, and above all, John Nicholson himself. The nominal commander, Brigadier-General Archdale Wilson, still hesitated as well he might, but he had Nicholson to deal with. Lord Roberts, then a subaltern in the Bengal Horse Artillery, was acting as Nicholson's staff-officer and knew his intention. "Delhi must be taken," he said, "and it is absolutely essential that this should be done at once, and if Wilson hesitates longer, I intend to propose at to-day's meeting that he should be superseded." Luckily Wilson gave way, and on September 7th orders were issued for the batteries to be laid out. Before long the breaches in the Kashmir and Water bastions were considered practicable.

"Nikkalseyn is Dead!"

The losses had been so heavy that only five thousand men could be found for the assault, after providing for the protection of the camp. They were divided into five small columns. The first, under Nicholson himself, was to assault the Kashmir bastion, the second the Water bastion, the third the Kashmir gate, the fourth the Kabul gate and the fifth remained in reserve. On the morning of September 14th the columns dashed forward to the assault. Nicholson, at the Kashmir bastion, was the first to climb the breach. The second column carried the Water bastion, and two gallant engineers, Lieutenants Home and Salkeld, blew in the Kashmir gate. Three columns were now inside the walls. Before them stretched a maze of narrow streets and lanes, desperately defended and filled with hostile snipers. Nicholson, in the narrow lane leading to the Burn bastion, sprang forward ahead of all urging on his men. A shot took him in the chest and he fell. Later, Lieutenant Roberts found an abandoned "doolie" by the roadside. In it was General Nicholson. "On my expressing a hope that he was not seriously wounded, he said: 'I am dying; there is no chance for me.' The sight of that

great man lying helpless and on the point of death was almost more than I could bear. Other men had daily died around me, friends and comrades had been killed beside me, but I never felt as I felt then—to lose Nicholson seemed to me at that moment to lose everything." Once again the old fire flashed forth. Hearing that Wilson contemplated withdrawing, the dying man exclaimed : " Thank God I have strength yet to shoot him, if necessary ! " There was no withdrawal, and for nine days Nicholson lingered on. " His every thought," says Roberts, " was given to his country, and to the last he materially aided the military authorities by his clear-sighted, sound and reliable advice." So—in the words of the writer of *On the Face of the Waters*—" John Nicholson stands symbol of the many lives lost uselessly in the vain attempt to go forward too fast. Yet his voice echoes still to the dark faces and the light alike—' Come on, men ! Come on ' ! "

The Capture of Delhi

The events of September 14th had placed the British in control of only a sector of the city-walls, and to avoid further heavy casualties in street-fighting such as had led to the loss of Nicholson, it was necessary on Taylor's suggestion to sap through from house to house. In this way ground was gradually gained and by September 20th Delhi was once more in the hands of the British. The mutineers and their allies fought stubbornly, but were always at a disadvantage from having no effective central command. The serious nature of the fighting is shown by the fact that in the Delhi campaign the British losses amounted to close on 4,000, of whom somewhat more than half were European, a very large percentage of the small force engaged. An episode which took place on September 21st led to much subsequent controversy. The emperor, Bahadar Shah, had taken refuge with two sons and a grandson at the Tomb of Humayun, the second Mughal emperor, outside the city. Hodson, the dashing leader of " Hodson's Horse," followed him there and obtained his surrender on a promise that his life should be spared. The promise was kept, but Hodson refused to make any pledge with regard to the princes who were accused of responsibility for the murder of European ladies. Having handed over the emperor, Hodson returned and seized the princes, but, being pressed on by a mob on the way back, he halted and shot the three captives with his own hand. Whether necessary or not, this act was the end of the Mughal dynasty. Bahadur Shah was sent as an exile to Rangoon where he subsequently died.

Before, however, the siege of Delhi had been brought to a successful conclusion, tragic events had been happening elsewhere.

The Tragedy of Cawnpore

Cawnpore, on the banks of the Ganges and some forty miles from Lucknow, was garrisoned by four sepoy regiments and a handful of British artillerymen. On the news of the outbreak at Meerut the divisional commander, Sir Hugh Wheeler, who had no illusions as to the loyalty of the sepoys, decided to construct a place of refuge in which the considerable European population, of whom about half were women and children, might take shelter. Not wishing, however, to precipitate an outbreak by withdrawing the sepoy guard from the magazine, which was strong and easily defensible and should at all costs have been occupied, he set about tracing out an entrenchment in the open to the south of the city. Apparently the idea was that if the sepoys did break out they would march away in the opposite direction, i.e., towards Delhi. When, on June 4th and 5th, the sepoys rose in revolt, the Europeans took refuge within this poor enclosure, the walls of which were only about four feet high. Here, from June 6th to June 26th, less than nine hundred Europeans, of whom only three hundred were soldiers, withstood the attacks of three thousand mutineers, who had indeed marched towards Delhi and then returned, backed by the heavy guns from the magazine. Night and day the narrow space was swept by a continuous fire, the water-supply was scanty, food was short, and soon the flimsy barracks were set on fire with red-hot shot. Yet in this ghastly situation the desperate garrison beat off attack after attack, and even sallied forth and spiked some of the guns which were battering their poor defences to pieces. At last the rebels would face them no more and sought by treachery to achieve what fighting could not do.

The Infamy of the Nānā

Living at Bithur near Cawnpore was Dhundù Pănt, commonly called the Nānā Sahib, the adopted son of Bājī Rao, the last Peishwa of Poona. Though generously treated by Government, he had always cherished a bitter hatred of the British on account of the annexation of the Peishwa's domains, to which he had no real claim at all. For years he had dissembled his real feelings but on the mutiny of the sepoys, he proclaimed himself as Peishwa, and put himself at their head. It was this man who, on June 25th, sent proposals to the garrison for a safe-conduct by water to Allahabad. Though now an enemy he had previously been on very friendly terms with the European inhabitants of Cawnpore, particularly with General Wheeler, and trusting to this, the offer of a safe conduct was accepted.

On June 27th the survivors of the garrison left their entrench-

ments for the boats waiting by the river-bank. As they began to embark, musketry, cannon-shot and grape were suddenly poured upon them, and a horrible massacre took place. One boatload only managed to push off into the stream. Relentlessly pursued, the boat was lost, and struggling over land or swimming for dear life in the water, only two officers and two men eventually won through to safety. On the river-bank or in Cawnpore all the men among the survivors were put to death by the orders of the pitiless Nānā, and about two hundred wretched women and children were dragged back to Cawnpore. There they were herded into a small building called the Bībīgarh. But already vengeance was on its way.

The March on Cawnpore

Farther down the Ganges at Allahabad, a small force was slowly collecting as reinforcements came up from Calcutta. There were men from three battalions of the Queen's troops, the Madras Fusiliers, the famous "Blue-Caps," under their relentless Colonel Neill, Brasyer's Sikhs and some improvised European cavalry. The command was entrusted to Brigadier-General Henry Havelock, an earnest Baptist and an accomplished soldier who had grown grey waiting for the chance of command which he had never had till now. On June 30th he reached Allahabad, too late to save the victims of Cawnpore. On July 7th he marched out at the head of his little army, less than 2,000 strong, but every man filled with a consuming fire for vengeance.

This was the grimmest episode of the Mutiny. Day after day the little force marched on over the vast level plain, dotted with villages burnt and abandoned in the anarchy which had set in, along roads where the corpses of suspected rebels—often indeed suspected with very little reason—dangled from the trees where the advanced-guard had hanged them. At Fatehpur on July 12th and at Aung on July 15th the rebels vainly attempted to stay their course. It was reported that the women and children in Cawnpore were still alive and the troops, though dropping in scores from cholera and heat-stroke, were not to be denied. On July 16th they were outside Cawnpore and there the rebels, led by the Nānā in person, made a stand. The British charged straight at the guns and drove the enemy in headlong rout. Next day Havelock marched in, but the tragedy had already been consummated. Two days previously the Nānā, fearful lest his victims should escape, had sent five butchers into the Bībīgarh armed with slaughtering-knives and these had deliberately hacked nearly two hundred women and children to death. Their remains were cast into a well close at hand. A member of the Indian Civil Service who accompanied Havelock's force wrote: "When we got to the coping of the well and looked

over we saw, at no great depth, a ghastly tangle of naked limbs. . . . There is no object in saying more." The well was filled up and later a garden was laid out round it with a monument, " Sacred to the perpetual memory of a great company of Christian people, chiefly women and children." The exact numbers were never known.

Sir Henry Lawrence

The recovery of Cawnpore, although too late to save the beleaguered garrison, opened the way to some extent for the next task, the relief of the Residency at Lucknow. The fact that Lucknow had not already shared the fate of Cawnpore was due to the foresight of Sir Henry Lawrence who, having made a great reputation in the Punjab, was now Chief Commissioner of Oudh. He was in an immensely difficult situation, since there were four mutinous sepoy regiments in Lucknow and others might be expected to join them from the surrounding stations. He had, however, one British battalion, the Thirty-Second Foot, and was able to add to them a few hundred loyal sepoys and pensioners, with whom he planned to hold an area about a mile in circumference in the centre of Lucknow, based on the hastily-fortified Residency and some adjacent buildings. On the news of the peril at Cawnpore, Lawrence sent off fifty men of the Thirty-Second who shared the fate of Wheeler's garrison, but he could do no more, and during the struggle at Cawnpore was mainly occupied in dealing with local outbreaks. Following the news of Wheeler's surrender, and the subsequent massacre, a rebel force collected near Lucknow, and Lawrence resolved to march out and disperse them. Unhappily the many years he had spent as an administrator had left him less conversant with military necessities and at the action at Chinhat on June 30th he was repulsed, and had to fall back on Lucknow with considerable loss. This was the signal for a general rising and Lawrence found himself besieged within the ring of improvised fortifications he had previously constructed. The area was soon under shell-fire, and on July 2nd a shell burst in the room in which Sir Henry was working and mortally wounded him. Thus died one of the noblest characters in the history of British India, a man whose life-work is best described in the epitaph he had himself chosen, " Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty."

The Defence of the Residency

On the death of Lawrence the command passed to Brigadier-General Inglis, a determined soldier who had resolved after the tragedy of Cawnpore never to surrender. His garrison numbered

some seventeen hundred, of whom slightly more than half were Europeans. There were in addition many women and children, now within a hair's breadth of sharing the fate of those at Cawnpore. In spite of sickness, scanty food, assaults, constant bombardment and the ever-present risk of exploding mines under their frail defences, all alike were filled with heroic constancy, and week after week still maintained their position. But their losses were very heavy and starvation was believed to be inevitable. Actually, as Sir George MacMunn has shown, Sir Henry Lawrence had provided, in underground storehouses, immense quantities of grain. But he had not informed the military staff and so Inglis, like Townshend at Kut-al-Amara, believing himself to be nearer starvation than he really was, urged an immediate rescue. Later, as these stores were gradually discovered, they proved ample for both the original garrison and Havelock's relieving force, and when these in turn were relieved by Sir Colin Campbell, huge stores of grain had to be destroyed or abandoned. But, as matters stood at the moment, the desperate appeals of the beleaguered garrison had their natural effect, and Havelock set out with little more than fifteen hundred men, determined to rescue the garrison of Lucknow or perish in the attempt.

The First Relief of Lucknow

On July 29th Havelock defeated the enemy at Unao and again at Bashiratganj, two victories in one day; but from cholera, heat-stroke and sheer exhaustion, his force was fought to a standstill, and he had to fall back on Cawnpore. On August 5th he again advanced, and again defeated the rebels at Bashiratganj, but was again forced to halt. On September 15th Major-General Outram arrived, but the "Bayard of India," although his senior, generously allowed Havelock to continue in command and accompanied him in his civil capacity as Chief Commissioner of Oudh. Reinforcements had now come up, and the total force now amounted to about 3,000.

On September 19th the advance began again. At the same moment arrived another letter from Inglis with the news that the garrison were starving. On the 21st Havelock repulsed the enemy at Mangalwar and on September 23rd Lucknow was in sight. But between the relieving-force and their goal stretched a fortified position with strong loop-holed buildings, the Alam Bagh, the Charbagh bridge, the Kaisar Bagh, and the Chattar Manzil. Between these the army forced its way and plunged into the city. Fired on from every side the troops pressed on. Soon the Residency was in sight, and with one last rush the relieving force was through and on September 25th the heroic garrison was saved.

The Second Siege of the Residency

The heavy losses of both besieged and their helpers had created a difficult situation. To save the garrison Outram and Havelock had been compelled to put in every available man, and their line of communications had gone. It was impossible to withdraw the women and children through the narrow streets under fire without a much stronger force, and all that had really been done was to reinforce the garrison. At this point, however, the supplies of grain, hitherto unsuspected, which Lawrence had laid in began to be discovered. Outram therefore determined to hold on and await relief. His force was strong enough to defy effective assault, and by adopting an aggressive policy he turned the siege more into the nature of a blockade. Sickness, however, was rife, and the losses from it very heavy.

The Second Relief of Lucknow

At this stage in the campaign the new Commander-in-Chief in India arrived, Sir Colin Campbell, almost the only senior officer who had left the Crimea with an enhanced reputation. While by no means a great general, since he was too cautious for Indian warfare and so inclined to miss opportunities, Sir Colin was as brave as a lion, always up with the vanguard and very energetic in his irascible fashion. He had few troops available, since reinforcements from England and the Cape were only just arriving, but the conclusion of the siege of Delhi made it possible to send down a column nearly three thousand strong which reached Cawnpore via Agra. With these and the reinforcements Campbell now had about five thousand men, but he was obliged to leave General Windham—known as "Redan" Windham from his share in the attack on it—with five hundred men to guard Cawnpore. There was a distinct risk in leaving Cawnpore, for the Gwalior Contingent—mistakenly left at a strength of over 20,000 after Mahārājpur and Paniār—had now revolted, and secured as a leader Tantia Topi, a civilian hanger-on of the Nānā Sahib but a skilful and active commander. This force was now moving via Kalpi to attack Cawnpore, and Outram, in one of his smuggled letters, unselfishly advised Sir Colin to deal with them first. The Commander-in-Chief was anxious to relieve Lucknow and decided otherwise. With the bulk of his force he moved on Lucknow, and occupied the Alam Bagh on November 12th and the Dilkusha on November 14th, thus following a route recommended by Outram through a European clerk named Kavanagh, who with great courage had passed through the enemy's lines disguised as an Indian[1]. On November 16th progress was stopped by a fortified building called the Sikandar Bagh, garrisoned by two thousand rebel

[1] Kavanagh received the V.C.

sepoys. A breach was battered in the wall and the place stormed with the bayonet. The defenders were caught in a trap and, with the exception of a handful who jumped from the wall, the whole garrison was exterminated. The troops had seen the well at Cawnpore and showed no mercy. The Shah Najif was taken in the same way, and the next day the Moti Mahal. Prominent in the capture of the latter was Captain Garnet Wolseley, who had distinguished himself both in Burma and the Crimea and who went into every action with the determination to make a name for himself at any risk. This was the last obstacle, and that day the relieving force joined hands with Outram and Havelock. Lucknow was at last relieved.

Campbell, however, decided that it would be undesirable to lock up a force within the Residency perimeter and so, having successfully evacuated the women and children to the Dilkusha, where they would be in temporary security, at midnight on November 22nd he withdrew his whole force thither, in readiness to assist Windham at Cawnpore were it necessary. Among the sick carried out was General Havelock worn out by dysentery. "I have for forty years so ruled my life," he said, "that when death came I might face it without fear." On the 24th he died and was buried outside the city with which his name will ever be linked.

The Advance of Tantia Topi

No news had meanwhile come from Windham at Cawnpore and Sir Colin was getting anxious. Leaving Outram with a portion of his force to watch Lucknow, he set out with the remainder for Cawnpore. As he approached the city successive messages came in with tales of disaster. The wily Tantia, as soon as Sir Colin's back was turned, had approached Cawnpore, and the impetuous Windham, disregarding the fact that his duty was to protect Cawnpore and the bridge of boats across the Ganges on which Campbell's communications depended, had on November 26th sallied out and attacked the enemy. In this engagement he was successful, but then fell back, and next day Tantia followed him up and attacked in much superior force and with a very powerful artillery. The fight went very badly and on the following day Windham was forced back within his entrenchments with a loss of three hundred men and a great quantity of transport, baggage and stores. Only the vital bridge of boats was still held, and there on the evening of November 28th Sir Colin Campbell arrived, riding far in advance of his army. A luckless officer at the bridge-head was so ill-advised as to say, "Thank God you have come, Sir. The troops are at their last gasp." At this Sir Colin's Highland spirit blazed out: "How dare

you say, Sir, of Her Majesty's troops that they are *ever* at their last gasp ! "

The Situation Restored

During the night the force from Lucknow came in, bringing with it the huge convoy of sick and wounded and the refugees from the Residency. Under protection of the British guns, which held off Tantia's artillery, the mass of transport was got across the bridge, taking from the afternoon of the 29th till the evening of the 30th to do so. The refugees were then sent on to Allahabad and safety, and at last, on December 6th, Campbell was free to deal with Tantia. He had at his disposal five thousand infantry, six hundred cavalry and thirty-five guns, the enemy numbering some twenty-five thousand with forty guns. In this third battle of Cawnpore the superiority of the British forces was decisively demonstrated. Part of the rebels' position was an open plain and there Campbell delivered his main attack. It was completely successful ; the enemy were routed, their camp rushed, and the flying rebels were hunted for a distance of fourteen miles. Only the failure of Campbell's chief-of-staff, General Mansfield, to arrange for the cutting off of the enemy's retreat as Sir Colin had planned, prevented the victory from being complete. As it was, the Commander-in-Chief had captured nineteen guns and inflicted very heavy loss on the enemy with less than one hundred British casualties. This was the decisive battle. From henceforward the British were no longer struggling for existence but merely putting down a rebellion. The villainous Nānā narrowly escaped at Bithur from the pursuit of a party led by Roberts and got across the Ganges into Oudh, where he twisted and turned, seeking to escape the vengeance which was striving to overtake him.

The Final Occupation of Lucknow

By the beginning of 1858 Sir Colin Campbell was for the first time at the head of an adequate force. Including 9,000 Gurkhas sent by Jang Bahadur, the ruler of Nepal, he had over 30,000 men and a very powerful artillery, including some 64-pounders landed from H.M.S. *Shannon*. With this force he determined to rejoin Outram, who was still holding on to the Alam Bagh, and finish with Lucknow once and for all. This, during the month of March he successfully accomplished, battering down one fortified building after another but failing to cut off or round-up the rebels in any considerable numbers. The result was that the revolted sepoys were simply driven out into the surrounding country and the final suppression of the rebellion considerably delayed. The same thing happened in May, when Sir Colin recaptured Bareilly, the

centre of the revolt in Rohilkhand. The enemy were defeated but got away, thereby necessitating the employment under most exhausting conditions of many small columns for their final suppression.

The Rani of Jhansi

Nānā Sahib was not the only Mahratta who cherished a grudge against the Government. Left a widow in 1854, the Rani of Jhansi had been refused by Lord Dalhousie the succession for her adopted son as Hindu custom permitted. From henceforward a bitter enemy of the British, she took advantage of the mutiny of two sepoy regiments at Jhansi—even if she did not actually instigate it—to wreak her revenge. On June 7th, 1857, the survivors of the Europeans, who had taken refuge in the Fort, found this position to be hopeless, and were tempted by the Rani's promises to lay down their arms on a promise of safe conduct. Once outside the Fort, every man, woman and child, to the number of sixty-six, was promptly massacred. Sharing the guilt of the Nānā Sahib and Tantia Topi, the Rani from now on co-operated with them and showed more courage and determination than any other of the rebel leaders. With both Tantia and the Rani to deal with, the suppression of the rebellion in Central India would have been a difficult matter but for the personality of the general entrusted with the task.

Sir Hugh Rose

Major-General Sir Hugh Rose, though he had never previously served in India, displayed from the outset the very qualities of speed and activity in which Sir Colin Campbell was deficient. His force was but small, some six thousand men, of whom slightly less than half were Europeans, but he used it in a masterly fashion. It is noteworthy that his Indian troops were drawn from the Bombay Army, which with very few exceptions had remained loyal, and that he was co-operating with a column of the Madras Army, of which only one regiment had given any cause for suspicion at all. The Mutiny was almost solely the affair of the Bengal Army, and the help given by the other two Presidency Armies and the Punjab Irregular Force (" Irregular " only in the sense that it was not subject to the normal organization) was of very great aid in putting it down.

On December 16th, 1857, Sir Hugh Rose arrived at Indore, and by the beginning of February he had captured the fort of Rahatgarh ; entered Saugor in triumph, and was preparing to march on Jhansi. It was in this campaign that khaki clothing was first used on a considerable scale for active service outside the Punjab, though the " Guides " and the rest of the Punjab Irregular Force had been

familiar for some years with its advantages under Indian conditions.

On March 21st Sir Hugh Rose arrived before the Fort of Jhansi, which, like so many Indian strongholds, was built on a rock and rendered as impregnable as art could make it. Nevertheless at the end of ten days the defences were being gradually battered down when suddenly an unexpected peril assailed the British.

A Double Victory

Though Tantia Topi had been defeated by Sir Colin Campbell outside Cawnpore the previous December, he had succeeded in extricating the bulk of his force. Now, at the head of 20,000 men, he was advancing to the rescue of his ally, the Rani of Jhansi, who with eleven or twelve thousand men was being besieged by Sir Hugh Rose with half that number. It was impossible for Sir Hugh Rose to raise the siege without being attacked in the rear, but somehow Tantia must be dealt with. With extraordinary resolution Sir Hugh left two-thirds of his small force to carry on the siege and with less than two thousand men sallied forth on April 1st to the R. Betwa to attack Tantia. In spite of the odds of over ten to one, the British cavalry charges on the wings and an infantry attack in the centre decided the day in brilliant fashion. Tantia was decisively routed with the loss of twenty-eight guns and almost as many killed as the total strength of Rose's attacking force. The garrison of Jhansi had remained inactive at this crisis, deceived as to the British strength, and now, on April 3rd, after only one day's rest for the British, their turn was to come. Three columns stormed and escaladed the walls of Jhansi Fort in the early morning, and for two days a desperate struggle went on. No mercy was shown, for the massacre at Jhansi had been as atrocious in its way as that at Cawnpore. As the British fought their way nearer and nearer the resolution of the murderous Rani gave way, and on March 4th she fled to join her confederate Tantia at Kalpi. By March 6th the last survivors of the rebel garrison driven out of the Fort had been surrounded and bayoneted to a man, on " Retribution Hill," just outside Jhansi.

The Counterstroke of Tantia and the Rani

As soon as possible Sir Hugh Rose advanced on Kalpi. The heat was terrible and the casualties from it very heavy. Sir Hugh Rose, himself, is said to have had sunstroke five times and yet he steadily kept on. He was now in touch with a detachment from Sir Colin Campbell's army on the other side of the River Jumna. On May 22nd he defeated Tantia and the Rani at Golaoli outside Kalpi and the following day he entered Kalpi itself. The campaign now

seemed over, and indeed both commander and troops were practically worn out.

The position of Tantia and the Rani appeared desperate, but they had still one last card to play. Away to the west was the great fortress of Gwalior, still held by the Maharaja Sindia in loyalty to the British. It was the mutiny of Sindia's Gwalior Contingent which had given Tantia an army in the first place, and Sindia had other troops who might be won over in the same way. The plot succeeded, and when, on June 1st, Sindia marched out to attack the remains of Tantia's army outside Gwalior, it was only to see his whole force go over to the rebels. He fled to Agra, and Tantia Topi, who, to do him justice, seems always to have been loyal to his villainous master, proclaimed the Nānā Sahib as Peishwa in the fort of Gwalior.

The Last Battles and the Final Reckoning

On the news of this reverse, Sir Hugh Rose, collecting men as he could, marched on Gwalior. On June 16th he defeated the enemy at Morar outside Gwalior, and the next day Brigadier-General Smith won the action of Kotah-ki-Serai close to the city. In this fight the Rani of Jhansi met her end, disguised as a rebel cavalryman. A trooper of the Eighth Hussars cut her down, thus avenging the death of the women and children at Jhansi just a year previously. On June 20th Gwalior surrendered; Sindia was reinstated, and Tantia Topi set out on his amazing flight up and down Central India and Rajputana with the British for ever at his heels. For months the pursuit went on, and then at last, on April 7th, 1859, Tantia was captured. On the 15th he was tried and condemned, and on the 18th he was hanged. The fate of his master, the Nānā Sahib, is uncertain to this day. By some it is said that he perished of hardship some time in 1860 in the jungles of the Terai at the foot of the Himalayas, and by others that he died in hiding many years later. Order in India was not fully restored till the end of 1859, for many small columns had continually to sweep the country, breaking up rebel bands and hunting down mutineers. By this time the British troops in India numbered 96,000 besides a large force of Indians. At last the work was done and British authority re-established throughout the length and breadth of India. But it was on a different foundation. The British troops in India were now fixed at double their previous strength; all artillery, except a few mountain batteries, was British, and the Purbiahs of Oudh had been swept almost completely out of the Indian Army. Every regular cavalry regiment of the Bengal Army had vanished and all but thirteen regular battalions out of seventy-four. Their places were taken by new units formed out of the Indian soldiers of other races who had fought by our side in the long contest.

The End of "John Company"

Even before the Mutiny was fully suppressed an "Act for the Better Government of India" passed both Houses of Parliament and received the royal assent. In accordance with it, the transfer of the government of India to the Crown, acting through the Secretary of State and the Council of India, was proclaimed on November 1st, 1858. The royal declaration was couched (considering all that had passed) in singularly noble language, the forgiving phrases of which sank deep into the Indian mind and are frequently quoted to this day. It is doubtful whether the art of government has ever been more finely expressed than in the words: "In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our great reward." From that date, the European regiments in the service of the East India Company were transferred to the British Army. The infantry regiments concerned came into the British Army List as the 101st to the 104th and the 109th of the Line and became known as the Royal Dublin Fusiliers, the Royal Munster Fusiliers and the Leinster Regiment. The 18th, 19th and 20th Hussars and the 21st Lancers were also transferred. So came to an end the distinction between "Queen's" and "Company's."

CHAPTER XVII

THE CARDWELL REFORMS AND OTHER CHANGES

At this point it is desirable to depart from a strict chronological sequence in order to describe certain far-reaching changes which were made in the organization and administration of the Army. The Crimean War with its muddles and scandals had shocked the British public and led to some reforms, but there were still many matters demanding urgent attention. It was not until 1868 that these were vigorously tackled.

Mr. Edward Cardwell, Secretary of State for War in the Gladstone Administration from 1868 to 1874, though " to all appearances one of the coldest and least warlike of men," brought to his office an original and analytical mind with great courage and tenacity of purpose. The latter he fully required, for the reforms associated with his name had in many cases to be carried through in the face of determined opposition from various powerful military and vested interests.

In the first place, the higher system of control of the Army required urgent attention. There was a serious lack of co-ordination between the many departments ; the Commander-in-Chief was housed at Horse Guards while the War Departments were in Buckingham House, Pall Mall ; correspondence was consequently multiplied even on the most trivial matters and the Secretary of State had little real supervision over the military activities of the head of the Army. There was, in fact, to use a modern expression, a dyarchy with all its attendant frictions and inefficiency.

This was removed by Cardwell's War Office Act of 1870 which laid down that the direct and immediate control of every branch of Army administration was vested in the Secretary of State, who would be assisted by one Parliamentary and one Permanent Under Secretary. Thus was terminated the age-long conflict as to who should exercise the King's Prerogative of government and command over the Army. The administration was henceforward to fall under three heads—(1) Military ; (2) Supply ; (3) Financial ; and the Commander-in-Chief should be the head of the Military branch, which included the Militia and Volunteers for the first time (previously these had been under the Home Office). Shortly afterwards, in spite of great opposition from the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander-in-Chief's office was moved to the War Office.

The second reform which had for long past been urgently needed

was the abolition of the purchase system. By this system, which was a survival from the Free Companies of the Middle Ages (in which each officer, in accordance with his rank, received a proportionate share of booty or ransom), an officer's commission and his subsequent promotion to the different ranks had a definite pecuniary value.

Thus, a Royal Warrant in 1720 fixed the regulation price of a first commission at £450, and each subsequent step had to be paid for in an ascending scale, unless there were a death vacancy, in which case promotion by seniority was the rule. To take a few figures at random, by 1856, £2,400 was frequently paid for promotion to Captaincy and £7,000 for promotion to a Lieutenant-Colonelcy. Old and war-scarred but impoverished veterans were passed over by youngsters with money who could afford to pay the necessary premium. The system blocked the way to advancement by merit, but was much valued, as was said, by " mothers with stupid soldier sons." It lent itself to a scandalous traffic in commissions and promotions, such as that carried on by the notorious Mary Ann Clarke, who combined great personal attractions with considerable business acumen. To get rid of it, however, meant a positive revolution and the smashing of a great structure of vested interests as well as a comprehensive and expensive measure of compensation for all the officers serving at the time.

Cardwell was not deterred by the difficulties and opposition and a Royal Warrant was issued in 1871 abolishing the whole premiums system. It cost the country £7 millions in compensation—a small sum, after all, to redeem the Army out of pawn from its officers.

Another important result of Cardwell's tenure of office was the reorganization of the Army on a short service basis of 6 years with the colours and 6 with the reserve. With the old long service system there could be no effective reserves, the lack of which the Crimea and the Mutiny had painfully demonstrated. The Prussian short service system had achieved great successes and awakened thought in England on this matter. On the other hand, it was argued that, if men were discharged early so as to form a reserve the serving soldiers would be largely immature boys. Actually, in practice, this difficulty has been overcome by demanding a high standard of physical fitness in recruits and by giving them the benefit of good food and plenty of exercise. But in the " seventies " and " eighties " the need for this was not fully realized, and there is no doubt that some campaigns of that period were handicapped by the change from the old long service soldier.

And now we come to the reform which has always been most closely connected with Cardwell's name. For many years a great

part of the Army had been stationed abroad, perhaps wisely so in order to keep it out of sight of a British people always anxious to cut down the expenditure on armaments. Thus, in 1868, out of 141 Line battalions only 47 were at home. Overseas service was therefore not evenly balanced by periods at home, and, moreover, there was no adequate striking force or Army for Home Defence in Great Britain. To a great extent this had been unavoidable in the past. Distances were great and means of communication slow, and forces could not be moved quickly to the areas where they were required. But from 1862 onwards, these difficulties were disappearing; the Dominions were now responsible for their own local defence; railways, the electric telegraph and cable and the application of steam for navigation were bringing the widely separated parts of the Empire more closely together and making rapid reinforcement easier; the Suez Canal completed in 1869 would halve the time for sending troops to India. And lastly wars on the continent and particularly the battle of Sadowa had recently shocked British public opinion into a serious apprehension with regard to the backward state of the Home Defences.

The essential feature of Cardwell's plan to remedy the situation was the maintenance of a balance between the number of battalions at home and the number abroad. His plan for this purpose linked together all the regular regiments of the line in pairs; except the 1st to 25th of the line which already had two battalions, allotting two pairs to a Brigade district. At the headquarters of the Brigade district was the Depot, which provided recruits for the linked regiments, two of which would normally be stationed at home and the other two abroad. The recruits for the regiments abroad would pass through the corresponding home regiments which would therefore perform the important task of feeding the foreign regiments. The linked regiments would also have a definite and common territorial connection through their common Depot and recruiting area. Two militia battalions were also allotted to each of these Brigade districts and arrangements were made for providing training for the Volunteers within the district. This reorganization not merely provided a balance between service at home and abroad; it also helped mobilization, as reservists could join up through the Brigade Depot in their own district.

It is needless to say that these reforms were at first extremely unpopular. Units which had no common regimental interests or traditions were linked together much against their will, and another ten years passed before the storm of protest had sufficiently subsided for the logical result to follow. In 1881, when Mr. Childers was Secretary of State for War, the linked regiments became battalions of the same regiment, being the 1st and 2nd battalions respectively.

In spite of the forcible nature of the marriage both parties soon settled down and lived happily together thereafter. The Militia Battalion became the 3rd Battalion and the Volunteers within the District assumed a Territorial Title. Brigade Districts at the same time were reduced to Regimental Districts, an arrangement which gave Regiments a more intimate Territorial connection and helped recruiting and mobilization. Regiments took their present-day Territorial Titles and ceased to be called by numbers.

From the foregoing it is obvious that the Cardwell system was based on two foundations, first on a balance between the number of infantry at home and in overseas garrisons and second on an assumption that the equipment, weapons and training of the half at home would be kept similar in all essentials to that of the half abroad. This assumption was undeniably justifiable at the time, and remained so for many years. Should, however, conditions of warfare in Europe and in our Colonial Empire become widely different, then some modifications of the Cardwell system would be obviously inevitable.

Other Changes

It is convenient to mention here some of the other changes which took place during the last quarter of the 19th century. Conditions of the soldier's life were greatly improved. More barracks were built; pay, food and means of recreation were reformed; canteens were introduced, and as a result of these humanizing influences, self respect grew and drunkenness declined. The Queen's interest in the soldier's welfare, and Kipling's poems and stories which displayed him as a human, humorous and sometimes heroic being, removed the stigma of unpopularity. "Gone to be a soldier" was no longer synonymous with "Gone to the bad."

The scarlet uniform was still retained until the South African War, but was now a more sensible loose-fitting Norfolk jacket; sun helmets were issued for the Egyptian campaign in 1882.

As regards arms, the Enfield rifle superseded the Minié in 1856; in 1866 the Snider—the first breech loader—was issued; in 1871 this was succeeded by a hammerless rifle, the Martini-Henry; and in 1889 the Lee Metford, .303, the first magazine rifle, came into use. It had a range of 1900 yards and was very accurate. Smokeless powder came in at the same time.

The first rifled field gun had been used in the China War of 1860. In 1886 the first breech loader came to stay; in 1891 the first quick firing gun. The first machine gun, the Gatling, had been used in the 2nd Afghan War.

Colours were not carried in battle after Isandlhwana in 1880.

CHAPTER XVIII

SMALL WARS, 1859–1899

The Second Chinese War

The outbreak of the Mutiny had necessarily held up the settlement of a dispute with China which had been going on since 1856. The real difficulty was the old arrogant Chinese attitude which still refused to have any official dealings with the "Outer Barbarians," even though they had signed a treaty in 1858 agreeing to receive British and French Ministers at Peking. When these Ministers attempted to disembark at Taku in June 1859 their landing was resisted, whereupon Admiral Hope attacked the Taku Forts with seamen and marines. The landing-party, hopelessly stuck in the mud, was beaten off with a loss of nearly half its strength. A bright spot in this rather ill-judged affair was the action of the American Commodore, Tatnall, who though officially a neutral, allowed his men to assist the British, observing, "I guess blood is thicker than water." The result was an expedition from India under Sir Hope Grant which, in conjunction with a French force, arrived outside Peking in September 1860. So far there had been no serious fighting and the diplomatists were busy settling matters, as they imagined, with the Chinese on September 18th when the latter suddenly turned on them and seized them and their escort as prisoners. The Allies at once advanced on the city, whereon the envoys and the survivors of their party were surrendered. They had been subjected to atrocious tortures from which half of them had perished. As a punishment for this iniquity the Summer Palace outside Peking was destroyed, a penalty which affected the Emperor himself and not only his subjects who paid the increased war-indemnity. The port of Tientsin was also opened to British trade. This second Chinese War was much more effective than the first in establishing the European right to trade in China, since the Allies had now penetrated to the centre of imperial authority and compelled redress for their injuries instead of merely attacking Canton and the region of the Yang-tse-Kiang.

The Ambeyla Expedition, 1863

In 1863 took place what may be called the first frontier expedition of the modern type. The scene of action was the hill-country to the

north of the plain of Peshawar, the territory of the Bunerwals, Swatis and Bajauris, who to this day still retain their independence. These, and particularly the Bunerwals, had been stirred up by Mohammedan fanatics from India who had settled among them, and an attempt to clear out the settlements of these "Hindustani" fanatics at Malka and Sittana set the whole of that part of the frontier in a blaze. Luckily the commander, Sir Neville Chamberlain, was an able leader, and his men, both British and Indian, held on for three months to the positions they had seized in a manner which showed a great advance in knowledge of mountain warfare. Nevertheless, the situation was critical at times, some of the fortified piquets being captured and recaptured more than once, and the losses were not far short of a thousand. Though on a small scale it was a stiff test, and the new Indian units raised during the Mutiny came through it with flying colours.

The Abyssinian Expedition, 1867

In 1867 trouble arose with Theodore, the half-insane ruler of Abyssinia or, as its inhabitants call it, Ethiopia. Isolated on a great mountainous plateau, the highest part of Africa, the Ethiopians, professing a primitive form of Christianity themselves but ringed round by Mohammedans and pagans, have always fiercely maintained their independence. Theodore, however, had committed so many atrocities on his own subjects that when, in the autumn of 1867, an Anglo-Indian force from Bombay landed on the shores of the Red Sea to rescue the Europeans he had cast into chains at his capital of Magdala, no one would fight for him. The task, however, of moving nearly 12,000 British and Indian troops 380 miles over practically unknown and extremely difficult country was no light one, and the way in which it was carried out reflected the utmost credit on the commander, Sir Robert Napier. On his arrival at Annesley Bay in January 1868, he brought order out of chaos, organized mules, camels and elephants from India into an efficient transport; and by April had reached Magdala. The Europeans were released; Theodore committed suicide, and the expedition returned to the coast, taking with it Theodore's crown, which, at his coronation, was restored to Hailie Selassie, the present "King of the Kings of Ethiopia."

The Abyssinian Expedition is noteworthy for the fact that it was the first campaign in which British troops were armed with a breech-loading rifle. This was the Snider, really the old Enfield rifle converted into a breech-loader. A better weapon was soon found in the Martini-Henry, a breech-loader of simple design and great hitting-power, but not lacking in vigour of recoil.

Small Wars and Great Results

The establishment of the Cardwell Reforms in 1870–72 made possible a great Imperial expansion. The old "long-service" Army, admirable as it was in many respects, had one great defect. It possessed, and could possess, no reserves. This meant that the units which comprised it were almost entirely absorbed by the needs of India, the Colonies and the intermediate garrisons. There were very few troops at home, and how difficult it was to add to their effective strength in an emergency the Crimean campaign had disclosed.

But with the gradual establishment of an Army Reserve and the withdrawal of the greater part of the Colonial garrisons, the situation was changed. There were now more troops at home, and as the Reserve system slowly developed, it was possible to increase their strength in any emergency by calling up these reserves as required. It was now feasible to send expeditions overseas without seeing them waste away into ineffectiveness. As a result of this in the era of "small wars," which followed, though comparatively small forces were engaged, the boundaries of the Empire were steadily expanded and the map of the world coloured red in many regions hitherto beyond our sway.

Cardwell's military assistant in building up the new British Army had been Garnet Joseph Wolseley, a young staff officer who had served with distinction in the Crimea. His two main principles were never to miss an opportunity of making friends and never to miss any campaign by which he could obtain experience. For this he was called by his enemies, "An unprincipled military adventurer," and by his champions, "our only general." Neither was really correct and the former might have been spared a man who got on at the outset of his career by sheer gallantry at the cost of several serious wounds. But get on he did, and few men have made a bigger mark on both the Army and the Empire. A firm believer in selection, he surrounded himself with a "ring" of brilliant young officers, whose names appear in campaign after campaign. With a few great exceptions, every leading British general at the close of the century was a member of the "ring." By 1895 he was himself Commander-in-Chief, but opposition, wounds and service had worn him out, and what as a younger man he might have done to prepare for the South African War, he was unable fully to accomplish. This, however, was many years ahead, and he was now to distinguish himself by crushing one of the most atrocious systems of mass-slaughter which have ever disfigured the universe.

2nd Ashanti War, 1873

For many years the British trading-settlements on the Gold Coast had been in constant peril from the virile and ferocious race of the

Ashantis inland. Not content with the usual tribal wars and massacres, they specialized in human sacrifice, which was literally a daily ceremony. In 1824 they had defeated and killed Sir Charles Macarthy, the Commissioner of the Gold Coast, and carried off his skull as a drinking-bowl to their capital, Kumasi. Though defeated in 1826 in a bloody little engagement, their power was not broken, and now in 1873 they were again threatening Cape Coast Castle. Wolseley, with the local rank of Major-General, was sent out in the autumn of 1873 to stem the tide. He took with him his band of selected officers and was allowed a British brigade. With these and a force of native levies, he advanced into the interior; overcame great difficulties of supply and transport in the bush warfare which ensued; defeated the Ashantis at Amoaful and Ordahsu, and entered Kumasi on February 4th, 1874. In his own words, "the whole locality stank with the human blood with which it may be said the ground was saturated." The grisly place was cleaned up; an indemnity exacted; Ashanti interference with friendly tribes and trade put a stop to, and the practice of human sacrifice checked. With great skill Wolseley had managed to confine the campaign to the brief period in the winter when the climate was not too impossible for Europeans on active service, and the whole business was concluded with a minimum of casualties and expense. The public became aware that in Wolseley, in spite—or because of—his taste for untidy-looking but practical uniforms of his own devising, they had a general who was a master in deceiving the enemy and in applying intelligence to his ends.

The Conflict of Policies on the North-West Frontier

In 1878 there came to a head a problem which is still unsettled. Since the First Afghan War, Russia had been steadily swallowing up territories intervening between herself and Afghanistan, and was now practically at the Amir's door. A Russian Mission had again been received at Kabul, and the Afghans, who not unnaturally bore us a grudge for the events of 1838–41, were busy playing off the Russians against the Government of British India. To this the Russians, though unable to do very much owing to the length and badness of their communications, were by no means averse, since they also owed us a grudge for the check to their ambitions in the Balkans administered by Disraeli at the Treaty of Berlin. On that occasion seven thousand Indian troops had been ordered to Malta, and from the Russian point of view it was desirable to administer a hint that the withdrawal of troops from India was by no means safe.

It does not appear that the Amir Sher Ali was ever enthusiastically pro-Russian. He was a weaker man than his father, Dost Mohamed,

his subjects were truculent, and he must obtain aid from somewhere. Gladstone had refused him the definite protection he had asked for in 1873, and Russia had taken advantage of this. Now the British authorities had to decide whether they would acquiesce in the situation or whether they would insist on the reception of a British Envoy to counter-balance the Russian representative. In making the decision two factors were of importance. In 1876 it had been decided to proclaim Queen Victoria " Kaisar-i-Hind," and the old Mughal Emperors had always claimed authority over Afghanistan. It was, indeed, originally the source of their power, though it had slipped from their grasp during their period of decay. The second point was that in the same year Quetta had been occupied, so that with the control of the Bolan and Khojak Pass, the door to southern Afghanistan lay open in case of need.

Under these circumstances, Lord Beaconsfield and the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, decided to insist on the reception of an envoy. The Mission was stopped by the Afghans at the fort of Ali Masjid in the Khaibar Pass on September 21st, 1878, and further passage refused. After some further correspondence, minatory on the part of the Indian Government and querulous on the part of the Amir, it was decided to use force. It is noteworthy that Wolseley was opposed to this, arguing that in the event of war with Russia we should be fighting on ground unfavourable to us and should in addition have the Afghans as our enemies.

2ND AFGHAN WAR, 1878–1880

The military champion of the " forward " policy was Major-General Frederick Sleigh Roberts, a keen and decisive soldier who had distinguished himself as a young officer in the Mutiny and in Abyssinia. Both as the friend and confidant of Nicholson and as the son of Sir Abraham Roberts, who had commanded Shah Shuja's contingent in the First Afghan War, he believed that to stop at the foot of the hills was weakness. He was now placed in command of the Kurram Field Force which, though weaker than the Peshawar Valley Field Force under Sir Samuel Browne (of " Sam Browne belt " fame) and the Kandahar Field Force under Major-General Donald Stewart, was in point of distance closest to Kabul. The general plan was that Browne should attack by the Khaibar Pass, Stewart by the Khojak, and Roberts by the Kurram into Afghanistan. Accordingly, while Sir Samuel Browne was capturing Ali Masjid and advancing slowly through the Khaibar Pass to Jalalabad, Roberts attacked the Paiwar Kotal at the head of the Kurram Valley on December 2nd, routed the Afghans who were superior in numbers from their carefully-prepared position by a masterly turning movement, and on December 8th reached the crest of the Shutargardan

(Camel's Neck') Pass. From thence to Kabul there was no serious obstacle, and the luckless Sher Ali's nerve gave way. A letter was received with the information that " this suppliant before God, with the unanimous consent and advice of all the nobles, grandees, and of the army in Afghanistan, having abandoned his troops, his realm and all the possessions of his crown, has departed with expedition, accompanied by a few attendants, to St. Petersburg. . . ." Actually he died in Afghan Turkestan in February 1879, and was succeeded by his son Yakub Khan.

The Treaty and the Tragedy

At Gandamak Yakub Khan agreed to everything, the occupation of the passes, the control of Afghan foreign affairs, and even for a British Envoy to be sent to Kabul. On July 24th, 1879, Major Sir Louis Cavagnari arrived at the capital, accompanied by a secretary, a doctor, and one officer and seventy-five men of the Corps of Guides as an escort. The Residency was established in a building only two hundred and fifty yards from the Amir's palace. It soon became evident that Yakub Khan possessed no real authority. Afghan troops poured in from Herat in a state of mutiny, and the miserable Amir was quite unable to control them. As an Indian naib-tchsildar once remarked, of similar forces, to the writer : " Sir, they are not of such a nature as to obey me." The situation grew more and more dangerous, and at last, early in the morning of September 3rd, an attack was launched in overwhelming force. An Indian officer of the Guides Cavalry, who was on furlough outside Kabul, escaped to tell the story of the tragedy. " I suppose there were some two thousand followers of the Amir who had come into the Bala Hissar early that morning who were all round the Amir's house. They were all armed. I hear that the Amir several times said, ' Some of you go to the Envoy's assistance.' But whenever any did go towards where the fighting was going on, they only shouted out ' Kill ! Kill ! ' At about 9 a.m., when the fighting was going on, I myself saw the four European officers of the Embassy charge out at the head of some twenty-five of the garrison. They drove away a party that were holding some broken ground. When charged, the Afghan soldiers ran like sheep before a wolf. About a quarter of an hour after this, another sally was made by a party with three officers at their head (Cavagnari was not with them this time) with the same result. A third sally was made with two British officers (Jenkins and Hamilton) leading. A fourth sally was made with a Sikh Jemadar leading. No more sallies were made after this. . . ." Late in the evening the last of the small garrison were overwhelmed, every man of the Guides fighting to the last. As was later said : " the annals of no army and no regiment

can show a brighter record of devoted bravery than has been achieved by this small band of Guides." As a distinction two words are borne on the appointments of the Guides : " Residency, Kabul."

The tragedy may have been avoidable, but retribution for it was unavoidable.

The Battle of Chaharasia

Roberts (now Sir Frederick) was instructed to resume command of the force in the Kurram, now enlarged and termed " The Kabul Field Force." Though not more than 6,600 strong, it was composed of excellent troops, the British element being armed with the Martini-Henry rifle which had already demonstrated its stopping-power on the Afghan " ghazi." There were also a couple of very inefficient Gatling guns which just managed to fire sufficiently to justify the claim that this was the first occasion on which machine-guns were used in action by British troops. After passing the Shutargardan Pass on September 24th, Roberts was met by the Amir Yakub Khan, ostensibly seeking refuge from his own mutinous troops. Though clearly treacherous, his arrival was advantageous in a way, since it enabled Roberts to issue some rather steely proclamations pointing out the probable fate of rebels against their lawful monarch. Roberts in Afghanistan in 1879 was by no means the kind-hearted old gentleman of the South African War. He later expressed the opinion that he was at this time in a far more dangerous position than during his famous march to Kandahar. On October 6th the British force, now reduced by garrisons on the line of communications to about four thousand men and eighteen guns, came into contact with a much larger force of Afghans at Chaharasia, about six miles south of Kabul. Very unwisely, where Roberts was concerned, they stood to be attacked in a strong position, from which as usual he skilfully dislodged them by a flanking movement, followed up by a cavalry pursuit. Among those who particularly distinguished themselves on that day were Major White, of the 92nd Highlanders (afterwards the defender of Ladysmith) who gained the V.C., and Colour Sergeant Hector MacDonald (granted a commission and known subsequently to fame as " Fighting Mac " and a British general). The victory won, Roberts had the satisfaction of sending " the joyful intelligence " to his " friend " the Amir, whom he knew had been circulating messages to the tune of : " By the favour of God and in accordance with the text ' Verily God has destroyed the powerful ones ' the whole of them will go to the fire of Hell for evermore. Therefore kill them to the extent of your ability." The Amir took the tidings with Asiatic calmness. By September 10th, the British had occupied Kabul. On October 12th, Yakub Khan came to Sir Frederick

Roberts, saying that he would rather be a grass-cutter in the English camp than ruler of Afghanistan. His abdication was accepted by the Indian Government and he retired to India, General Roberts taking over the administration of the district round Kabul.

The situation was now dangerously similar to that of the First Afghan War. A British-Indian force about eight thousand strong was in occupation of the capital, maintaining precarious communications with Peshawar via the Khaibar Pass. Winter was coming on, and the country round swarming with fanatical Afghans. But the force was far better organized and armed than that of forty years before and its commander infinitely superior to the decrepit Elphinstone. A series of small actions were fought outside Kabul with a fair measure of success; but the Afghans were steadily closing in, and their total strength was now estimated at some 60,000 men. On December 14th an action was fought outside Kabul in which a British detachment was pushed back with the loss of two guns, and Roberts, remembering Elphinstone's errors, decided to concentrate his force inside the walled quadrilateral of the Sherpur Cantonments which Sher Ali had partially fortified. This was successfully accomplished, and when the Afghans launched a massed attack at dawn on December 23rd over the snow-clad fields they were mown down in heaps and the cavalry sallying out completed the rout. The trap had again been sprung, but this time it was a failure. The city of Kabul was re-occupied and by the beginning of 1880 the situation seemed fairly satisfactory.

At home, however, the " forward policy " of Lord Lytton and Sir Frederick Roberts was being severely criticized, and the Beaconsfield administration was on its last legs. It was therefore decided to look for an Afghan ruler who could at any rate take over the northern part of the country, and a likely candidate was found in Abdur Rahman Khan, a grandson of Dost Mohamed. He had been hunted about Afghanistan by Sher Ali and after astonishing adventures had finally taken refuge in Russian Turkestan. He had now re-entered the country and negotiations were opened with him, but he was far too shrewd to place himself in the position of Shah Shuja as the puppet of the British. It was not until July 22nd that matters were finally fixed up and he was recognized as Amir by the Indian Government. Arrangements were now made to withdraw the British force, and Roberts was at Jalalabad for that purpose when " an instinctive presentiment of coming trouble " made him ride back towards Kabul.

Tidings of Disaster

The division of some seven thousand men under Sir Donald Stewart had entered Kandahar in January 1879. They had fought

and won a battle at Ahmed Khel (1880) had stormed and taken it and Ghazni, and leaving a force of some four thousand men under General Primrose to hold Kandahar, had marched on to Kabul. This seemed adequate enough, but in July it was reported that Ayub Khan, a brother of Yakub Khan and governor of Herat, had left that city and was moving on Kandahar with a force which swelled rapidly as he advanced. Not realizing how dangerous the menace had become, General Primrose detached a force of some 2,500 men under Brigadier-General Burrows with orders to advance to Girishk, on the banks of the Helmand River and on the road to Herat, to deal with Ayub. Burrows was to co-operate with a supposedly friendly force of Afghans under the governor of Kandahar. He arrived at Girishk on July 11th, but on July 14th the Afghans deserted *en masse* to join Ayub, and though Burrows pursued them and captured their guns, the main body got away. Burrows' position was now serious and he fell back half-way to Kandahar. On July 26th it was reported that Ayub Khan was at Maiwand, eleven miles from the British position, and was making for Ghazni. Once at Ghazni he would be on the road between Kandahar and Kabul, and so on July 27th Burrows marched at dawn to intercept him. He had with him two Indian cavalry regiments, a battery of horse artillery, two Indian battalions and one British battalion, the 66th Foot.

"The Last Eleven at Maiwand"

At 10 a.m. masses of the enemy were seen in front, and Burrows realized that he was opposed by a force at least ten times his own numbers. He decided to attack; crossed a ravine, and advanced into an open plain. This, under the circumstances, was a fatal move, for the Afghans soon disclosed a numerous and well-served artillery, including six Armstrong guns, which were more powerful than anything with the British. These guns could not be silenced, and steadily battered away at the British line, while large flanking forces continued to push forward. Some of the British guns now ran short of ammunition, and as our artillery fire slackened the Indian infantry began to get unsteady. Suddenly they gave way; and the Indian cavalry, on being ordered to charge in a desperate attempt to restore the situation, wheeled about and retired. There was nothing for it now but a retreat, and the force fell back with the "ghazis" swarming all round them and the 66th alone preserving cohesion and discipline. The ravine was recrossed, and twice the main body of the 66th made a stand to cover the retreat. At last, about a hundred men, all that were left, stood at bay in an enclosure surrounded by the whole Afghan army. When all but eleven were killed, these made a desperate charge and perished fighting bravely to the last man. As the inscription at the base of the "Maiwand

Lion" at Reading proudly states: "History does not record a finer example of courage and devotion to duty than that displayed by the Royal Berkshire Regiment."

Heroic though this stand of the British battalion was, it cannot disguise the fact, baldly stated by Roberts, that "our troops were completely routed and had to thank the apathy of the Afghans [and, incidentally, the stand of the 66th] in not following them up for escaping total annihilation." So ended the only stand-up fight in Asia in which a British force was decisively beaten.

The March to Kandahar

The survivors of Maiwand, about half the total strength, struggled on through the night to Kandahar. Including the remnants of Burrows' force and some reinforcements from Quetta there were now in the city some 4,500 troops, mainly Indian; but there is no doubt that the morale of the force had been badly shaken by Maiwand, and General Burrows made no serious attempt to sally out against Ayub Khan. A desultory siege was met by a mainly passive defence, while appeals were sent for assistance. The attitude of the garrison was, in fact, by no means impressive, and Roberts later referred to it with contempt. Still, it was necessary to relieve them, and the nearest available force was unfortunately not in a position to move. The troops in Baluchistan were few in number; they lacked transport, and the Indian element was drawn from the Bombay Presidency whose troops had failed at Maiwand. It was not considered desirable to pit them against Ayub Khan's men.

Under these circumstances Roberts proposed a daring plan. Abdur Rahman had now arrived in Kabul and assumed the throne, and it was therefore suggested that, while one division marched down to India through the Khaibar, the other, composed of veterans and under Roberts, should march simultaneously via Ghazni to Kandahar and extricate Burrows. This would mean nearly a month's march, during which no communication with the outside world would be possible since no intervening garrisons would be left. The proposal was approved, and on August 8th, Roberts set out with 10,000 troops, 8,000 followers and no base or communications. On August 31st the force arrived at Kandahar, a distance of 318 miles. No fighting took place *en route*, but the march was admirably organized since Sir Frederick Roberts was able to rely on the recollections of his father, Sir Abraham Roberts, who had passed the same way forty years previously. On reaching Kandahar, the siege of which Ayub Khan had hurriedly abandoned, communication with India was restored, and the next day Roberts moved out to attack the enemy, who had taken up a strong position on a ridge close to the city. The battle of September 1st was completely

decisive. The Kabul force turned the enemy's right, capturing their camp and all their guns. Ayub fled to Herat and the war was over. The force at Kandahar was withdrawn via the Bolan Pass, and by April 1881 Afghanistan was completely evacuated. Roberts, in this campaign, established himself as a commander universally trusted for his skill and admired for his character. " 'E's little but 'e's wise ; 'e's a terror for 'is size ; and 'e does not advertise "—the last a hit at Wolseley who was accused of so doing. For this campaign he was made Lord Roberts of Kandahar.

The Afghan Problem Still Unsolved

The Second Afghan War, apart from the death of Cavagnari and the disaster at Maiwand, cannot be considered a failure. From the military point of view it was a success, since British forces—and very small forces from a modern point of view—marched freely from Peshawar to Kabul, from Quetta to Kandahar, and along the Kabul-Ghazni-Kandahar route without, in the end, meeting with any resistance. Territorially it improved our position, since a better grip on the Khaibar was a warning to the inhabitants of Kabul as the permanent occupation of Quetta was to those of Kandahar. The eventual taking over of the Kurram valley gave us another route to Kabul as well. Politically it was an advantage, since it resulted in the replacement of Sher Ali and his family by the vigorous Abdur Rahman. The latter dealt faithfully with Ayub Khan, and by somewhat barbaric methods, such as the construction of iron cages on pillars in which brigands were publicly starved to death, terrified his recalcitrant subjects into submission. He later visited India and maintained as close a friendship with the Indian Viceroys as his situation rendered advisable. He died eventually a natural death (remarkable for an Afghan ruler) in 1901, universally respected if not universally regretted. Afghanistan still remains, however, a military problem ; the only country in the world which British armies have twice invaded, twice largely occupied, and twice evacuated.

Egypt

Britain had intervened in Egypt in 1801 to expel the French. The task successfully accomplished, we had not troubled particularly that the dynasty of Mohamed Ali, established in 1806, was much under French influence. The situation was altered, however, when the Suez Canal was opened in 1869. This great product of French capital and engineering skill was rendered possible by the personal friendship existing between its originator, Ferdinand De Lesseps, and the Pashas Said and Ismail, who supplied the forced labour of their subjects for the purpose. In return for this, Ismail received a

block of 176,602 shares and by 1875, having piled up liabilities, mainly by personal extravagance, amounting to £77,700,000, these shares were about his only negotiable assets.

The British Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli, was the son of a converted Jew. He had travelled in the Near East, which had always a powerful attraction for him, and on hearing that Ismail was thinking of selling these shares his vivid insight agreed as to the way in which Britain might establish a hold on the new route to India. Parliament was not sitting, and swift and secret action was essential. He borrowed nearly £4,000,000 from the firm of Rothschild, bought the shares and confronted Parliament with the accomplished fact. De Lesseps, always an opponent of England, had to face the position that the British Government now owned a large holding, though not, of course, a controlling influence, in the French Company. This purchase, financially most lucrative, was a definite check to French supremacy, and added to the fact that Ismail was indebted to British as well as French creditors, put the British Government in a position to rival France in Egypt. Either rivalry or co-operation was by now inevitable.

Egyptian Campaign, 1882

By 1878 Ismail's debts amounted to £90,000,000; the country was being horribly misgoverned, and the following year France and Britain demanded his deposition as "Khedive" (= Viceroy) from the Sultan of Turkey. This was acceded to and Ismail's place was taken by his son Tawfik Pasha.

Tawfik, a dull but well-meaning ruler, soon found himself in difficulties. The dynasty of Mohamed Ali was itself Albanian in origin, and almost all the leading officials and officers had been and were non-Egyptians. The native population was beginning to chafe against this foreign, though Mohammedan, domination, and found its champion in an Egyptian colonel, Arabi. Before long Tawfik was compelled to accept Arabi as Minister of War and the virtual ruler of the country. Arabi's administration was violently nationalist, and nationalism in Egypt is synonymous with hatred of foreigners. French and British warships arrived off Alexandria, but were unable to prevent a massacre of Europeans there on June 11th, in which about one hundred and fifty lost their lives. This was the critical moment. To maintain her position in the country, France must co-operate in suppressing Arabi, but it would seem that the risk of another war with Germany decided the French against locking up an expeditionary force in Egypt. The French warships steamed away, and it was a British squadron alone which bombarded the forts at Alexandria and British sailors and marines who landed and occupied the city.

Matters could obviously not be left at that while the Khedive was virtually deposed, and Gladstone, now Prime Minister, reluctantly sanctioned a military expedition. Wolseley, who had administered Cyprus on its occupation in 1878 and had subsequently been Commander-in-Chief and High Commissioner in Natal and the Transvaal, was appointed to command and in August arrived with two divisions off Alexandria. The force included many men of the Army Reserve, now for the first time to be tested on active service. Arabi, who could dispose of some 60,000 men in all, was watching Alexandria from a position inland, but Wolseley had no intention of advancing on Cairo by the obvious route. Spies abounded, and to counter them Wolseley deliberately kept in the dark his own generals, in whose discretion he seems to have had slight confidence. Carefully informing the correspondents that he meant to land at Aboukir, he sailed past it under cover of darkness on August 19th and next morning the transports were entering the Canal. De Lesseps, exploding with indignation at British perfidy in making use of his canal, was hustled out of the way, and the landing at Ismailia, where the fresh water canal from the Nile at Cairo reaches the Suez Canal, promptly began.

Arabi, realizing that he had been deceived, hastened to take up a position at Tel-el-Kebir, between Ismailia and Cairo, where with some 25,000 men he proceeded to entrench himself as strongly as possible. Towards this position Wolseley cautiously advanced, his cavalry driving back an Egyptian detachment at Kassassin on August 28th. By September 12th Wolseley's force of some 13,500 infantry and cavalry (including some Indian troops, now for the second time on Egyptian soil) and 60 guns was closed up and within striking distance of the Egyptian entrenchments.

Wolseley now displayed that originality of mind which would probably have stamped him as one of our greatest commanders had he encountered more serious opponents. Arabi's position had been carefully selected so as to give a perfect field of fire, with flanks well protected by guns and strong redoubts. Even against Egyptian troops a daylight attack on such a position would be very costly. Reasoning that where there was no cover there could be no obstacles, Wolseley decided on the unprecedented expedient of a large-scale, long-distance night attack across the open. It succeeded to perfection. A naval officer steered the centre of the line by the stars as the force set out after midnight on September 13th, and at daybreak the Egyptian position was surprised and rushed at a cost of little more than four hundred casualties. Arabi's army was completely routed and made no attempt at a further stand. By the evening of September 14th the British cavalry was in Cairo, 64 miles away, 10,000 Egyptian soldiers there surrendering without striking a blow.

This surrender was due to the rapid cavalry advance which took advantage of the loss of morale of the enemy and pushed on before they had time to recover. The Khedive Tawfik returned in triumph to his capital, and Arabi Pasha, who, but for the restraining influence of the British, would certainly not have escaped with his life, was deported as an exile to Ceylon. Wolseley was granted a peerage and 10,000 British troops were left to garrison Egypt, while Gladstone's administration wondered how to get them out again.

France had by her own action abdicated her position in Egypt, and Britain was now in control. To no one was this state of affairs more unwelcome than to Gladstone, always the opponent of imperialist expansion. He had agreed to Wolseley's expedition because he had no option, but he refused to call it a war; it merely "partook of the nature of military operations." He now desired to get out again, but found there was no reverse gear. Egypt had to be rescued from the plight in which Ismail had left it, and this involved the employment of British officials and officers. Sir Evelyn Baring advised the Khedive and kept a careful eye on Egyptian finances, while Sir Evelyn Wood reorganized the Egyptian army. He was aided by a band of picked officers with extra local rank, among them Horatio Herbert Kitchener, who had learnt Arabic while surveying in Palestine and Cyprus and who, to put it bluntly, was in Egypt through disregarding the attempts of his seniors to keep him out of it. The process of reorganization had perforce begun, and strive as Gladstone might, it was impossible to put a term to it without jeopardizing everything.

But Egypt proper was only part of the problem. "Egypt is the gift of the Nile," and, apart from a few rainstorms in winter, every drop of water used in Egypt comes from Abyssinia and Central Africa. In seizing the head of the Nile, Britain had forgotten the immensely long tail comprising the Nile Valley. And the upper end of the tail, represented by the Sudan, was in a troublous state. Mohamed Ali had sent an expedition there in 1820, and under his successors an atrociously bad form of government had been established. The Egyptian rulers had treated the Sudan as one gigantic slave-raiding area and for years the scandal of their doings had affronted the civilized world. Now Nemesis had overtaken them. Their own country was in foreign occupation, and their apology for an administration south of the cataracts was collapsing under its own feebleness and the furious hostility of the inhabitants.

The Sudan War, 1881–1885

Under such circumstances only a leader was required and this was found in the person of one Mohamed Ahmed, one of the "holy men" who periodically arise in Islam. He proclaimed a "Holy War"

against the " Turks " (i.e., the Egyptians, whose pashas then, as now, were usually of Turkish origin) in 1881, and in that year and the next thrice defeated the troops of the government. By January 1883 he had become a formidable menace. Too late it was realized that in assuming responsibility for Egypt Britain had also in fact assumed some responsibility for Egyptian possessions with all that that implied.

The first step taken was of the half-hearted type doomed in advance to failure. Hicks Pasha, an ex-officer of the Indian Army, was sent to the Sudan with a handful of European officers and some eight or nine thousand of the Egyptian troops who had been defeated at Tel-el-Kebir. They marched from Khartoum, the capital, on El Obeid, recently captured by the Mahdi. The desert closed behind them and the Mahdi's hordes hemmed them in. Not a man got away, and the very nature of the disaster remained unknown till a few survivors were found in the Mahdist ranks when the Sudan was reconquered fifteen years later. This wholesale slaughter took place in November 1883, and from that date the Egyptian government and its British advisers thought only of how to withdraw the remaining garrisons and non-Sudanese population.

" Chinese " Gordon

To extricate the garrisons without sending British troops was a task for a superman, and the name of Major-General Charles George Gordon at once occurred. He and Wolseley had served together as young officers in the Crimea, and since then he had established a great reputation for leadership, though seldom in command of British troops. He had suppressed the Tai-ping rebellion for the Chinese Government at the head of his " Ever-Victorious Army," and had been appointed Governor of the Equatorial Province of the Sudan for the Egyptian Government in 1874. Then, after a short stay in England, he had been appointed Governor-General of the Sudan in 1877, and for two years had given it the nearest approach to just and orderly government it had ever known. In spite, however, of his fine character, he was still in the eyes of the Sudanese a " Turkish " pasha, and among the notables he had made enemies owing to his past efforts to suppress slavery. None the less, there was no one whose prestige in the Sudan could compare with his, and if it were humanly possible to evacuate the garrisons Gordon was obviously the man to do it. On that understanding he was sent out in January 1884.

Unfortunately the situation had become too serious for any single man to deal with. The Suakin Province on the shores of the Red Sea rose in revolt under a slave-dealer named Osman Digna. A force of four thousand Egyptian troops under Baker Pasha set

out from Suakin, and on February 4th was overwhelmingly defeated by half its strength of half-armed "Dervishes" (as the Mahdist Arabs were now beginning to be known) at El Teb. The miserable Egyptians made no serious resistance and knelt down begging for the mercy they did not get. Ninety-six officers and 2,250 men perished, and only the proximity of Suakin saved the remainder from the fate of Hicks's army. A British force of one cavalry and two infantry brigades was then sent out under General Graham, whose British "squares" defeated the Dervishes at El Teb in March, and at Tamai in April. Our losses amounted to over two hundred men on each occasion, and it became clear that the Sudanese were, considering the weapons of those days, very formidable opponents.

Meanwhile Gordon, unable to induce the demoralized Egyptian troops to take the field, had been blockaded in Khartoum by the forces of the Mahdi. Now were disclosed the consequences of sending a man of Gordon's character on a not very inspiring mission. Throughout his career Gordon had regulated his acts solely by the light of his own conscience (supplemented, it is alleged, by a chance selection of texts from the Bible). There was not then—or indeed at any time till Khartoum actually fell—any question of saving Gordon's own life. He had river steamers and command of the river, and could have come away at any time he liked. This, however, was precisely what he would not do. The steamers would hold but a handful and he would not leave the troops and population of Khartoum to the tender mercies of the Mahdi. Reluctantly the British Government woke up to the fact that their emissary, sent to evacuate, was determined to force them to send an expedition to save the garrison of Khartoum under penalty of being accused of leaving him to his fate if they took no action.

Throughout the summer of 1884 Gordon's skill and resource alone maintained the defence of Khartoum in the face of every difficulty, not the least of which was the worthless nature of his Egyptian troops. Meanwhile the Opposition stormed at his "betrayal" and Gladstone's Government endeavoured to make up its mind as to what to do.

The Gordon Relief Expedition

At last public opinion grew too strong to be resisted, and at the end of August it was decided to send out Wolseley with a relief expedition. The route eventually selected was up the valley of the Nile, by rail as far as Luxor and from thence the stores were to be transported by water. This had an advantage over the route overland from Suakin in that it is easier to sail up the Nile (the expedition had no steamers owing to the cataracts) than down it, owing to the prevailing northerly wind. But there were the six cataracts of

the Nile to be surmounted between Aswan and Khartoum and this involved special boats and Canadian " voyageurs" to handle them. This all meant time, and brilliant as Wolseley was as an organizer he could not make up for the months lost in discussion. It was not until December 1884 that the Third Cataract was passed by a picked British force.

The situation in Khartoum was now growing critical. In September, Gordon had sent off his three European officers in one of his " penny-steamers," but they had been trapped into landing on the way down and been massacred by a treacherous Sheikh. Gordon was now absolutely alone but for his Egyptian officers and men, who were already giving up the struggle as hopeless. Occasionally scraps of messages were smuggled through and it was clear from these that Khartoum must soon fall. With three more cataracts still to be surmounted the main expedition with the boats could scarcely arrive in time.

" The Desert Column "

There was just one chance. From Korti it might be possible to push overland across the great bend in the Nile and link up with Gordon's steamers at Matemma. With even a few British soldiers actually in Khartoum the place might be held until the main body could arrive. The risk would be great, since the number of troops who could be sent overland was limited by the number of camels available. Wolseley decided to take the risk, and on December 30th sent off Sir Herbert Stewart from Korti with a picked force of 1,100 men. On January 3rd they reached Gakdul Wells and on January 16th approached the wells of Abu Klea. Here on January 17th they were attacked by a Dervish force estimated at some 10,000 men and a desperate struggle ensued. The Gardner gun jammed at a critical moment and the Martini-Henry rifles, effective as they were, had no magazines. The Dervishes got to close quarters, the square was penetrated and the enemy only driven out with considerable loss for such a small force. On the 18th the Camel Corps moved forward again, and by the evening of the 19th had reached the Nile, after another fight in which Sir Herbert Stewart was mortally wounded. In the stream four of Gordon's steamers were waiting, and it is believed that had Sir Charles Wilson, Stewart's successor in command, embarked a party at once Khartoum might have been saved. But for various reasons he delayed and it was not till January 24th that he set out with two steamers. On January 28th they came abreast of Khartoum only to see that the Egyptian flag was no longer flying over the palace where Gordon had watched and waited so long. The fortifications had been rushed on the night of January 25th, and a little before daybreak on the 26th, singly con-

fronting his enemies, Gordon had been hacked to pieces on the steps of the palace. By the narrowest of margins the relief had failed.

The Years of Waiting

The death of Gordon decided the Liberal Government against all further intervention in the Sudan[1]. The troops were withdrawn right back to the Egyptian frontier, a brigade being stationed at Aswan with outposts at Wadi Halfa and Korosko. The last Egyptian garrison at Kassala was overwhelmed and the vast territory of the Sudan was abandoned to unmitigated barbarism. Mohamed Ahmed himself did not long outlive his victory. He died in June 1885 and his place was taken by his principal lieutenant, the "Khalifa" (= Successor) Adbulla, a ferocious Baggara Arab. Under this man's barbaric rule the population of the Sudan shrank to a fraction even of that which had survived Egyptian misgovernment.

Meanwhile in Egypt Sir Evelyn Baring (later Lord Cromer) was steadily nursing a ruined country into financial convalescence and even prosperity. The system of justice was purified, irrigation schemes initiated, forced labour (the "corvée") abolished, taxation reduced, and the finances gradually straightened out. The last was the most difficult task of all, but the soil of Egypt is naturally so immensely fertile that the country only needed decent government for both wealth and population to increase. Modern Egypt is the work of Cromer and his assistants, and few tasks have conferred such benefits on such a mass of humanity. The work was not easy, for theoretically Cromer was on the same footing as any other foreign representative, but the presence of the British garrison enabled him to insist that his "advice" should be carried out, and carried out it was.

Gradually, as the finances improved, it was possible to spend a little money on Sir Evelyn Wood's new Egyptian army. It was very small at first, only eight battalions of infantry, and cheaply run; but the men were well-handled by their British officers and honestly paid, and under this new and surprising treatment their military value steadily increased. Steps were also taken to raise battalions from such Sudanese as were available, and these, having more military spirit than Egyptians, made very useful units. The new army took no part in the attempt to rescue Gordon—a purely British affair—as it was still under training, but when Sir Evelyn handed over the post of "Sirdar" (= C.-in-C.) to Sir Francis Grenfell in March 1885, the beginnings of a real army had been made. At Ginnis, on the frontier, in December 1885, in conjunction with a British force, the Egyptians attacked the Dervishes and acquitted

[1] A force under Graham (which included Indian and Australian Troops) continued to operate against Osman Digna from Suakin until May, when it was withdrawn. It won a battle at Tofrek.

themselves well. Ginnis, incidentally, was the last engagement in which British soldiers went into action in red coats.

The Turning of the Tide

Among the first British officers to join the Egyptian Army was, as we have seen, Kitchener. During the Gordon Expedition, Major Kitchener was employed in the Intelligence Department, and in Gordon's Journals, which he managed to send through, there occurred some rather unjust remarks on Kitchener's activities. He was next engaged as a colonel in operations near Suakin against Osman Digna. He became Governor of Suakin in 1886 and in January 1888 with some " friendlies " attacked the Dervish camp, but finally had to retire where he himself was wounded. He had, however, established himself as one of the most promising officers in the Egyptian Army.

In 1889 occurred an event which showed that civilization and barbarism cannot well exist side by side. A Dervish force, under Wad-an-Nagumi, started an aggressive movement across the Egyptian frontier and was defeated at Argin near Wadi Halfa on July 1st. Nothing daunted, the Dervish leader marched round Wadi Halfa and made for Aswan, but was routed and his force destroyed by British and Egyptian troops under General Grenfell at Toski in August. Though the invasion was checked it was sufficient to show what the fate of Egypt would probably have been but for the British occupation.

In January 1892 Tawfik Pasha died, and was succeeded as Khedive by his son, Abbas Hilmi, a troublesome young man who constantly showed his dislike of British control but who stood no chance against Cromer. In April Kitchener succeeded Grenfell as Sirdar of the Egyptian Army, and began the steady course of preparation which was to lead him to Khartoum and beyond. In March 1895 Slatin Pasha, an Austrian and formerly Governor of Darfur, escaped from the Khalifa's clutches, and was able to provide Kitchener with exact details of all that was going on in the Dervish Empire. In the same year a Conservative Government came into office and in March 1896 an expedition into the northern part of the Sudan was sanctioned. On June 1st, 1896, the advance from Wadi Halfa began.

The Organizer of Victory

The clockwork precision with which Kitchener conducted the long advance to its triumphant conclusion should not conceal the difficulties under which he had to work. Foremost among these was pessimism at home. The history of the Sudan to that time had been one of overwhelming disaster to Egyptians and of narrowly-won and

inconclusive successes for British troops. There was no willingness to repeat the story of Abu Klea, and apart from one British battalion in garrison at Wadi Halfa, the whole of Kitchener's force at the outset consisted of Egyptians and Sudanese under their British officers. If he could win successes with these, then British troops might be forthcoming to carry forward the advance, but the new Egyptian Army must first prove its worth. It was for this reason that Kitchener's strategy was cautious at the outset, since small successes would give confidence both at home and to the Egyptian Army. In this he was greatly aided by the mistaken policy of the Khalifa in sending comparatively small forces forward to resist the advance, while reserving his main body for a decisive struggle outside his capital.

The second problem was one of transport. Kitchener resolved that the struggle with the cataracts, which had cheated the Gordon Relief Expedition of success, should not be repeated. He therefore methodically consolidated each successive advance by bringing forward the railway from the base at Wadi Halfa, and till each stage was secure as regards transport and supplies, he made no step towards the next. He avoided the spectacular in favour of grim efficiency.

The first small success was at Firket on June 7th, won entirely by the Egyptian Army. The Dervishes lost eight hundred dead and five hundred wounded besides six hundred prisoners. These prisoners meant a valuable aid. The Sudanese—unlike the Egyptian—is naturally a fighting man and does not greatly care for whom he fights so long as the fighting and treatment are good and his wife (or wives) can accompany him. Each success therefore meant recruits for the Sudanese battalions, and the Khalifa was in fact largely conquered by his own men. By the end of 1896 Dongola was re-occupied, and it was safe to undertake the construction of the railway across the loop of the river from Wadi Halfa to Abu Hamed, the next jumping-off place. When the railway was more than half-way across a force under Major-General Sir Archibald Hunter advanced on Abu Hamed, following the course of the river, and captured it from the Dervishes on August 7th, 1897. The Dervishes thereupon evacuated Berber farther to the south, which was occupied on September 13th. The railway was then rapidly linked up with Abu Hamed (on October 31st) and beyond, and Kitchener was ready by the beginning of 1898 to advance southwards with a solid line of communications behind him.

The Battle of the Atbara

So far the Dervishes had offered no serious opposition, but the force was now sufficiently close to Omdurman to make it certain

that stiff fighting might be expected. It was therefore decided to add a British brigade to Kitchener's command, which, with five Egyptian and six Sudanese battalions, cavalry and artillery, now reached a total strength of 14,000 men. It was well that this was done, since a Dervish force of about the same strength under Mahmud, one of the Khalifa's commanders, was marching from the Nile to take up a position on the River Atbara some distance from its junction with the Nile, so as to threaten the flank of an advance on Omdurman. It was necessary, therefore, to deal with Mahmud first, and on March 20th Kitchener's army left the Nile and marched along the north bank of the Atbara in search of the Dervishes. These had reached the Atbara from higher up the Nile on the same day, crossed it, and taken up a position on the north bank. Since barbed wire had not then come into use, when possible both sides in the Sudan surrounded themselves with a " zariba " of thorn-bushes when standing on the defensive. It was such a position that the Anglo-Egyptian force attacked on April 8th. After a preliminary bombardment, the troops dashed forward, burst through the thorn-bushes and plunged into the interior of the " zariba." A good deal of hand-to-hand fighting took place in which the Anglo-Egyptian losses amounted to over five hundred, but the Dervishes were completely defeated, Mahmud himself captured, and very heavy loss inflicted. The battle of the Atbara clearly proved that the Dervishes, desperately as they fought, were much less dangerous when attacked than when themselves attacking.

The Battle of Omdurman, 1898

After the battle of the Atbara Kitchener prepared for the final advance on Omdurman. His strength was now two British and four Egyptian and Sudanese brigades, which with cavalry and guns amounted to over 25,000 men. There were also ten gunboats, which had been brought out in sections from England, put together on the Nile and hauled by main force up the cataracts. Gradually the force advanced by marches along the Nile, taking the west bank so as to threaten Omdurman. By September 1st they were within seven miles of the Khalifa's capital, and that night the army lay down to sleep in a long thin line with both ends resting on the Nile and covering the baggage and transport. This was the Khalifa's last chance. Had he attacked that night under cover of darkness when the rifle fire would have been much less effective, his men might have broken the line and a great disaster ensued. Luckily, he did not do so (owing to Kitchener spreading the rumour that he meant to do so himself), and the sun rose on the battlefield of September 2nd, the last battle in which British troops fought in line shoulder to shoulder, and in which volley-firing was still to some

extent employed and black powder periodically obscured everything.

The scene of the battle was an open plain with two isolated ridges, and without cover save for a few "khors" or dried-up watercourses. From early morning to noon the Anglo-Egyptian army manœuvred as if on parade, wheeling to meet the successive attacks from different directions of some 60,000 Dervishes. It was, to all intents and purposes, a battle of a much earlier period, save that the weapons used were infinitely more effective. One word-picture by Winston Churchill describes the scene:

"The officers, some standing on biscuit-boxes, peered through their glasses and studied the effect. Of this I had one glimpse. Eight hundred yards away a ragged line of men were coming on desperately, struggling forward in the face of the pitiless fire—white banners tossing and collapsing; white figures subsiding in dozens to the ground; little white puffs from their rifles; larger white puffs spreading in a row all along their front from the bursting shrapnel." The Dervishes never got to close quarters save when the 21st Lancers, seeking to charge a body of the enemy, crashed into a hidden "khor" between them and their objective packed with Dervishes. They struggled through with considerable loss, and, turning on the farther side, routed their enemies with carbine-fire—the last charge of the British cavalry against unbroken infantry.

The Anglo-Egyptian losses all told amounted to less than five hundred men, their enemies lost about ten thousand killed, about sixteen thousand wounded and some four thousand prisoners. Gordon was at last avenged and Anglo-Egyptian rule established in a land ruined by Dervish mis-government, war, massacre and famine. The Khalifa fled from the battlefield, and strove in vain to rally an army round him. He was pursued and at last surprised with a band of followers by Colonel Wingate in the early morning of November 24th, 1899, at Umm Dabrekat. Seeing that all was lost, Abdulla and his chief Emirs seated themselves on the sheepskins they used as saddles and fell riddled with bullets. Thus ended the Mahdist Empire, not without justification in its beginnings, horrible in its period of power and ferocious to the end. The Sudan, thanks to British enterprise and administration, is now one of the most prosperous portions of the Empire. Its population, less than a million in 1898, now amounts to 5,500,000. In this lies the justification for the slaughter at Omdurman.

The Fashoda Affair

Immediately after the Battle of Omdurman, the Anglo-Egyptian force was involved in a crisis which came within measurable distance of causing a European war. The division of Europe into two—at

that time—fairly equally-balanced alliances, the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria and Italy, and the Dual Alliance of France and Russia, involved a continual, if secret, struggle to strengthen the members of one alliance at the expense of the other. This France and Russia had managed very successfully to accomplish when in March 1896 the Abyssinians, largely with the aid of arms supplied by France and Russia, inflicted a crushing defeat on the Italians at the battle of Adowa. No attempt was made by the Italians to retrieve the disaster; their projected protectorate over Abyssinia was abandoned, and the design has not until recently been renewed. This success for the Dual Alliance seems to have led to a most ambitious scheme. Were it possible to link up the French territories on the West Coast of Africa with the victorious Abyssinians and French Jibuti, a solid block would be constituted right across Africa from the Atlantic to the Red Sea, which might even be linked with Russian designs in the Persian Gulf. This—or something like it—appears to have been the plan, but it would of course involve French occupation of the valley of the White Nile above Khartoum, left derelict by the Egyptians and never seriously occupied by the Dervishes.

The design was dramatically disclosed—though it had previously been suspected—five days after the capture of Omdurman, when a Dervish steamer (one of Gordon's fleet) came downstream to Omdurman (where it surrendered) with a tale that the crew had been fired on upstream at Fashoda by black troops commanded by European officers. There were certainly bullet-holes in the hull, and Kitchener at once started with a strong detachment up river to discover whom the Europeans in question might be. When the Anglo-Egyptian steamers arrived off Fashoda they found there eight French officers and 120 black riflemen, who had been there since July 10th. They were short of ammunition and could hardly have resisted the further Dervish attacks from which Omdurman had saved them. Nevertheless their gallant leader, Major Marchand, who had been two years on his journey from West Africa, calmly welcomed the Sirdar " in the name of France."

This brought matters to a climax. Was the Egyptian claim to the Upper Nile valley, never formally abandoned, to be jumped in this way by a handful of men ? France indeed thought so, but Britain was determined otherwise. An acrimonious diplomatic correspondence ensued, and in the end the French gave way. On December 11th, 1898, the tricolour was hauled down and Marchand and his men, unwilling to accept transport down the Nile which would involve recognition of British control in Egypt, departed overland to Abyssinia and the sea, eventually reaching France in safety, but leaving their dream of an empire of the Upper Nile behind them.

Lord Salisbury's firmness thus secured the whole valley of the White Nile for Anglo-Egyptian control and made it possible to link up with the British expansion in East Africa and Uganda, which we shall next consider. But it is idle to deny that "Fashoda" was for years a name of bitterness in France, and largely accounted for French feeling during the Boer War. Tact largely solved the difficulty. The inoffensive name "Kodok" replaced "Fashoda" on the map of the Sudan, and the pestilential swamp which nearly caused a great war sank back into oblivion.

In advancing up the Nile Valley Britain had to contend with the rivalry of France; in East Africa the contest was with Germany. The whole region inland from the Indian Ocean and northwards from the old Portuguese settlements in Mozambique had for years been the hunting-ground of Arab slavers operating from their base in the island of Zanzibar. As the travels of Livingstone and other missionaries and explorers gradually disclosed the horrors of this traffic and the valuable nature of the territory, it became clear that the establishment of European control was inevitable. But which Power would undertake the task? Germany, coming late into the field, cast covetous eyes on a region containing areas which, though close to the equator, are so high above sea-level as to be possible for European settlement.

It is probable that the British Government would have been willing to withdraw in favour of Germany but for the realization, as the occupation of the Nile Valley proceeded, that it would be impossible to leave another Power in complete control of the great rainfall area whose waters drain into the vast Victoria Nyanza, and, overflowing down the valley of the Nile, sustain the life of Egypt. Thus, when a German explorer, Karl Peters, began to tour the interior, persuading native chiefs to sign treaties of cession with himself as representative of Germany, British representatives were sent on a similar mission from Mombasa to Uganda on the farther side of the Nyanza. The region between Mombasa and the lake was, and still is, thinly inhabited by very primitive tribes, but Uganda itself, though smaller, is thickly peopled with Africans of a higher type, the Buganda, with an established system of government of their own. This was the prize for which Britain and Germany from 1885 were contending.

The British East Africa Company and the Partition with Germany

The first important step was the formation of the British East Africa Company in 1886 to rival Peters's German Company. Here the British had an advantage in that the island capital of the Sultan of Zanzibar was at the mercy of British warships, and his Arab

subjects were too deeply implicated in the traffic in slaves for him to be able to resist the imposition of a British protectorate. This gave Britain a certain hold on his considerable but undefined territories inland, and the East Africa Company's representatives were able to push on into Uganda, where a persecution of missionaries had been succeeded by quarrels between the converts of rival Christian bodies.

At length in 1890 an agreement was come to with Germany whereby East Africa was divided. Zanzibar itself was recognized as British and the territories claimed by the Sultan on the mainland were divided by a practically straight line drawn from the coast south of Mombasa across to the shore of the Victoria Nyanza. A kink in the middle of this line included Kilma Njaro in German territory, it is said at the demand of the Kaiser, who desired to possess the highest mountain in Africa. The kingdom of Uganda became a British sphere of influence, much to the annoyance of Karl Peters, and was at first administered by the British East Africa Company, together with what is now Kenya Colony. The expense, however, was too much for the finances of the Chartered Company, which resigned its territories in 1894 into the hands of the British Government, which thereupon established two protectorates in Uganda and East Africa respectively. The main event in the history of British East Africa was the construction from the coast of Mombasa of the Uganda Railway, which until very recent years stopped short at Kisumu on the shores of the Nyanza and never touched Uganda territory at all. The construction of this railway was much hampered by the depredations of lions, which persistently devoured the Indian coolies working on the line. The survivors of these coolies mostly remained in the country and, together with petty Indian traders who had followed in the wake of European development, created the Indian population which is such a problem in Kenya at the present time.

Germany's Strongest Foothold Overseas

The treaty of 1890 left Uganda and the all-important outfall of the White Nile from the Nyanza in British hands, but south of the boundary it involved the possession by Germany of a vast compact block of territory forming the keystone of the East African arch. It included the excellent harbour of Dar-es-Salaam, facing the Indian ocean, and inland the warlike tribe of the Manyamwezi, of old the mercenaries of the Arab slave-raiders. Largely from this tribe the Germans were able to recruit the black "askaris," who fought so well for them in the Great War; and as no money was grudged for the development of Germany's favourite colony, before long she owned not only a valuable possession, but also the base for

a local military organization which was a distinct menace to neighbouring British possessions.

British military organization was on a smaller scale, and not at first particularly fortunate. In 1897 Colonel Macdonald was sent to Uganda with a dozen British officers, but his Sudanese troops were discontented with service so far from their homes and broke into mutiny which, together with a local revolt, took some time to suppress, so that no co-operation with the Nile expedition was possible. Sikh troops were sent from India to restore order, and eventually a local force of King's African Rifles under British officers was raised to keep order and check raiding gangs from across the Abyssinian border. Unlike most of our African possessions, the occupation of East Africa involved no serious fighting, but in German East Africa we had an uncomfortable neighbour, as the future was to show.

British Central Africa

Farther to the south our rivalry was with Portugal, which from the early sixteenth century had possessed settlements on the East Coast. Luckily for British expansion, the Portuguese had taken little interest in the interior save for gold-seeking expeditions, and so it was possible for British missionaries and traders, following in the footsteps of Livingstone, to establish themselves on the eastern shore of Lake Nyasa and in the Shiré Highlands to the south outside the Portuguese sphere. The region was troubled by Arab slave-raiders, and after Sir Harry Johnston had been sent to suppress them, a treaty was concluded with Portugal in 1891 by which the Central Africa Protectorate (later known as the Nyasaland Protectorate) was recognized as British.

German South-West

Just as Germany had planted herself in East Africa, so she managed to insert herself into the Atlantic territory north of the Orange River. This area could for years have been British for the formality of declaring an occupation, but apart from occupying the only good harbour on the coast, Walfish Bay, and some small islands off the shore, nothing had been done. Eventually a German merchant, Lüderitz, claimed to have some concessions there, and being supported by his government the whole area, other than some small islands and Walfish Bay, was proclaimed German in 1884. Awkward though it was to have German territory adjoining such a region of trouble as South Africa, this occupation was not serious since " German South-West " was cut off from the rest of South Africa by largely waterless deserts, and the native population

was too scanty and too hostile to German rule for native troops to be raised as they had been in East Africa.

The Occupation of Ashanti

Since Wolseley's expedition of 1874, the River Prah had formed the boundary between the British Gold Coast settlements and the kingdom of Ashanti, but the government of that country did not greatly improve, and so in 1895 it was again occupied and a protectorate set up which included the Northern Territories farther inland. Difficulties arose in 1901, when the British Governor was besieged in Kumasi and only rescued with some effort by an expedition under Sir William Willcocks ; but after that matters settled down and the joint area of the Gold Coast, Ashanti and the Northern Territories became one of the most prosperous portions of the Empire, largely owing to the tremendous production of cocoa. West Africa differs from South and East Africa in being quite unsuitable for European settlement and in possessing in parts a dense native population in whom the trading instinct is highly developed and who are willing to work on their own small farms to produce the commodities which traders are anxious to buy. Many tribes also possess a workable government of their own, and provided the chiefs are restrained from sanguinary measures it is generally possible to work through native institutions instead of superseding them as has often been the case in Africa.

The Rivalry with France in West Africa

Since their expedition to Algiers in 1830, the French had steadily been devoting themselves to building up a great North and West African Empire. Not only did they work inland from the coast, as did the British, but working from the interior along the courses of the great rivers Senegal and Niger, roughly parallel to the coast, they aspired to extend their influence in all directions, of which the Marchand Expedition is an example. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century they came within measurable distance of absorbing the whole of the " hinterland," and so confining the British to a few small areas on the coast. They did this effectively with the Gambia, the oldest British settlement in Africa, which by the treaty of 1891 was limited to a narrow strip on both sides of the Gambia River, with French territory hemming it in. The same largely happened with Sierra Leone, originally started in 1787 by philanthropists as a refuge for rescued African slaves. It did not make very rapid progress and by 1889 was ringed round by French Guinea, except on the east where it adjoined the negro republic of Liberia, founded under American auspices for liberated slaves. The French were not quite so successful with British Ashanti, which, owing to

the small wars we have described, extended a long way inland before its expansion was checked by the treaty with France in 1898. It was also cut off from British territories on the east by German Togoland and French Dahomey.

The Royal Niger Company

The real tug-of-war with France came over the question of Nigeria; now, after India and Britain, the most populous region in the Empire. Ever since the slave-trading days Europeans had been familiar with the delta of the Niger and the adjoining coast, and as slavery died out European trading-stations had been set up along the lower course of the river. By 1879 it became obvious that the French, who also had trading-stations on the river, were in addition pushing downstream from Senegal and aspiring to bring the whole region under their sway. The situation was saved by the vision of Sir George Taubman Goldie, who managed to amalgamate all the British firms in 1879, his organization, the National African Company, being granted a charter as the Royal Niger Company in 1886. The new company soon outdistanced the French commercially, and finally bought out their stations on the Lower Niger. In 1886 an agreement was come to with Germany, who had established herself in the Cameroon area, by which the boundary on the east was drawn in a fairly straight line from the Bight of Biafra to Lake Chad.

The position on the north and west, however, was still critical, as the company had to face the hostility of the slave-raiding Mohammedan "emirates" inland, and the determination of the French to conclude cession-treaties which would give them possession of large portions of Nigeria. The Company's native troops under their British officers defeated the Fulani Emirs in 1897, and the French, advancing down the Niger from Say and on the western border, found the Company's troops in their path. A period of "great tension" followed and hostilities were daily imminent, but at last in 1898, the Anglo-French boundary was fixed as it is at present, giving the French a good deal of the territory they coveted, but leaving a huge area still within the British sphere. The Royal Niger Company had saved Nigeria for Britain, but the government of so large a population was considered to be too great a task for a commercial company. Its possessions were transferred to the Crown on January 1st, 1900, and two protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria were set up. The Company's forces were replaced by the West African Frontier Force (now "Royal"), which gradually dealt with the Mohammedans of the north. Kano and Sokoto were taken in 1903, and British authority established within the area as delimitated with France and Germany. It was still neces-

sary to maintain this force for use in emergencies, but like the King's African Rifles in East Africa, its strength was kept at a figure no larger than that required for local purposes.

The Panjdeh Incident

Since the Second Afghan War that country had, as we have seen, been in strong hands; but while the Home Government was negotiating over African territory with one member of the Dual Alliance, the Indian Government was anxiously watching the other member, now for the first time pressing in earnest against the boundaries of Afghanistan. In March 1885 the Russians, doing at last what they had been suspected for fifty years of being about to do, attacked an Afghan detachment holding a disputed piece of territory on the Russo-Afghan frontier at Panjdeh. This was the more awkward since the Amir was at the time visiting the Viceroy at Rawal Pindi, but Abdur Rahman was a stronger and calmer man than some of his predecessors. He desired British subsidies and munitions, not British intervention, and given these he was quite prepared to look after his own interests. So the excitement subsided, and an Anglo-Russian Boundary Commission delimitated the disputed frontier. It seems at last to have been realized that the surest way to secure the Amir's real support was to allow him to study Russian aggressiveness at close quarters and not to excite his fears by a policy which bore too close a resemblance to that of which we accused the Russians.

The Third Burmese War, 1885

France was at the same time displaying aggressiveness on the eastern frontier of India, taking advantage of the fact that after the war of 1852 Upper Burma had been left still in the hands of the native dynasty. Mindoon Min, the justly-respected King of Burma, had recently died and been succeeded by his son Thibaw, a weak and vicious young man entirely under the domination of his consort, Queen Supaya-lat. Probably under her instigation, he signalized his accession by a horrible massacre of eighty princes and princesses of the royal family. The British Resident at Mandalay was withdrawn, but this did not greatly trouble Thibaw, who was aware of the difficulties of the British Government in Afghanistan and South Africa. He then followed this up by a systematic persecution of British trading-interests, while showing special favour to the French, whose Indo-Chinese territory adjoined his own and who were quite willing to slip in by the back door. This was too much for the Indian Government, whose troops under General Prendergast crossed the boundary in November 1885. Thibaw's rule collapsed like a pack of cards, and the north-eastern boundary was firmly

consolidated by the annexation of Upper Burma. The country, however, was in such a state of turmoil from Thibaw's misgovernment, and "dacoity" (gang-robbery) so prevalent, that it took a large number of British and Indian units five years before the robber bands were finally dispersed and hunted down. Since then Burma has enjoyed peaceful and prosperous days, only broken by a rising in 1931.

The North-West Frontier Again

In 1891–2 a small expedition occupied Hunza and Nagar, two small principalities lying close to the Pamirs and Russian territory, the chiefs of which claimed a dubious descent from Alexander the Great and had been adopting a dubious policy. There is little reason to believe that anything more than a few Cossacks could ever have struggled over passes more than 12,000 feet high and only open for a short time in summer, but such as the possibility was, it was now removed. As a Russian statesman said: "They have slammed the door in our faces." The next episode was in 1895 in Chitral, south of Hunza and Nagar and facing Afghan Kafiristan. The usual dispute over the succession led to the usual murder of the Mehtar (Prince) of Chitral. The usurper who took his place besieged the British representative in the fort at Chitral, and managed to wipe out some small detachments on the road to Gilgit and Kashmir. The place was gallantly held by a small garrison under Captain Townshend of the Central India Horse, later one of Kitchener's battalion commanders of the Egyptian expedition and later still the defender of Kut. A force under Colonel Kelly advanced to its relief, which was successfully accomplished. The Chitralis were poor fighters compared with the tribesmen farther south, and the problems of the relief force were mainly concerned with transport and the difficulties of advance along tracks cut in the sides of immense ravines and across slopes with constantly falling boulders. Chitral since then has been a fairly quiet backwater which requires a small garrison but is otherwise unimportant.

The year 1897 signalized a frontier war of infinitely greater importance, since it came within measurable distance of providing what the frontier authorities have always dreaded: a simultaneous uprising of all the frontier tribes between Afghanistan and Indian-administered territory. There was heavy fighting round the Malakand Pass; the Khaibar Pass was closed by the Afridis, and the whole of the Tirah country south of the Khaibar was in a blaze. However, the British and Indian troops held firmly to their positions; the passes were re-opened, and the Tirah country, home of the Afridis and Orakzais, penetrated by two divisions under Sir William Lockhart. This was the largest frontier expedition that has ever

taken place, involving the employment of 35,000 troops with 20,000 more on their lines of communication. It was marked also by the discovery that the frontier tribesmen were now fairly well armed with breech-loading rifles, to which our long struggling columns presented painfully good targets. The fighting at comparatively close quarters which had decided the engagements of the Second Afghan War was now replaced by dangerously effective rifle-fire, as was demonstrated at the gallant storming of the position at Dargai; and altogether the British-Indian force was fortunate to get clear of the Tirah country with no greater loss than it did, the troops suffering heavily from cold and exposure. Before another large expedition could be attempted it was clear that much more flexible tactics and more powerful artillery must be utilized, since as regards weapons the tribesmen were fighting on level terms and with the country very much in their favour. However, though the Tirah Expedition was by no means a brilliant success, it did succeed in penetrating into regions where the tribesmen deemed themselves secure and which British troops had never traversed before or have done so since. The evacuation of the Tirah in the winter of 1897 left an awkward salient still in tribal hands, which, as shown by events in 1931, constitutes a dangerous projection of tribal territory between both Peshawar and Kohat.

The End of an Epoch

This chapter has been a story of small wars. Viewed in comparison with the greater conflicts which were to follow, they appear trivial, but their results were immense. Titanic struggles like the Napoleonic Wars and the Great War preserved the Empire, but they did not add so largely to its importance and area as the small campaigns and little-noticed annexations just described. That there is a British Empire to administer, develop and lead into the paths of civilization and prosperity is mainly the result of such minor campaigns and frontier treaties. Looked at in the perspective which only the future can give, it may well be that posterity will view the arrival of Britain as a World Power by the end of the nineteenth century not as the result of world-conflicts but as the outcome of the efforts of soldiers, sailors, administrators, missionaries and traders in the days of apparently small things.

CHAPTER XIX

CANADA, NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTH AFRICA, 1852–1899

The Dominion of Canada

Confederation is never easy, for it means the subordination of local wishes and interests. In Canada the process was hastened by the ill-will towards Britain displayed by the Government of the United States, when at last victorious over the Southern Confederacy. In the Civil War the sympathies of the British Government had been on the side of the South, and to even the account the American Government permitted, if they did not actually connive at, raids on Canadian soil by the disbanded Irish soldiers of which the northern armies had been largely composed. These " Fenian raids," though not very serious, made Canadians realize that their position as regards the United States would be strengthened by Canadian union, and this was intensified by the American refusal to renew the Reciprocity Treaty affecting trade. There is little doubt that the more enthusiastic spirits in the United States did at that time visualize a North America entirely under the Stars-and-Stripes, and to this campaign a United Dominion of Canada was the only possible answer. Sir John Macdonald, whose countenance bore very much the same resemblance to that of Disraeli as did his policy, was the statesman mainly responsible for this great development. Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick joined the new " Dominion of Canada " when it was at last formed by the British North America Act of 1867, and the other provinces came in later with the exception of the ancient Colony of Newfoundland.

The first important act of the new Canadian Government was to buy out in 1869 the Hudson Bay Company's rights in Rupertsland, though they still remained as a trading corporation. This measure was very ill-received by the French-Canadian half-breeds round Fort Garry (the modern Winnipeg) hitherto engaged in fur-trapping and hunting, as they foresaw and feared an influx of new settlers to take up the vast and easily-cultivated open prairies. They rose in revolt at the end of 1869 under a half-breed, Louis Riel, imprisoned some English and Scottish settlers, and murdered a Mr. Scott who had incurred their wrath. The challenge of the so-called " Republic of the North-West " had now to be met and suppressed.

The Red River Expedition, 1870

Colonel Wolseley, at that time on the staff of the force stationed in Canada on account of Fenian raids, was given his first independent command. With one British and two Canadian battalions he set out across the Great Lakes, landed at Port Arthur on the western shore of Lake Superior, and struggled through the wilderness on the farther side. The route was mainly by water and there were many " portages " to be crossed where the boats had to be hauled overland to avoid the rapids. Here Wolseley's powers of organization were well displayed and a difficult journey successfully carried out. Starting on July 18th, 1870, the force reached Fort Garry on August 24th ; the rebels dispersed without firing a shot and Riel took refuge in the States. Wolseley became Sir Garnet, with his foot on the first rung of the ladder of fame, and the gateway to the prairies was open. Manitoba became a province of the Dominion.

Between 1872 and 1881, the C.P.R. was constructed, opening up the Prairies, uniting Eastern and Western Canada and ensuring Canada's future as a nation. Once again, however, in 1885, did the old antagonism of the half-breeds and Indians towards the new settlers flare up in a rising under the old rebel, Louis Riel. This time it was put down solely by Canadian troops and Riel was very properly hanged. The realization of Canada's importance in the world came with the help given to the Empire in the South African War and the great rush from the United States and Europe to take up land in the Prairie Provinces started at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1905, the last British troops—the garrisons of Halifax and Esquimalt—were withdrawn and henceforward Canada was completely responsible for her whole defence.

The Second New Zealand War

By the New Zealand Constitution of 1852, the colonists had self-government, but Maori affairs were under the Governor, who had to try to reconcile conflicting claims over the old cause of strife, the land. The colonists wanted more, for New Zealand is not a large country, and the Maoris were unwilling to part with more. Endeavouring to strengthen themselves by union, some of the Maoris started the " king " movement, i.e. an attempt to set up an elected head of their own who would maintain the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi. The Governor objected to this and war broke out in 1860 in the extremely difficult Taranaki country round the base of Mount Egmont. The lessons of the First Maori War had not been forgotten, and the British commander, General Pratt, methodically battered down the Maori " pas " with heavy artillery. As, however, others were constantly being built the advance was terribly

slow, and the colonists mocked at Pratt's cautious tactics, not very justly since at this period they left the fighting to the regulars while profiting themselves by the money spent on Army contracts.

Sir George Grey now returned from South Africa as Governor. He was the old friend of the Maoris, and was the obvious man to compose the difficulty. He did his best, but the Maoris were by now too suspicious of Europeans to trust his word and the war started again. General Cameron marched up the Waikato River, storming one Maori position after another. The fighting was desperate for a small campaign and the British troops not always successful at the first assault, but they doggedly returned to the charge. The Maoris displayed equal courage. The stand of the chief Rewi at Orakau is still remembered. His " pa " had been breached, and the British commander offered him terms. Rewi replied : " We will fight to the end, for ever, for ever, for ever ! " This incident is recalled by the " war-cry " of the New Zealand " All Blacks " on the Rugby field in modern times. The bitterest fighting took place at Tauranga on the Bay of Plenty. The British troops stormed the " Gate Pa," but were driven out again by the desperate Maoris. The defeat was shortly afterwards redeemed.

Feeling now became more bitter, and some of the Maoris invented the " Hau-hau ! " movement, believing that barking like dogs would protect them against the British bullets. Humorous though it sounds, the " Hau-hau ! " were a very nasty menace, as they danced round their enemies' heads stuck on poles and killed a missionary and ate his eyes. They secured an able leader in Te Kooti who, a prisoner in the Chatham Islands, seized a ship with the aid of other prisoners, got back to New Zealand and massacred an entire village at Poverty Bay. By this time the British Government, not realizing the ferocious nature of this new movement, was getting very tired of continual warfare against brave men defending their lands against the demands of the colonists. They began to threaten to withdraw the British troops as the only apparent means of inducing the New Zealand Ministry to agree to a reasonable compromise on the land question.

The disputes between the Colonial Office and the colonists and the objection of the settlers in South Island (where there was no fighting) to the expense of the war in North Island, placed the Governor in a difficult plight. The Imperial authorities were sick of the war and obviously believed that so long as they were prepared to go on supplying troops so long would the war also go on. Yet the " Hauhaus ! " must be crushed, or no permanent settlement would be possible. Sir George Grey therefore took command of a force of colonists and Maoris—for half the Maoris were always friendly to the Government and many fought on its side—and with these

stormed the " pa " at Wereroa, the last important fight of the war. Te Kooti was also routed and driven into hiding, and by degrees the North Island had peace. The war did not finally end till 1870 when the last British battalion was withdrawn from New Zealand. The only relics of the long war now to be seen are a Battle Honour and a few names which used to follow the holders of the Victoria Cross in the Army List, those of the last survivors holding the New Zealand Cross granted, like the V.C., " for conspicuous bravery."

South Africa

We now turn to the troublous history of South Africa, the only one of the future Dominions the majority of whose population was non-European, and the majority of the Europeans non-British. The Sand River Convention of 1852 and the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854 had allowed the principle of non-British governments in the Transvaal and Orange River Territory. This implied the admission that the small European population of South Africa, faced as it was by the hostility of warlike Bantu tribes, could henceforth go on its way developing two separate cultures and institutions, and regarding each other as rivals to be resisted rather than as complementary parts of the future South African nation. The worst consequences of this mistaken decision took just fifty years to undo, and the difficulties have not yet been fully overcome.

The Boer Republics

The early days of the Boer Republics in the Transvaal and Orange Free State (as the Orange River Territory was now termed) were precarious in the extreme. As regards the Cape Colony their boundary was the Orange River, but otherwise they had no fixed external boundaries, and were constantly engaged in disputes with the native tribes among whom they had intruded and whose territories they strove to seize by force. The Basutos under their chief Moshesh stood stubbornly at bay against the Free Staters in their mountains, and in the end the British government proclaimed the Basutos British subjects and defined a boundary between them and the Free State in 1869. Similarly an award by an arbitrator, drew a line between the Transvaal and Free State and the Bechuana tribes to the west.

Meanwhile, the affairs of the Transvaal Republic had been going from bad to worse. Its finances were in hopeless disorder, salaries were left unpaid, and it was in a state of continual warfare with its native neighbours. These included the Swazis to the east, the Bechuanas to the west, the Matabele to the north, and most serious of all, the Zulus to the south-east under their king Ketshwayo, with one of whose subordinate chiefs, Sekukini, in the Lydenburg district,

the Boers were in 1876 waging a by-no-means successful campaign. Under these circumstances Sir Theophilus Shepstone came up from Natal to Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal, as Special Commissioner, to investigate matters. The situation seemed hopeless, the Republic was bankrupt, and President Burgers had no alternative suggestion to offer to annexation. Encouraged by the British party in Pretoria, Shepstone decided to act, and, though he had no military force to back him, on April 12th, 1877, he issued proclamations that the Transvaal was annexed, and that he undertook the administration. The Boer leaders formally protested and the Boer population sullenly acquiesced.

The Zulu War, 1878–1881

The control of the Transvaal, which carried with it great influence over the Orange Free State, may have been necessary, but it involved a big danger. Hitherto the Bantu tribes, though they had often risen against the British—as did the Galekas and Gaikas in Kaffraria in 1877—definitely preferred them to the Boers, whose ways they knew of old. But, now there was for the time being but one white authority in South Africa; the British automatically took over the Boers' problems in addition to their own. Foremost among these was the military monarchy of the Zulus, which from the shores of the Indian Ocean threatened at once Natal, the Transvaal and Swaziland. There is no doubt that their ruler, Ketshwayo, was both truculent and bloodthirsty, but being what he was and where he was, it is difficult to see what else could have been expected. Tshaka, the founder of the dynasty of Senzangacona, had been murdered; his brother, murderer and successor, Dingaan, had also been murdered in turn; Panda had died more or less peacefully; but his son, Ketshwayo, had only gained the throne after a civil war with his brother, who also paid the penalty. Ketshwayo was in fact very much in the position of many Eastern monarchs—compelled to slaughter his subjects fairly freely lest they should end by slaughtering him. This really underlies the reply he sent to the Lieutenant-Governor of Natal when the latter made some well-meant remonstrances as to the "washing of spears"—"My people will not listen unless they are killed." There was an even more serious suspicion that Ketshwayo was intriguing with the Bantu tribes outside Zululand for a general rising against the whites. At last a party of Zulus crossed the Tugela River into Natal and carried off some fugitives to execution. This evoked an ultimatum to Ketshwayo in December 1878, with a time limit, calling on him to disband his army and cease his massacres. To this he made no reply.

Unless British power was clearly demonstrated at once there would

be trouble. In Natal in particular, the situation was critical. The colony had not grown very rapidly since its early days, and there were at least ten Kaffirs to every European. The only possible chance of saving Natal was an immediate invasion of Zululand. Accordingly, on January 11th, 1879, about six thousand British troops under Lord Chelmsford, accompanied by a number of native auxiliaries, advanced across the frontier. They were divided into three columns.

Isandlhwana and Rorke's Drift

The main column under Lord Chelmsford crossed the Buffalo River at Rorke's Drift, moving towards Ketshwayo's kraal at Ulundi. On January 20th they camped under the hill of Isandlhwana (" The Place of the Little Hand "), and at dawn on January 22nd Lord Chelmsford moved out with a portion of his troops in search of a Zulu force reported in the neighbourhood. He fought an indecisive engagement with these and then returned to camp. On approaching in the darkness the tents were seen standing as usual and men in red coats were moving about them. But they were not British. In the interval a force of 15,000 Zulus had swept down upon the camp and wiped out all but a few mounted men who managed to escape. Eight hundred British and nine hundred natives had perished. The Zulus lost 5,000. The whole business had been a ghastly muddle. The Zulus attacked while the men were having their dinner. The wagons were not laagered or a position prepared, but even so the Zulus might have been held off if the reserve ammunition had not been screwed down in boxes which took a long time to open. As the ammunition ran short the Zulus closed in and the end was a general slaughter. One of the few who got away was Lieutenant Horace Smith-Dorrien, afterwards an Army Commander in France. Chelmsford's force halted for the night among the ripped-up corpses in the camp.

Meanwhile the small garrison left at Rorke's Drift, 96 men of the 24th Regiment under Lieutenants Chard and Bromhead, were putting up a desperate resistance. From that afternoon till early next morning they had repulsed the repeated attacks of a large body of Zulus. Behind boxes and bales and lighted by the flames of the burning hospital, they fought to hold the Zulus back. No more heroic stand has ever been made. In the morning Lord Chelmsford's force came in sight and the Zulus drew off. The gallant handful had saved Natal from invasion.

The Breaking of the Zulu Power

The news of Isandlhwana was received in England with horror. Reinforcements mainly of young and inexperienced soldiers were

despatched and Sir Garnet Wolseley was sent out as Commander-in-Chief and also High Commissioner for Natal and the Transvaal. But before he could actually reach the front the Zulu power had been broken. The right column under Colonel Pearson had already occupied Eshowe, and the left column under Colonel Evelyn Wood defeated the main Zulu army of 24,000 men at Kambula on March 29th. In April Lord Chelmsford defeated the Zulus at Gingihlovo, and on July 4th he won the decisive battle at Ulundi. It was an engagement of the Sudanese type, the Zulus vainly trying to reach the British square and being mown down in heaps. Ketshwayo himself was eventually captured and exiled. He was allowed back again in 1883 and died in 1884, his attempted restoration to power having proved a failure. Sekukuni was dealt with in November 1879 and the struggle with the Bantu tribes south of the River Limpopo was at an end. The Zulu military system was abolished. It was perhaps rather a pity that some of these natural fighters were not recruited for our Colonial Forces in Africa.

The First Boer War, 1881

The Transvaal Boers were, during this period, agitating for their independence to be restored. They were now told that British control would not be withdrawn and that they must be satisfied with Crown Colony government. But this was not enough for them. Their native enemies, Ketshwayo and Sekukuni, were gone ; their country was now safe, and they longed for the old primitive existence with no British officials to control them. In the autumn of 1880 they began to refuse to pay taxes and on December 16th (Dingaan's Day) the " four-coloured flag " was raised at Paardekraal by Krüger, Joubert and Pretorius.

The British garrison in the Transvaal was not much over 1,000 strong and widely scattered. The detachments were at once besieged in Pretoria and the other small towns, and a force of under three hundred men, marching from Lydenburg to Pretoria, was ambushed at Bronker's Sprint on December 20th and surrendered after over half had been shot down. Sir George Colley, Wolseley's successor, advanced from Natal with a small force to relieve Pretoria, but was repulsed at Laing's Nek on the frontier with a loss of nearly two hundred men on January 28th. The same thing happened at Ingogo on February 6th where the casualties were almost as heavy.

Colley, an able soldier, but too impatient to await reinforcements, then attempted to outflank the Boers by seizing the commanding height of Majuba, which overlooked the Boer camp, after a night march on February 26th. He succeeded in doing so, but failed to notice that the hill provided a great deal of " dead ground." On the morning of the 27th the Boers attacked from this dead ground,

and swarming up the slopes overwhelmed Colley's force of less than four hundred men on the summit. Colley himself was killed and among those wounded was Lieutenant Ian Hamilton of the 92nd Highlanders. Apart from the dogged defence of the small garrisons, the Boers had been everywhere successful. They had of course superior numbers in these small engagements ; their marksmanship was excellent and they were fighting under conditions familiar to themselves and unfamiliar to their opponents, but none the less it was clear that traditional tactics were of little avail against these formidable antagonists. Colley, it seems, would not use colonial troops to avoid the appearance of a civil war. He tried with an inadequate force of regulars and failed.

The British troops had met with initial defeat but not disgrace : it was left to the British Government to provide the latter. Sir Evelyn Wood, who was well acquainted with Boer tactics, as he had served with them in Zululand, was advancing from Natal with a force four times the strength of Colley's, and Sir Frederick Roberts was on his way with reinforcements to take command when, as he says, " Peace was made with the Boers in a most marvellously rapid and unexpected manner. A peace, alas ! without honour." The Government in power, despite their brave declarations to Krüger, had no heart for a war in South Africa at a time when, to quote the doggerel *Punch* put into the mouth of Mr. Gladstone :

> " With all the Powers but five we're much in harmony—
> The total's six, including self and Jarminy ! "

Also there was the unpleasant prospect of the Dutch in the Free State and the Cape Colony joining in with the Transvaalers. As a result the Government gave way, and the Transvaal—the Free State had been independent since 1854—was granted its independence on March 23rd, 1881, subject to British " suzerainty," a word which could be interpreted to mean a good deal or practically nothing.

The grant of Boer independence, however, had not solved the difficulties of South Africa. Gladstone's surrender inspired the Boers with the idea that the British Government could be flouted with impunity, and they now began to extend their territory to east and west with the idea of cutting off Natal and Cape Colony from any further expansion. They pressed heavily against the disorganized Zulus, setting up the " New Republic " which would soon have absorbed Zululand had not the British intervened and annexed most of the country in 1887.

On the west they adopted the same tactics in Bechuanaland with the filibustering " Republics " of Stellaland and Goshen. Here they ran up against philanthropic sentiment at home. Bechuana-

land had been the scene of much of the missionary labours of Livingstone, whose difficulties with the Boers there were remembered. It was impossible to hand the friendly tribes there over to the Boers and in May 1884 a former missionary, Mr. John Mackenzie, was sent to represent British authority in Bechuanaland. He lasted only a short time and his place was taken as Deputy-Commissioner by Cecil John Rhodes.

The great imperialist, who now comes on the stage of South Africa, was a man of far-seeing mind. Starting as a diamond-digger in Kimberley in 1871, he acquired claims there and became prosperous in the intervals of " keeping terms " at Oxford. In 1877, with his wealth still to make, he wrote out his will, by which he proposed to endow a society which should have as its foremost object : " The extension of British rule throughout the world." But to do this required money, a good deal of money, and while waiting for his chance to make it Rhodes went into politics. In 1880 he became member for Barkly West, near Kimberley, in the Cape Parliament. Here he gradually framed his political creed. The Dutch were after all in the majority among the white inhabitants of South Africa, and Briton versus Boer, baldly stated, would never lead to union or prosperity. But not all Dutchmen were as ignorant and as reactionary as the Boers of the Transvaal. Were it possible to attract the more enlightened Dutch element into co-operation with the British based on their common interests, the " back-veld " Boers, represented by such men as Krüger, would not in the long run be able to stay the progress of South Africa. Rhodes, who sat for a Dutch constituency and had many Dutch friends, was by no means the jingo-imperialist he has been represented. He was indeed in many ways opposed to too much interference from home, and when he undertook the task of representing the Empire in Bechuanaland in 1884, he did so as one in the confidence of both nationalities.

The Dutch freebooters on the borders of Bechuanaland were aggressive and intractable, and Rhodes was only partially successful in getting them to withdraw. Something more substantial than persuasion was needed, so at the end of 1884 Sir Charles Warren arrived in " Stellaland " with 4,000 troops. This was decisive, though strongly resented by the Dutch element generally. The Boers withdrew without fighting and the bulk of Bechuanaland became British, either as part of the Cape Colony or as the Bechuanaland Protectorate. This was the more important since in 1884 Germany had annexed Damaraland and Namaqualand to form German South-West Africa. The risk of Boer and German territory touching had been averted and the road to the north was still open.

In 1886 gold was found on the Witwatersrandt (the " Rand ").

This was not the first discovery of gold in the Transvaal, but it was infinitely the most important. It was rapidly developed, and with the most valuable gold-field in the world within its boundaries the financial troubles of the South African Republic quickly vanished. The Boers themselves took little part in its exploitation, but they controlled the State and the taxation, and as the output of the Rand increased so did the revenue which they drew from the labours of the miners. Not only were they now financially secure, but they had henceforward resources to direct in such ways as they thought fit.

The next act of the drama was enacted further north. Beyond the Transvaal and Bechuanaland was the military monarchy of the Matabele, similar to that of the Zulus, of which it was an offshoot. The great Tshaka had an unpleasant habit of executing *en masse* impis which failed to carry out his orders to the letter. One such impi under Umziligazi, disliking such a prospect, had broken away to the north and, after various fights with emigrant Boers in the Transvaal, crossed the Limpopo and seized a wide area, slaughtering the miserable Mashona inhabitants as the fancy took them. Now Umziligazi was dead, and his son Lobengula reigned in his stead. The Boers were nearest and already talked of extending their influence into Matabeleland. This Rhodes determined to prevent. The British also had a route through the Bechuanaland Protectorate, but to anticipate the Boers it was necessary to act without delay.

The British South Africa Company

On October 29th, 1889, the British South Africa Company, formed by Rhodes to take over various mining concessions granted by Lobengula to Europeans, received its charter. Rhodes was its managing director, he was also chairman of De Beers and, in 1890, Prime Minister of the Cape Colony. All his resources were united for the great object. The Chartered Company with many titled directors gave him influence at home; the support of the Cape Dutch, owing to the selfish policy of Krüger, strengthened him in South Africa, and behind were the financial resources which he never hesitated to spend like water in his life-task of "painting the map red."

On June 28th, 1890, four hundred "pioneers" led by Frank Johnson entered the land which was to be Rhodesia. Their task was a difficult one, since they must avoid Buluwayo ("the Place of Slaughter") Lobengula's capital, and the territory actually inhabited by the Matebele, and make rather for Mashonaland (i.e. the territory where the remnants of the Mashonas had taken refuge) more towards the north-east. This involved a circuitous route, where for guidance the column depended on the famous

hunter, Frederick Courtenay Selous. At length Mashonaland was reached, and at the end of a road four hundred miles long a site was selected as the capital of the new settlement and called Fort Salisbury. Lobengula did not resist the passage of the expedition, which had carefully skirted his own country. The Chartered Company was paying him rent for Mashonaland, which he regarded simply as a country in which his young men might "wash their spears," a practice which was destined to lead to trouble.

The Portuguese, however, were not so complacent. They had vague claims on the interior which they had never troubled to occupy, and now, too late, had visions of linking-up Mozambique in the east with Angola in the west. But they found the Chartered Company's police in occupation and had to content themselves with a frontier drawn north and south through Masikesi and Melsetter.

Mashonaland occupied, Rhodes sent thither as Administrator, Leander Starr Jameson, a Scottish doctor with whom he was on very friendly terms. Jameson was a very able man and devoted to Rhodes, but he was also rash, a failing which was to lead them both to temporary disaster. But he did not lack decision which was needed to maintain the new settlement in existence.

The immediate threat was from the Boers. The occupation of Mashonaland had placed the British on three sides of them, and they decided to test the strength of their opponents' hold north of the Limpopo. A number of Boers arrived with their wagons at the "drifts" leading to Mashonaland and prepared to cross. Rhodes had no objection to Dutch settlers in his new territory—in fact he encouraged them—but this mass "trek" was a deliberate challenge for possession. The Boers were told that if they attempted to cross, the Bechuanaland Police and the Company's Police would open fire, and perceiving that the British meant business, they desisted from the challenge.

The Matabele, 1893

The Chartered Company had forestalled the Boers between the Limpopo and Zambezi, but the situation was still precarious. The settlers Rhodes had introduced were scattered among the Mashonas, but a short distance away were the Matabele who did not see why they should desist from slaughtering Mashonas merely because the white men who lived among them disliked to see it happen. The clash came in July 1893 when a Matabele impi butchered some Mashonas in the township of Victoria and attacked the police who tried to save them. A fight ensued in which the Matabele got the worst of it, and since Lobengula refused to mend his ways there was no alternative but to deal with him. The Company had all told less than one thousand men available, but the Maxims,

now used for the first time in South Africa, swept away the Matabele warriors at the Shangani River and again at the Imbembesi River, and Buluwayo was occupied on November 3rd. Lobengula fled and was followed up by a party under Major Forbes and Captain Alan Wilson. On the Shangani River Forbes and Wilson separated, and Wilson's detachment of thirty-five men was suddenly attacked by a large force of Matabele. Wilson and his men stood at bay in a ring behind the bodies of their horses and were finally overwhelmed when their ammunition failed. Later, a monument was erected to their memory in the Matoppo Hills, close to where Rhodes himself was finally laid to rest, with the simple words : " To Brave Men."

Lobengula himself died shortly after of smallpox, and Matabeleland was annexed by the Company. It rapidly developed, and soon a flourishing town sprang up at Bulawayo, the ominously-named " Place of Slaughter " of Umziligazi and Lobengula. An enormous area had been added to the Empire at very moderate cost, for Rhodes liked to know exactly how money was spent. The original Pioneer Column had cost £89,285 10s. 0d. and the crushing of Lobengula £113,488 2s. 11d. Like Kitchener in the Sudan, Rhodes never wasted anything.

The Causes of the Final Boer War

In 1895 Rhodes was at the height of his power. He was made a Privy Councillor and the new territories were named after him, Rhodesia. The ambitions which seemed so wild in 1877 had been fulfilled ; 75,000 square miles had been added to the Empire by his drive and initiative ; there seemed nothing that he could not do. One man only stood in his way, an old man in a shabby frock-coat and disreputable top-hat on the " stoep " of the presidential dwelling at Pretoria. Krüger was the obstacle, for he represented the old uncompromising Boer spirit, which needed nothing from civilization but guns and rifles. There was not room in South Africa for two such opposing spirits.

Rhodes had not forgotten the importance of enlisting the support of the moderate Dutch, and in this Krüger played into his hands by imposing " outrageous tariffs " on goods coming into the Transvaal from the Cape, and by making transport across the " drifts " as difficult as possible. Could Rhodes have afforded to wait, as he had waited in the old days at Kimberley, he might with his great ability for " talking people round " have united the rest of South Africa against the reactionary policy of Krüger. But he could not afford to wait now. Krüger was acquiring war material ; he was already fraternizing with German representatives, and Rhodes felt that he himself had not many years to live. He grew impatient, and with impatience came disaster.

THE UITLANDERS

On the Rand a big mining population had grown up, mostly of British origin. The Uitlanders (= Outlanders—a significant name) considerably outnumbered the Boer burghers; they paid the taxes —indeed practically all the taxes—but they had no political rights at all, and successive laws had been passed which made it virtually impossible that they would ever obtain them. Deputations remonstrated with Krüger and were met by jeering remarks about his pet monkey chained on the stoep who lost his temper and tried to bite his owners. Feeling on the Rand was rising to fever pitch; armed revolt was being talked about, and Rhodes decided to make that revolt possible. As Prime Minister of the Cape Colony he allowed arms, which he himself had bought, to be smuggled through to the Rand, and as managing director of the Chartered Company he brought a force of the Company's police under Dr. Jameson to Bechuanaland and established them on the Transvaal frontier near Mafeking.

There followed the ill-fated Jameson raid into the Transvaal, in which Rhodes was morally though not actually implicated. The Uitlanders did not rise as had been expected and the whole affair fizzled out with almost comic speed. The British government was embarrassed, and the Kaiser added to the general feeling of acute dismay by sending a very anti-British telegram of sympathy to Krüger.

In the meantime, in March 1896, the Matabele had risen in revolt. The Company's police had been largely shifted south for the raid and Buluwayo was besieged. Defeats were inflicted on the Matabele by Colonel Plumer (later Field-Marshal Lord Plumer) and Bulawayo was relieved. But a prolonged war would have ruined the country, since the Matabele strongholds were difficult to attack, and Rhodes who had just arrived in Rhodesia decided to parley himself with the Matabele chiefs. He took his life in his hands and for two months argued with and persuaded the "indunas." At last he was successful and Matabeleland was pacified. After such an achievement as this, the fact that he was subsequently "severely censured" for his share in the Raid by the South Africa Committee mattered comparatively little.

But, the Jameson Raid had revealed the essential antagonism between Krügerism and democracy, and the original stumbling-block still remained. The newcomers, the Uitlanders, were more numerous than the citizens of the Republic, but Krüger, elated by success, hardened his heart and was less disposed than ever to make any concession. The Raid had rallied the whole of Dutch South Africa to his side, and his own burghers, many of whom had previously doubted the wisdom of his policy, were now solidly behind

him. Furthermore, the repulse of the Raid had gained him a great deal of sympathy in England and elsewhere as a patriot striving to defend his country against international financiers. The position therefore of the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, in pointing out that the Suzerain Power could never tolerate a situation under which its citizens were systematically repressed and denied all rights, was a difficult one. Krüger remained obdurate and passed law after law directed against all who were not Boers. Still more money was spent on military preparations, orders were placed in Germany for big guns to be imported through Delagoa Bay, and Krüger was manifestly preparing to fight. The Imperial Government, on the other hand, could not stand by indefinitely and see a British population placed in an ignominious position and—as in the case of the workman Edgar—shot down merely because they were British.

One last attempt was made to seek a peaceful solution at the Bloemfontein Conference in June 1899 when the British High Commissioner, Sir Alfred Milner, met Krüger and urged him to allow the Uitlanders, though a majority, to have at least a minority representation. Krüger would allow them no effective voting power at all and the Conference broke up. The issue was now plainly whether or not Boer dominance in the Transvaal should be maintained so that it might be converted into Dutch dominance throughout South Africa.

In the autumn of 1899 the existence of British South Africa was trembling in the balance. The Transvaal Boers, thanks to their commando system evolved during the Kaffir Wars, could put every male of fighting age into the field; they had obtained an offensive and defensive alliance with the Free State in 1897, and the Afrikander Ministry in the Cape Colony, though ostensibly neutral, was clearly waiting on events. Natal, where alone the population was almost purely British, was isolated and in danger of invasion, since the Boers could put 50,000 men into the field.

Under these circumstances the British Government began to take steps to send some reinforcement to the weak British garrison in South Africa. This was the pretext for which Krüger had been waiting. On October 9th, 1899, the South African Republic presented an ultimatum to the British Government demanding:

(1) That the British troops on the borders of Natal should be withdrawn.

(2) That all reinforcements landed in South Africa in 1899 should leave the country.

(3) That all troops on the high seas should be turned back.

Failing agreement within two days war would be declared. The ultimatum received its natural answer. The Orange Free State

under President Steyn associated themselves with the Transvaal and Great Britain found herself at war with the two Republics.

On the outbreak of war the British troops in South Africa numbered about 20,000 men, and there were in addition about half that number of Colonial troops, armed volunteers and police. It was this fact that differentiated the South African War from the conflicts in which Britain had hitherto engaged. Previously the fighting had been done almost solely by British and Indian troops and native levies. Now an issue had been presented on which not merely the British element in South Africa (nearly half the total population) but Britons throughout the world felt as strongly as Britons at home. Even before the war broke out Queensland had offered to send a contingent, and the British population of the Empire overseas rallied to the support of the British in South Africa and the British Government, for in defending their cause and principles they felt they were defending their own. It was the South African War which made the British Empire as it is to-day and so consolidated the work of three centuries of conflict and exploration.

CHAPTER XX

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR, 1899–1902

THE Boer War, in which the Empire was now to engage, divides itself into three phases. First came the Boer invasions of British territory and the efforts of the British to drive them back and relieve the beleaguered garrisons. Then followed the British advance and the occupation of the enemy capitals and their other towns. The last phase—and incomparably the most difficult—was the wearing down of Boer resistance in the open field until at last peace was possible.

In all three phases, especially in the first and third, the Army was confronted with very difficult problems. The " small wars " with which we have previously dealt had been waged by relatively small bodies of troops, directed by a carefully-selected—and usually the same—set of officers. Though individually formidable, the Afghans, Zulus, Sudanese and frontier tribesmen had played into our hands by launching massed attacks against which our usual superiority of armament had its natural effect. Now for the first time since the Crimean War we were confronted by a European enemy, and a particularly intelligent one. The Boers had evolved a system of warfare admirably suited to South African conditions. It was based on the very sound principle of inflicting as much loss as possible on opponents while running as little risk as possible of suffering retaliation. All told, from first to last, the Boers put not far short of 90,000 men into the field, including foreigners and rebels from the Cape Colony; and to subdue them required in all not less than 450,000 troops, British and Colonial. This was a large total, and it involved the use not only of war-tried leaders and troops, but of those with much less effective training and even of many with no previous training at all. Owing to the nature of the campaign, these less-effective elements had to engage not in static trench warfare but in mobile operations, and pick up experience under unfamiliar conditions as best they could. They rose to meet these conditions, but naturally not without many incidental checks. Our continental critics might indeed have waged war more ruthlessly, but it is doubtful whether they would have finished it any sooner, and certainly not without a lasting heritage of hate.

The Difficulties Encountered

The difficulties of bringing the enemy to a decisive action were very great. The area in which operations was to take place was as large as France and Germany combined, Lines of communication were therefore enormously long. The two bases at Capetown and Durban were 1,000 miles apart. There were few roads, so operations, particularly at the beginning, tended to follow the railways, viz. the western line running northwards through Kimberley ; a central line through Colesberg to Bloemfontein ; a more easterly one through Stormberg Junction, and the lines from Natal, all of which focussed on Ladysmith. Lateral communications between these lines of approach to the enemy's territory were very few in number. Further, the country was admirably suited to defensive operations. In general—apart from Natal where the great escarpment forming the eastern edge of the South African plateau ran south westwards parallel to the coast in rising terraces—it was a plain (veldt) broken by many small rounded or pointed hills (kopjes) which each commanded a considerable area. The only bridges across rivers such as the Modder were the railway bridges. The fords (drifts) had steep and difficult approaches. The plateau averages 6,000 feet above sea level and the night temperatures on it are very low. Tents were therefore necessary and this increased transport problems. There were no reliable maps and reliance had to be placed, sometimes with fatal results, on native guides.

Added to all these difficulties there was the natural ability of the Boer as a fighter. He was well mounted, an excellent horsemaster, very mobile and a good marksman. The smokeless powder which he used made him still more elusive in a country where he knew how to make use of every vestige of concealment. He had accumulated large reserves of ammunition. On the other hand he was short of artillery and had no bayonets, two facts which made him averse from attempting offensive action on a large scale. There was also some lack of co-operation between the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, and there was no supreme commander to co-ordinate their efforts.

The Boer Offensive

Enjoying the advantage of interior lines and, at the outset, superiority in numbers, the Boers could choose where they would attack. Probably their wisest course would have been to stake everything on an immediate invasion in force of the Cape Colony, but they were tempted by the exposed position of the 13,000 troops, under Sir George White, holding the northern portion of Natal and wedged in a salient between the Transvaal and the Free State. As soon as

the ultimatum had expired on October 12th, the main body under Joubert closed in on a detachment of about 4,000 men under General Penn Symons, which was engaged in protecting the important coal mines at Dundee in the extreme north of Natal. Symons did not wait to be attacked, but launched an attack on the Boers holding Talana Hill on October 20th. The position was carried, though with heavier loss than the Boers sustained, Symons himself being mortally wounded.

On the following day General French with part of the main body from Ladysmith attacked a smaller force of Boers at Elandslaagte. The attack was well planned, the position was carried and an effective cavalry pursuit inflicted more loss on the Boers than that suffered by the British. So far the fighting had not been unsatisfactory but now the danger of the too-advanced position of the Natal force was to manifest itself. It was impossible to hold either Dundee or Elandslaagte and both forces were therefore withdrawn to Ladysmith.

Here Sir George White decided to make a stand, with the object of inducing the Boers to besiege him and so avert a big invasion of Natal. He also knew and relied on the Boer dislike of offensive action. The place was ringed round by hills, which provided the Boers with a series of natural positions. Striving to keep them at a distance, he fought an unsuccessful battle at Lombard's Kop on October 30th and on the same day a detachment of 1,100 men was attacked at Nicholson's Nek by the Boers and the whole force killed, wounded or captured. White could no longer manœuvre, and, with the exception of a small force south of the Tugela, the original Natal force was shut up in Ladysmith. But Sir George White was never forgiven by the Government for "the Ladysmith entanglement." On the west, the Boers gradually closed in on Mafeking and Kimberley, the latter place being of particular interest to them as containing Mr. Rhodes—whom they are alleged to have threatened to exhibit in a cage when captured. The first two months of the war, therefore, saw the Boers already in positions specially suited to their tactics. They were investing three British garrisons, the relief of which would compel the British to attack in certain definite areas in which the Boers could prepare positions, relieved meanwhile of any immediate apprehension of invasion of their own territory. On the other hand, the investment of these three places involved the diversion of a considerable proportion of their men, and so prevented them from making the really decisive stroke—the invasion in force of the Cape Colony.

The First Attempt to Relieve Kimberley

The British forces in South Africa, other than those invested, were now in four portions. On the left, advancing up the railway

to Kimberley, was Lord Methuen; further east General French's cavalry near Colesberg; about Stormberg Junction was General Gatacre, striving to deal with the Free State Boers who, though not in large numbers, had penetrated into the eastern portion of the Cape Colony; and on the right, in Natal, was the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Redvers Buller.

Methuen was the first to move. On November 23rd he drove the Boers from a position at Belmont beyond the Orange River, and on November 25th from another position at Graspan. He was now drawing close to Kimberley, and on November 28th he forced the passage of the Modder River lying athwart his track at a cost of some 500 casualties. Ahead lay the ridges of Magersfontein across which a passage must be forced to reach Kimberley.

"The Black Week."

The second week in December was destined to test to the full the resolution of the British Empire.

On the night of December 9th Gatacre led a force of some 3,000 men to attack a Boer position at Stormberg, an important railway junction and Boer camp. The guides missed their way, and daybreak found the flank of the British force presented to the Boers on the higher ground. The column had advanced without advance or flank guards; the system of transmission of orders was defective, and although Stormberg had been in our occupation before there were no field sketches to compensate for a lack of maps. The result was a disaster in which the British lost about seven hundred men, mostly prisoners, and Gatacre was obliged to fall back towards the south. It emphasized that reliance on native guides without previous reconnaissance or careful examination by the staff could be fatal.

On the night of December 10th Methuen also attempted a night attack on the Boer position at Magersfontein. Daybreak disclosed the British force on the left of the line, the Highland Brigade, right on top of the Boer position and about to extend. They were held up by barbed wire—apparently nothing more than a fence—and pinned to the ground by devastating Boer fire at close range. Throughout the morning they lay there unable to move, and when in the afternoon they fell back, they again suffered heavy losses. The total casualties amounted to close on a thousand, including General Wauchope, commanding the Highland Brigade. The folly of a hastily conceived frontal attack against a strongly entrenched position had been fully demonstrated. There was no element of surprise as an initial bombardment had warned the Boers. The ground had not been reconnoitred. Had more time been taken an enveloping movement would have been possible and Kimberley,

which was only 9 miles away, would probably have been relieved.

On December 15th Redvers Buller, now at the head of 18,000 men, made his first attempt to force the passage of the Tugela and relieve Ladysmith. The attack at Colenso was delivered in a piecemeal and indecisive fashion, without sufficient reconnaissance and Buller was hopelessly out-generalled by Louis Botha commanding the Boer force covering the siege. Native guides brought the troops to the wrong part of the river—away from the ford—and into a re-entrant of Boer fire. The British guns were placed within rifle range of the Boer positions. Everywhere the attacks broke down, the British lost over 1,100 men and ten out of twelve guns which had been brought into action in the impossibly exposed position. The week had, therefore, seen a crescendo of disasters, not in themselves overwhelmingly serious but serving all to show how formidable the Boers were when defending their selected positions. The only gleam of light was in the Colesberg area where General French, midway between Gatacre and Methuen, scored some successes with a small force against the Boers during December and January.

Isolated in the World

Stormberg, Magersfontein and Colenso were the signals for an outbreak of hostility against Britain on the part of foreign powers. Nowhere in the world, except perhaps to some extent in America and Italy, did the Empire appear to have a friend. The very countries which fifteen years later were urgently to beg our aid outdid themselves in insults and execrations. The Boers were heroes, irrespective of the rights and wrongs of the case, merely because they had imposed a check on the advance of Britain. It was a nasty exhibition, but very natural. Not only was the expansion of Britain a cause of jealousy, but our policy of "splendid isolation" was reaping its fruits. Small powers sympathized with the Boer States because they were small and large powers rejoiced at our defeats because they had nothing to hope from us if we were successful. Isolated between the Dual and Triple Alliances, and without an effective ally in the world, we had to face a chorus of denunciation the moment we failed, and this was kept up as long as the war lasted. It is probable that only the strength of our Navy kept at bay the ultimatums which were mooted from time to time.

The Empire's Response

Adversity is the test of resolution, and the well-nigh universal tempest of abuse which beat against the Empire only aroused her to greater efforts. Troops were poured out to South Africa from home, not only regulars but militia, yeomanry and volunteers as well. Mounted troops were sent in large numbers to cope with the

mobile Boers. These had previously been delayed, largely because it was important to get reinforcements to South Africa quickly and horse-transports took some time to prepare. Everywhere colonial contingents were offered, and by the end of the war the Dominions had sent over 30,000 men, while the South African loyalists contributed over 50,000, a figure which compared not unfavourably with the numbers put into the field by the Boer population. The British South Africans were fighting for their speech and institutions and they did their fair share in defending their cause. Most important of all, Lord Roberts, now sixty-eight years of age, was offered the chief command in the theatre of war where his only son had just been killed striving to save the guns at Colenso. He accepted, and set out to fight in 1900 the campaign he should have fought in 1881, taking with him Lord Kitchener as his Chief-of-Staff. He decided that the main theatre must be Cape Colony. But first, there must be a great expansion and reorganization of transport to allow him to manœuvre away from the railways; and, second, 30,000 militia must be sent to guard his communications as he advanced.

Buller in Natal

Roberts was now Commander-in-Chief, but Buller retained the task of relieving Ladysmith. His retention was one of the great mistakes of the war. He was no longer the man he had been when he won his V.C. in Zululand. Twenty years of sedentary life as an organizer, in which he had done some excellent work, had left him slow and incapable of decisive measures involving more than limited casualties. He knew the country well and also the capacity of the Boers, by the side of some of whom he had fought in Zululand. He shrank from the loss of life involved in storming the positions covering Ladysmith and from the attacks he would never have had to make but for White's action in shutting himself up there. His heart was not really in the task and he would much have preferred the original plan, before Ladysmith was invested, of advancing through the Free State where the country was infinitely easier. "Here I am," he exclaimed to Winston Churchill, "condemned to fight in Natal, which all my judgment has told me to avoid, and to try to advance along the line worst of all suited to our troops." It is to his credit that from first to last he retained the affection of his men, who appreciated his care for their welfare and his reluctance to expose them to loss.

None the less, it was imperative to do something to help the hard-pressed garrison of Ladysmith. The Boers were anxious to remove this menace in their rear, and in the early hours of January 6th they launched storming parties against both Caesar's Camp and Wagon Hill, the vital defences of Ladysmith. The fighting was desperate

and hand-to-hand, and only the resolution of Ian Hamilton, in command on the spot, and a gallant charge by the Devonshire Regiment saved the day. The Boers were finally driven off, but it was clear that sickness and want of food must increasingly handicap the garrison of Ladysmith.

Buller decided to attack the Tugela front on his left, and on January 18th sent nearly 16,000 troops under Sir Charles Warren across the Tugela by pontoon bridges. But the movement was incredibly slow, and it was not till the night of January 23rd–24th that two thousand men were in occupation of the flat summit of Spion Kop on the right of Warren's line. By this time the Boers had had time to gather reinforcements, and Botha attacked. There was no room for additional troops on the crest of Spion Kop, and Warren did nothing effective to help elsewhere. No attempt was made to take the Boers guns on the neighbouring hills which were raking Spion Kop. The commander and his staff were ignorant of what was happening, because they were too far away. By nightfall on the 24th, the situation had become very dangerous and Colonel Thorneycroft, in command on the summit, decided, contrary to Warren's orders, to retire. He did so, and by the night of January 26th Warren's force was back across the Tugela. On the narrow plateau of Spion Kop over a thousand casualties had been sustained and the total loss in the operations exceeded 1,700. The irony of the situation was that the Boers had actually had enough and had withdrawn from the neighbouring hills, but this was not known at the time.

Buller now tried again at Baal Krantz farther to the east. Here again he failed with some loss, and early in February the troops were once again withdrawn south of the Tugela, and Ladysmith was no nearer relief than before.

Roberts in Command and French's Masterstroke

At the beginning of February Roberts took over command of the Kimberley front. He had 30,000 men, including a strong force of cavalry under French, and his intention was to leave the railway and strike across the open plains of the Free State for Bloemfontein and thence to Pretoria. This would relieve the pressure on Natal where Buller was again to try to relieve Ladysmith and then to drive the Boers out of that Province. It would automatically relieve Kimberley, since the Boers could not remain there without being cut off. Cronje in command at Magersfontein did not realize his risk. He despised the British and thought that they would not dare to cut loose from the railway. If they did he could deal with them. He did not know his opponent. On February 11th the British began to move east headed by French with his cavalry. The Riet River was

crossed and French then moved north towards the Modder, which he crossed to the east of Cronje's position at Magersfontein. Behind him the infantry were steadily toiling forward. North of the Modder a detachment of Cronje's force had gathered to bar the road to Kimberley. The ground was not too difficult, and on February 15th French hurled his cavalry straight at them and rode them down, " the most brilliant stroke of the whole war." That evening Kimberley was relieved.

Paardeburg, 1900

The British now had their first experience of the principal Free State leader—Christian de Wet. A great convoy was following the British and had arrived at Waterval Drift on the Riet River. Here on February 15th De Wet attacked it. The convoy could have been saved if Roberts had diverted more troops to its assistance, but to do so would jeopardize the great movement he had planned. He abandoned the convoy, and with his troops on half-rations as a result set off after larger game.

Meanwhile, Cronje had lingered in the neighbourhood of Magersfontein, south of Kimberley. He knew that the British cavalry were at Kimberley to the north and that British infantry were at the drifts of the Modder to the east, but he thought he could march round them, cross the Modder by an unguarded ford and get away to Bloemfontein. This he could have done had he been willing to abandon his slow-moving ox-wagons, but this was too great a wrench for an old-fashioned Boer ; and so with his whole cumbrous convoy he set out.

On February 16th the infantry at the Modder Drifts saw a great cloud of dust away to their right. Cronje was already past them and they followed hard on his track, the Boers fighting a rear-guard action all the way. By February 17th Cronje had reached the Modder and was preparing to cross it east of Paardeburg Drift. But the South African ox is a stubborn animal. He cannot be hurried and he must rest and graze. Cronje had to halt.

This was the British chance. French's cavalry at Kimberley were exhausted by their long and trying rides, but some of them at least could still make an effort. With 1,500 men French had set out to head the Boers off and, riding round to the north of Cronje, had reached the river just above his force. He had twelve guns with him, and the Boer ox-wagons could not cross under their fire. On February 18th two British infantry divisions came up—the Sixth and the Ninth.

Cronje still had two chances. French's force to the east of him was small, and a concerted attack by Cronje and the Free State Boers gathering on the farther side of French might have dislodged

him. Failing this, Cronje might still have broken through with his mounted men had he been willing to abandon his wagons. He took neither course, but dug himself into the sides of the river-bed and prepared to stand a siege. Soon the British shells filled the position with dead and decaying oxen, but Cronje and his men still held out.

The position of the British was none too comfortable. De Wet and other Boer leaders were doing their utmost to break through the ring from without to rescue Cronje, and provisions were short. It was this that induced Kitchener, now in local command at Paardeberg as Roberts was ill, to order a series of attacks on February 18th. These were not well co-ordinated, and cost the British nearly 1,300 casualties, but they had the effect of confining Cronje's force even more closely to the river-bed. De Wet from outside tried again, but was driven off, and on February 27th Cronje surrendered with 4,000 men, the survivors of his force. It was the anniversary of Majuba, now at last avenged. Cape Colony was freed from Boer attacks; the Boers plan was upset; they now had to concentrate in defence of their own territory. British morale was increased and Boer morale correspondingly depressed.

The Advance on Bloemfontein

The skilful strategy of Lord Roberts had scored the first substantial success of the war. It now remained to improve it by the capture of the Free State capital. At the beginning of March the advance began. On March 7th the British came into contact with a considerable force of Boers, led by De Wet, at Poplar Grove close to the Modder. Roberts attempted to roll up their left flank and pin them against the Modder, but the effort failed owing to the exhaustion of the cavalry horses and the Boers got away. On March 10th they made another stand at Driefontein from which they were driven with some loss. Krüger himself had come south to reinforce the exhortations of his fellow-President, Steyn, with some seasonable admonition:

"Flinch not and fall not into unbelief; for the time is at hand when God's people shall be tried in the fire. . . . He who trusts in God's guidance is under the protection of the King of Kings and safe through the darkest night. His word is everlasting. See Psalm 92. Let this be read to all officers and burghers, for our present sufferings are nothing compared with everlasting glory."

It was all in vain. On March 13th Lord Roberts entered Bloemfontein and shortly afterwards Clements and Gatacre crossed the Orange River and entered the Free State from the south. Krüger and Steyn fled northward, and thus in a little more than two months Roberts had changed the face of the war.

The Relief of Ladysmith

Buller had been reinforced and was now to make his fourth attempt to relieve Ladysmith. He had failed at Colenso, at Spion Kop and at Vaal Krantz, but there was still another route farther to the east, and this had the advantage that from the nearest point of the Tugela here to the perimeter of Ladysmith was not more than five miles. It involved the capture of the hills of Cingolo, Monte Christo and Hlangwhane south of the Tugela, and this was successfully accomplished between February 17th and 19th. The route now lay across the Tugela and then along the railway line to Ladysmith which was flanked by Boer positions on either side. On February 21st the army crossed and on the next day Wynne's Hill was captured. On February 22nd General Hart and his Irish Brigade fought hard to take Hart's Hill and again on February 24th, but without complete success. On February 27th, Majuba Day, the same day that Cronje surrendered at Paardeberg, the British stormed Hart's Hill, Railway Hill and Pieter's Hill. The ten days' fighting had cost some 2,250 casualties but it was decisive. There were no more good positions between the British and Ladysmith, and the Boers hurriedly retreated. Lord Dundonald and the cavalry entered Ladysmith on the evening of February 28th, but there was no pursuit. Winston Churchill, who was present, says that Buller personally ordered the cavalry back. It would seem that he was solely interested in the actual relief. Unquestionably, just as by breaking off his attacks to save lives he had sacrificed far more in the end, so, by this failure to pursue, he deprived the war of all prospect of a speedy end. A relentless pursuit, for which he had cavalry available, coming at this juncture on top of Cronje's surrender at Paardeberg, might quite conceivably have induced the Boers to sue for peace. As it was, they retired in comfort, taking with them their artillery, including the heavy guns with which they had been bombarding Ladysmith. Even after the relief of Ladysmith, Buller made no advance till the beginning of May, though he had had no such distances to cover as had Lord Roberts.

The Halt at Bloemfontein

The relief of Ladysmith and the capture of Bloemfontein marked a pause in the operations, and for the next two months no advance took place on either the eastern or western fronts. In the case of Lord Roberts' own force, there had been a period of great activity and the army needed time to refit. This was a slow business as there was only a single railway. Also cholera had broken out. Meantime on March 31st De Wet ambushed two batteries of artillery and a convoy at Shannah's Post, inflicting on the British a loss of seven guns and nearly six hundred men, in spite of a most gallant

resistance. On April 3rd and 4th he attacked a British detachment of about 600 men, devoid of artillery, at Reddersburg, and captured 550 prisoners. The tide was now turning in favour of the Boers again and the prospects of peace receded.

De Wet's next enterprise was the siege of Wepener on the Basutoland border and held by less than two thousand men, the majority of whom were British South Africans. The siege lasted for sixteen days and on April 24th de Wet had to draw off, baffled by the desperate resistance of the colonials and the arrival of the relieving force. The defence of Wepener was of great service to Lord Roberts for it diverted the attention of the Boers during the period he required to mature his arrangements for the next advance. At the beginning of May he left Bloemfontein with 45,000 men including a strong force of mounted infantry, and marched north-east along the railway in the direction of the Transvaal. On May 12th he entered Kroonstad, evicting President Steyn who had temporarily established there the government of the Free State, now very much " on the run."

The Siege of Mafeking

Ever since the beginning of the war a siege had been going on in the north-east corner of British Bechuanaland, and a defence which all Britons regard with peculiar pride. Colonel Baden-Powell was holding Mafeking with little more than a thousand men, all of whom with the exception of a few British officers were armed police or townsmen. Outside were several thousand Boers under Snyman, who should have been able to walk into the place at any time had they possessed any real determination. But they were deterred by the gallantry of the garrison and the gay audacity of its commander, ever resourceful in bluffing the enemy and keeping up the spirits of his men. The siege was not seriously pressed and on Sundays the Boers abstained from firing. This opportunity Baden-Powell utilized for cricket-matches till the scandalized Boers threatened to bombard such an irreligious proceeding.

In April the Boers came to the conclusion that the siege had about lasted long enough and reinforcements arrived under Eloff, President Krüger's grandson. On May 12th a detachment of Boers, led by this young man, rushed the native town but were rounded up and taken prisoner. The defence which Baden-Powell had conducted so long with his amateur force and one home-made gun was now about to be rewarded.

The Relief of Mafeking

For some months past a small force under Plumer had been endeavouring to relieve Mafeking down the railway from Rhodesia.

He had with him Rhodesians, Australians, New Zealanders and yeomanry, but was not strong enough to break through. At the beginning of May another force came up from the south under Colonel Mahon (later General Sir Bryan Mahon), and the two united west of Mafeking. The relieving force was still no more numerous than the Boers, but it was victorious in an engagement at Roidam outside Mafeking on May 16th and the town was relieved. When the news came through London went wild with delight. The whole episode had been in such sharp distinction from the blundering in Natal that exultation, even if somewhat undignified, was well understandable.

The Advance on Pretoria

Towards the end of May Roberts moved north from Kroonstad, helped perhaps to a very small extent by rather a tardy advance by Buller towards Laing's Nek. On May 24th Roberts issued a proclamation at Winburg, announcing the annexation of the Free State under the title of the Orange River Colony. At last the grievous error of the Bloemfontein Convention of 1854 was repaired. On May 27th Roberts crossed the Vaal and entered the territory of the South African Republic. There was one small fight at Doornkop. near where Jameson had surrendered, and then on May 31st Johannesburg capitulated. Four days later Pretoria surrendered without resistance and the British prisoners there were released. President Krüger had already departed down the line towards Delagoa Bay, taking with him many boxes of good Rand gold which may have accompanied him to Europe, or again may have been buried somewhere in South Africa. The latter belief is the more popular and many enterprising men have been looking for them ever since.

Token of Coming Trouble

As in the case of the British, so with the Boers, the most able leaders were gradually coming to the front. The Transvaal leader, Joubert, had died in March and his place had been taken by Louis Botha, who had started the war as a simple burgher and subsequently held Buller back on the Tugela. Similarly in the Free State (or Orange River Colony) De Wet was now Commandant-General. These leaders, aided by Delarey, well knew the difficulties which the British would have to face in holding the long line of railway from Cape Town to Pretoria and in striving to establish their authority over the wide stretch of country on either side of it. They therefore came to the decision to hold no more prepared positions, except along the line to Delagoa Bay, which might result in their being hemmed in, but to conduct instead a guerrilla warfare in

the open country, relying on their great mobility to break the railways and concentrate against isolated British garrisons.

De Wet began this policy in the Free State by capturing 530 yeomanry at Lindley on May 31st. He followed this up on June 7th by capturing 500 militia at Roodewal. Lord Kitchener, coming south to concert measures against him, was very nearly captured and the Free State sector of the British communications became distinctly unsafe. Lord Roberts had, however, always a sure eye for what was really essential. The guerrillas, annoying as they were, must wait until he had cleared the Boers from the vicinity of Pretoria, and this he did by driving Botha back from Diamond Hill on June 12th farther down the railway to the Portuguese frontier.

Prinsloo's Surrender

Columns were now directed against the Free State Boers who had tended to congregate close to the northern frontier of Basutoland, from which they could direct raids against the main railway-line to the north-west of them. This had one serious disadvantage in that Basutos were warlike and did not like Boers. They could not therefore cross the Caledon River into Basutoland, but must slip out at either end of the mountains if the British advanced. This fact had not escaped De Wet, and as the British advanced against the Free Staters their Commandant-General departed while the going was good. The bulk of his force did not, however, follow him and remained under Marthinus Prinsloo pinned up against the Basutoland border. Consequently, when the British closed the passes in the mountains, they had no option but to surrender, which they did to the number of over 4,000—a slightly bigger bag than at Paardeberg.

On escaping from the Basutoland border De Wet made for the Transvaal. President Steyn accompanied him and was thus enabled to join President Krüger on the Delagoa line. De Wet then returned to the Free State, doubling and twisting between the columns trying to catch him. In August three hundred Rhodesians and Australians under Colonel Hore were attacked by Delarey on the Eland's River. They stood their ground gallantly; there was no surrender and they were eventually rescued by Lord Kitchener.

The Expulsion of the Boer Governments

Meanwhile Krüger with the bulk of the Transvaal forces had remained in the eastern portion of the Transvaal, and from this region Roberts now determined to clear them out. A joint advance was planned, French moving east along the Delagoa line and Buller northward from Natal. A junction was successfully effected at

Belfast on the railway and Roberts then came to take command of the operations against Krüger and Botha. The last considerable engagement of the war was fought at Berendal, athwart the railway, on August 27th. Here the British were victorious, owing largely to the determination of Buller, whose last battle was his best. This was the last formal stand made by the Boers. The fighting men scattered north and south to avoid being caught against the Portuguese border. Krüger himself left for Europe in the hope of gaining at any rate diplomatic support against the British, but soon found that applause when his cause was prospering was a very different matter from help now that he was an exile.

On September 21st General Pole Carew reached Komati Poort, the last Transvaal station on the Delagoa railway. Here were found the remains of the 6-in. Creusot guns with which the Boers had so long battered the beleaguered garrisons and the wreckage of all the stores they had been unable to carry away when the railway was abandoned. It marked the end of the Boer republics as organized states, but not, unfortunately, of their powers of irregular resistance.

De Wet was still at large in the Free State and on November 6th had the tables turned on him by Colonel Le Gallais, who surprised his camp at dawn. De Wet lost 150 men and his guns but managed to escape himself with President Steyn. Rallying his forces, however, he attacked Dewetsdorp on November 23rd and captured 400 prisoners. Decidedly there was a lot of fight in him yet.

The Change of Command

Despite De Wet's successes the fact that the Boers no longer had any organized government, or any town they could call their own for more than a brief period, appeared to justify the belief that peace could not be long delayed. On September 1st a Proclamation was issued once again annexing the Transvaal to the British Dominions. Lord Roberts handed over the chief command in November 1900 to Lord Kitchener, who was entrusted with the task of crushing the remains of the Boer resistance. His last and greatest service to the Empire had been rendered. He took command in the darkest hour, he turned failure into success and he remained at his post till—to all appearances—the final victory was in sight. In his farewell address to his troops he said: "You have caused the Army of Great Britain to be as highly respected as it must henceforth be greatly feared in South Africa." This was his work and the justification of the South African War. Had Great Britain never been feared in South Africa by her opponents she would never have been respected and there would have been no Union of South Africa within the British Commonwealth of Nations to-day.

The second phase of the operations was over. Kitchener re-

mained—to conduct a war which, despite all appearances, was only half completed.

Guerrilla War

Kitchener now had to face the problem of how to fight in every direction at once. Hitherto the Boers had held certain defined positions which could be attacked ; but now they held none. The policy initiated by De Wet was everywhere in force and thousands of well-armed and well-mounted Boers infested the countryside, blowing up railways and bridges, derailing trains and concentrating, often in superior numbers, to attack isolated British detachments and convoys. They could not now hope to win, but they could—and did—hope to postpone the day of submission as long as possible. Moreover, having now no definite territory of their own to protect, they were able to devote more efforts to raising rebellion in the vast area of the Cape Colony, where they would at any rate find friends and, in many cases, reinforcements. The British lines of communication were enormously long and could be attacked at unexpected points. (From Pretoria to Capetown is 800 miles.) In these operations Boer detachments came even within sight of the sea. Prominent in these raids on the Cape Colony was Jan Christiaan Smuts, formerly State Attorney of the South African Republic under Krüger, and in years to come Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa and a British lieutenant-general. The war was therefore more widely-spread than ever and, in a sense, even more difficult.

Kitchener's New Tactics

Kitchener's problem in 1901 and 1902 was therefore threefold. He had to protect the British communications against Boer attacks ; he had to deprive the Boers of the resources to carry on the war, and he had to harry them unceasingly till they gave up the struggle. For the first need he relied on corrugated-iron blockhouses with stones or other material between the corrugated iron to render them bullet-proof. Each had a garrison of 1 N.C.O. and 10 men. These were sited within rifle-shot of each other and were linked up by barbed-wire entanglements. South Africa established barbed-wire as a military weapon. It was the cheapest and most popular form of fencing in South Africa and very plentiful. Starting in January 1901 as a protection for the railway-lines, the blockhouse and barbed-wire system gradually spread across country till the whole theatre of war was a series of vast enclosures.

The second measure, distasteful but inevitable, was the concentration camps. Obviously, if the Boers could commandeer horses and provisions from loyalists and obtain them free at the farmhouses of

friends, the war might go on indefinitely. The white population was therefore brought in as far as possible from the farm-houses, and established in central camps, which by the end of 1901 contained over 100,000 inmates. This created great bitterness for two reasons. Many farms had to be burnt to prevent their being used as shelters by the Boers. A South African farm-house represents many years of labour in an empty land and their destruction was much resented. Even where they were not burnt they suffered heavy damage. South Africa has in general very little wood, and a fence-post is a consideration to a soldier speculating how he is to cook his supper. Other wood is better still. Sir George MacMunn tells of a soldier who said : " I always cooks with a 'armonium." Boers are fond of harmoniums, which go well with psalm-singing, and these losses rankled.

Secondly, the concentration-camps, though run as well as possible, were not as comfortable as homes and there was heavy mortality among their inmates, of which the Boers and their sympathizers naturally made the most.

Kitchener's third expedient was mobile columns commanded by picked officers and when possible accompanied by at least a couple of guns. The British had learnt a good deal from their opponents by now and these columns, if not invariably successful, were a constant menace to the Boers and kept them continually on the run.

A Contest of Endurance

Throughout 1901 and the first half of 1902 the conflict of wills went on. The Boers mocked at first at the blockhouses and barbed-wire, but they found them increasingly serious obstacles. " Drives " were organized inside the wired areas, in which a British force would first sweep in one direction and then suddenly reverse and sweep back again, catching those who thought themselves secure. The Boers usually got away, but not without leaving casualties and prisoners behind them. Those prisoners were difficult to guard, and at first many were released on taking oath not to fight again, but these oaths they frequently broke, largely on account of the bitter hatred against the " handsuppers," i.e. those who took the oath and kept it. To avoid having to capture the same Boer too often the British deported over 24,000 overseas, mostly to St. Helena, India and Ceylon.

The Boers, particularly De Wet and Delarey, also captured a good many prisoners. Despite occasional incidents the South African War was a model of what a war should be. Both sides fought hard, but there was no bitterness such as characterized the Great War. Winston Churchill says of the Boers—though he was probably thinking of Boers of the type of Botha—" They were the most good-

hearted enemy I ever fought against." Furthermore, the combatants were by now well-accustomed to sum up a situation. So long as any hope remained they would fight desperately, but when there was hope no longer they surrendered and hoped to fight again another day. It was well-known that the Boers could not keep their prisoners since they had nowhere to put them, and the loss of their wardrobe to supply the Boers' deficiencies was the most to be feared. The bitterness on the British side was against the Cape Colony rebels, and on the part of the Boers against the "hand-suppers" and the "National Scouts," i.e. Boers who enlisted on the British side. Generally the feeling was good. The Boers sent their wounded to the British field-hospitals; and when Delarey captured Lord Methuen, who was wounded, in March 1902, he released him and sent him in to hospital.

Nevertheless it was a tough struggle. What turned the scale was the increasing skill and mobility of the British. Little as it was realized by their continental critics, they were engaged in the hardest school of warfare—the unexpected—and having grappled with one difficulty they could grapple with others. It is noteworthy that almost every British commander who distinguished himself in the Great War had previously done so in a comparatively junior rank in the South African War. The Army which left South Africa was very different from the one that went there. It had learnt mobility, resource and the use of the rifle. Military thought had been aroused to many weaknesses which must be remedied, and the reforms which followed such as those associated with Haldane were largely based on experience gained. Further, the value of Volunteers and Militia could be appraised and England realized that in time of need she could rely on the Dominions for assistance.

The Boers, on the other hand, despite occasional successes, found it harder and harder to continue the struggle. They began to realize that if they fought much longer they would have no country left for which to fight. But since

> "In matters of business the fault of the Dutch
> Is giving too little and asking too much"

it was to be expected that they would prove close bargainers.

Overtures for Peace

As early as February 1901, General Botha had met Lord Kitchener at Middelburg to discuss possible terms of peace. But the Boers would accept nothing which the British felt able to offer and the attempt failed. By the beginning of 1902, the position of the Boers was much less favourable, and at last on April 12th Lord Kitchener received the Boer delegates at Pretoria and presented them with the

British terms. The stumbling-block was the question of sovereignty. Britain had sacrificed too much to be able to tolerate any more the old divided authority. There must be one South Africa and it must form part of the British Empire. This conceded, the terms would be generous, but on this point there must be no misunderstanding. The Boer leaders took the proposals to discuss at their meeting at Vereeniging.

The Treaty of Vereeniging

For a long time the Boers argued among themselves and presented counter-proposals. But the days of suzerainty were past; sovereignty must be admitted. Finally on May 31st, 1902, the Boer delegates signed. They gained a free grant of £3,000,000 to restart their ruined farms, loans on very favourable terms for the same purpose, and very lenient terms for the Cape rebels, but they admitted British sovereignty. They had indeed no option. Apart from casualties, the exact figures of which are unknown they had lost over 33,000 prisoners, and only about 20,000 men still kept the field. The British loss in prisoners was under 10,000 (mostly soon recovered), but those killed in action amounted to nearly 6,000 and deaths from wounds and disease to over 16,000. Enteric fever did far more damage than the Boers. The cost to Britain in money was over £200,000,000.

A New South Africa and a New Empire

South Africa was at last united, but at a heavy cost. Nevertheless, it would be worth it were that union permanent. This depended principally on the Boers and different sections took different views. Some, like De Wet, Beyers and Maritz, were irreconcilable and would strike again if they got the chance, as they did in 1914. Others regretted their independence and would have liked to recover it, but not to the extent of fighting for it. Others again, like Botha and Smuts, the first two Premiers of South Africa, realized that it would be madness for white South Africa to remain disunited in face of a large and rapidly-growing Kaffir population, and furthermore that South Africa would be infinitely more important within the British Empire than she would ever be outside it. They appreciated the generosity, not only in money, with which they had been treated, and twelve years later fought for the Empire which they had been among the last to resist.

And as the South African War had made a new Army, so also it made a new Empire. Colonial forces had aided Britain before, but never in such strength or with such unanimity. The Dominions had, as it were, grown up to nationhood under the stress of war, and this fact was recognized by the very different way in which they now

regarded themselves and were regarded at Home. The words "colonials" and "colonies" were growing out-of-date. They had been colonies: now they were nations.

As regards the outside world, unquestionably the South African War was an unpleasant period. Britain had never realized that in international politics the isolated are always wrong. Our previous clashes with foreign powers were repaid with hostility: others had remembered, if we had not. Here again, the South African War was a turning-point. We began to look for allies.

CHAPTER XXI

EVENTS LEADING UP TO THE GREAT WAR, 1902–1914

Overtures to Germany.

The attitude of Continental powers during the South African War had demonstrated that isolation might be dangerous as well as splendid. The problem was : where should Britain seek friendship ? Rhodes had deliberately framed his scholarships so as to provide for Germans and Americans at Oxford, and the same thought was uppermost in the mind of the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Chamberlain. In a speech at Leicester on November 30th, 1899, he began by saying that " we should not remain permanently isolated on the continent of Europe," and then went on to advocate a Triple Alliance—or at any rate an understanding—between the British Empire, the United States and Germany. He urged that these were the Great Powers most like ourselves and also the ones with whom we had fewest causes of dispute.

These overtures fell on deaf ears. America had no desire to involve herself in European affairs, and Germany was only disposed to utilize Britain's necessities to demand concessions in Turkey and elsewhere. This attitude was compounded partly of jealousy of Britain's naval and colonial position, and partly of a determination to read a sinister motive into every British speech and action. German diplomats thought they detected in Chamberlain's proposals a desire on the part of Britain to use Germany as catspaw in her difficulties with France and Russia. So, with short-sighted cunning, they refused, and thus threw away a chance they afterwards bitterly regretted. Chamberlain's offer was genuinely meant. Germany had not been unpopular in England, for British troops had often fought side by side with Germans and hardly ever against them.

Germany as a Rival

On the contrary, Germany now adopted a policy increasingly hostile to Great Britain, and this was exemplified in her Second Navy Bill of 1900, the preamble of which explained that Germany must have so strong a battle-fleet that war, even for her most powerful naval opponent [which could only be Britain], would be attended by such dangers that its supremacy would be at stake. This was a definite challenge, and its effect was added to by the Kaiser's constant flamboyant speeches. Greater knowledge of his character and

position has since shown rather more of what these speeches really meant. The German Kaiser, despite his pretences to the contrary, was really a party-leader in his own country as well as a monarch. His party was the practically-fixed and irremovable government of the monarchists; his opponents were the Social Democrats, the stubborn and increasing minority of those who refused to fall down and worship the brazen image which Bismarck had set up. It was against these that his bombastic speeches were principally directed with the object of rallying support to his side, but naturally public opinion in Britain found difficulty in understanding a monarch who was alternately nervously anxious to be accepted on terms of equality by his British royal relatives and given to bluster when he failed to meet with an equally effusive response. The result, despite his sympathetic attendance at Queen Victoria's funeral in 1901, was a growing tendency to regard him as a temperamental swashbuckler, who was certainly a nuisance and might become a positive danger. Had Germany confined herself to ensuring a superiority over France and Russia at sea, the situation might have appeared very different from a British point of view.

The Boxer Rebellion, 1900

In 1900 Chinese hatred of "the foreign devils" culminated in an anti-foreign rising instigated by a secret society whose euphonious title "The Harmonious Heavenly Fists" was rapidly abbreviated to "the Boxers." Missionaries and their converts were murdered, the German Minister in Peking assassinated, and the foreign diplomats and residents shut up within the hastily-fortified Legation Quarter, where with a scanty garrison they endeavoured to hold off the frenzied hordes without. The Dowager-Empress, known as the "Old Buddha" and the real ruler of China, did not officially countenance the rising but she took no effective steps to suppress it. Eventually an international force gathered at Tientsin and, after one abortive advance, reached Peking in three weeks and relieved the Legations, which it was reported had already fallen. British and Indian troops behaved gallantly in the advance and were the first to reach the Legations, supported by Americans, French, Russians, Austrians, Italians, Germans, and Japanese. By the end of the rebellion there was a total allied force of 50,000 of which 18,000 were British and Indian. China had to pay an indemnity and the Boxers were suppressed. The Kaiser managed to get a German general, Count von Waldersee, appointed as commander, though, like most of his German troops, he did not arrive till the fighting was practically over. The Germans, however, distinguished themselves by carrying out their Kaiser's injunction to kill and slay "like the Huns of Attila"—an allusion familiar to German history

and legend and inspired by fury at the death of von Ketteler, but destined to be taken up in the Great War in a manner very unacceptable to its author and his people.[1]

Anglo-German co-operation in China had been distinctly difficult, but the British Government did not yet accept it as an impossibility. Two further attempts were made in 1903: an Anglo-German naval blockade of the tyrannical President Castro of Venezuela, which did little except irritate the United States, and discussions as to a proposed railway across Asia Minor to Baghdad and the Persian Gulf which fell through owing to excessive German claims. The partial co-operation as to the "Harmonious Heavenly Fists" had ended in an unpleasant revelation of the "mailed fist." It was now realized in England that, as it takes two to make a quarrel, so it takes more than one to make a friendship.

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance

Chamberlain's project for an Anglo-American-German alliance having fallen through, it remained to be seen what could be done elsewhere. One Power remained, a Power whose strategical and political situation bore a close resemblance to that of Britain. In 1894 Japan had gone to war with China, and captured from her the valuable harbour of Port Arthur. From this she had been compelled to withdraw by ultimatums served on her by Russia, Germany and France. The German ultimatum had been particularly offensive and when in 1914 the Japanese declared war on the Germans, they served them up the identical ultimatum, only changing Port Arthur to Kiao-Chau. But at the moment Japan's immediate problem was Russia, who, on Port Arthur being evacuated, had promptly installed herself there under cover of a "lease" from China. She had then by degrees occupied Manchuria, and was now pressing southward into Korea, a deadly menace to Japan. The Japanese felt fairly confident that they could deal with the Russians alone, but they feared another coalition directed against them. The British had narrowly escaped a similar risk during the South African War, and so the two similarly-circumstanced powers naturally drew together. In January 1902 a five-years treaty, extendable at will, was signed, the essential clause of which was that if either power were attacked by more than one enemy in Asia the other would come to her assistance. Thus Japan was no longer alone in the Far East, and Britain, though still alone in Europe, was no longer alone in the world.

[1] The British troops (and a British Naval Brigade) had to bear the brunt of some hard fighting and sustained considerable casualties. The Royal Welch Fusiliers were awarded the Battle Honour "Pekin" and nineteen Indian Army regiments obtained the Battle Honour "China."

The "Entente Cordiale"

A beginning had been made, but it was not sufficient. After our own, the most widely-spread colonial empire was that of the French, and where these adjoined there was constant friction which, as in the case of Fashoda, might become dangerous. It was therefore well worth seeing if "a friendly understanding" could not be come to by which these sources of friction might be eliminated. This was the policy of Lord Lansdowne and Delcassé, the British and French Foreign Ministers; but it is safe to say that it could not have been put into effect without the genial personality of King Edward. Resentment over Fashoda and sympathy with the Boers were still lively in France, and it was necessary to make the first advances. In the spring of 1903 the King visited Paris. He had often been there unofficially, a mark of good taste which the French appreciated, but this time he came in state and conquered. Greeted at first in silence or by a few cries of "Vivent les Boers," he departed as a friend, the result of his own tactful utterances. Shortly afterwards, President Loubet visited London where he was received with enthusiasm. The way was open for a settlement of the difficulties.

During 1904 a series of agreements took place dealing with outstanding difficulties. The most important of all—Egypt—was settled by the French declaring that they would not obstruct British action there in return for a similar agreement on our part with regard to Morocco. France renounced certain rights to use part of the shore of Newfoundland for fishing purposes—a privilege which dated from the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713—in return for certain concessions in West Africa. Other disputes in Asia and the Pacific were similarly settled. For the first time for many years France and Britain were prepared to live together in friendly fashion. France shortly afterwards came to terms with Italy, which made the latter's participation in a Franco-German war extremely improbable.

Trouble with Russia

Hardly had the Entente been concluded than it was subjected to a severe test. At the beginning of 1904, the Russo-Japanese War had begun with a surprise attack by Japanese destroyers on the Russian ships at anchor off Port Arthur. The damage inflicted in this attack had given the Japanese local superiority at sea, an advantage which the Russians were endeavouring to balance by the despatch of their Baltic Fleet to the Far East. Admiral Rojdestvenski's armada—a collection of hurriedly-completed vessels and museum specimens of obsolete warships—set off in the autumn with its officers and crews in a state of nervous agitation over the mythical Japanese destroyers supposed to be lying in wait for them in the

North Sea. Actually the Japanese never left their own waters, but on the night of October 21st the Russians blundered into the middle of the British "Gamecock" fleet of fishing trawlers on the Dogger Bank. Suspecting, in their state of "nerves," that these were the Japanese destroyers, the Russian warships opened fire in all directions, inflicting some damage on each other (subsequently cited as proof that the Japanese really were there) and killing and wounding a number of British fishermen. Indignation was hot in England where there were other grievances against Russia, including the seizure of British ships on suspicion of carrying contraband to the Japanese and suspected intrigues in Tibet, which had led to a British expedition under Colonel Younghusband entering Lhasa in August 1904. The Dalai Lama abdicated and a treaty was signed with his successor. This small campaign was remarkable for the highest altitude ever reached by British troops on service.[1]

Luckily the British Government kept calm, for it was realized that, just as Britain was bound to aid Japan if attacked by a second adversary, so France was bound to Russia in the like case. The Entente had been concluded just in time. Eventually the Russians paid compensation and the Baltic Fleet went on its way to execution at the hands of Togo in the Straits of Tsu-Shima, somewhat surprised to note the apprehensive neutral vessels encountered *en route* dashing for the horizon to avoid being mistaken for more torpedo-boats.

The episode, however, furnished the Kaiser with an excellent opportunity to display his mischief-making propensities. He took up the "Willy-Nicky" correspondence, assuring the Tsar in indifferent English (their medium of communication) that there had been foul play somewhere and proposing a coalition against Britain and Japan. The Tsar was eventually bamboozled into signing such a treaty at their private meeting at Björko in July 1905, but when the Russian ministers pointed out that such a treaty would involve Russia's ally, France, who would certainly not agree, the Kaiser's essay at flat-catching was allowed to drop. Once again the Entente had proved its value.

The Tangier Adventure

In the next crisis Britain was to come to the aid of France Relying on the 1904 agreement with Britain, France had adopted a forward policy in Morocco. But she had not bought off Germany, and as a means of putting on the screw the Kaiser had landed from his yacht at Tangier on March 31st, 1905, and addressed a speech to

[1] The force or "mission" consisted of 3,000 at first. It surmounted great difficulties of lines of communication, altitude, cold, snow and wind, fought three actions and took Gyantse and Lhasa. The only British regiment present was the Royal Fusiliers.

the German colony there (mobilized for the occasion) in which he emphasized the entirely independent position of the Sultan of Morocco. This led to strained relations between France and Germany, and the French Government had to sacrifice their Foreign Minister, Delcassé, in obedience to German threats. The French, however, were not prepared to be driven too far, and after prolonged discussions a Conference of the Powers was opened at Algeçiras, within sight of the bone of contention, Morocco, on January 16th, 1906. France and Germany were sharply opposed and the question was as to what line Great Britain would take.

The Military and Naval Conversations

Mr. Balfour's Government had just been succeeded in office by a Liberal Government under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, with Sir Edward Grey as his Foreign Secretary. Relying on the Entente, the French Government pointed out that though they quite recognized that Britain could not pledge herself in advance as to what she would do in the event of war, yet, in the event of action being decided on, the British would not be able to do anything effectively if their military and naval experts had not previously discussed matters with the French experts. It was this piece of French logic that ultimately led to British action in August 1914. Sir Edward Grey agreed, though with the proviso that these conversations should leave the hands of the British Government absolutely free to decide when, if ever, the time came. The day after the Conference began on January 16th, 1906, the conversations began also, and they continued at intervals till August 1914. Similar conversations took place with Belgium and documents connected with this being found when the Germans entered Brussels in August 1914, the Germans made great play with them as evidence of the horrid designs of Britain and Belgium. Considering the Kaiser's previous proposals at Björko, it is strange that no German ever thought of the well-known French saying: "This animal is very ferocious; if one attacks him, he defends himself."

The Algeçiras Conference

The actual matters discussed at Algeçiras were not of vast importance, mainly details as to the organization of the Moroccan police by France and Spain respectively. What did matter was the "line-up" of the European Powers. Britain and Russia openly supported France; Italy kept neutral, and Austria-Hungary alone gave Germany some support. In gratitude for this the Kaiser referred to Austria as a "brilliant second on the duelling-ground"

(an allusion to the German students' " schläger " duels, where each heavily-padded combatant is supported by a heavily-padded second, whose duty it is to strike up the swords " as soon as blood has been shed"). He added that Austria could count on a similar kind service from Germany when the need arose. He kept his word in Austria's dispute with Serbia in 1914, but it was not possible to strike up the swords quite so quickly.

The Conference of Algeçiras ended in April 1906. France had not quite got the free hand in Morocco she had hoped for, but German pressure had driven Britain and France closer together, and to that extent Germany had failed.

The Settlement with Russia

Adversity—or the prospect of it—makes strange bed-fellows. Germany had already alarmed Britain and France into making up their differences, and Russia, having got out of the Japanese War without paying an indemnity, was now beginning to think that the British were not altogether opposed to " Holy Russia." The Tsar, too, was getting a little suspicious of the good faith of the advice gushingly lavished on him by his friend " Willy." From the British point of view, Russia was making an effort to become respectable. In May 1906 the Tsar opened the Imperial Duma which, if not quite a parliament, looked at a distance quite sufficiently like one. There was also France, eager as a mutual friend to affect a reconciliation between her friends unhappily estranged. At last, in August 1907, an Anglo-Russian Convention was signed at Petrograd. By this Persia, a frequent source of argument, was divided—unfortunately without reference to the Persians—into three zones, Russian, British and neutral; a plan depicted by *Punch* in a cartoon showing the Bear and the Lion holding the Persian cat and observing: " I'll stroke his head, you can stroke his tail, and we'll take turns with the rest." It is certain that but for the imperative need of coming to an agreement with Russia, Britain would never have agreed to this, as it automatically made the Persians suspicious of all British proposals: a feeling they have ever since retained. In return Russia agreed to recognize Afghanistan as within the British sphere of interest, and both Powers agreed not to interfere in Tibet. The Russian menace to India was removed and, as a result, arrangements could be made for three divisions serving in India to be sent to Britain's assistance outside India if required. Our ally, Japan, also signed agreements with both Russia and France. Four Powers were now linked together, none of whom had any reason to love Germany, and sardonic Germans on the opposition side professed to detect subterranean rumblings indicating that Bismarck was turning in his grave.

The Young Turks

Ever since the "Bulgarian atrocities" of 1876, the Turkish Sultan, Abdul Hamid II ("Abdul the Damned") had been seeking to hold down the Orthodox Christians of his dominions by a systematic policy of slaughter and repression which was an offence to civilization. Neither Britain nor Russia would tolerate it; Britain because the victims were Christians and Russia because they were Orthodox. In 1903 Austria had joined with Russia to urge reforms which were only partially carried out, but by degrees rivalry between Russia and Austria in the Balkans grew to such a pitch that co-operation between them was no longer possible. It was clear that the Sultan was relying on this jealousy to nullify all attempts at reform and so, to prevent these breaking down altogether, Britain now took a more prominent part, in conjunction with Russia, in putting pressure on the Sultan. In 1908 King Edward visited the Tsar, and this event both alarmed Germany and gave her the opportunity of increasing her influence at Constantinople. Playing on the Sultan's fears of an Anglo-Russian alliance, Germany took the line that what went on in the Sultan's dominions was his affair alone, and this callous policy gradually established Germany in the position of the only friend of Turkey, whose proceedings no other Power would stomach.

Her position at Constantinople was not greatly affected by the "Young Turk" revolution of July 1908, by which a party of Turkish officers headed by Niazi Bey and Enver Bey deposed Abdul Hamid and established themselves in power. It soon became evident that the Young Turks were merely the old Turks writ large as far as any real hope of redress for Christians went, and Germany began to hope for a prospective ally in Turkey in place of Italy, whose value was more than ever dubious. From this time onward it was impossible for Britain to rival Germany in Turkey, since she could not pay the price in self-respect which the Germans were willing to pay.

The Bosnian Crisis

The first result of the "Young Turk" revolution was the Austrian annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Here Austria had a fair case, since she had been in occupation of the two Turkish provinces ever since the Treaty of Berlin and had done much to improve the material welfare—though not the contentedness—of the inhabitants. But as regards Turkey, the action was unscrupulous, since the world in general was at the moment disposed to give the Young Turks a chance to establish a decent government if they could; and as regards Serbia it was an overwhelming blow. The provinces had formed part of the old Serbian Empire, the Serbs had fought for them

in 1875, and in speech and origin the population was Serb. The Serbs now saw all hope of union apparently gone and their hopes of an outlet to the sea frustrated. They could not possibly resist and so in their plight they appealed to their hereditary protector—Russia. The Tsar protested and was backed by King Edward.

Here was Germany's chance to repay Austrian support at Algeçiras and her government adopted an aggressive tone towards Russia. Did Russia agree—Yes or No ? It was known that she had not yet recovered from the disasters of the Japanese War ; her army was not ready, and France and Britain were not disposed to fight over a quarrel which did not directly concern them. Russia gave way in March 1909 and Serbia had perforce to follow suit. This time the mailed fist had triumphed, but at the cost of welding the Triple Entente more closely together.

"THE TRIDENT MUST BE IN OUR FIST !"

Russia's disasters in the Far East had done more than tilt the balance of prestige on land in favour of the Central Powers. Her Baltic Fleet had followed her Far Eastern Fleet to its doom at the hands of the Japanese, and her naval power was now negligible. Germany's Baltic coast was secure and she could now concentrate her whole fleet in the North Sea if she so desired. The result was seen in a steady increase in her building-programme and an equally steady refusal to agree to any fixed proportion between her own fleet and the British. Perceiving this, feeling grew strong in Britain, even among those who had previously given Germany credit for pacific intentions. An agitation broke out for the immediate laying down of eight British battleships—"We want eight, and we won't wait !" These were provided by the Liberal First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. McKenna, in the estimates for 1909. Britain and Germany were now definitely building against each other. It is curious that Germany should have expended on her fleet the resources which, if devoted to the army, would almost certainly have ensured a victory. The reason appears to have been that, by the German Constitution, some of the Federal States had still, in peace-time, a considerable control over their military forces, whereas as regards the fleet, a more recent growth, the German Kaiser had undisputed control in peace as well as in war. He regarded the fleet as his own personal toy, a feeling naturally encouraged by ambitious naval officers, prominent among whom was Admiral von Tirpitz.

However the fact might be disguised, the building of this fleet was a challenge to Britain as an independent power, comparable to what Britain's institution of universal military service would have been to Germany. This, despite the urgings of Lord Roberts, we

could not possibly have undertaken in peace-time without Germany considering it a definite threat to her existence, yet she claimed the right to take an equally serious step as far as Britain was concerned. So a situation grew up in which Germany, in the event of a European war, would have the mastery of the seas unless Britain intervened.

"The Panther-Spring"

Between 1908 and 1911 friction steadily developed between France and Germany over Morocco. The French were gradually establishing their hold over the country and Germany had not yet been "bought off." She was determined to exact compensation, and so, in the summer of 1911, she dispatched a gunboat, the *Panther*, to the Moroccan port of Agadir, ostensibly to look after the interests (practically non-existent) of German subjects there. The next step was to demand from the French the cession of the greater part of their Congo possessions as compensation for recalling the *Panther*. This was sheer blackmail, and the French stood fast. What was to be Great Britain's attitude? Her answer was given by Mr. Lloyd George in a speech at the Mansion House on July 21st. "If a situation were to be forced on us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain has won by centuries of heroism and achievements, by allowing Britain to be treated, where her interests were vitally affected, as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of Nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure."

If Germany had any intention of testing the strength of the Entente between France and Britain her doubts were now resolved. Europe was within measurable distance of war.

But this time it was Germany who was not ready. Her army reorganization was not complete and her financial position insecure. After a prolonged period of tension she allowed it to be understood that she was willing to accept a much smaller slice of the French Congo than she had originally demanded, and on these terms the episode concluded. But for a moment the veil had been drawn aside and Europe was disclosed as two armed camps, each feverishly preparing for the worst and seeking allies. And with one of these camps Britain had taken her stand.

The Tripoli Adventure

On September 29th Italy declared war on Turkey, the pretext given being the oppression of her subjects in Tripoli by the Turks. Actually the reason was that Tripoli was the last portion of the North African coast not in the possession of a Great Power, and Italy feared that if she waited any longer she might be forestalled by another

power, possibly France, but more probably Germany. An Italian expeditionary force landed and engaged in hostilities with the few Turkish troops stationed in the province. No serious action was taken against Turkey's European possessions, as Austria-Hungary allowed it to be understood that such would be considered an act of war against herself.

Germany was in a dilemma. Italy was still nominally a member of the Triple Alliance, but any hope of her assistance was no longer possible conjointly with the carefully-cultivated friendship with Turkey. The latter was considered the more valuable and so Turkey began to take the place of Italy in the German plans.

The Balkan Wars.

In October 1912 the Balkan States, Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro, suddenly launched a crusade against Turkey with overwhelming success. Europe had not expected their victory, which was due to better leadership, organization and equipment, and also to the fact that by putting every available man into the field they had secured a considerable superiority in numbers over the Turkish troops in Europe. As the Turkish reinforcements from Asia arrived, it was possible to hold the Tchatalja Lines covering Constantinople, but everything else was lost. The European Powers now had to face a new situation.

Italy, soon after the war broke out, had made peace with Turkey, as she did not wish to fight in partnership with the Balkan States. Russia, as the protector of Orthodox Christianity, was delighted, though aware that the success of the Balkan States would make them more difficult to control in her own interests. Germany, on the other hand, had sustained a nasty blow, since the Turkish leaders had been trained in Berlin and she therefore expected them to prove victorious. She decided that, if Turkey were to be of military value in future, her army must be definitely trained and organized by German officers on the spot, and measures to this end were gradually introduced.

The biggest shock of all, however, was sustained by Austria. The Serbs, hitherto considered as of little military value, had been amazingly successful; they had gained confidence in themselves, and the southern Slav subjects of Austria were more than ever looking to them as their destined liberators. However, much was hoped from the dissensions among Balkan allies as to the disposal of the spoil they had gained. Here again Austria was destined to be disappointed. On June 29th, 1913, Austria's protégé—King Ferdinand of Bulgaria ("Foxy Ferdinand")—suddenly made a surprise attack on his nominal allies, Serbia and Greece, in Macedonia with disastrous effects—to himself. The Serbs and Greeks fought

like tigers and the Bulgars were beaten back. The Roumanians crossed the Danube and marched on Sofia, while the Turks, emerging from behind their Tchatalja Lines, re-occupied Adrinople without opposition. Ferdinand, ringed round by enemies, had to swallow a dictated peace at Bucharest which deprived him of the majority of his previous gains, and the hated Serbia was stronger than ever.

There is little doubt that Austria would at this stage have attacked Serbia had it not been for an Italian declaration that she would not support such a measure, since it would not fall within the terms of the Triple Alliance. Austria had therefore to content herself with ordering the Serbs out of Albania, a part of which they had occupied in order to gain an outlet to the sea.

The situation was now clear-cut. So long as Serbia existed Austria would never be secure in her southern provinces or have a free path for her designs on Salonika. Serbia barred the way and must be settled with sooner or later. The only advantages from the point of view of the Central Powers were that Turkey was more than ever dependent on Germany, and Bulgaria was obviously ready to join any alliance which would give her an opportunity of securing revenge on Serbia and Greece.

Preparing for the Worst

All the Powers now began to put the final touches to their military organizations.

Germany in 1913 added 170,000 men to the strength of her peace-time army and raised a capital levy of £50,000,000—an expedient which obviously could not be repeated—to cover the cost of equipment. She also dispatched a military mission to reorganize the Turkish army under General Liman von Sanders, who was in addition given command of the Turkish First Army Corps, covering Constantinople and the Straits. This was too much for Russia, and Liman's post had to be changed to that of General-Inspector of the Turkish army. But none the less Turkey was now in Germany's grip, and the Young Turk leaders were content that it should be so, for they had much to hope from Germany in the way of accomplishing their ambitions and nothing at all from Britain and Russia.

France did her best to bring her peace-time effectives more on a level with those of Germany by restoring the principle of three years' service with the colours in 1913, a heavy sacrifice to which her population would never have submitted had they felt there was any alternative. But nothing France could do would raise her reserves to an equality with those drawn from Germany's much more numerous population, and the problem as to how those reserves would be used was still an unsolved mystery. Peace-time formations cannot be concealed, but a Power in possession of large addi-

tional reserves can use them in two ways. The obvious course, since they are either too old or too young and in any case less efficient than serving soldiers, is to hold them back to reinforce regular formations in the event of need. This course France had adopted, since in any case she had fewer of them. The German Great General Staff, however, adopted a much more ambitious plan, which only German powers of organization could have rendered possible. They planned to organize their extra man-power into additional reserve divisions and corps the moment war broke out and to utilize them in the field without delay. This was possible since the General Staff had always the whip-hand of the German civil government, which neither knew nor controlled their plans, whereas in France the soldiers were, in peace, dependent on successive French ministries, which were constantly changing and would certainly not fight unless they must. This daring design to form German reserve corps, coupled with the equally daring plan of reducing the troops facing Russia at the outset to barely 250,000, meant that Germany could reckon on putting about 1,500,000 organized troops on to the western front at the outset, to which the French could at first reply with only 1,000,000. It was this enormous numerical superiority which carried the Germans into France in 1914. It also made certain that Belgium must be invaded in the event of war, since without an extension of the front the extra troops could not possibly be deployed.

Russia, Italy and Austria also did their best. Russia was hampered by vast distances and inefficient communications; Italy by lack of money, and Austria by the uncomfortable fact that only her German, Magyar and Bosnian Musulman formations could be relied on to fight with any enthusiasm. The remainder, more than half her total effectives, she must so dispose that they did not have to fight men of the same race on the other side of the frontiers, a transfer which would take a good deal of time.

The initial duel, therefore, were it to take place, would be principally between Germany and France.

Imperial Policing

While Europe was drifting towards the whirlpool, episodes of Imperial policing which required quite considerable forces, passed unregarded by the British public, whose attention was preoccupied by affairs nearer home. As usual, the North West Frontier provided some of these.

Following the Tirah War of 1897–8, large numbers of British and Indian troops had been left to guard the passes, so that the available striking force was partly frittered away in small detachments. This policy was altered by Lord Curzon who introduced that "Half

Forward Policy " which still exists on part of the frontier to-day. By this policy, political agents were appointed to exercise as much political influence over the tribes as would be sufficient to safeguard Imperial interests; the tribes were to be paid subsidies for the performance of specific duties—the chief of which was good behaviour—and otherwise they were to be left alone. The regular troops were to be withdrawn from the advanced posts to a few frontier stations and their place taken by locally enlisted tribal militia officered by a handful of British officers.

The success of the policy was largely dependent on the trustworthiness of the militia, and in Waziristan, by 1904, grave doubts had arisen on this matter. There, during the fixing of the Durand line, a Brigade under General Turner was surprised by a large force of tribesmen (some of whom were disgruntled militia), and as it was lying merely under picquets and not in a perimeter camp, sustained heavy losses. A punitive expedition had to be sent; penetrated to Wana and remained there for some time. The whole incident, accompanied as it was by the murders of several British officers by Mahsud levies, left a feeling of uneasiness, which was justified in 1919 when the militia forces melted away before the Afghan invasion.

Again in 1908 the weakness of the militia contributed largely to the need for an expedition against the Zakka Khel and Mohmands.

In north-east Africa, also, there was a small war which, indeed, was protracted until 1921. In British Somaliland a mullah, Mohammad bin Abdullah, began to raid the tribes friendly to the British. Unsuccessful operations were carried out against him in 1900–01 with a small force of Somalis and Yaos (from Nyasaland). In 1903 another campaign was opened with some British and Indian troops and a few Boer mounted infantry. Severe fighting took place; a small force was overwhelmed and eventually 7,000 troops had to be sent and a pitched battle fought at Jedballi before the " Mad Mullah " was routed and took refuge in Abyssinia. This, however, did not end his career, and further trouble broke out in 1908, in 1913–15, and finally in 1920–21, when, a force under Colonel Summers, with some aircraft decisively defeated the whole Dervish force and the Mullah died shortly afterwards. These campaigns had all to be carried out under the most difficult climatic conditions, often in desert or jungle country, and the camel transport, on which the punitive columns depended, suffered severely from a shortage of camels and forage.

British Army Reorganization

In the meantime, the British Army had fortunately been overhauled and reorganized. The South African War had revealed many

weaknesses; public interest was aroused owing to unexpected reverses and also through the medium of civilian soldiers who served for "the duration" and then returned to civil life. There had been a lack of trained staff officers; there was no brigade or divisional organization. These higher formations were hastily constructed out of units and corps at the last moment; their staffs were equally hastily gathered and appointed to them. There were no proper measures for ensuring adequate reserves and replacements. There was no General Staff, as it is known to-day, to think and plan for the future, nor was there any body whose function was to advise the Cabinet on Defence policy as a whole.

A Committee, consisting of Lord Esher, Admiral Sir John Fisher and Colonel Sir George Sydenham Clarke (later Lord Sydenham), was appointed to consider some of these problems in 1903. As a result of their report, in 1904 a general staff was formed; the appointment of Commander-in-Chief was abolished and henceforward the control of the Army was vested in an Army Council, consisting of the Secretary of State for War, four military members, one civil member and a finance member. The military members were respectively the Chief of the General Staff, the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General and the Master-General of Ordnance. At the same time the War Office was reorganized and much decentralization to the commands (which had been instituted in 1903) took place in order to leave the Higher Command free to work out policy and prepare for the future. Another important and permanent contribution was the reinstitution by Mr. Balfour of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (which had existed off and on for periods right back to the War of the Austrian Succession), and which soon became known as the Committee of Imperial Defence. Its functions were to advise the Cabinet on all matters of defence from the combined standpoint of the various sources, and thus to act as a co-ordinating agency between the Navy and Army (and later of the Air Force as well).

But the equally important task of organizing the Army itself so that it would be immediately ready for the struggle, which seemed to be inevitable, was still untouched.

The unromantic figure who undertook this vital task was a Scottish lawyer, Richard Burdon Haldane. He united a clear, logical brain with a power of prolonged exposition which wore out the most inquisitive opponents. Appointed Secretary of State for War when the Liberal Government came into office, he retained the post for six and a half years. During this period, aided largely by the advice of Sir Douglas Haig, he organized the British Army on a basis far more efficient than anything it had known before. The commanders and the training were there, the result of the South African War; what

was wanted was an organization worked out in peace which would stand the test of war. There must be no more of the hasty bundling together of units and staffs to form brigades and divisions which had taken place in South Africa. Everything must be organized beforehand—staffs, supplies, transport, auxiliary services and mobilization arrangements. This, however, would cost money; and he could not ask for increased estimates from a pacific government. He therefore disbanded some units (a very unpopular step) and with the money so saved he built up the framework of his organization. When his work was done, the British Regular Army at home comprised six infantry divisions and one cavalry division, each self contained with its staff and reserves immediately ready for service, with their proper complement of line-of-communication troops. The old Militia was transformed into the Special Reserve, to reinforce and find drafts for the regulars and the heterogeneous mass of yeomanry and volunteers welded into fourteen Territorial divisions and fourteen mounted brigades, complete with artillery (though not, unfortunately, owing to their cost, with the latest guns) and ready, with some additional training, to take the field for home defence and as a second line. The Staff Colleges were enlarged; manœuvres of large formations were started, and great attention paid to collective training and to musketry. Officers' Training Corps were also established at Universities and schools to provide a flow of officers. Further, the Dominions were consulted on Defence matters at the First Imperial Conference held in 1907, and agreed to establish General Staffs on the same lines as the British, working in close conjunction with it, exchanging officers, training on the same lines and using the same arms and equipment.[1] The Chief of the General Staff henceforward was known as the Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

As a result of these reforms we had, at last, a Regular Army at home organized for war; a Reserve to make good the wastage for at least six months and to replace regular battalions at overseas stations if necessary, and a Territorial Force which would receive some training each year, would be embodied when danger threatened and would be a support for home defence and possibly a means of expansion. In tabular form the available forces consisted of the following:

Regulars.	1 Cavalry Division.
	6 Divisions and L-of-C Troops (76 Battalions).
Special Reserve.	1 Battalion per Line Regiment as Draft finders and trainers (74 Battalions.)

[1] Unfortunately the Canadian Militia continued to use the Ross rifle—with the result that their arms and ammunition were different from all the other British units in the early days of the war.

	27 extra Battalions to go abroad and take the place of regular Battalions at Malta, Gibraltar, etc.
Territorials.	14 Divisions.
	14 Mounted Brigades (Yeomanry).
	Coast Defence troops.
Others.	National Reserve (Men over age for military service).
	Officers Training Corps.
	Pensioners.

If war must come, then Britain, within her peace-time limitations, was reasonably prepared. She had at least a small striking force immediately available and highly efficient.

The Beginnings of the Royal Flying Corps

Military experiments with aviation by means of balloons did not begin in England until 1878 ; by 1883 a balloon factory and school of instruction had been established at Chatham as part of the activities of the Royal Engineers. In 1884 the first detachment of balloons went on active service—to Bechuanaland—and again in 1885 several were used in the Sudan. In 1890, the balloon section R.E. became a recognized unit and the factory was moved to South Farnborough, where it still remains as the Royal Aircraft Factory. During the South African War, four balloon sections took part and did some good work in directing fire, though they were not used to the fullest advantage, and their stationary nature made them useless for the more mobile operations. It was not until the war was over that the first British dirigible was constructed (in 1903), and already the new heavier than air machine was starting on its meteoric career. In December 1903 the first Wright aeroplane had risen from the ground in America ; by 1909 Blériot had crossed the Channel, and foreign armies were seizing on and developing this new potential arm.

The development of the aeroplane was largely stimulated in England by the efforts of individual enthusiasts, some of whom were army officers, and its obvious importance led to the establishment in 1911 of the Air Battalion of the Royal Engineers, to supersede the Balloon Section and to instruct not merely in the handling of balloons, dirigibles and kites, but also of aeroplanes. Progress, however, was so rapid in foreign armies that the Government set up a committee in the same year to study the requirements of a national air service. In accordance with the report of this committee the Royal Flying Corps, consisting of a Naval and a Military Wing, came into existence on May 13th, 1912. The Military Wing

was to include 7 aeroplane squadrons of 12 machines each, in addition to some kites and balloons. When war broke out in August 1914 only six of these squadrons were complete, the seventh being merely a nucleus. The Naval Wing, or Royal Naval Air Service as it later was called, consisted only of about twenty machines.

The Archduke Franz Ferdinand

Across the middle of Europe lay Austria-Hungary, whose Emperor and Apostolic King since 1848 had been Francis Joseph, respected for his age and misfortunes, but otherwise a survival from a vanished age. His dominions had no common ties, except that they were his personal property, and in this empire he was in reality the hereditary chief and controller of the Hapsburg dynasty—a collection of about eighty Archdukes and Archduchesses (including collateral branches) with power to add to their number by duly-approved matrimony, but in no case (unless they wished to face the wrath of the Emperor) with those not of royal blood. This rule Franz Ferdinand, Francis Joseph's nephew and heir, had deliberately broken. In marrying the Countess Sophie Chotek he had been compelled to swear that his children, if he himself succeeded, should not succeed him ; but it was feared that the oath to which he had submitted as an Archduke he might not necessarily observe as an Emperor. Moreover, the Duchess of Hohenberg, the highest title which Austrian pride would allow his wife, was a Czech (i.e., a Slav) and the whole political structure of Austria-Hungary depended on the suppression of the Slavs by the German-Magyar coalition (i.e., " Dualism "). Whether influenced by his wife or not, Franz Ferdinand was believed to be flirting with the horrid figure of " Trialism " (i.e., an arrangement by which Austria-Hungary would be divided into three or more areas, not two, with reasonable privileges for the Slavs, thus reducing the dominance of the Magyars and Germans). Franz Ferdinand was, therefore, among the Hapsburgs a lonely and mistrusted figure, his only friend being the German Kaiser, who had gained his friendship by ordinary courtesy to the Duchess. On this man the future of Austria-Hungary would depend when Francis Joseph died.

The Tragedy of Sarajevo

On June 28th, 1914, the Archduke, in his capacity of Inspector of the Army, visited Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, in connection with some army manœuvres. The occasion was particularly ill-chosen, since it was the day of " Vidovdan " when all Serb patriots commemorate the stand of the Serbs against the Turks on the fatal field of Kossovo in 1389, and are consequently in even more than their usual state of fervour. Franz Ferdinand's selection of this day was taken as a deliberate challenge, and among the crowd were

a number of youthful Bosnian Serbs (Austrian subjects) armed with bombs and revolvers, but mostly, it would appear, hoping that someone else would do the deed and face its unpleasant consequences. Unfortunately the troops who had previously lined the streets for a visit of Francis Joseph—Sarajevo was known to be dangerous—were not in position, neither had the usual hosts of " secret police " been detailed. In fact, there is a very strong suspicion that the Austrian authorities deliberately put Franz Ferdinand " on the spot " after the manner of Chicago. The car containing the Archduke and his wife trailed slowly through the narrow streets. A bomb was thrown which missed its intended victims, but wounded some of the escort. After a visit to the Town Hall, where the Archduke roundly abused the mayor for the nature of his reception, he set out to visit the wounded in hospital. Once more there was a slow procession and this time there was no mistake. A young Bosnian Serb, Gavril Princip, pressed forward and emptied a revolver at point-blank range into the unfortunate couple, mortally wounding them. The Archduke's dying words are said to have been : " The fellow will get the Golden Cross of Merit for this ! " The Bosnian Serbs had killed the only Hapsburg who, if he had succeeded, might have diminished their grievances.

Once dead, the Archduke was buried at night in a very hole-and-corner fashion, with none of the ceremony appropriate for the Heir to the Throne ; and the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Berlin remarked to Prince von Bülow, the former German Chancellor : " As a Christian and as a Hungarian nobleman, I deplore the fate of the Archduke and his consort, but politically I must see in it a gracious act of Divine Providence." Alive, the Archduke was a danger, but dead he was an ideal pretext for what the German Crown Prince called : " a fresh and joyous war." Europe was on the edge of the abyss.

The Austrian Ultimatum

For nearly a month nothing of special importance happened apart from certain diplomatic conversations. Austria and Germany were considering the possibilities of the situation, while the rest of the world waited with growing apprehension. An Austrian Archduke had been murdered by Austrian subjects, but these subjects were Serbs by race and it might be possible to implicate the Serbian Government in having instigated them and supplied them with weapons. The truth seems to have been—though there will always be divergent views on this subject—that the Serbian Government as such knew nothing about it. Plans and weapons had been supplied by a Serbian secret society, located in Belgrade, but, to put it on the lowest grounds, the government of M. Pasitch would

not have selected the middle of a critical general election in Serbia for such an act. They had been negligent but not necessarily criminal. The sudden Austrian ultimatum of July 23rd gave them credit for nothing. They were required to submit within forty-eight hours to ten demands, including the " co-operation " of Austrian officials in Serbia in enquiries directed to finding out to what extent Serbians of the Kingdom had been guilty of instigating the murders. The skill of Austrian officials in " finding " the kind of evidence they wanted to find had previously been demonstrated at the expense of Austrian Slavs at the treason trial at Agram at the time of the Bosnian annexation, and this demand the Serbs could not possibly accept. They accepted everything else and appealed for arbitration. The Austrian Minister did not even wait to read their reply, but packed up and went. The " punitive-expedition " must begin. The Austrian Government were well aware that Russia would not tolerate this action but, secure in the promise of German support, they determined to persist.

Russia and the Slav Cause

Meanwhile in their distress the Serbs appealed to Russia. She had climbed down over the Bosnian annexation in 1908, but could she afford to climb down now ? If she did, her position as protector of the Slavs was at an end, and the Tsardom would be in jeopardy. Austria was already mobilizing her forces against Serbia and every day which passed would increase her advantage over Russia, since it was now obvious that the conflict, if it came, could not be localized merely as an Austro-Serb campaign. On July 29th the Tsar signed the order for general mobilization, but then wavered and tried to convert it into a mobilization against Austria only. It was too late. His generals disregarded his orders and carried on. The next day, July 30th the Austrians bombarded Belgrade and the Tsar's resistance was swept away. The following day the mobilization notices were posted up in Petrograd. Austria at once ordered a general mobilization, and Germany, who knew her own system to be more speedy than any other, ordained " a state of preparedness for war," not technically a mobilization but amounting to very much the same thing.

The German Ultimatum

On July 31st the German Government sent an ultimatum to Petrograd, demanding that Russia should cease mobilization within twelve hours or take the consequences. This, if any single event can be so regarded, was the decisive act. Germany still had it in her power, if she really wanted peace, to reply to the Russian mobilization by her own formal mobilization. The situation then, though

immensely dangerous, would not have been beyond hope. It is almost impossible to mobilize without fighting, but to send a formal ultimatum to a Great Power is absolutely decisive. According to Prince von Bülow, who visited his successor as Imperial Chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, at this moment, the latter was determined that war, if it must begin, should start with Russia, since otherwise he could not rely on the support of the Social Democratic opposition. They hated and feared Russia, and this was the only way to gain their aid. To the ultimatum Russia returned no answer—for none was expected—and on August 1st Russia and Germany were at war.

Sir Edward Grey's Efforts for Peace

Throughout this period Sir Edward Grey had been straining every nerve to obtain a peaceful settlement. On July 26th he proposed a mediation by the Great Powers. France and Italy at once agreed, but Germany replied that she could only intervene at Austria's definite request, and to this Austria refused to agree. Had Germany put pressure on her ally at this date it would have been another matter, but there is little doubt that Germany had no will to do this. Austria was propelled from behind into a position which, single-handed, she would never have dared. On July 29th Sir Edward Grey had a friendly conversation with Prince Lichnowsky, the German Ambassador in London, who was himself genuinely desirous for peace. But Lichnowsky had not himself been allowed to know his Government's real intentions so that, being himself deceived, he might the more easily deceive others. On July 31st Grey again talked with Lichnowsky, and urged that if Germany had any reasonable proposal to put forward she should do so. There was no response.

One thing Sir Edward Grey definitely could not do. He could not have announced, as the French asked him to do, that in the event of war Great Britain would necessarily take part. Such an action would have divided public opinion at home and would inevitably have been taken by Germany as definite proof that she was the victim of a policy of "encirclement." Moreover, it would have been useless, since Germany regarded Britain's military power as negligible—hence the Kaiser's reference to "French's contemptible little army"—and her whole plan of campaign was to overwhelm France before any other Power could aid her. Grey did, however, announce on August 2nd, after Germany and Russia were already at war, that if the German fleet attacked the French coast the British fleet would give all the protection in its power. This was the least he could have done since, relying on British support, the French had withdrawn practically their entire fleet into the Mediterranean. This

assurance did not necessarily mean war, as in 1870 the German fleet, though then it was inferior to the French, had taken no real part in the hostilities.

The Ultimatum to Belgium

On July 31st Germany delivered an ultimatum to France, who did not begin her mobilization till August 1st, calling on her to surrender her frontier fortresses of Verdun and Toul to German occupation. On August 2nd Germany also presented an ultimatum to Belgium, demanding a free passage for German troops through her territory on very inadequate security. This definitely violated the Treaty of 1832, by which Prussia, in common with Britain, France, Austria and Russia, had guaranteed the neutrality of Belgium. Both demands were refused, and German troops crossed the Belgian frontier. On August 3rd the King of the Belgians addressed a dignified appeal to Great Britain, and announced his intention of resisting to the utmost of his power. On the same day Germany declared war on France.

The British Ultimatum

The violation of Belgian neutrality was the decisive factor for Britain. The German Chancellor, who had an unfortunate habit of blurting out the truth, said to the Reichstag on August 4th: "Gentlemen, we are in a state of necessity" [i.e., the necessity of finding sufficient front for the German troops to deploy] "and necessity knows no law." The same afternoon the British Ambassador presented our ultimatum. Bethman-Hollweg was terribly agitated. "Just for a word—'neutrality'—just for a scrap of paper [the Treaty of 1832] Britain was going to make war." Up to the very last it seems that the German Government had imagined that Britain would take no action—indeed, cheers were actually raised in Berlin for Britain on that supposition. It was a fool's paradise—at midnight on August 4/5th the British ultimatum came into force. Germany was faced with the most stubborn of her antagonists, and the British Empire had embarked on the greatest war in history. Sir Edward Grey has recalled how he stood at a window of the Foreign Office as dusk was falling and observed: "The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime."

CHAPTER XXII

THE EFFORT OF THE REGULAR FORCES, 1914–1915

"For All We Have and Are"

The decision to take up the German challenge with regard to Belgium meant for Britain an effort infinitely more serious than ever before in her history. Not only did it involve a struggle for the mastery of the seas with the well-designed and well-organized German fleet, but it necessitated as well an intervention in Continental warfare on a scale hitherto undreamt of. This was due to the colossal ambition of Germany in planning victory on both sea and land simultaneously. Our ancestors never had to face the double challenge to anything like the same degree. They had been able to choose to a great extent the nature of their own effort and to measure it by the circumstances of the case. Now that choice was no longer possible. On both sea and land everything must go in. No Powers but Britain and Germany ever assumed such a burden. Their allies on each side made their principal effort by land and staked their own prospects of victory there. Both combinations trusted to their individual champions at sea, and in addition expected from each a maximum effort by land to assist in averting invasion. Under the double strain Germany finally collapsed and Britain came within measurable distance of doing so. As a result, when the hatred generated by the conflict had to some extent diminished, both Powers were left with a distinct respect for each other's prowess and a much less exalted opinion of their respective allies, who had expected from each far more than they were themselves willing to perform. It is an interesting speculation whether it was not the ambitious naval programme of the Kaiser and Admiral von Tirpitz which really lost Germany the war. A less exhausting defensive policy at sea would have made available by land those additional resources which might have given Germany the victory before the pressure of the British Fleet proved decisive. Fortunately, this policy was not tried.

The reason for the double effort in each case was economic. Britain must starve within a few months if successfully blockaded; if blockaded for a considerable period Germany, though more self-contained, must eventually succumb. No other Powers fought with the spectre of starvation hanging over them.

British Resources for the Struggle

Was Britain ready for such a conflict? Perhaps not, measured by subsequent necessities, but armaments depend on policy and policy depended on civilian Ministers who, though not unaware that war might come, had consistently pursued a policy of doing nothing that might precipitate it. It is hard to say that they were wrong. Measures such as the pre-war introduction of Universal Military Service, the creation of a vast submarine-proof base at Scapa Flow, and a firm alliance with France would have had precisely that effect. This was the limiting factor. To seek to obtain the maximum degree of efficiency in our existing armaments was possible; to organize beforehand so as to put much larger forces in the field would have been taken by Germany as a proof that the "conspiracy" against her was a real one and war would have come before any advantage from such measures could have been secured. The handicap was an inevitable one. Within these limits it is fair to say that most of what was reasonably possible had been done.

The Navy was ready, as far as thought and preparation could make it. It had fought no serious action for over a hundred years, and no one precisely knew how the balance between explosives and armour would turn. The primary lesson of the Russo-Japanese naval conflict, viz. the all-importance of quick and constant hitting, had been grasped, and the standard of gunnery had vastly improved in recent years. No one could say with certainty what the results of that hitting would be on the most modern ships, just as no one could exactly estimate the real value of the submarine. These problems only practical experience could elucidate. One definite advantage the British Fleet had already secured. Assembled at Spithead for a practice mobilization in July, the Home Fleet was prevented by the Admiralty from dispersing, and on July 29th the newest and most efficient vessels had passed the Straits of Dover under cover of darkness *en route* for their war-base at Scapa Flow. It was thus, though far from adequately defended against submarine attack, in a position of immense strategical advantage when hostilities actually commenced.

The Regular Army, though limited in numbers, was—thanks to the Haldane reorganization—far better constituted than ever before. By calling up the regular reserves, it was in a position to put into the field at very short notice a cavalry division and six infantry divisions, with line-of-communication troops and garrisons for defended ports. Its mobilization worked with extraordinary smoothness, as did its transport arrangements, and the first appearance of the British in the field took the Germans completely by surprise, as they had not expected them to intervene with any such rapidity. The senior officers had in most cases made their reputa-

tions under the difficult conditions of the South African War and were therefore picked men, accustomed to dealing with unexpected problems. With the exception of a few veterans who had served in 1870 as subalterns, no French or German officers had any such practical experience. There were no such wholesale dismissals amongst the British generals as those to which Joffre was compelled to resort.

The British disadvantages in command were that even the most senior officers had had no opportunity of handling really large forces on manœuvres or in the field, and that trained staff-officers were very few in number. Those who were available were nearly all despatched to France, leaving the staff at the War Office very seriously depleted.

The standard of musketry of the men was extremely high; the normal fifteen aimed rounds per minute being far in excess of that attained by any Continental army. Machine-guns were limited to two per battalion, and considerations of expense and uncertainty as to the nature of the next war had prevented any but the most scanty provision of even medium artillery and more than a very limited supply of shell for the field artillery. This was mainly shrapnel, the value of which was based on deductions drawn from the very different conditions of South Africa. The Special Reserve units (the old militia) were mostly employed on coast-defence. Later their great surplus of recruits was utilized to form New Army divisions.

The Problem of the Territorials

An integral part of the Haldane scheme had been the provision of fourteen mounted brigades and fourteen infantry divisions of the Territorial Force. The units comprising these were mostly in camp for their annual training when hostilities commenced, and so could be quickly mobilized. The use made of them has ever since been a subject of controversy. On the one hand, they represented an organized system with excellent local connections, and they were probably as well trained as the reserve divisions the Germans put into the field at the outset, thereby completely falsifying all the French calculations as to the strength of their armies. On the other hand, their training was much inferior to that of the regulars; many units were below strength, and they had a considerable proportion of unfit men. Legally, they were liable for home-service only, and though the vast majority would certainly have responded at once to an effective appeal to volunteer for service abroad, that appeal was not made on a general scale till a good deal later. The decision to seek other means for the vast necessary expansion of our armies was a personal one made by Lord Kitchener.

"KITCHENER WANTS YOU!"

His great reputation as an "organizer of victory" now brought Lord Kitchener into the Liberal Cabinet as Secretary of State for War. As a cadet just out of Woolwich he had taken a brief share in the war of 1870 as a volunteer with the French, and since then his life had been almost entirely spent out of England. Looking, therefore, at the vast problem with a wide perspective, he remained undazzled by the optimistic fancies of the French General Staff, and he alone from the outset correctly predicted the approximate duration of the war and planned his measures accordingly.

But he had the defects of his qualities. Throughout his military career he had relied on himself alone and worked no machinery which he had not himself created. The Territorial Force was another man's work; he saw its immediate limitations but not its potentialities. He therefore decided to start from the ground upwards, raising new divisions in groups of six; the first group in August 1914, the second and third groups in September and so on successively. This course enabled the Territorial divisions to be kept intact for home defence instead of being disorganized by splitting up and dilution, but it also meant that nearly a year elapsed before the new armies appeared in the field on a large scale, and that in the interval expedients like the bringing of Indian divisions to France had to be employed to fill up the gap. Had Kitchener risked a temporary dislocation of the Territorial Force his new formations might have been ready much sooner. On the other hand, the dramatic effect on recruiting of his appeal for New Armies would have been lost.

This appeal was an astonishing achievement, and no one but Kitchener could have carried it through. The early volunteers were the finest fighting material Britain ever put into the field. They came in their tens of thousands, only anxious to "do their bit"; they put up cheerfully with cold and muddy camps, no uniforms, dummy weapons and harassed and overworked officers. The school of thought represented by Henry Wilson derided the possibility of their ever making efficient troops. They proved him wrong but at the cost of such effort as may fill succeeding generations with admiration. Slowly they became real soldiers, but in the interval the small Regular Army had been left almost alone to hold the gate. That gate was held, but the regulars sacrificed themselves to hold it. The trained officers and N.C.O.s, who would have been invaluable in 1916, died in subordinate posts in 1914 and 1915, leaving to those who followed their inspiration but not their knowledge. That had to be painfully acquired all over again in the face of the enemy, and at a cost which it is difficult to over-estimate.

Conscription was not seriously considered as a means of filling the

New Armies at the outset. The objections were political and also the fact that voluntary enlistment provided at first all the men who could be handled. With so few trained instructors available, it was useless to take in any but the most willing and intelligent recruits. Conscription sweeps in all kinds, and needs a very powerful organization to handle its mixed material.

The Retreat from Mons

The first four regular divisions—for two were left behind at the outset to support the Territorials guarding the coast—and the cavalry division arrived in France to find the war nearly lost before a single battle had been fought. The French Plan XVII had visualized a German onslaught in numbers roughly equal to their own, viz. about 1,000,000 men. The French had anticipated a German invasion of Belgium, but south of Brussels only. With the German right wing tangled in the difficult Ardennes country, they hoped with a sudden counter-attack to break the German centre in Lorraine and dislocate their whole plan of attack. All their calculations were wrong, though they had had forty years to think of nothing else. Their formations and tactics were old-fashioned, their men still wore the very conspicuous blue coats and red trousers, and their counter-attacks in the centre were repulsed with frightful loss. They lost the pick of their first-line troops in these " battles of the Frontier " and never again was their human material so good.

No sooner had those battles been lost than it became clear that the enemy had deployed at least 500,000 more men on the West than had been anticipated ; that the main German weight was on the right wing and that that wing was swinging through Belgium with a far wider sweep and far greater momentum than had been deemed possible. The Fifth French Army on the left under Lanrezac, so far from outflanking the Germans, was itself in danger of being outflanked. On its exposed and outer flank stood the small British Expeditionary Force under Sir John French, with not. ing between it and the sea but the French Cavalry Corps and some French Territorial formations. Instead of merely supporting the French left wing, the British were thrust forward in the most dangerous position in the Allied line. Wiser than his generals, Kitchener would have preferred a concentration in the neighbourhood of Amiens.

On August 23rd Lanrezac, in a hopelessly exposed position between the Sambre and the Meuse, suddenly fell back without warning after a defeat at Charleroi, and the British fought the battle of Mons alone. The Germans had a nasty surprise, for it was their first experience of the musketry standard of the British regulars, and Sir John French was able to extricate his force from the grip

of a much more numerous enemy and fall back without undue difficulty. But grave mischief had been done to the cause of Allied co-operation. Sir John French was a good friend but a bad enemy. Lanrezac, he considered, had left him in the lurch, and he did not mean to risk a repetition of it. His thought was now primarily how to secure his flanks, and he meant to fall back till those flanks were definitely secure. It was this purpose which led to the breach with Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien over the latter's stand at Le Cateau on August 26th. In the situation in which the commander of the Second Corps found himself he really had no choice, and the check inflicted there on the oncoming German right wing was well worth the considerable British losses sustained. But he had definitely run counter to the intention of the Commander-in-Chief, who never trusted him again and exaggerated the shattered condition of the Second Corps as a reason for falling back still faster and farther. By September 5th the British Expeditionary Force was just to the south-east of Paris, and only the direct personal appeal of the French Commander-in-Chief and the intervention of Kitchener himself restored effective allied co-operation.

The First Battle of the Marne

The sweep of the German right wing through Belgium and northern France was the most tremendous military movement ever carried out, but, once started, it was difficult to direct effectively. The German Army Commanders were self-willed and inclined to quarrel, and the German Chief-of-Staff, von Moltke, had little control over them. Moreover, he was carrying out the plan of his predecessor von Schlieffen, in which he only half believed and only half-heartedly executed. The all-important right wing had been weakened to prevent the invasion of Alsace. The German losses in battle and on the march had been great and all units were much under strength. Divisions had been shed for the sieges of Antwerp and Maubeuge, and others diverted to the defence of East Prussia against the Russians. Whereas at the outset the Germans had enjoyed a fifty per cent. superiority in numbers, they were now only approximately equal to the Allies on the battlefield and their men were exhausted. Joffre, who had seen the complete collapse of the original French plan, had none the less kept his head, realizing that the German advance was carrying them farther from their own reserves and nearer to his own. He had the railway system of France behind him, and was steadily bringing troops across from his right wing, where the fighting had died down, to strengthen his centre and prolong his left.

The commander of the German First Army on the right, von Kluck, was now faced by the double task of conforming to the

general swing to the east of Paris and at the same time of holding off the new French Sixth Army under Maunoury assembling just to the north-east of Paris. He could not carry out two ex-centric movements adequately with the troops available, and so by September 6th a gap of some thirty miles had opened between the First Army and the Second Army under von Bülow on its left, a gap filled only by cavalry and Jägers (riflemen). On September 6th, in pursuance of Joffre's plan, the British faced about, and their countermarch carried them directly into the centre of this gap. The advance was not rapid, for the Grand Morin and Petit Morin had both to be passed in the face of resistance by the German cavalry rearguards; but by the morning of September 9th the British and the left wing of Franchet d'Esperey's Fifth French Army (Lanrezac had been Limogéed) were approaching the Marne. Both von Kluck and von Bülow were unhappy at the situation and jumped at the presence of Lieut.-Colonel Hentsch, on a vague mission from von Moltke to order retreat if necessary, to get out of a dangerous position by falling back to the Aisne. The whole German right wing retired, fighting rearguard actions as they went, which made it difficult for the Allies to get to close quarters. It was a planned retirement and not the rout it might have been had the Germans been pressed more resolutely by the British Army.

The battle of the Marne thus came to an end—a German check but not an Allied triumph. The German right wing fell back to an immensely strong natural position overlooking the valley of the River Aisne, and the Allies were faced with four years of attacks on entrenched positions. The Germans had secured a position of such initial advantage in France that they could afford to stand fast there, if they chose, while seeking a decision against Russia in the East. This was, however, to reverse their original plan, and they never decided wholeheartedly which they meant to do. Had they done so they might yet have won the war.

The Unrealized Problem

The tentative support by Britain of the Dual Alliance ever since the Algeçiras Conference had been based on a definite belief. This was that the respective military strengths of France and Russia versus Germany and Austria-Hungary were approximately equal and that the addition of the British Regular Army would turn the scale or even, under favourable circumstances, accelerate the victory. The failure of the Allies by September 18th to drive the Germans from their selected positions on the Aisne and farther east made it clear that a totally different military situation had disclosed itself. The Germans were firmly established in France, and the strategy of Hoffmann and Ludendorff in East Prussia had wrecked

Samsonov's army at Tannenberg by the end of August. The original combatants were not equal, and only a colossal effort by Britain could turn the scale in favour of the Entente, an effort which only the foresight of Kitchener had recognized as necessary from the outset. This effort the Allies impatiently expected, while the Germans openly derided its possibility. It was possible, but not without the sacrifice of the Regular Army to gain time for it to be made.

The Extension to the Sea

One move was still possible with the Allied forces available, and that was a progressive extension of the line northwards from the junction of the Oise and the Aisne to the sea, with the object of working round the German right flank. The attempt was made, but the odds were all against it, for the Germans had the advantage of interior lines and could in addition threaten to envelop the Allies' own left flank by an offensive down the Flanders coast. No sooner, in fact, was the B.E.F. transferred to the neighbourhood of Ypres and linked up with the Seventh Division and Third Cavalry Division, under Sir Henry Rawlinson, which had been covering the retirement of the garrison of Antwerp, than the blow fell. Hardly had the First Corps under Sir Douglas Haig begun its advance from Ypres towards Menin, when on October 20th it found itself opposed by large and unexpected forces. The Germans were pouring in the recently-raised reserve corps, composed mainly of young recruits, in a desperate attempt to break through to the Channel ports. This gain they could have had for nothing in the first days of the War, when all their plans were concentrated on the projected round-up of the French armies east of Paris. Some assistance was afforded by the French and Belgians, and two Indian divisions arrived shortly afterwards; but in the main the brunt was taken by the seven regular infantry divisions. They covered themselves with glory, but their losses were appalling and they were sustained by men who could not easily be replaced.

First Battle of Ypres, 1914

The focus of the British salient was Ypres, a position of no particular tactical importance which might well have been evacuated had not its possession been regarded by both sides as the symbol of victory. From October 21st to November 21st the British regulars held that salient despite all the efforts of fresh German troops continually pushed in to the attack. Twice over, on October 31st and November 11th, the line surrounding Ypres and southwards to Messines was nearly broken, and only the amazing fighting power, discipline and musketry of the British kept the Germans at bay.

The British troops were heavily outnumbered, and on occasions every possible reserve had to be thrown in to hold the line. Had the enemy realized the actual situation there is little doubt that they would have broken through, but they did not grasp how thin and battered was the line that alone interposed between them and the Channel ports. The outstanding British commander was Sir Douglas Haig, whose iron resolution kept the First Corps in a position untenable save by such troops and such a leader.

At last, by the middle of November, the conflict died away, and the British were temporarily relieved in the Ypres salient by the French. Never did British troops contend successfully against greater odds. In the words of Liddell Hart, they left Ypres for all time "the supreme memorial to the British Regular Army." Winter now came on, and all along the line from Switzerland to the sea the contending armies settled down to trench warfare, a condition from which till right at the end of the War the western combatants were never able to shake themselves free. The machine-guns and barbed-wire dominated the situation to a constantly-increasing extent.

Turkey Joins the Central Powers

On August 10th, 1914, two German cruisers, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, arrived in the Dardanelles, having successfully evaded the British cruisers in the Mediterranean. Their arrival was the signal for a systematic anti-Entente and pro-German attitude on the part of the Young Turk party in power at Constantinople, which had long been prepared. This should not be surprising, for the Turks had much to hope for from a German victory and nothing from the Entente. Russia had always been their enemy, and both Russia and Britain were in possession of a great deal of former Turkish territory. Britain had nothing to offer them but money and good advice of the kind that Turks were always reluctant to take, whereas Germany offered no advice but instead leaders, munitions and the prospect of a great Turkish Empire ("Pan-Turanianism") once more revived. The inducements were too unequal, and by October German and Turkish ships were shelling the Russian Black Sea ports. This meant war; Germany had secured a substitute for the neutral and potentially-hostile Italy, a substitute whose reduction was to involve a tremendous diversion of British military resources.

The Turkish Stroke at the Canal

On deciding to join the Central Powers, the Turks, encouraged by their German masters, determined on an enterprise against the Suez Canal. They were anxious to retaliate for the proclamation of

Egypt as a British Protectorate on the outbreak of war, and for the deposition of the pro-Turkish Khedive, Abbas Hilmi, who had chosen to remain in Constantinople, where he was at the outbreak of the War, in favour of his uncle, Prince Hussein Kemal. The latter took the title of Sultan of Egypt, a challenge to the Turkish Sultan for which he was solemnly condemned to death (in his absence) by the Turks. The Turks believed that the appearance of even a small Turkish force in Egypt would be the signal for a general popular uprising against the British ; the British did not believe that the Turks could reach the Canal across the Sinai Desert at all. Actually a fair amount of water was left by winter rainstorms in rock-hollows and there were also wells along the Mediterranean coast. Thus in February 1915 a Turkish force of 20,000 with some field artillery did manage to struggle across the desert, painfully dragging with them some light steel pontoons for the crossing of the Canal. With the aid of these a handful of men actually managed to scramble across the Canal where they were shot down. The attack was repulsed and the Turks withdrew practically unmolested across the desert, though they lost a certain number of men from thirst. In a sense this Turkish enterprise justified itself, as it was the means of retaining a considerable British force to guard the Canal, but this fact should not be pressed too far. Owing to Egypt's admirable strategical situation, it served throughout the War as the base of British operations against Turkey (excluding Mesopotamia), and as a training ground was so suitable that the troops would have been there in any case had there been no Canal to guard.

The Lure of the Dardanelles

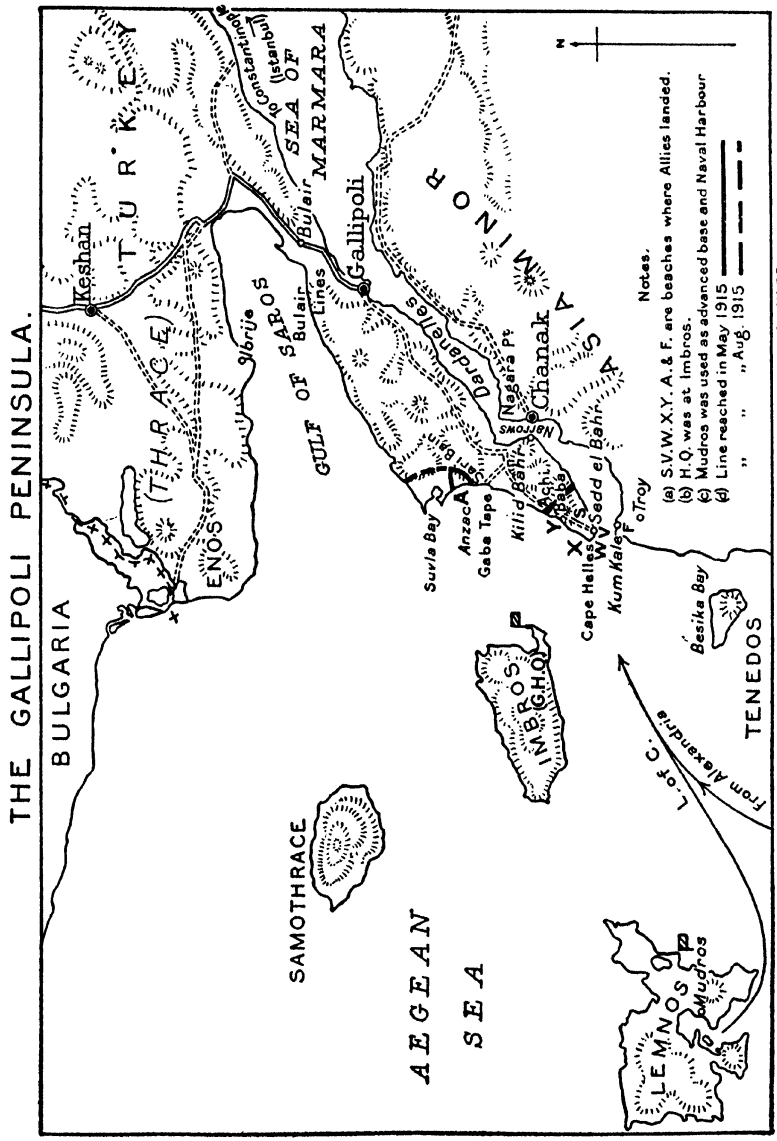
At the beginning of November an Allied Fleet bombarded the outer forts at the Dardanelles. The defences were known to be out-of-date, but this move at once alarmed the Turks, who appealed to their allies for aid in repairing the deficiencies, which by the end of February was fairly successfully accomplished. On January 2nd, 1915, an appeal was received by Britain from the Russian Government for something to be done to take off the Turkish pressure in Armenia. Actually the Russians were in no danger there, for they shortly afterwards defeated the Turks in that theatre, but the appeal fitted in well with the views of the section of opinion in England which was unfavourably impressed by the apparent stalemate in France, and desired to get back to the type of amphibious warfare traditional in British history. Its leader was Mr. Winston Churchill. He had already personally shared in the expedition to Antwerp, which might conceivably have succeeded had our military forces been twice as large as they were, and he believed that a successful assault

on the Dardanelles might change the course of the war. Unfortunately, though he had the ships, he had not the troops, for those available and trained (and they were not many) were in the hands of Kitchener. The latter, it seems, with the problems of the Western Front on his shoulders and long personal experience of the Near East, was never an enthusiastic believer in the Dardanelles scheme. He was, however, prepared to approve a "demonstration" as a diversion, and so found himself insensibly drawn into something very much larger. The naval authorities, anxious to take a more prominent part in the War, offered to undertake the task with their own resources, and during February and March an Allied fleet carried out a series of tentative bombardments of the outer forts of the Dardanelles, which had little result except the loss of three old battleships by unexpected mines, the damaging of three more, and the placing of the Turks and Germans thoroughly on their guard.

Even had the Fleet broken through, it is not easy to see what it could have done without a very large landing-force. Constantinople is not Turkey, as the subsequent career of Mustapha Kemal proved, and to pass laden munition-ships for Russia through the narrow defiles of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus would have been a most ticklish operation with determined enemies on both flanks. It would, moreover, have necessitated powerful and widely-distributed flank-guards ashore which we could not then spare. The whole Dardanelles scheme was based on the assumption that the forcing of the Straits would automatically have led the Turks to sue for peace. Had they not done so—and there was nothing in their character to justify the assumption that they would—the Allies would have been very little better off. Turkey surrendered when her main armies had been destroyed, and the Straits were never forced.

First Landing, Gallipoli

The Navy having failed to force the Straits alone, the Army was now called upon to intervene as an auxiliary. The project was that the troops should seize the narrow Gallipoli peninsula in the hope that with one side of the Narrows in friendly hands it might be possible for the ships to get through. No one seems to have considered that to seek for a decision in such a confined area was to present the Turks with the very kind of conflict in which they most excelled. Often as they had been out-manœuvred in the open, there were no better troops in the world in the defence of a narrow fortified front, as had been shown at Plevna in 1877 and Chatalja in 1912. They had six divisions to hold the Dardanelles, two of which were placed on the Asiatic side, two guarding the isthmus of Bulair and two in the peninsula itself. Their leader was the German Liman von Sanders, a steady and careful commander.


THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA.
BULGARIA
TURKEY
(THRACE)
Keshan
Constantinople (Istanbul)
Ybrija
ENOS
GULF OF SAROS
Bulair
Bulair Lines
SEA OF MARMARA
Gallipoli
Dardanelles
ASIA MINOR
Nagara Pt.
Chanak
SMOLEN
Suvla Bay
Anzac
Gaba Tepe
Kilid Bahr
Achi Baba
Sedd el Bahr
Cape Helles
W
X
Y
Kum Kale
Troy
IMBROS
IMBROS
SAMOTHRACE
AEGEAN SEA
C. of L.
from Alexandria
Besika Bay
TENEDOS
LEMNOS
Mudros
Notes.
(a) S.V.W.X.Y. A. & F. are beaches where Allies landed.
(b) H.Q. was at Imbros.
(c) Mudros was used as advanced base and Naval Harbour
(d) Line reached in May 1915
" " Aug. 1915
N
MILES 10 0 10 20 30 40 MILES

The British force exemplified the first blending in action of the old and the new: the regular 29th Division, gathered from overseas garrisons, the Royal Naval Division, war-time recruits for the Navy surplus to naval requirements, and two divisions of recently-raised Australians and New Zealanders, the famous "Anzacs." To these was added one French colonial division. All told, the respective forces were approximately equal in numbers. The Allied commander was Sir Ian Hamilton, an original and optimistic leader with a touch of genius, had he been given a fair chance to exercise it.

On April 25th, 1915, the landing took place. Sir Ian Hamilton, being able to select his points of attack, planned four distinct movements:

(1) A landing by the French on the Asiatic side to distract the attention of the Turks thitherward and then withdraw.

(2) A feint by the Royal Naval Division against Bulair from the Gulf of Saros.

(3) A landing by the Anzacs on the western side of the peninsula, aiming at reaching the Narrows across the shortest and least-broken stretch from the Aegean.

(4) A landing by the 29th Division at the tip of the peninsula, with the object of capturing the rounded hill of Achi Baba and linking up with the Anzacs.

Of these the first and second fulfilled their objects; the third and fourth (the main plan) succeeded where no other troops would have succeeded and failed only at the impossible. To have landed at all was superhuman; the 29th Division on beaches wired above and below water and swept by the enemy's fire, the Anzacs at the foot of rugged cliffs seamed with gullies and piled with rocky ridges above; but to push forward at once under such conditions before the enemy's reinforcements arrived could not be done. Had the troops marched forward on to the peninsula from level ground the task would have been difficult; landing as they did, it was impossible.

We know now that the Turks available to oppose the landing at first were very few, but they were fighting under conditions most favourable to themselves; they knew the ground, had water available, were less exhausted, and had reinforcements marching up steadily from behind as soon as the positions of the landings were known. Thus they were able to hold the slopes of Achi Baba and sweep the Anzacs off the crest of Chunuk Bair overlooking the Narrows. During the brief period in which Ian Hamilton's plan had given them the superiority in numbers the assailants were too handicapped and too exhausted to advance; when, from May 6th to May 8th, they tried again the Turks on the defensive in an ideal position had increased their forces. The two patches of territory gained remained unlinked-up, and, if the Turkish counter-attacks

failed to expel the invaders, the Narrows remained as far away as ever.

The first landing on the peninsula came within an ace of being a success in the face of amazing difficulties; it ended as a glorious failure. But since it is not in the British nature to admit failure, the two footholds, both sadly overlooked by the Turks, were retained until such time as troops could be found for the task of extending them.

Mesopotamian Campaign

Even before the Dardanelles expedition had been decided upon, an enterprise had been launched against Turkey which aimed at utilizing the pre-war military forces of the Empire other than the Home Expeditionary Force. This was the expedition to the head of the Persian Gulf, based on the military resources of India and controlled, till disaster supervened, by the military authorities there. The resources in question were not, in fact, particularly large. Order had to be maintained in India and the North-west Frontier guarded, a task not rendered any easier by the substitution of three Territorial divisions for the greater part of the regular British garrison. Two British-Indian divisions and two cavalry divisions had been sent to France and additional troops were required to deal with German East Africa. What could still be spared would not at first amount to more than a division of regular British and Indian troops with line-of-communication units. There was also the disadvantage that, owing to the defective reserve system in India and the lengthy period needed for training Indian soldiers, further reinforcements would be hard to find. More serious still, because unrealized, was the fact that the Indian Army had always been cheaply-run for its size. Kitchener, during his period as Commander-in-Chief, had succeeded in linking the scattered units into organized brigades and divisions, but even he had not been able to secure the proper provision of transport, supplies and auxiliary services. These deficiencies had been excused on the ground that local resources would always be available, but this only held good for campaigns in or adjoining India itself. Once an expedition left India by sea and was not provided for by the home authorities, this policy of parsimony would exact a heavy toll. But in such a crisis these considerations were disregarded, and so in November 1914 a force of one brigade, subsequently raised to a division, sailed for the Persian Gulf with the double object of checking German Berlin-Baghdad designs at their sea-terminus, and of protecting the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's pipeline from the region of Ahwaz and Shushtar to the river at Muhammera.

The Turkish hold over Mesopotamia had never been very effective,

and their local garrison was largely composed of unreliable Arab elements. Under these conditions it was possible to defeat the Turks at Sahil and occupy Basra and Kurna before the end of the year. In the spring the Turks rallied, and from April 12th–15th the battle of Shaiba was fought, a striking British victory which frustrated their attempt to break the ring of occupation round the head of the Persian Gulf. This battle of Shaiba has been described as one of the most decisive of the War, owing to the effect which a British repulse would have had on our prestige throughout the East. This is true, but it also had a most undesirable result in giving a false impression of the fighting powers of the Turks. Amara was rushed by river-steamers on June 3rd and the way appeared to lie open for the occupation of Baghdad. It was not realized that this attempt must infallibly bring the small and ill-equipped Anglo-Indian force up against the divisions of hard-fighting Anatolian Turks from the north, whose lines of communication to that city, though not good, were far better than those of the British.

The German Bases Overseas

The Partition of Africa had given Germany possession of considerable areas in that continent and these, as far as local circumstances permitted, had been organized not merely for self-defence but as bases for the invasion of adjacent British territory. The most serious attempt was made from German South-West Africa, from which the Germans had got into communication with the discontented Dutch element in the Union. On the declaration of war a revolt broke out there, headed by Beyers, the Commandant-General of the Union Defence Force, and by old irreconcilables like Christiaan de Wet, who had been fined 5/- for flogging a native with a sjambok (hence the title, "The Five-Shilling Rebellion"). Maritz, the commander of the force facing "German South-West," actually went over to the Germans with the majority of his men. In this crisis Generals Botha and Smuts rendered a magnificent service to the Empire. The "commandos" were called out, and trusting to Botha's judgment—one commandant is reported to have wired: "Please say if for or against British"—they responded in force. Beyers was routed and perished while trying to swim the Vaal, and de Wet was pursued with cars till his horses foundered in the Kalahari Desert and he had to surrender. With the advent of motor transport the old guerrilla warfare of 1901–2 was doomed.

Then Botha and Smuts turned on the Germans and the traitor Maritz. A series of exceedingly skilful moves forced the capitulation of the Germans in "South-West" by July 1915. They had only their European troops on which to rely, for the native population, remembering the ferocious treatment of the Herreros, gave

them no assistance and the mobile South Africans were all round them. Maritz fled to Portuguese Angola.

Togoland fell at the outbreak of the war with its magnificent wireless station, and German resistance in the Cameroons was steadily worn down by British and French African troops.

German East Africa was a much tougher task. There the Germans had an excellent recruiting ground in the warlike Manyamwezi tribe, and their black " askaris " fought hard under German leadership. An Indian expedition to Tanga was repulsed in November 1914, and it became clear that locally the Germans had more African troops than the British and that South African and Indian help must be enlisted to deal with the very capable German leader, von Lettow-Vorbeck, as well as troops from home.

Elsewhere the wisdom of Bismarck's objection to German colonial expansion was strikingly vindicated. Kiao-Chau fell to a Japanese force with a small British detachment, thus avenging the Japanese expulsion from Port Arthur in 1895, and German New Guinea and German Samoa capitulated to Australian and New Zealand forces. Everywhere, save in East Africa, German overseas ambitions collapsed because her bases were isolated by the British command of the sea and were too weak to stand alone. Only in " German East " had her colonization taken some kind of root, and here, backed by a solid military organization which he inspired, von Lettow-Vorbeck stood stubbornly at bay.

Neuve Chapelle

The failure of the German offensive in Flanders in the autumn of 1914 had led Sir John French and his staff to look forward with confidence to turning the tables in the spring of 1915 in conjunction with the French and Russians. There were now nine British regular divisions in France, two Indian divisions, and the equivalent of two first-line Territorial divisions attached as units to regular brigades. With the spring of 1915 other first-line Territorial divisions began to appear on the scene, acting as divisions, though the bulk of the fighting would still have to be borne by the regulars. These had been filled up with drafts, but still contained a considerable proportion of pre-war soldiers. On the other hand, artillery and shells were deficient, as the orders placed on the outbreak of war had not yet become effective. This limitation, serious as it was, did however prevent a long-continued bombardment of the type which later gave the Germans every opportunity to bring up their reserves.

Thus the attack at Neuve Chapelle on March 10th was an effective surprise ; the enemy lines were overrun to a depth of one mile on a three-mile front, and the Germans lost heavily in their counter-attacks, their casualties somewhat exceeding our own. Neuve

Chapelle may therefore reasonably be considered a tactical success, but strategically it was a failure, for the front attacked was too narrow to secure a break-through, and the Germans held on grimly to the flanks of the slight bulge created in their line. A wider frontage, better arrangements for bringing up reserves and a more powerful artillery were all obviously needed before any real impression could be made on the German entrenched positions. By March 13th the attack was suspended.

The New Weapon: Poison Gas

On April 22nd the Germans let loose the weapon they had secretly been preparing—chlorine gas. It was first employed on the northern sector of the Ypres salient and swept away the two French divisions holding it, thereby exposing the flank of the Canadian division on their right. There was really nothing at the outset to prevent the Germans walking into Ypres, but it seems that they had tried the use of gas mainly as an experiment; their own respirators were very inefficient, and they allowed themselves to be held up by the Canadians who extended to their left to fill up the gap. The German gain of ground was comparatively small; what was much more serious was the succession of attacks ordered by Sir John French to recover the lost ground, which occasioned the British very heavy loss for what was tactically of very small advantage. Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien objected to these attacks as not being worth the loss of men involved and was accordingly dismissed by the Commander-in-Chief, with whom his relations had been strained ever since Le Cateau. His force, now under Sir Herbert Plumer, was still kept in the disadvantageous salient, suffering heavy loss from German bombardment until the pressure was relieved at the end of May by Allied attacks elsewhere.

The Second Battle of Ypres was therefore a German tactical success, for they inflicted on the Allies much heavier losses than they sustained themselves. Strategically it was a failure, owing to their inability to exploit their new weapon to the full. As a matter of policy it was probably a mistake, for apart from the fury caused by the use of a weapon specifically condemned by the Hague Convention, westerly winds are more prevalent in northern France than easterly ones. As the British shortly afterwards retaliated in kind the Germans suffered more heavily on the balance from their own weapon till wind-borne gas liberated from cylinders was replaced by gas-shells. Later in the War, when the increasing shortage of rubber handicapped their manufacture of respirators, the Germans must have cursed the day they ever introduced poison-gas.

As to the morality of the German proceeding, it is unwise to be dogmatic. All war is terrible, and it is difficult to draw very much

distinction between asphyxiating one's enemies with gas and blowing them to pieces with high-explosive shells. It was a new weapon and therefore naturally objected to by those who did not employ it first. The Germans had the same kind of objection to the tank, which we considered an eminently proper weapon. In the War as a whole, it is noteworthy that permanent casualties from gas, once efficient respirators were available, formed a very small proportion of the total losses, which were roughly 60 per cent. from shells and 40 per cent from bullets.

The Battle of Festubert

On May 9th the British and Indian regulars attacked the south-west end of the Aubers ridge. The object was to assist the French attacks farther south, which were not unsuccessful, but from the British point of view the operations can only be described as a failure. The Germans' positions had been growing steadily stronger; the enemy were well supplied with machine guns and bombs which they used vigorously in counter-attacks. The British attempts lasted till May 25th, when they had to be discontinued. The regulars fought hard, and in these operations they were supported for the first time by Territorials acting as complete divisions, but the gains were very slight and the losses heavy.

In effect, the regulars—or such of them as were left—had shot their bolt, and it was necessary to wait until the New Armies training in England should be ready to take their part. In May they began to arrive, and during the summer of 1915, a steady stream of New Army divisions poured into France. By the end of September Sir John French had a total of thirty-seven divisions in France of all kinds. There was no longer any need to struggle against impossible odds as far as men were concerned, but as regards the other essentials—adequate staff-work, adequate training and, above all, adequate guns and shells—there was still an enormous leeway to be made up.

The Transition from the Old to the New

Still, the pause of three months between the end of the battle of Festubert and the beginning of the battle of Loos in September, during which the new divisions were arriving, marks a definite period in the operations in France. Roughly speaking, the fighting during the first year's operations in France was the work of the old Regular Army, and that fighting was carried out on pre-war training and with the weapons available when war broke out. The pre-war regulars had been trained on certain definite lines, of which discipline, musketry and mobility were the essential points. Not one of the belligerents had realized the character which the war was destined to

assume, and in this respect Britain was no worse than anyone else. Given the assumptions that the conflict would be brief and that it would be decided by manœuvres in the open field, the British Regular Army was as well trained and equipped as any.[1] During the brief period at the outset when these assumptions held good, the Regular Army did all—and more than all—that could be expected of it. When the whole character of the War in France suddenly changed to the attack and defence of fortified positions, the regulars rose to the occasion in a wonderful fashion, but they had neither the numbers nor the elaborate equipment which the new conditions necessitated. They had only their lives and these they gave in such profusion that by the autumn of 1915 the distinction between regular and non-regular divisions had practically been blotted out by casualties. The staff and the senior regimental officers were still mainly regulars and individual pre-war officers and men were still to be found in the lower ranks, but as units the old pre-war battalions had passed away with the exception of the final battalions withdrawn from overseas garrisons. The last regular division formed of these, the 27th, arrived in France in September 1915. There were no more to come. The last service the pre-war units could render was to hand down their traditions to the units which still bore their names, and their example to the new units which followed in their footsteps. They had paid the price for a war the Nation had not desired.

The Beginning of Air Power

In 1914 aviation as an instrument of war was still in its infancy. It was distrusted by senior officers, both naval and military, and the machines in existence were still so largely experimental that there was a general belief that aerial combat was an impossibility. The Royal Flying Corps, a branch of the Army and composed of volunteers from Army personnel, possessed about seventy aeroplanes of all types, and the Royal Naval Air Service about twenty seaplanes. On August 14th the first three squadrons of the R.F.C. flew across to France and every effort was made to add to their numbers.

Immediately on arrival the R.F.C. rendered priceless service to the British Expeditionary Force. It was British aviators who first warned Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien that at least three German Army Corps were facing him at Le Cateau instead of one as at first supposed ; it was British aviators again who detected von Kluck's move to the south-east of Paris and so paved the way for the " about-turn " which led to the victory of the Marne. This reconnaissance work was invaluable and would alone have justified the existence of the R.F.C.

[1] Except in machine guns and H.E.

Bombing on a large scale was not at first attempted, though some daring expeditions were made by the R.N.A.S. from its British bases which resulted in considerable damage being done to Zeppelin sheds in Germany. Actual air fighting in France was at first very primitive, the combatants being armed only with revolvers and rifles. It was realized that the machine-gun was the obvious weapon, but the difficulty was how to fire it. At first the weapon was mounted on the top plane of a biplane, and then an interrupter gear was evolved which enabled the gun to be fired through the propeller. This was the solution, for it was now only a question of aiming the whole machine in the required direction and opening fire as soon as the desired position was obtained. The danger was that a pilot seeking to do this was himself very liable to be attacked from the rear by an enemy plane swooping from above—the usual plan of the German Fokkers in the autumn of 1915 ; but during the first year of the War aerial fighting was still mainly experimental. Reconnaissance was the main task, and the amazing developments of air-fighting came later as both sides realized its immense importance.

The Sure Shield of Britain

In contrast with the speedy trial of the Regular Army was the silent strain on the Royal Navy. No military commander-in-chief can lose a war in an afternoon as a naval commander-in-chief may do ; and not merely the preservation of Britain from starvation but the very existence of the various expeditionary forces depended on the Navy. There was therefore no inclination to force an issue on the sea so long as the advantages derived from the initial dispositions of the Fleet remained intact. The British Isles lay like a breakwater cutting off the German High Seas Fleet from those high seas on which it never sailed, and it was for the Germans to make the first move if they wished to break that grip. Beatty's battle-cruiser squadron raided the Heligoland Bight on August 28th, 1914, and sank three German light cruisers, but this was obviously not a move which could be well repeated. Nor, despite the Kaiser's boasts, was it to the advantage of the Germans to stake their all at sea on a hasty battle with a fleet numerically superior to their own. They remained carefully on the watch, waiting for opportunities to reduce the odds against them. Nor till this had been done did they mean to fight a fleet-action.

The Submarine Menace

On September 22nd, 1914, the German submarine-commander, Otto Weddingen, with U 9 sank three old British cruisers in quick succession off the coast of Holland. This gave the Germans the

clue that they were seeking. Actually it does not seem that before the War Admiral von Tirpitz had much confidence in the submarine. The Germans started with only twenty-eight U-boats in service—only half the number possessed by the British—and of these the majority were by no means efficient. Over 150 were now laid down, but it took some time before they were completed and still longer to train their crews. For a considerable period the submarine danger was limited to the U-boats previously in existence, seven of which were lost in 1914. But the joint in Britain's armour had now, as the Germans thought, been found, and the U-boats were on their way. Meanwhile the enemy relied on their commerce-raiders and on mine-laying, of which their greatest success was the sinking of the battleship *Audacious* off Lough Swilly on October 27th.

Clearing the Seven Seas

The German ships abroad suffered from one decisive disadvantage —they had no base which could be considered secure. Their merchant-ships must seek refuge in neutral harbours or be captured; their warships could only aim at doing as much damage as possible before they were destroyed. Two armoured cruisers and six small light cruisers might be difficult to catch, but their eventual doom was inevitable. Admiral von Spee commanded five ships in the Pacific: the other three operated independently. On November 1st von Spee's squadron met a much weaker squadron under Admiral Craddock off Coronel on the coast of Chile and sank the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth* with all hands. The blow was swiftly avenged. On December 8th a British squadron, including two battle-cruisers, under Admiral Sir Doveton Sturdee, caught von Spee off the Falkland Islands and sank four German cruisers. This meant the collapse of German naval power beyond the seas. Of the remaining four light cruisers, one blew up and the other three were hunted down and destroyed, though not before they—particularly the *Emden*—had done great damage to British shipping. By March 1915 the seas were clear of German surface warships. Only disguised armed merchantmen and submarines could now operate outside the North Sea.

The Battle of the Dogger Bank

Just before the final rounding-up of the commerce-raiders, an engagement was fought between the British and German battle-cruisers in the North Sea. The German cruiser *Blücher* was sunk and the surviving vessels got back to port badly battered. This defeat for the Germans was indirectly of great service to them, for they saw the actual effect of British shells on their most modern

vessels. This was no longer a matter of speculation but of exact knowledge, and they were able to make certain technical improvements which were to stand them in good stead in the vaster conflict the following year. Had the British gained the same knowledge in time it is safe to say that their losses at Jutland would have been greatly reduced. But they did not know and so these technical weaknesses remained unremedied.

Naval interest instead was concentrated on the Dardanelles where, as we have seen, naval enterprise only succeeded in placing the land-forces in an impossible position strategically. Now, with the arrival of hostile submarines in force in the summer of 1915, the Fleet was prevented tactically from rendering assistance by gunfire just when it was most needed. Had this possible handicap been realized it is improbable that the campaign would ever have been launched.

As on land, so by sea, the summer of 1915 marks a decided pause in the operations. The initial clash had come without a definite decision, and on sea and land alike the two mighty antagonists were watching vigilantly for the next move. Each had engaged its initial resources without securing victory; each was mustering additional resources to tilt the balance in its favour. Could Germany wrest from Britain the mastery of the seas, handicapped as she was strategically, before the Allies could drive her armies from France, handicapped as they were in turn by the establishment of the Germans deep in the heart of the country?

Italy Joins In

Meantime, Italy had declared war on Austria (though not on Germany) on May 25th, 1915. She had been an uneasy member of the Triple Alliance, and now national interest and sentiment alike made intervention on the Entente side and against Austria almost inevitable. On April 26th she came to terms with Great Britain and France, in what is known as the Secret Treaty of London. She was to get the Trentino, Trieste and the Dalmatian coast, as well as a loan of £50 millions and some equivalent accessions of territory in North East Africa if Great Britain and France took the German colonies. On these conditions, Italy entered the war. She was, however, very unprepared. Her artillery was insufficient and a good deal of it nearly obsolete; there was a shortage of machine guns, shells, trench mortars, bombs, transport. The reserves of rifles and ammunition were inadequate.

In addition, the great salient of the Trentino, with its mountain sides, which protruded into the plain of Lombardy gave to Austria a strategic advantage. If Italy attempted to attack on the east, where lay the easiest fighting ground and the Austrian ports of

Trieste and Pola, a counter-attack from the Trentino, aimed at the very heart of northern Italy, would quickly bring her up with a jerk.

Nevertheless, she had the initial advantage in military strength on the frontier. She could dispose there 400,000 first line troops under General Cadorna against 80,000 Austro-Hungarians. Her entry into the war therefore had the immediate effect of diverting Austro-Hungarian troops from the Russian front and of relieving pressure there.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE VOLUNTARY EFFORT, 1915–1917

The Dardanelles. Second Phase

With the arrival of the New Armies in the field by the middle of 1915, the shortage of men was no longer acute. Munitions, however, were still sadly lacking, and it was not till a year after the formation of the Ministry of Munitions on July 2nd, 1915, that they were reasonably adequate, either in quantity or reliability. There was still, moreover, the divided effort resulting from the inability to decide whether to stake everything on success in France or to hold fast there and endeavour to seek a local decision at the Dardanelles. The champions of the latter theory had sufficient influence to cause three divisions of the New Army to be allotted as reinforcements for a big effort there.

The attempt was well-planned. On August 6th the 29th Division attacked at Helles, thereby distracting the attention of the Turks in that direction. The same day the Anzacs at Gaba Tepe, secretly reinforced by four New Army brigades and one Indian, attacked towards Maidos and the Narrows. The design was that these forces should be joined up on their left flank for an attack on the Sari Bair position by five New Army brigades landed on the night of August 6–7th at Suvla Bay just to the north of them. The plan came within an ace of success. The troops from Anzac Cove reached the summit of Chunuk Bair on the Sari Bair position, and were in sight of the Narrows when the Turks counter-attacked and drove them back, and no aid came in time from Suvla. The troops there had landed successfully and driven back the small force of Turks who opposed them, but the task of continuing the advance with a disorganized command, no water, and the hill-sides on fire, was too much for raw troops fighting their first battle. The advance died away as the result of general paralysis. Chunuk Bair to the south and Scimitar Hill and Tekke Tepe to the north were finally lost, and the net result of the new landing was merely to enlarge somewhat the area held by the British on the western side of the Peninsula without gaining the definite success hoped for. The Turkish reinforcements were just got up in time to the vital point. The Turks were altogether 120,000 strong and as numerous in the theatre of operations as the British. They held far more advantageous positions overlooking the British and a condition of stalemate ensued. Too much

had been asked from our new troops for their first time under fire, and once again the British effort had been too late.

The New Armies in France: The Battle of Loos

The attempt to break through at the Dardanelles had failed: it was now the turn of the commanders on the Western Front. The French were urging an ambitious plan, a converging attack by themselves and the British from the La Bassée Canal to south of Lens to coincide with a French offensive in Champagne. The British—and in particular Haig—were by no means optimistic. The ground was unfavourable, the front too narrow, the number of divisions to be used insufficient, and the supply of heavy guns and shells quite inadequate. But the French, particularly Foch, were insistent, and much was hoped from the employment of gas on a large scale. The attack was decided on.

On September 21st, 1915, the bombardment began, and on the morning of September 25th accompanied by a discharge of gas, six divisions (three Regular, one Territorial and two New Army) attacked at Loos. There were no local reserves available, as it was understood by Haig that the Commander-in-Chief would supply these from his general reserve.

Loos was overrun and the troops pressed on in the direction of Hulluch, but the German resistance was steadily stiffening. Now was the time for fresh troops to carry forward the attack. They were not there. Two New Army divisions had started the night before a long day's march from the rear. Tardily they struggled up through the darkness, constantly obstructed by transport moving down on the same roads. It was a parody of staff-work. One brigadier of the 24th Division was held up by a military policeman at Bethune for lack of a pass to enter the trench area! Meanwhile the assaulting divisions—or such of their men as were left—were clinging desperately to the ground gained. At last the exhausted reserves arrived. They were thrown straightway into the conflict, with no effective artillery support and no clear idea of what they were expected to do, against the strong German second-line positions. The result was a hopeless failure. The attacks of the 21st and 24th Divisions broke down, the Germans counter-attacked, gaps began to appear in the British line, and the situation was only saved by the Guards Division. The French Tenth Army to the south of Lens made no real effort and the French attack in Champagne broke down with enormous loss. The British losses amounted to 60,000 men, thrice the German loss on their front, and all there was to show for it when the operations were discontinued in the middle of October was a small bulge four miles long and at most a mile-and-a-half deep in the German front line. Loos was in many

ways the most unsatisfactory battle of the War and dealt a fatal blow to Sir John French's reputation. He resigned his command on December 15th, 1915, and Sir Douglas Haig took his place.

The Effort to Fill the Gaps : the Derby Scheme

Neuve Chapelle, Festubert, the Dardanelles and Loos had occasioned the British Army heavy casualties. Though by the end of 1915 there were thirty-six divisions in France and nine in Gallipoli, the problem of how to repair the wastage (on an average 100,000 a month) was growing increasingly serious. The original rush to arms had carried into the ranks the keenest and the most adventurous. Conscription had not been adopted, and those who remained had many excuses. The Navy absorbed many men; vast numbers were required for munitions, and trade and industry still required to be carried on to furnish funds for the War. The personal appeal of " Pals," " Sportsmen's " and " Public Schools " battalions was losing its force, and conscription in some form or another was drawing ominously near. In August 1915 an attempt was made by the National Registration Act to secure a stocktaking of the man-power available, and this disclosed the fact that, allowing for every other form of national effort, there were still very large numbers who might reasonably be called upon to join up.

The champions of undiluted voluntaryism were given a last chance. Lord Derby, one of the most popular of British noblemen, undertook to organize a scheme whereby men were invited to volunteer in groups arranged in order of age; the younger to go first and the single men before the married. It was only a partial success, since only the more conscientious signed on; those who wished to find excuses could still do so. This was unsatisfactory, as a sense of justice is a strong feature of the British character. What would happen if all these groups were called up, and married men found themselves in the ranks which those with less responsibilities had evaded ? Public feeling turned steadily towards a fairer system, and by the end of 1915 was ripe for a change.

Salonica

Throughout 1914 and 1915 the Serbians had fought heroically against colossal odds. Alone of our allies they had done all, and more than all, that could have been expected of them. Twice over, inspired by the desperate appeals of their blind King Peter and the skilful generalship of Marshal Putnik, they had driven the Austrians in rout from their territory. Now they were beginning to fail, and on their flank and rear hung the menace of their bitter enemies—the Bulgarians. Revenge for the defeat of 1913 and a great extension of territory—not to mention considerations in cash—were baits for

Ferdinand of Bulgaria which the Entente had nothing to match. He could only be offered Serbian territory in Macedonia which the Serbs were naturally loath to relinquish. By September 1915 Bulgaria was mobilizing.

The only hope of aiding Serbia effectively was a speedy landing in force at Salonica. True, it was Greek territory and Greece was a neutral, but her Prime Minister, Venizelos, was pro-Entente and likely to take a reasonable view of an irregular proceeding. But if Venizelos was pro-Entente the king, Constantine, was not—at any rate so long as Germany appeared likely to win—and he was strong enough to force the resignation of Venizelos. When the first French divisions, under General Sarrail, reached Salonica in October, they found themselves passively obstructed at every turn, and on October 14th Bulgaria declared war on Serbia and joined the Central Powers. Supported by a British division from Gallipoli, the French made desperate attempts to link up with the Serbs through Macedonia. They only just failed. The Serbian armies, attacked on three sides, were driven from their country, and only a remnant struggled in the depth of winter across the mountains of Albania to the Adriatic, from which the survivors were brought round by sea in allied ships to Salonica. A vast entrenched camp was then formed round Salonica, occupied by British, French, Italian, Russian (for a time), Serbian and, eventually, Venezelist Greek divisions. The Germans derisively referred to it as their largest internment camp, since only a few German troops were required to watch it, the bulk of the containing force consisting of Bulgars who certainly would not have served outside the Balkans. From this point of view the Salonica expedition was a bad investment for the Allies. None the less, it was the advance of the Salonica force in September 1918 which first forced an enemy power, Bulgaria, to sue for peace, so the strain cannot have been as one-sided as it appeared.

The Mesopotamian Campaign

The capture of Amara on the Tigris on June 3rd, 1915, was followed by the occupation of Nasiriya on the Euphrates on July 25th, thus placing the British in occupation of a wide area in southern Mesopotamia. The position was not, however, quite secure, since the Shatt-al-Hai (an old channel of the Tigris) ran north from Nasiriya to Kut-al-Amara on the Tigris. By advancing up the Tigris from Amara to Kut this alternative line could be denied to the Turks and the position on both rivers rendered more secure. This task was successfully accomplished by Major-General Townshend, who had first made his name by the defence of Chitral in 1895, and the 6th Indian Division, the Turks being very skilfully

defeated at Es-Sinn, eight miles below Kut, on September 27–28th. The cavalry pursued the enemy to Aziziya, half-way between Kut and Baghdad, and from a strictly military point of view the whole purpose of Expeditionary Force " D " was fulfilled, even if it had not already been completed by the capture of Amara on June 3rd.

At this point, unfortunately, purely political considerations began to affect the sound purposes of strategy. Mesopotamia was the only theatre of war in which British arms had up to that time been uniformly successful. The Suvla Bay landing had been a failure, and there was a prospect that the whole Dardanelles enterprise might have to be abandoned. There was little happening on the Sinai front, and the prospects at Salonica did not appear encouraging. Something, in the opinion of the politicians, must be done to restore British prestige in the East, and in this aspiration they found support from the Mesopotamian Commander-in-Chief, Sir John Nixon, a thrusting and ambitious soldier who believed that Townshend's division could capture Baghdad single-handed, provided reinforcements were sent to enable it to be held. Townshend himself, a skilful tactician who based his tactics on Napoleon's and consciously imitated him in other respects (he was known to the troops as " Alfonso ") was not altogether satisfied, being well aware that casualties had lowered the morale of his Indian troops and that neither in quantity or quality was his river-transport adequate for the task. But he was ambitious and willing to try.

After much anxious cabling between the numerous authorities concerned, the decision to advance on Baghdad was taken, and on November 11th Townshend set out from Aziziya beyond Kut. His field force only amounted to one weak division, and his prospects of success depended entirely on the Turks in their position at Ctesiphon, eighteen miles from Baghdad, not having been reinforced. At dawn on November 22nd he attacked them and carried their first line, but while the struggle for the second line was proceeding the very circumstance which had been deemed impossible happened. The advanced-guards of two divisions of Anatolian Turks, fresh from the Caucasus front, began to appear on the battlefield. After a desperate struggle the two forces fell apart, the British holding the captured Turkish first line for the night and the Turks retiring behind the Diala River. Finding that the British did not pursue, the Turks attacked the following evening and were beaten off, but it was obviously impossible now for the British to advance or even to remain in the Ctesiphon position. Retirement was ordered and the whole force fell back towards Kut, marching hard and fighting rearguard actions to hold off the pursuing Turks and the Arabs who now joined them. The river flotilla sacrificed itself to cover the retreat, with the result that every gunboat but one was lost. On

December 3rd, 1915, the exhausted force staggered into Kut, the advanced base where the stores had been accumulated.

Now came the critical decision. If Townshend acted at once there was time to evacuate Kut and fall back on the Sannaiyat position farther downstream, where his flanks would be secure and his communications intact. The sick, wounded, prisoners and the cavalry were sent off; but it was difficult to abandon the stores accumulated at Kut. Townshend consulted Nixon, whose decision as Commander-in-Chief it really was. Nixon, instead of giving a definite order, left it to Townshend to decide, and the latter, loath to abandon Kut and anticipating a speedy resumption of the forward movement, decided to occupy the loop of the Tigris nearly surrounding Kut and to hold on there in expectation of relief. "I will hold Kut as I held Chitral." So the chance was lost.

The Turks marched past him and occupied the Es-Sinn position; and four brigades of British-Indian troops were securely bottled up in the loop of the river at Kut. Instead of providing for the defence of Baghdad, the authorities in India were faced by the necessity of rescuing the garrison of Kut.

The Evacuation of Gallipoli

The shutting-up of Townshend's force was closely followed by the successful withdrawal of a much larger force from a position of even greater danger. It had for some months been realized that, now there seemed no hope of breaking through, the retention of the troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula during the winter months would involve immense hardship (as was demonstrated by the terrible blizzard of November 26–28th) and might even be very dangerous if German reinforcements arrived. A visit of Lord Kitchener to the actual scene of operations on November 9th turned the scale. It was decided to withdraw, even though the losses might amount to one-third of the force involved. What saved the situation were the facts that the Turks themselves had had about as much as they could stand, particularly from the blizzard, and that their troops were by nature firm believers in a good night's rest. Impossible as it appeared in anticipation, the troops at Suvla and Anzac, already steadily reduced in numbers under cover of darkness during the previous twelve days, were finally withdrawn on the night of December 19–20th. To evacuate Helles, now that warning had been given, seemed even more impossible, and yet by the employment of suitable ruses this too was successfully accomplished on the night of January 8–9th, 1916, with practically no loss of men. Thanks to the skilful co-operation of the Navy, perhaps the most difficult operation in war went off without a hitch. The Germans were amazed at its success. But we had lost in the whole opera-

tions, including the French, 130,000 killed, wounded and missing, and the most we could claim for this tremendous sacrifice was the elimination of nearly as many of the best Turkish troops. They never fought so well again.

Semi-Conscription

By the beginning of 1916 it became evident that not even the Derby Scheme could provide the necessary men to replace the wastage, and so in January the Military Service Bill was passed. It was only in the nature of a half-measure, since it did not apply to married men and Ireland was exempted. The Derby groups were shortly afterwards called up, the married men soon after the single, so that by signing on they saw themselves called upon before those men, married and single, who had not enrolled. This injustice was rectified by the Universal Military Service Bill of May 1916, which applied to all men from 18 to 41 ; but even so very large exemptions were given by the tribunals which decided who should go, and Ireland was still exempt. From a military point of view this was deplorable, but there was another side to the question. The unsuccessful frontal assaults continually sapped the confidence of the politicians in the military commanders, and they never gave them entire trust throughout the War. There was always the unexpressed fear that, given the man-power they demanded, they would expend it in the same way. It was not, therefore, till the Army obviously had its back to the wall in April 1918 that the Government was forced to pass a really sweeping measure. This was the real dilemma of the War. The generals could not win without *carte blanche* being given them, and this the politicians would not give when the generals did not demonstrate that they were winning without it. Thus the battle of the Somme was fought only with voluntary troops, for those partially-compelled were not ready ; and it was these two classes who finished the War, for the products of fully organized man-power were not really ready till the War was over.

Irish Rebellion, 1916

The antagonism between the Nationalist majority and the pro-Union minority in Ireland with its repercussion on British politics had been a considerable factor in Germany's original contempt of British intervention. Its effect they had grossly over-estimated, but the difficulty still remained. At the outset the Irish Nationalists rallied to the Allied cause, but undoubtedly they did so largely as a means of vindicating their own aspirations. In this they were to a great extent disappointed, for the passage of the Home Rule Bill into law was suspended and sentimental considerations, such as the

formation of an Irish Army Corps and the recognition of a national flag (matters which might have had a great effect on Irishmen), were, owing to Lord Kitchener's objections, not accepted. As a result, popular feeling began to turn from the Nationalists to the non-co-operating Sinn Fein extremists, and these, feeling the tide running in their favour, suddenly rose in revolt in Dublin on Easter Monday 1916. A number of police and soldiers were murdered, including wounded men in hospital uniform, but the troops quickly rallied and by May 1st the rebellion was stamped out with the aid of reinforcements from England. The Sinn Feiners who actually took up arms were comparatively few, and it was the riff-raff from the Dublin slums who joined them who were responsible for the deeds which roused England to fury. When one is fighting for one's life a stab in the back is always deadly, and it is not possible to consider the motives with which it is delivered. Fifteen of the rebel leaders were tried by court-martial and executed, together with Sir Roger Casement, an ex-British Consul who had landed on the coast of Kerry in the German interest. These executions automatically converted the rebel-leaders into "martyrs," and turned the (at first) universally-denounced attempt into "the most successful failure in history." In spite of subsequent attempts at conciliation by the British Government the damage was done. Irish recruitment never exceeded one-quarter of the proportionate effort of Great Britain and a very considerable British garrison had to be kept in the country throughout the War.

The Tragedy of Kut, 1915

The end of 1915 had seen the investment of General Townshend's force in Kut, and the establishment of the besieging Turks in the narrow gap between the marshes downstream, a position ideally suited to hold off a relieving force and provided with successive lines of defence. Two Indian divisions, the 3rd and 7th, arrived from France short of artillery and with no adequate river-transport, and with these General Aylmer defeated the Turks at Ali Gharbi and again at Sheikh Saad in the early part of January. The enemy now fell back to the Hanna position. This Aylmer attacked on January 21st, 1916, but the narrow front gave not the slightest cover to the assailants and the assault broke down with heavy loss. The relieving force was temporarily fought to a standstill, and during February no forward movement was possible.

Meanwhile, the stores in Kut were running out and Townshend was sending by wireless urgent appeals for relief. He had repulsed Turkish assaults on December 10th, 11th and 24th, and after that the siege became merely a blockade. Food was the problem. Townshend had at the outset undertaken to feed the civil population as

well as the troops, being ignorant of the fact that they had considerable stores of buried grain. Gradually this was realized, but so slowly that his early estimates of the date up to which he could hold out were wildly erroneous. Nor would he eject the Arab population, whom the Turks would undoubtedly have driven back to starve between the lines. The consequence was that the commanders of the relieving force, believing from Townshend's appeals that surrender was a matter of days, wore out their slowly assembling forces by a series of piecemeal attacks, whereas had they known the real situation they could have held back for a decisive effort.

On March 7th Aylmer advanced from Sheikh Saad against the Dujaila position by the south bank. Daybreak on the 5th found the Turks surprised, but the opportunity was not seized and a belated attack was repulsed. Thus the best chance of relieving Kut was lost. On April 5th the newly-arrived 13th Division under General Maude stormed the Hanna lines on the north bank ; but the next position at Sannaiyat was too strong, and the 7th and 13th Divisions failed successively. Attempts on both banks then failed, and as a last desperate resource a steamer, the *Julnar*, laden with provisions, tried to break the boom defences but was captured. Kut was now at its last gasp, and twenty men of the garrison were dying daily of starvation. On April 29th Townshend surrendered, having first destroyed his guns, ammunition and stores. About three thousand British troops and six thousand Indians were taken prisoners—the biggest British military disaster since Yorktown. Nearly five thousand of these unhappy men were never heard of again. The dull brutality of the Turks, who treated their own soldiers like dogs, had no mercy for sick and starving prisoners. Driven overland by long marches to Asia Minor, they collapsed and died by the wayside. Their officers were separated from them and there were few witnesses of that ghastly journey. Turkish officers taken prisoner at the end of the war begged abjectly not to be obliged to accompany their men. They thought they knew what it meant.

Verdun, 1916

On February 21st, 1916, the Germans began their Verdun offensive the second of their three great attempts to gain a decision on the Western Front. It was well planned, for the region surrounding Verdun projected as a great salient into the German lines and they were therefore able to deliver a converging attack on an area into which the French had few lines of communication. In addition, owing to an erroneous belief in the uselessness of permanent fortifications, the forts surrounding Verdun had been dismantled, and since it was regarded as a quiet sector even the field fortifications and trenches had been much neglected. The German calculation was

that, as the French could not, for reasons of morale, abandon Verdun, they would be compelled to expose large bodies of troops to bombardment in a confined area; whereas the Germans, making a succession of limited advances, each preceded by a hurricane bombardment, would suffer far less heavily. This calculation was very largely correct, for Marshal Petain, the defender of Verdun, admits that by May 1st no fewer than forty French divisions had been "swept through the millwheel," whereas the Germans had only employed twenty-six, though these were replenished from the rear.

As the struggle went on, it became clear that only a very considerable diversion of the German resources elsewhere would enable the French to hold Verdun, for the French losses were at least fifty per cent. heavier than those of their opponents at the outset, though later they improved the position. The continual absorption of French resources in the defence of Verdun upset the Allied plan of a joint offensive on the Somme previously arranged. The French share would now be proportionately less, and the attack would have to be on a narrower front and with fewer effectives. The British did all that was possible, sending across the Channel the last New Army divisions in the spring of 1916. We also took over more of the front to relieve the French, till by the end of June the British line extended from north of Ypres to the Somme. Meanwhile, during the period of preparation for the great assault on land, there came the long-awaited conflict at sea.

The Clash at Jutland

Nearly two years had passed and yet, contrary to popular expectation at the outset, no general fleet-action had been fought. The Grand Fleet still continued from its bases at Scapa Flow and the Firth of Forth to support the naval blockade of Germany, as far as difficulties with America and other neutrals would permit. So posted, it could be quickly concentrated, but when at sea it required at least eighty destroyers to safeguard it, so many the fewer for dealing with the U-boats.

The High Seas Fleet remained generally in harbour, waiting for its selected moment for action. This depended mainly on the success of the campaign by U-boats and mines, but up to the present this had produced no very great effect except to render it clear that the unrestricted use of these would in all probability embroil Germany with the United States. This possibility the German Government was, for the time being, unwilling to face, and it therefore became necessary for the High Seas Fleet to take on itself a more active rôle. On April 10th German cruisers bombarded Yarmouth and Lowestoft. The British Admiralty were at once on the alert.

As a result of our possession of a German signal-book captured by the Russians in the Baltic the enemy's reckless use of wireless (which could to some extent be deciphered), and the delay caused by having to sweep a passage through the mines laid (and watched) by British submarines in the Bight of Heligoland, the Germans could never issue out in force without warning being given. On May 31st the warning was received, and the Battle Cruiser Squadron from the Firth of Forth and the Grand Fleet from Scapa Flow at once proceeded towards Horn's Reef off the coast of Jutland. That afternoon the light cruisers on both sides were in contact.

The Battle Cruisers at Jutland

The British van was led by Admiral Beatty with six battle cruisers. The 5th Battle Squadron of fast battleships of the *Queen Elizabeth* type was eight or ten miles astern. At 3.45 p.m. Beatty was in action with Admiral von Hipper's five battle-cruisers. Beatty's subsequent movements have been the subject of much eulogy and also much criticism. He was a fine fighting commander; he believed in the individual superiority of his ships, and he was burning to strike a blow at von Hipper. On the other hand, he was acting in conjunction with Jellicoe, who depended on the battle-cruiser commander for the information which would enable him to fix the position of the German battle-fleet and so bring it to action. Instead of manœuvring so as to secure this, Beatty dashed at the German battle-cruisers without waiting for the fast and heavily-armed 5th Battle Squadron. The results were disastrous. The shooting of the British battle-cruisers was generally poor; the Germans had better visibility and were able to find the range very quickly. At 4 p.m. the *Indefatigable*, hit by a salvo, blew up and sank. At 4.26 the *Queen Mary* capsized and blew up. Shortly afterwards the *Princess Royal* was reported (but incorrectly) blown up. The unprotected ammunition-hoists and thin armour on the decks and turret-tops of the British battle-cruisers—weaknesses undisclosed, as we have seen, at the battle of the Dogger Bank—were exacting their price.

Beatty turned to his Flag-Captain: "Chatfield, there seems to be something wrong with our damned ships to-day. Turn two points to port" (i.e., an eighth of a circle *nearer* to the enemy). Four against five now, but the British fire improved and that of the German fell off now that they were being hit. The four British fast battleships now came up, and so did Scheer with the German battle fleet. Beatty turned back towards Jellicoe as did the 5th Battle Squadron, the latter being heavily hammered as it turned, but without loss owing to its better armour protection. At 6.10 p.m. the main fleets were in contact.

THE BATTLE-FLEETS AT JUTLAND

Jellicoe was steaming with divisions in line ahead and he had to consider how he would deploy into line for action. He decided to deploy on his port wing (i.e., farthest from the enemy). By so doing he has been accused of having missed an invaluable chance of bringing the enemy to action without loss of time ; on the other hand, it has been maintained that had he deployed on his starboard wing he would have been no nearer to the enemy and would temporarily have been in a dangerous position. The Germans themselves thought so, judging from their " Official History." By deploying as he did, he certainly got between the Germans and their own shores. The movement, however, took time, and while it was being carried out another British battle-cruiser, the *Invincible*, was hit and blew up.

By 6.35 p.m. Scheer was under a crushing fire from the deployed British battle line, and after ten minutes of this he turned away abruptly. He was still, however, on the wrong side of the British Fleet, (i.e., farthest from his own coast); and shortly afterwards he again turned east, it appears for no very convincing reason. At 7.12 p.m. he emerged from the mist right into the midst of the British battle-line. Every British battleship within range at once opened a tremendous fire. Two German battle-cruisers were heavily hit and Scheer flinched from the storm. After six minutes of this hurricane of fire he again turned about abruptly and vanished, covered by smoke-screens and torpedo attacks. To avoid these, Jellicoe also turned away at 7.22 p.m. For this he has been criticized, as it seems that the number of German torpedoes actually discharged was very limited.

Half an hour after Scheer's withdrawal, Beatty was again in touch with the German battle-cruisers three of which he battered almost to extinction. But only one, the *Lutzow*, was later scuttled as unmanageable. The German capital ships were not designed to be lived in for more than a short period at a stretch and their bulkheads and watertight compartments were accordingly much more numerous than in the corresponding British ships. With many hundred tons of water on board the remaining German battle-cruisers crawled away and just managed to reach port.

The British fleet was still between Scheer and home, and at 11.30 that night he crashed into the British destroyer flotillas following the Grand Fleet. Again Jellicoe has been criticized for having them there instead of ahead of the battle-fleet, but it appears that he knew that the German searchlights and night-recognition signals were better than our own, and he did not mean to fight a fleet action at night at all if he could help it. The Germans broke

through with the loss of one battleship, the *Pommern*, which was torpedoed and sunk at 12.10 a.m. Passing astern of the Grand Fleet, Scheer reached harbour and when morning broke not a German ship was in sight. Jellicoe accordingly returned to harbour. Thus ended the Battle of Jutland, a conflict in which the Germans escaped destruction owing to one or all of the following :

(1) The impetuosity of Beatty.

(2) The caution of Jellicoe,[1] and/or

(3) (Probably the principal reason.) The failure of the British Admiralty, to transmit an intercepted wireless message from Scheer which, had he received it, would have enabled Jellicoe to fix the exact position of the German fleet at daybreak after the battle instead of proceeding, as he did, on the wrong course.

The casualties sustained in personnel by the British were about double those of the Germans. On the other hand, the British fleet was unquestionably prepared to fight again next day. On August 19th Scheer sallied out again, but, on the presence of the Grand Fleet being reported, he at once returned to harbour. The two brief periods during which they had come under the fire of the Grand Fleet had been sufficient for the Germans. Well as Scheer had handled his ships, there was no doubt as to what would happen if a stand-up fight took place. The Germans never gave another opportunity for a fleet-action.

The Results of Jutland

Satisfactory though the battle had been in confirming the British surface mastery of the seas, Jutland had very serious results for Britain. The failure to destroy the German fleet meant that right till the end of the War it remained in being. It followed that the enormous resources needed to maintain the Grand Fleet were continuously required, and that these involved a corresponding diminution in those available to grapple with the submarine menace. For the Germans now devoted nearly all their energies to the construction of U-boats. So long as they still hoped to gain control of the seas with their surface-vessels the submarine campaign remained definitely a subordinate affair. Once they transferred their resources to building submarines the latter became much more menacing. In the spring of 1917 they had Britain by the throat. Had their fleet been crushed at Jutland they might still have attempted this, but the means to meet it would have been vastly greater.

[1] It must be remembered that there were tremendous reasons for Jellicoe's cautious policy. Heavy British losses by mines or torpedoes might have destroyed the British naval supremacy. He was, therefore, the one man who could have lost the war in a day.

The Passing of Kitchener

On the Eastern Front matters had not been going well. The enormous numbers mobilized by Russia had been held in check by a much smaller force of Germans aided by Austria, and in 1915 their lack of rifles, guns and shells had compelled the Russians to a disastrous retreat. These deficiencies might in time have been overcome—a far more serious matter was the weak-willed direction at the head. The Tsar, the Autocrat of All the Russians, Nicholas II, though personally completely loyal to the common cause, was entirely governed by the Empress. She, in turn, relied solely on a man described by a leading Russian politician as " a filthy snuffy lay-brother, a charlatan and adventurer," Gregory Rasputin (" the rake "). Only this man seemed able to keep alive the ailing Tsarevitch, on whom all the hopes of the Imperial family were centred. Russia was ruled by Rasputin, and under such an influence the rearward services of the Russian Army were rotting to decay. The sole object of Rasputin and the ministers appointed on his advice was to preserve the autocracy—nothing else mattered.

As a last hope of inducing the Russian Government to co-operate vigorously with the Allies and its own people, it was decided to send Lord Kitchener to Russia. Had he reached it he might conceivably have saved the situation, for his prestige was immense, but on June 6th the cruiser *Hampshire*, which was taking him to Russia, struck a mine—one of a group quite casually laid by a German submarine—off the west coast of the Orkneys and went down with nearly all on board. The leader who, despite all criticisms, stood more than any other for Britain's effort and who had created the New Armies, had perished.

The Empress wrote to the Emperor : " Our friend (i.e., Rasputin) says it is good for us that Kitchener died . . . as later he might have done Russia harm." In less than a year the Russian autocracy was gone. Brusilov in Galicia made a last effort, June–August 1916, capturing 350,000 prisoners, nearly all Austrians, but sustaining a million casualties in doing it. After this the Russians made no serious effort.

The Opening of the Somme Offensive

Before 1915 had closed the Allies in France had planned a stroke which should end the war. The place was to be the area on either side of the River Somme and the time the summer of 1916. By that date it was expected that for the first time there would be both sufficient men and sufficient munitions. Then came the German offensive at Verdun, and so what was to have been an attack in which the French took considerably the larger share dwindled to a British

attack with some French assistance. Nevertheless our plans went steadily on, and, if the need for secrecy was considerably disregarded, at any rate an imposing concentration of troops and guns gathered on the countryside north of the Somme. The vast majority of both officers and men were the volunteers of 1914. It was in quality and zeal the finest Army Britain ever put into the field. But it was a *new* army, powerful but stiff and unwieldy, and commanded by men whose early service had been confined to much smaller and more flexible formations. With only two years' training we were attempting to do what it had taken the Germans two generations and two great wars to understand. Even numbers, courage and intelligence will not compensate for lack of experience. Yet no other army in the whole history of war ever previously attacked positions so naturally strong and so carefully prepared and so nearly succeeded.

From June 24th till 7.30 a.m. on July 1st a terrific bombardment of the selected twenty-four miles of the German positions north and south of the Somme continued, while 19 British and 5 French divisions waited for the order to advance. They could see the German trenches spouting earth and dust; they could not see the deep dug-outs sheltering the German machine-gunners or the German reserves gathering to the sector where such ample warning was being given.

At zero hour the artillery lifted, and eleven divisions of Rawlinson's Fourth Army, supported by two divisions of the Third Army on their left and the French on their right, crossed the parapet in a human wave which was expected to carry all before it. But the moment the shells ceased to beat down on the German trenches, their undaunted machine-gunners scrambled up the shafts of their dug-outs and opened fire at point-blank range, while the German artillery behind redoubled their efforts. Whole battalions were blotted out. On the right the British captured Mametz and Montauban to the right of Fricourt and a patch to the left of Fricourt, but farther to the left, particularly in front of Thiepval, their casualties were colossal. The assailants were mown down in swathes. It was the worst repulse in the whole war. The small groups who got into the German trenches were wiped out, and by the end of the day on most of the front assaulted the survivors were back in their own trenches. That single day's fighting cost the British Army 50,000 casualties, the biggest loss in our history in one day, and for this we had to show only 2,000 prisoners, 20 guns and two small patches of enemy territory. The French on our right, attacking with less rigidity, and where the Germans were less prepared, had taken 6,000 prisoners with relatively far fewer casualties.

Disastrous as the opening assault had been, there was one com-

pensation. The German front line had been breached on the right, and Sir Douglas Haig decided to exploit such success as had been gained. The next day the Fricourt salient was taken and day after day the British strove to enlarge the bulge in the enemy's line. By July 17th Longueval, Bazentin le Petit and Ovillers had fallen, but a corner of High Wood was still in German hands and a German counter-stroke on July 18th regained the crest of the ridge which Haig had aimed to seize. The British had by now taken 10,000 prisoners at a cost of 80,000 casualties. Terrible as these losses were, Haig's refusal to admit defeat after July 1st meant the difference between winning and losing the War.

Turning Defeat into Victory

A good foothold had now been established in the enemy's defensive system, and a series of desperate attacks and counter-attacks followed during the remainder of July, August and the beginning of September. The Germans were suffering more heavily now, for they were often compelled to counter-attack over the open under a crushing fire and found their own Verdun methods turned against them. At last, by the middle of September, the crest of the ridge was gained. The British casualties in this last operation amounted to over 100,000. The machine-gun was still the master of the battlefield, and it is probable that no other troops in the world would have continued to attack under such conditions.

"A Tank is Entering Flers"

So far the German machine-guns and barbed wire had prohibited any advance except at enormous cost, but now a weapon was introduced which was eventually to conquer that deadly combination. On September 15th, 1916, the first British armoured fighting vehicles (called by the innocuous name of " tanks " for reasons of secrecy) appeared on the battlefield of the Somme. Their introduction at this stage has been criticized as premature, on the ground that the surprise effect was thrown away by employing them when they were still so inadequate in numbers and mechanical effectiveness. It is noteworthy that a subsequent Chief of the Great General Staff, General von Hoffmann, severely criticizes the launching of the first German submarine campaign in the same way as being premature. It was only practical experience which made them into such a deadly weapon.

It is noteworthy that the Germans never did evolve a really effective antidote to the tank. Their propaganda depicting the frightful sufferings of tank crews had little effect except to destroy the willingness of their own men to serve in them when later they tried, though on a very small scale, to evolve a tank corps of their

own. The tank was the distinctive British invention of the War, and did more than anything else to destroy the morale of the German troops. As the new weapon grew more effective by degrees so did they feel that the scales were being weighted against them.

Aided by the tanks available, though a large proportion broke down, the Fourth Army took Flers on September 15th. The same day the Fifth Army captured Martinpuich and Courcelette. On September 25th Morval and Lesboeufs were captured, and with tank assistance Guedeucourt on the 26th. The same day Thiepval was at last taken by the Fifth Army, and only Serre was left of the German positions on the high ground. In the latter part of September nearly 10,000 prisoners were taken.

The conflict, which at the beginning had been so favourable to the Germans, was now turning the other way. The British commanders and units had learnt a great deal, and their attacks were much more effective and at a much reduced cost. Ninety-seven German divisions in all had been drawn into the conflict and their troops were beginning to dread the fearful " blood-bath" of the Somme. Careful investigation of the casualty lists has since shown that the Germans lost there at least 500,000 killed, wounded and missing, a figure slightly little less than that of the British and French combined, if the slightly wounded Germans are included who were not comprised in their casualty lists. Their morale, on Ludendorff's admission, was beginning to deteriorate. The French Army at Verdun, having gained time to recuperate, was striking back, and Forts Douaumont and Vaux were recaptured. At this moment the weather came to the aid of the reeling enemy. Throughout October it rained in torrents and no big operations could be undertaken. In the middle of November St. Pierre Divion and Beaucourt were taken with many prisoners. The 400,000 British casualties at the Somme were being repaid when the season rendered a continuation of the attack impossible.

The Hindenburg Line

Notwithstanding this respite during the winter of 1916–17 the position of the Germans on the Somme front was steadily growing untenable. Ludendorff decided to economize men by shortening the line. Miles to the rear a great fortified system had been constructed, called after the German idol, Hindenburg, and to this in February and March 1917, the Germans skilfully retreated. They left behind them a wilderness. Everything which could be of the slightest use to their opponents was systematically devastated. Roads, bridges, railways and buildings of all kinds were methodically destroyed. It was a masterpiece of thoroughness and, by the irony of fate, it largely contributed to the loss of the War on land. It was

across this very area, when speed was of vital importance, that the Germans had to advance in March-April 1918. The measure which saved their army at the Somme ruined Ludendorff's subsequent offensive.

The British cautiously followed them to the Hindenburg Line, but the measures taken by the Germans were so effective that it was not till the beginning of April 1917 that the British were in contact with its defences. Ludendorff had just staved off defeat.

The Royal Flying Corps at the Somme

By the middle of 1916 the first fighting squadrons of the R.F.C. were in existence and they did amazingly effective work. We had, for the time being, complete mastery of the skies. German aeroplanes seldom put in an appearance, and, protected by the fighters, our observation planes were continually above the enemy lines. The German infantry during the summer bitterly complained that their every movement was watched while they hardly ever saw their own machines. The enemy strove to repair the situation by local concentrations of planes, the "circuses," led by noted flyers like Boelcke and von Richthofen, and this resulted in pitched aerial battles in the autumn of 1916 between strong forces flying in formation and manœuvring under a leader. As a result the British suffered some losses, but as they constantly displayed a more offensive spirit than the Germans their work was more effectively performed. From being a reconnoitring and bombing auxiliary, only fighting when compelled, the R.F.C. was rapidly developing into one of the most effective weapons of the battlefield. At the Somme, too, were the first instances of co-operation between aeroplane and tank. Sir Douglas Haig now asked for twenty additional fighting squadrons, as the value of these had been so clearly demonstrated.

The Zeppelin Raids

In 1916 the Zeppelins and Schütte-Lanz airships, originally used only for scouting over the North Sea or for raids on the English coast, began to be more aggressive. On September 3rd a force of thirteen airships set out to bomb London. Of these only about a third reached their destination, and one of these was brought down by Lieut. Robinson at Cuffley to the north of London. German airships had been successfully bombed before, but in this instance incendiary bullets from Robinson's machine-gun ignited the hydrogen in the ballonets and sent the airship down in flames. On the night of September 24th two more were lost in Essex, and on October 1st another Zeppelin was brought down at Potters Bar. This was the airship of the best German Zeppelin commander, Mathy, and the Germans found no one of equal skill and daring to replace him.

Another Zeppelin was destroyed on the Norfolk coast on November 28th and for a considerable period the Zeppelins remained quiescent. Undoubtedly it was the dread of an awful death as a result of the incendiary bullets which deterred them, and it was not till late the following year that they adopted the device of flying at a great height above the " ceiling " of our aeroplanes—a plan which exacted its penalty in frozen engines and paralysed crews. The Zeppelins were no longer a serious menace under these conditions, as was proved by their final disasters in the autumn of 1917.

On November 28th, 1916, took place the first daylight raid by German bombing-planes on London. This was a much more dangerous menace, as the bombs could be aimed. The night-blinded Zeppelins seldom had more than the vaguest idea of their positions and seem to have been mainly concerned to dump all their bombs anywhere (usually reported as the Tower of London), so as to demonstrate zeal on their return. But the bombing-planes in daylight which could aim their bombs were a far more serious affair. They necessitated the recall of ten times as many fighting planes from France to deal with them, and the eventual development of a vast ground organization. From this point of view the German aeroplane raids were an undoubted success to our enemies.

" How to Win the War "

Since May 1915 the Coalition Cabinet of twenty-three had been deliberating under the respectable but uninspiring leadership of Mr. Asquith. In wartime the spectacle of a good man struggling with adversity does not evoke much sympathy when there is an impression that he might be doing rather more. And he had in his Cabinet a man who was prepared to promise very much more. Mr. Lloyd George, who had succeeded Lord Kitchener as Secretary of State for War, was that man. In December 1916 he demanded a War Cabinet, instead of the old War Committee, composed of four members and *not* including Mr. Asquith. Feeling was obviously against the latter, and he retired with dignity. On December 7th, Lloyd George was Prime Minister and he immediately formed his War Cabinet, whose members should be free from all departmental duties and solely concerned with winning the War. Ministries of Labour, Food, Pensions and Shipping were forthwith created.

The Capture of Baghdad

The new War Cabinet (and Mr. Lloyd George) required a success somewhere, preferably of a striking geographical nature, and this was hard to secure on the Western Front during the winter months. There was such a prospect in Mesopotamia where winter was the time for campaigning, and there was now a leader capable of com-

manding success. During the period of depression which followed the fall of Kut, General Maude had risen from the command of a division to that of the troops at the front and shortly afterwards of the whole force in Mesopotamia. He realized that nothing useful could be accomplished till the morale of the badly-shaken troops in a pestilential climate was restored, and that this could not be the case till they were provided with really adequate supplies and transport. Throughout the autumn of 1916 he perfected his organization until by the beginning of December he was ready with a great superiority of force. Meanwhile the Turks, who had rashly reduced their forces for operations against the Russians in Persia, remained passively in their Sannaiyat position.

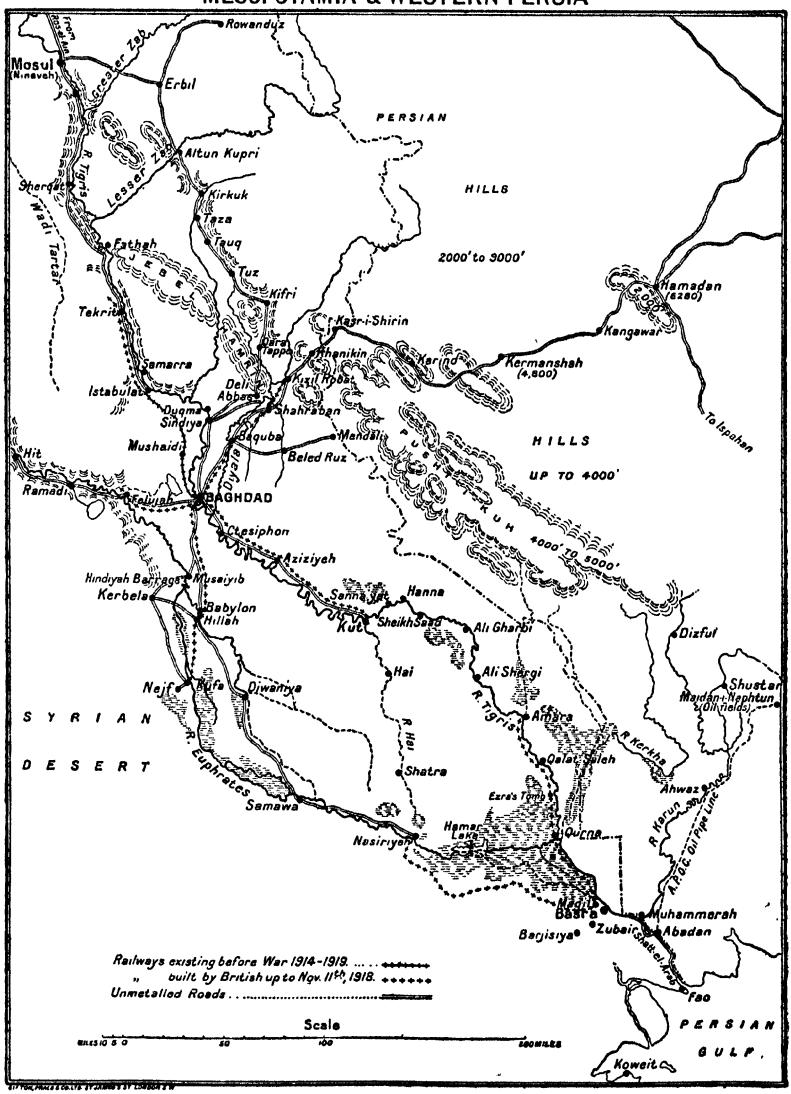
On December 13th, Maude's Second Corps under Marshall launched an attack on the left; crossed the Shatt-al-Hai close to its junction with the Tigris, and by December 18th established itself on the south bank of the Tigris just above Kut. Maude's left wing was now looking across the river at the Turkish rear, and far in advance of his right which was still facing Sannaiyat. The river could not, of course, be utilized while the Turks held Sannaiyat, but Marshall's Corps had a recently-constructed railway-line behind it from Sheikh Saad and, supported by this, the Turks were gradually evicted from the positions on the south bank to which they desperately clung. By February 16th the Turks had been driven across from the south bank, unable to relax their watch at Sannaiyat and compelled to disperse the remainder of their forces along a wide stretch of the north bank above and below Kut.

On February 17th, Cobbe, with the First Corps, attacked at Sannaiyat. On the 22nd the Sannaiyat position was carried and the Turks fell back to their next position. But they could not remain there, for now the Second Corps forced a passage across the Shumran bend to the north bank above Kut, and it was only by the stubborn fighting of the Turkish right wing to the north of the Shumran bend that the retreat of their left was covered. Even so, their retreat might have been converted into a rout shortly after but for the inertia of our cavalry, caused largely by Maude's rigid centralization of control. However, with the evacuation of Sannaiyat the river was free, and the British gunboats pressed the pursuit to Aziziya, inflicting heavy casualties on the Turks retiring along the north bank above Shumran.

Maude, taking advantage of a temporary halt at Aziziya to replenish supplies, now requested permission to make Baghdad his objective, and the Government, delighted to have found a strategist at last, gave consent. On March 4th, Maude resumed his advance, and passing the battlefield of Ctesiphon, found the Turks in position behind the Diala River, flowing from the north into the Tigris. The first

attempt to cross failed, whereupon Maude shifted a force by a bridge of boats back again to the south bank to threaten their rear.

MESOPOTAMIA & WESTERN PERSIA



The Diala was forced and advancing by both banks the British entered Baghdad on March 11th, 1917. Continuing the advance the British drove the Turks well back to the north and north-east of the

city, and by the beginning of the hot weather a wide area had been cleared and Baghdad was reasonably secure. The first great British strategical success of the War had been won.

Von Lettow-Vorbeck in East Africa

The failure of the British landing at Tanga in November 1915 with 800 casualties had demonstrated the difficulties to be encountered in the conquest of Germany's last remaining colony. When the War began Colonel von Lettow-Vorbeck had less than five thousand men under arms, including only a few hundred Europeans. Later, however, by utilizing every conceivable resource, he brought into the field at various times nearly 4,000 Europeans and over 20,000 warlike black " askaris." The East African campaign was therefore a serious matter and the problem was increased by the incredibly difficult nature of the country where thick bush, particularly in the south, gave every advantage to the defending force. In April 1915 a blockade-runner reached the coast, and, though sunk, the Germans managed to salve the arms and ammunition she carried. Another ship got through in 1916, enabling the Germans to prolong their resistance.

The Strategy of General Smuts

In the spring of 1916 " German East," though ringed round by enemies on all sides (Portugal joined the Allies in April 1916), was still practically intact. The South African Government, having already dealt with " German South-West," now undertook to send two mounted brigades, an artillery brigade and two infantry brigades to reinforce the British, Indian and African units already in East Africa. The supreme command was placed in the hands of General Smuts, now about to demonstrate on behalf of the Empire those mobile tactics which he had employed against it towards the end of the South African War. The first experience of the South Africans was not very fortunate. An infantry brigade was repulsed at Salaita Hill on the Kenya border on February 12th, 1916, and the situation was only saved by the Indian troops. In March, however, the South African mounted troops under Van Deventer began to employ their outflanking tactics, so that von Lettow had to fall back from the Kenya border towards the interior. In April Van Deventer occupied Kondoa Irangi, half-way towards the central railway from the north, and by July he was across it at Kilimantinde. The sea-terminus at Dar-es-Salaam was occupied on September 4th and an attempt was made to corner von Lettow at Morogoro on the railway between Dar-es-Salaam and Kilimantinde. He broke away to the south, however, and managed to keep his force intact.

The African Reorganization

As a result of these operations, aided by the Belgians advancing from Ruanda towards Tabora and General Northey's force operating from the Rhodesia-Nyasaland border, two-thirds of "German-East" had been overrun, and von Lettow driven into the very difficult country between the central railway and the Portuguese border. General Smuts' strategy had been very successful in gaining ground, but it was also clear that the climate was so deadly for European troops that it was desirable to imitate von Lettow and to make the largest possible use of Africans. New battalions of the King's African Rifles, who had fought extremely well, were raised, and a brigade of the West African Frontier Force was brought round from the West Coast. The South Africans were almost all withdrawn and the conflict now became one principally between coloured troops under European leadership. In January 1917 General Smuts went to England to become a member of the Imperial War Cabinet, and the command passed to General Hoskins, who was relieved at the end of May by General Van Deventer. Von Lettow was now only in control of the region in the far south between the Rufigi and Rovuma Rivers, with headquarters at Mahenge, and to expel him from this area was likely to prove an extremely difficult task.

Beginning of Palestine Campaign, 1916.

Since the Turkish attack on the Suez Canal had been repulsed in February 1915, little of importance had happened on the Egyptian front beyond the suppression in January 1916 of a threatened attack on Egypt by the Senussi of the Western Desert, instigated by Turkish officers landed by submarine. But with the evacuation of the Dardanelles in that month the strength of the force in Egypt was considerably increased, and when in August 1916 18,000 Turks under a German commander, Kress von Kressenstein, again approached the Canal, they were defeated at Romani with the loss of 4,000 prisoners. It was now decided to advance across the desert towards Palestine; and through the latter months of 1916, the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (as the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force had now become) pushed steadily forward across the Sinai desert carrying with it a railway line from Kantara on the Canal and the pipe-line on which the water-supply of the troops and animals mainly depended. On December 20th El Arish was reached, and Rafa on the Palestine frontier on January 9th, 1917. The Turks had retired to the line Gaza-Sheria, just inside the Palestine frontier, and held Beersheba as an outpost on their left. Sir Charles Dobell, commanding the troops in Sinai, had with him three Territorial divisions (52nd, 53rd

and 54th) the Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division, the Imperial Mounted Division and the Camel Corps. The Commander-in-Chief in Egypt, Sir Archibald Murray, remained at G.H.Q., Cairo, and only paid occasional visits to the Gaza front.

The First Battle of Gaza

The Turks were now suffering under Maude's blows in Mesopotamia, and to increase the effect it was decided that the E.E.F. should attack Gaza. Dobell's plan was to drive in a wedge cutting off Gaza from the rest of the Turkish line, and compel the garrison to surrender, thus occupying the key to their position. But Gaza was itself very strong, and must be carried with a rush since gaining a water-supply was vital. The whole plan depended on swift and effective movement in a single day. If the raid was held up in any way it must fail. The attack was fixed for the morning of March 26th, 1917, but two hours were lost owing to a dense sea-fog which delayed the deployment of the troops. It was not till noon that the 53rd Division delivered its attack on Ali Muntar, the bold hill S.E. of Gaza, and it was not taken till late in the afternoon. Reinforced by a brigade of the 54th, the 53rd pushed on, and were now overlooking Gaza a short distance to the north-west. The Australians and New Zealanders had pressed on to the north to work round the Turks and were fighting among the cactus-hedges surrounding Gaza, and some even penetrated into Gaza itself. But the Imperial Mounted Division engaged, in succession to the Anzacs, in holding off the Turkish reinforcements had found no water for their horses all day, and it was impossible to keep them in position any longer. Darkness was falling, and an intercepted wireless message from the enemy commander in Gaza, informing his superior that he could hold out no longer, was not received from Cairo till too late. Murray and Dobell decided that the attack could not be pressed. On the night of March 26-27th the mounted troops were withdrawn and the whole force fell back to the Wadi Ghuzza on the night of 27-28th with some 4,000 casualties in all. The initial loss of two hours had wrecked the whole operation.

The Second Battle of Gaza

Following the capture of Baghdad, instructions were received by Sir Archibald Murray from the War Cabinet to attempt the capture of Jerusalem, always a place of interest to Mr. Lloyd George. He demurred, on the ground that he still had no more than his original three infantry divisions and a fourth in process of formation, while the Turks had now been reinforced to five divisions and had made their positions vastly stronger. He was overruled, and the second attack on Gaza began on April 17th. Owing to the Turkish wire

the mounted troops could not be used as they had been previously and the brunt of the fighting fell on the three infantry divisions. The 54th Division made some progress S.E. of Gaza, but the Turkish positions were too strong, and early next morning it was decided to discontinue the attack. The casualties this time amounted to 7,000 and a period of depressed stagnation set in comparable to that which followed the fall of Kut on the Mesopotamian front. Fortunately a second Maude was found in the person of General Allenby, who succeeded Murray in June, and at once abandoned Cairo for quarters close up to the front line. General Murray had performed great services during his two years of command. He had secured the safety of Egypt, established a line of communication to Palestine, and organized his force on sound lines. In these respects he had paved the way for the successes which were to follow.

"Too Proud to Fight"

Throughout 1915 and 1916 Sir Edward Grey had been exchanging a series of carefully-worded notes with the Government of the United States on the subject of the naval blockade of Germany. The problem was highly complicated and one on which the views of belligerents and neutrals were sharply opposed. What precisely constituted "contraband of war" and what steps exactly could a belligerent take to intercept it? Obviously, if we allowed unrestricted importation of American goods into Germany, either directly or through neutrals, we deprived ourselves of our most effective weapon; on the other hand, if we pressed too hardly on American trade we ran the risk of an American embargo on the export of munitions to Great Britain or even of more vigorous measures. It was clearly a case for very careful balancing of advantages and disadvantages.

Fortunately a crisis which constantly threatened to become acute was constantly obviated by the atrocities of the German submarine commanders. Lost lives count for more than lost profits. When the *Lusitania* was torpedoed off the Old Head of Kinsale on May 7th, 1915, about 100 of the 1,198 lives lost were Americans. As a result Germany was compelled to promise America that passenger-ships should not be sunk without warning, and for a while the undertaking was more or less observed.

That America did not instantly declare war on Germany when the *Lusitania* was sunk, as she had previously on Spain in 1898 for the alleged responsibility for sinking the *Maine*, was due to the policy of the American President, Woodrow Wilson. He was a Democrat and leader of the American party which since the election of Lincoln had almost continuously been out of office. In 1912 Wilson had been elected President owing to a split Republican vote; in Novem-

ber 1916 he had to face the next election. He firmly believed that the welfare of America, and therefore of the world, depended on the retention of power by the Democratic party. Anything, therefore, which prevented a Democratic split, such as might have been occasioned by an early declaration of war, was not only justifiable but, in his opinion, morally right. He accordingly continued to bombard each side impartially with " Notes " in which it was almost implied that drowning women and children were in much the same category as obstructed fats and cotton.

Germany's Choice

In November 1916 he was re-elected and, satisfied that the Democratic party was safe for another four years, in December he addressed independent enquiries as to their war aims to both groups of belligerents. The Allies replied with the formula " Reparation, restitution and guarantees." Germany made proposals which she knew the Allies could not possibly accept. The reason was that the German Chancellor, Bethman-Hollweg, had at last been beaten in his long struggle to keep America neutral. The German military and naval chiefs definitely assured the Kaiser that with absolutely unrestricted submarine warfare Britain, the mainstay of the Entente, could in six months be beaten to her knees. Even if as a result America declared war, it was believed that victory could be gained long before American intervention became effective; for it was known that, in his zeal for perfect neutrality, President Wilson had prevented any additional naval or military preparations being made in America.

On December 22nd, 1916, the order for submarine warfare " without limitations " went forth. No fewer than 140 U-boats were ready.

The Unrestricted Submarine Campaign and America's Response

On February 1st, 1917, unrestricted submarine war began. The results were startling. Previously the British losses had averaged about 40 ships a month; in February 98 ships were sunk and in March 103. America and the world were being definitely challenged. On February 3rd the American Government severed diplomatic relations with Germany, with the result that on February 19th a message was intercepted instructing the German Minister in Mexico to negotiate for Mexican attack on the American border with the alleged possibility of assistance from Japan. On February 26th President Wilson asked Congress for authority to arm American merchant-ships, and the following day he announced that he considered the torpedoing of the S.S. *Laconia* to be " the overt act "

which would justify America in declaring war. War was not, however, formally declared till April 5th, when America joined the Allies, not indeed as an "ally," but merely as an "Associated Power." The distinction was important. President Wilson took the decision to make war for the same motives which had previously made him "too proud to fight." So long as there was any chance of the War coming to an end by any kind of agreement, Wilson might hope to act as a mediator in the same way as President Roosevelt had done between Russia and Japan. Now that there was clearly no hope of peace, as the Germans had demonstrated, save by a fight to a finish, he came in. America joined in the War because she did not mean to be left out of the peace.

On the Brink of Disaster

In April 1917, 169 British ships were sunk with the loss of 1,125 lives. The American Admiral, Sims, cabled home to Washington: "I think history records few spectacles more heroic than that of the British Navy fighting this hideous and cowardly form of warfare in half a dozen places with pitifully inadequate forces but with undaunted spirit which remained firm against the fearful odds. What opportunity for America!" American assistance would be valuable, but more depended on Britain. Could the Admiralty evolve means of dealing effectively with the submarines before the Fleet was immobilized for lack of imported oil fuel and the population at home starving for lack of food?

Nor was this the only danger. On March 12th, just before America came in, the Russian Revolution broke out, and on March 15th the feeble Tsar abdicated. The weak provisional Government which succeeded lacked all authority and, though still nominally loyal to the alliance, could take no effective measures to maintain the Eastern Front. It was only a question of time before the Central Powers would be able to dictate their own terms of peace to Russia, and once that was achieved they would be able to transfer at least forty divisions to the west and regain the numerical superiority they had had in 1914. On sea and land it was the darkest hour.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE NATIONAL EFFORT AND THE FINAL VICTORY, 1917–1918

The First Unified Command

In December 1916 " Père " Joffre, unable to persuade the French that he must be winning because he retired to rest regularly at 10 o'clock every night, was succeeded by General Nivelle, who had been very successful at Verdun. In contrast to the " nibbling " policy of Joffre, Nivelle claimed that it was possible to break the German lines by a single elaborately prepared massed attack and so end the War at a blow. In order to carry out this plan, Nivelle desired to obtain control of British as well as French resources. Mr. Lloyd George was won over by Nivelle during a visit to London in January 1917 where, as his mother was English, he was able to put his case as no other French general could do. At a conference held at Calais on February 26th and 27th, 1917, it was decided that Sir Douglas Haig, who had been given no warning whatever of what was intended, should be placed under the general direction of Nivelle during the forthcoming operations and should conform his plans accordingly.

Nivelle's original plan was to bite off the German Somme-salient by a British attack on a broad front on either side of Arras, combined with a similar French attack in Champagne. This hope was already in process of being upset by the German retirement on the whole front from Arras to Noyon, back to the Hindenburg Line. Nevertheless, it was decided still to proceed with the double attack, though this would mean a considerable delay for the British, who had to follow across the devastated Somme area before they could " mount " their attack against the new German positions. It was not till April 9th, 1917, that all was in readiness.

The Arras Offensive, 1917

On Easter Monday thirteen British and four Canadian divisions of the Third and First Armies attacked, after a six days' bombardment by nearly three thousand guns. The first day's fighting was extremely successful. Practically the whole of the Vimy Ridge was captured, the advance being aided by the first scientific use of the newly-designed " creeping barrage." By April 11th the whole of the German third line in the valley of the River Scarpe had been taken, and the enemy were compelled hurriedly to undertake the

completion of a new line of defence, linking up their old La Bassée system to the north with the Hindenburg Line to the south—the famous Drocourt-Queant Switch. Meanwhile they launched heavy counter-attacks to gain time, and the British could only make slow progress. To render aid the Fifth Army delivered an attack, on the right of the Third Army, against the defences of the Hindenburg Line to the south. This was broken into, but no very considerable advance was possible. Still, by April 14th, the British had captured 13,000 prisoners and 200 guns.

The Failure of French Hopes

It was now the turn of the French, and on April 16th Nivelle's great offensive on the Aisne was launched. Measured by the 21,000 prisoners and 183 guns captured by April 20th it was a very considerable success; indeed, the best French offensive to date; but the German lines had not been broken through and the French losses were estimated at 120,000 (actually they were about 75,000). Compared with what Nivelle had so optimistically promised, it was a failure, and, as a result of the reaction, on May 15th he was dismissed from his command. Already a serious crisis was disclosing itself. In France the nation and the army are one, and the political disappointment communicated itself to the troops. Whole divisions were shortly in a state of mutiny, not refusing indeed to fight, but declining to make any more costly attacks. It took all the paternal authority of Pétain, Nivelle's successor, to restore discipline. Luckily the Germans did not fully realize the seriousness of the situation, any more than the French realized how badly the Germans themselves had been shaken.

Meanwhile, at the French request, the British continued to attack, but with much less success than at first. The Third Army under Allenby gained some ground, but at heavy cost, and by May 5th both the French and British operations came to an end. The German grip on north-eastern France was still unbroken.

The Thunder-Stroke at Messines, 1917

The Somme and Arras offensives had gained but moderate success at very heavy cost; we had failed at the Dardanelles and before Gaza, and the capture of Baghdad was our solitary striking success. The Army in France was now to provide its first example of a perfectly carried-out operation.

For many months General Plumer, commanding the Second Army on the Ypres front, and his Chief-of-Staff, General Harington, had been preparing for an assault on the Messines ridge which overlooked the Ypres salient from the south. The position was immensely strong, and had been provided with four separate lines of defence.

The Germans knew its importance, for so long as it remained in their hands no British offensive east or north of Ypres was possible. Now, foreseeing that he might be compelled to carry out such an offensive to give the French time fully to recover their morale, Sir Douglas Haig decided to deal first with Messines. Only one month was needed to complete the preparations. The Second Army was raised from twelve divisions to sixteen and the artillery doubled, Nineteen mines, containing 600 tons of explosives, had been driven under the enemy's front line, and an eight days' bombardment poured nearly 100,000 tons of shells on the enemy's positions. The munitions campaign at home had done its work; the supply of shells was by now practically unlimited.

At 3.10 a.m. on June 7th, 1917, the mines were exploded and nineteen volcanoes leaped shatteringly into the air, destroying the resistance of the enemy's first line. At the signal nine assaulting divisions and three in support moved methodically forward, covered by a hurricane of fire. Of the German positions in the second line Messines was taken by the New Zealanders, and Wytschaete by the 36th (Ulster) and 16th (Irish) Divisions, fighting in generous rivalry. On the left the 47th (London) Division crossed the Ypres-Comines Canal, and soon after midday the first stage of the operations was complete. In the afternoon, supported by batteries which had moved up behind them, the troops again advanced and carried their objectives. In this single day's operation loss was inflicted on the Germans to the extent of over 7,000 prisoners and 67 guns, at a very moderate cost to the British. The next day the enemy attempted a counter-attack, which failed hopelessly; and in the following days Plumer's Army extended its gains till by June 15th the German salient south of Ypres was completely "bitten off." The British Army in France had won a striking success, but only at the moment when the force of circumstances was to compel it to take on its shoulders for a season almost the entire weight of sustaining the Allied cause.

The Struggle with the Submarines

In May 1917 the first gleams of hope in the grapple with the U-boats came with the adoption of the principle of "convoy." Experience had shown that scattered ships did not spell safety, since the submarines were always able to lie in wait for them at the ocean junctions of shipping. On the other hand, it was not at first believed that merchant ships could steam successfully in the close formations of convoys, and in any case this would mean proceeding at the speed of the slowest vessel. Nevertheless the need of protection was so urgent that it was decided to make the attempt on a big scale, and it succeeded beyond expectation. Regular convoys were

organized, escorted by such old cruisers and destroyers as could be spared, supplemented by fast armed cargo-steamers; and in May 1917 the sinkings, though still very serious, showed a gratifying drop. In June they showed an increase, due to a special submarine drive; but in July, August and September they continued to diminish. The most highly trained German submarine commanders—for it was only 22 out of a total of 400 who did more than half the total damage—had largely become casualties, and the remainder were nothing like so skilled and so enterprising. Also the convoy system meant that the seas between the convoys were empty of shipping.

The next nail in the coffin of the U-boats was the use on a large scale of depth-charges. These "ash-cans" of high explosive, set to go off at a given depth, were tipped overboard where a submarine was suspected and made the sea boil with their detonations. It was not necessary for them actually to hit the submarine. If they exploded sufficiently close, the displacement of water damaged the frail sides of the submarine, and if she did not actually sink the action of salt water on the electric batteries generated chlorine which "gassed" the crew. Soon the dread of the depth-charges, battering like gigantic hammers on the hull, became a most potent factor in lowering the morale of U-boat crews. Mines of a greatly-improved pattern were laid, too, in ever-increasing numbers in all areas known to be frequented by U-boats. June 1917 also marked the introduction of the hydrophone, an instrument for detecting movement under water. This, though crude at first, was rapidly improved and the advantage of invisibility, caused by a submarine's submergence, was steadily discounted. The German crews never knew that their presence was not being detected by hydrophones, although the ships using them could not at that period do so while in motion.

In June, too, there was a great increase in the activity of "Q-boats." These were apparently inoffensive vessels which went to sea with the deliberate intention of being shelled or torpedoed. They were filled with timber to make them as difficult as possible to sink, and passively endured the attacks of submarines in the hope of securing a position for a devastating reply. If necessary, a carefully-staged "panic" party "abandoned ship" to induce the submarine to close. Then, at a given signal, the sides of dummy deck-houses collapsed, disclosing the guns which crashed shells into the submarine. Before long every solitary small ship was suspected by the Germans of being one of the hated Q-boats and accordingly avoided.

No single anti-submarine measure was in itself conclusive, it was the combination of so many means that was effective. Whereas in

1916 only 22 submarines were destroyed, the number rose in 1917 to 63 and 69 in 1918. And seldom did any word reach Germany as to their fate. An ominous silence was maintained by the British Admiralty. Submarines sailed and did not return. "Sunk without trace" was being turned against its originators. From first to last the Germans lost about 180 U-boats and crews amounting to about 5,000 men.

The New Navy of Britain

Throughout the War the great majority of the personnel of the Royal Navy remained of necessity in the North Sea, waiting for the final fleet-action which never came. To man the transports, the auxiliary cruisers, the mine-sweeping trawlers and drifters, the motor-launches and coastal motor-boats, the armed yachts and small craft of every kind, reliance was largely placed on the officers and men of the Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve. The R.N.V.R. in particular expanded enormously, attracting to its ranks a multitude of small yacht-owners and those whose hobby was the sea. They manned the small craft which soon swarmed about the coasts of Britain and pursued any detected U-boat like a pack in full cry. But perhaps the most enduring fame of all is that of the merchant seamen, the fishing population and all whose business was the sea. Torpedoed, shelled and blown up by mines, the survivors never flinched and put to sea again and again.

Taking the Strain

While the British Navy was bearing almost the entire burden of defeating the Germans at sea, the British Army was compelled to take a similar strain on land. The Russians were now practically out of the War; Italy, who had declared war on Austria on May 24th, 1915, was committed to a most difficult campaign in which the Austrians held all the higher ground and could at any moment threaten the Italian left flank and rear from the Trentino; France had not yet recovered from the political disorganization and military difficulties following the failure of Nivelle's offensive; America, though she had instituted compulsory service on joining the Allies, had made no preparations beforehand and no military assistance could be expected from her till 1918. Only the British Empire remained to bear the brunt for the time being. Without a sustained British offensive on land the Allied cause might be lost. It was decided to attack northwards and eastwards from the Ypres salient.

The selection of this particular area seems to have been due to a desire to reach the Belgian coast and clear out the bases of the German Flanders flotillas of small submarines. Actually, though

dangerous and annoying, these submarines did nothing like the damage caused by the larger U-boats operating at long range from the German ports ; but the idea of combination between the Army and Navy has always been deeply rooted in British strategy, and the Admiralty strongly supported the plan. General Sir Hubert Gough goes so far as to state that " Haig was informed by the Admiralty that if the Army could not capture the German submarine bases on the Belgian coast, the Navy could not safeguard the seas."

The Third Battle of Ypres

On July 31st, 1917, nine divisions of the Fifth Army attacked from the Ypres salient, supported by the Second Army on their right and the French First Army on their left. The first day's operations were generally successful. St. Julien (lost in the first German gas attack) was captured and the Pilckem ridge overlooking Ypres was captured. The Germans lost over 6,000 prisoners. The same day it began to rain and the ground churned up by the bombardment was converted into a slough. No further offensive was possible till August 16th, when the Fifth Army made some advance on the left but failed on the right. This time the prisoners numbered only 2,000.

On September 20th the Second Army advanced to a depth of about a mile despite heavy rain, and the Fifth Army gained a little ground. On this occasion over 3,000 prisoners were taken. A new tactical method had now been adopted, that of the " shallow objective." This was rendered necessary by a new development in German tactics. They no longer held their forward positions in force, but relied instead on small parties in shell-holes supported by small concrete block-houses, the " pill-boxes," impervious to field-artillery fire. Covered by these, the Germans delivered massed counter-attacks before their assailants could consolidate the ground gained, so that no break-through was possible. Only a very methodical advance was therefore feasible, and even this was rapidly becoming almost impossible.

The Battle of Passchendaele, 1917

The whole area between Ypres and the Belgian coast was only a few feet above sea-level, and its cultivation depended on an elaborate system of drainage. During the War this had perforce been neglected, and the constant bombardments had dammed up the various small streams and caused them to spread out into morasses. When to this was added heavy rain, the whole countryside, apart from a few ridges, dissolved into a vast slough across which passage was only possible by means of " duck-boards." It was across this frightful swamp, in which even unwounded men were in danger of being engulfed, that the British Army was now attacking.

On October 4th the Fifth and Second Armies again attacked, reaching another "shallow objective" and capturing over 5,000 prisoners; but the Houthulst forest with the higher ground beyond it was still in German hands, and there was little hope of capturing it before winter set in. Unhappily, just as the French mutinies had made it necessary to start the offensive, so it was still necessary to keep the German army engaged while the French recovered, and the attack was renewed on October 9th. This time the Fifth Army gained ground beyond Langemarck, while the French on their left reached the outskirts of the Houthulst forest. Two thousand prisoners were taken and a thousand more on October 12th, though at a heavy cost. The whole countryside was dissolving into churned-up mud, and any advance was becoming a matter of herculean exertion. A few more efforts were made, and finally on November 6th the village of Passchendaele was captured. This was practically the end of the operations, though the Belgian coast was still out of reach. The Germans in France had been pinned down during a period of peculiar danger to the Allies; but it had cost the British nearly 400,000 casualties to do it, almost as many as at the Somme. The British forces had been horribly reduced, just as they were about to meet their sternest trial and, even so, the Germans, whose casualties had been far less than our own, had managed by the intelligent use elsewhere of only six divisions to inflict a crushing defeat on one of the Allies.

The Break-through at Caporetto

The dangerous salient of Venetia was tenable by the Italians so long as they only had Austrians to contend with. The Germans, not hitherto considering it a decisive sector, had since May 1915 left their allies to fight their own battles there;[1] but now, in the autumn of 1917, they were prepared to try the effect on the Italians of finding German troops brought up against them. On October 24th the six German divisions of von Bülow attacked at Caporetto. The result was overwhelming. The Italian army had been rotted by defeatist propaganda, and, though some units fought hard, once the line was broken on the front of the Second Italian Army the majority of the troops and their commanders had no idea except to escape from the perilous salient into which General Cadorna had thrust them. They broke wildly backwards, and 200,000 men and 1,800 guns were captured. Position after position was abandoned, and it was not till everything east of the Piave was abandoned that the Italians were able to make a stand. By that time the Italians had lost nearly 600,000 men from all causes and over 3,000 guns. General Diaz, who took over command from Cadorna on November 9th, now

[1] The Italians did not declare war on Germany until August 28th, 1916.

stood at bay on the much-shortened front of Monte Grappa and the Piave, and succeeded in arresting the enemy's advance by the middle of November. Nevertheless the Italians had sustained so smashing a blow that it was imperative to support them, and accordingly at the beginning of November, five British and five French divisions began to move to the Italian front, a reduction of the Allied strength in France which, together with the losses at Passchendaele, was shortly to have most unfortunate consequences. Once again the Germans had compelled a dispersion of Allied troops from the decisive front.

The Triumph of the Tanks: Cambrai, 1917

Since their first introduction at the Somme, the tanks had been having a difficult time, and their champions had been hard put to it to secure the programme of expansion deemed necessary. Indeed, in policy as well as physically, the swamps of Passchendaele had nearly proved the graveyard of the tanks altogether. Thrust into action piecemeal and over ground utterly unsuitable for their employment, they had stuck wholesale in the mud, and there were not wanting those who condemned the tanks as only of very minor utility. It was clear to the leaders of the Tank Corps organization that, unless the tanks could win a striking success, the whole future of the new weapon would be in grave jeopardy. Scanning the whole front, the portion held by the Third Army, under General Sir Julian Byng, appeared most propitious for the attempt, as it consisted of good hard ground, and General Byng supported the project. It was definitely a Third Army design, however, and few additional troops except the Cavalry Corps were provided by G.H.Q. to exploit any success which might be gained. The tanks, plus six infantry divisions and two in reserve, must break the Hindenburg Line if they could.

At 6.20 a.m. on November 20th, 1917, nearly 400 tanks, all in fact which could be collected, attacked opposite Cambrai. The Tank Corps had staked everything on success, and its chief, Major-General Elles, led the attack himself in his own tank. There was no preliminary bombardment to give warning, and simultaneously with the guns opening fire the Germans saw the tanks crossing "no man's land" and crushing the wire defences beneath them. Each tank was provided with a compressed brushwood fascine eight feet thick, carried on the roof, and an elaborate drill had been practised for filling up the main Hindenburg trench with these. Behind, on a front of six miles, followed the six infantry divisions.

Everywhere, except at Flesquières, where a German officer serving a gun single-handed knocked out several tanks in succession, the first and second systems of the Hindenburg Line were overrun; but

the damaged bridge at Masnières across the Scheldt Canal prevented all but a very slight use of the cavalry which had been brought up in anticipation of a break-through, and the advance was held up at Rumilly. On the 21st Flesquières was captured and the troops reached the southern edge of Bourlon Wood, a commanding position which must be captured if Cambrai were to be reached. On November 23rd the 40th Division with the aid of tanks captured Bourlon Wood, and during the next four days a bitter struggle raged for the possession of Bourlon village, which was finally recaptured by the Germans together with a wooded spur to the east. While these were untaken Cambrai was safe and the German line to the north also could not be turned. Nevertheless, by November 29th 10,500 prisoners and 142 guns had been captured and a large square block to the depth of five miles bitten out of the Hindenburg Line.

The German Counter-Stroke

Meanwhile the German reserves had been assembling to close the breach. They had no tanks, but they could follow the British example of a sudden attack unpreceded by any long warning bombardment. The southern portion of the British salient and the old line south of it were comparatively thinly held by troops who had already been heavily engaged, while attention was concentrated on the Bourlon area farther north.

Suddenly, at 8 a.m. on November 30th, the Germans attacked. At Bourlon their attack was defeated with heavy loss, but at Gonnelieu and Villers, just south of the new salient, they broke right through into the original British positions and even penetrated to Gouzeaucourt close behind our original line. From here the Germans were ejected by a counter-attack of the Guards Division, which thus saved a very critical situation, but they still held Gonnelieu and Villers Guislain. Under these circumstances, and lacking the reserves dissipated at Passchendaele and diverted to Italy, a continuance of the pressure towards Bourlon was not possible, and so between December 4th and December 7th the positions gained on the Bourlon ridge were evacuated, and the troops fell back to the Flesquières ridge. A great success had been followed by an unfortunate reverse, and on the balance we had gained from the Germans little more ground than they had gained from us.

Germany's Dictated Peace on the Eastern Front

The high hopes of 1917 had faded, and the beginning of 1918 disclosed an increasingly serious position on land. In November 1917, the Russian Provisional Government had been overthrown by the Bolsheviks (i.e., the "majority" party of the Russian Communists) who announced that they considered the War at an end as

far as they were concerned. It takes two, however, to make a peace, and the Germans had no intention of granting any terms not fully acceptable to themselves. When the Bolsheviks boggled, they merely ordered their troops to continue their advance into the heart of Russia. Lenin and Trotsky surrendered; and by March 2nd, 1918, the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed, by which the Bolsheviks abandoned the whole of the Baltic Provinces, Poland, Lithuania, and the Ukraine and surrendered Armenia and the Caucasus to the Turks. The same month the unfortunate Roumanians, the greater part of whose territory had been overrun in the latter half of 1916, finding themselves abandoned by the Russians, were compelled to sign the humiliating Treaty of Bucharest, which placed them completely at the mercy of the Central Powers. By these two treaties Germany had demonstrated how little mercy her remaining opponents might expect were she victorious elsewhere. Secure on the east, from November 1917 onwards till the spring of 1918, the Germans steadily carried out a transference of troops to the Western Front, wiping out the superiority in numbers the Allies had enjoyed there since 1915. They were obviously preparing for a decisive blow.

Mesopotamia and Palestine, 1917

At this depressing juncture the great efforts made by the British in the Middle East began to repay themselves. Maude, as soon as the hot weather was over, struck from Baghdad first at Ramadi on the Euphrates in September 1917, and then north-east towards the Jebel Hamrin in October, in each case defeating the Turks with loss. Then, like Wolfe and Moore, he died in the moment of victory. On November 18th, cholera claimed him as a victim in Baghdad. By his wonderful organization and most skilful generalship he had changed a campaign which cost the Empire 60,000 dead—a figure second only to France and Belgium—into a spectacular triumph. "At the beautiful cemetery in Baghdad there is the one exception to the equality which reigns in every other British war cemetery. There is a central monument—a shrine—over the grave of General Sir Stanley Maude." His successor, General Marshall, carried on Maude's work. In February he defeated the Turks again on the Euphrates, taking 5,000 prisoners, and in April he beat them at Kirkuk, capturing 3,000 more. By the beginning of the next hot weather Baghdad was completely secure.

On the Gaza front General Allenby had put new life and spirit into the troops. He now had seven infantry divisions, the 52nd, 10th, 54th and 75th (XXI Corps) facing Gaza, and the XX Corps (53rd, 60th, and 74th) together with the Desert Mounted Corps of three divisions available for operations elsewhere. In October 1917 the

Turks had not, however, abandoned hope of recapturing Baghdad, and the Young Turk dictator, Enver Pasha, was still sending all available troops to Mesopotamia, trusting that the strength of the Gaza positions would enable the Turks there, though now inferior in numbers, to hold their own. But Allenby had no intention of playing into Turkish hands by another unaccompanied frontal assault on Gaza ; what he designed was a movement so daring, on account of the water problem, that the Turks hardly considered it possible. It was to strike first at Beersheba on the extreme Turkish left, then at Gaza, and finally right through the centre of the enemy's line with his mounted troops, thus dividing the Turkish army into two disconnected halves. In attempting this operation, Allenby had the great advantage that his men were veteran troops and that the divisions had not had to be filled up with inexperienced recruits as was often the case in France.

The Third Battle of Gaza

Beersheba had hitherto been considered out of reach of the British right wing owing to the waterless area which intervened between it and the Wadi Ghuzze. It was therefore necessary to organize an elaborate system of pipe-lines and camel-convoys of water even to get the troops within attacking distance ; when, if successful, they must rely on the wells and reservoirs in Beersheba itself. If they were held up there, the whole operation must fail.

On the night of October 30th-31st, 1917, the 60th and 74th Divisions approached Beersheba from the west and south-west, while two mounted divisions moved round to the farther side. Early on the morning of October 31st the infantry attack developed, while the 2nd Australian Light Horse brigade worked round farther still and got across the Hebron road. At 4 p.m. the 4th A.L.H. Brigade charged Beersheba from the east and galloping over the Turkish trenches, rushed the straggling little village. The wells were secured, and the horses watered. Over 1,000 prisoners had been taken, and the attention of the Turks satisfactorily directed towards Beersheba.

On November 1st an attack was delivered towards Gaza to pin the Turks to their positions there, and on November 2nd an assault was made on Tel-el-Khuweilfe north of Beersheba. The result of these moves was to compel the Turks to weaken their centre in order to strengthen their flanks. On November 6th, Allenby hurled the 10th, 60th and 74th Divisions and the 4th Cavalry Division (Yeomanry) against the Turkish centre at Kauwuka and captured the Turkish rail-head at Sharia. By November 7th the break was completed, and the bulk of the Desert Mounted Corps, supported by the 60th Division, pressed through the gap. The Turks at Gaza,

fearing to be cut off, hurriedly retreated, and on November 7th the town was in British hands. The Turks were separated into two portions, the main body retiring towards Jaffa and Ludd and the remainder towards Hebron and Jerusalem.

The Advance through Philistia

The enemy were now badly shaken and were striving to fall back to a position where they could reunite their forces and form a new line of defence. Their rearguards fought stubbornly to gain time, and at Huj, on November 8th, the Warwickshire and the Worcestershire Yeomanry charged straight up to the muzzles of twelve Turkish guns, the gunners continuing to fire till they were cut down. By November 13th the enemy had managed to form a line covering Junction Station on the Ludd-Jerusalem railway ; but next day the station was taken and with the capture of Ramleh and Ludd on November 15th, the Turks' lateral communications both by rail and road were severed. Jaffa fell on November 16th, and General Allenby continued to press the enemy northward behind the River Auja, so as to gain space for the great " right-wheel " which now took place towards Jerusalem.

The Capture of the Holy City

So far the fighting had been across the rolling plains of Philistia, but the changed direction made it necessary to attack positions on the bare limestone hills of Judaea. Moreover, the weather had broken, and the troops, previously in straits for water and thinly clad, were exposed to cold, rain and bitter winds. The progress of the XXI Corps, now swinging due east towards Jerusalem, was necessarily slow. Nevertheless, the troops pressed stubbornly on, and by November 21st Nebi Samwil (the " Mont Joyeux " of the Crusaders), from which Jerusalem was visible, was taken. It became imperative to relieve some of the hardly-tried divisions, and the XX Corps took over the Jerusalem front from the XXI Corps. The Turks still hoped to be able to hold Jerusalem, which the British for religious and political reasons would not attack directly, but, aiming somewhat to the northward, our troops got across the Jerusalem-Nablus road on December 9th, whereupon the Turks hurriedly evacuated Jerusalem and the city surrendered the same day. On December 11th, 1917, General Allenby entered the Holy City on foot, thus fulfilling the oriental (or invented) prophecy that when the water of the Nile flowed into Palestine (? the pipe-line) a prophet (al nebi = Allenby ?) should deliver Jerusalem from the Turk. In these operations the Turks sustained about 30,000 casualties.

The Conquest of Judaea

The Turks had not, however, given up hope, and on December 26th and 27th made determined attacks to the north of Jerusalem. These were repulsed, and after a period of reorganization, a force was pushed down the Jericho road, which took Jericho on February 21st, 1918, and a month later crossed the Jordan and established a bridgehead at Goraniye. From this, on March 25th, Es Salt was successfully raided and the Hejaz Railway damaged; but the Turks held on to Amman and it was necessary to withdraw again to Goraniye on April 2nd. A line stretching from the Jordan to the sea and covering Jerusalem and Southern Palestine had been firmly established; but in the spring Allenby had to part with the 52nd and 74th Divisions, nine yeomanry regiments and 24 more British battalions. In exchange for these he received the 3rd and 7th Indian Divisions from Mesopotamia, Indian cavalry from France, and battalions from India. The need of veteran British troops elsewhere was vital, for the third great German offensive in France had begun.

The German Offensive, March 1918

The practical cessation of warfare on the Eastern Front had enabled the Germans to increase their forces in the West in an even greater proportion than the British strength had been reduced by the Passchendaele offensive. By the spring of 1918 Haig had available 56 infantry divisions, and these, owing to lack of effectives, were now only on a ten-battalion basis. Facing these on the British front were 69 German divisions and more were steadily coming up. In addition, under pressure from the French, we had recently taken over from them an additional fourteen miles of front to the south, the defences of which had been much neglected. It was not, apparently, that additional British troops were not available. Thanks to the Ministry of National Service under Sir Auckland Geddes, a systematic sorting-out of man-power was now in operation. There were 200,000 troops available as reinforcements at home, but in view of the recent heavy casualties at Passchendaele, Mr. Lloyd George hesitated to place them at the Commander-in-Chief's disposal. By so hesitating, instead of winning the war, he nearly lost it.

Sir Douglas Haig was well aware of the risk he ran. If the Germans attacked in great force, as it was clear they meant to do, he might be compelled to give ground. In the north, where the line was dangerously close to the vital Channel ports, any retirement meant a grave risk; to the south, where there was more room to spare, it would not be so immediately disastrous. He therefore kept the bulk of his reserves in the north. To hold the line he relied

on an "elastic" system of defence—outposts out in front supported by machine-gun posts, behind these a network of redoubts or "strong points," and behind these the battery-positions and dugouts and trenches for the supporting troops. Farther back still were the medium and heavy batteries. Such was the system, but owing to lack of labour, in the south particularly, it had not been completed.

To overcome this resistance Ludendorff, the virtual commander of the German Army, had elaborated a new system of tactics. The assaulting troops were kept back well behind the line, and only brought up at the last moment by a series of marches so timed as to bring them into position the night before the attack. "Infiltration" was the key-word. Where success was gained the German troops were not to hold back on account of obstacles to left or right. These were to be "mopped up" by the troops following; the carefully-trained men in the first wave, once they had broken through, were to press on as long as possible. A short, but extremely violent, bombardment was to preface the attack.

At 4.30 a.m. on March 21st 950 German field batteries, 701 heavy batteries, and 55 of the heaviest calibre opened a colossal bombardment, largely by gas-shells, on the whole front from the Oise to the Scarpe. Sixty-two German divisions, attacking and in reserve, were in readiness.

The Twenty-first of March

Facing the Germans on the right was the Fifth Army with eleven divisions in the line or close up and six (including three cavalry divisions) some distance in reserve, on a front of forty-two miles; on the left was the Third Army with eight divisions in the line and seven in reserve. The Fifth Army's line was in particular very thinly held—Sir Hubert Gough puts it at only one man per yard on the 42-mile front. The odds generally were more than three to one, even when British divisions in reserve are included.

At 9.40 a.m. the German infantry advanced, covered by a barrage. The morning was exceedingly foggy, and this undoubtedly aided the enemy at first in their infiltration tactics. Later, it certainly hindered them and was on the whole a doubtful advantage. But the pressure generally was so overwhelming that, except in the neighbourhood of Flesquières and in front of Arras, ground was gained by the Germans everywhere. By nightfall the Fifth Army had been driven back to a considerable depth, and a bulge created in the front of the Third Army. Fresh German divisions were everywhere pressing on, and during the night the Flesquières salient had to be abandoned.

The Drive to the Somme

On March 22nd and 23rd the Third Army gave ground gradually, but the Fifth Army, more thinly spread out and relentlessly pressed, was driven back with the loss of 500 guns to its rear positions, still uncompleted and dangerously close to the Somme, which here runs from south to north parallel to the original line. It was considered too risky to fight in this position, and so on the night of March 22nd the Fifth Army commander, Sir Hubert Gough, ordered a general retreat behind the Somme. This was carried out by the 23rd, but that day the enemy crossed the Crozat Canal, joining the Somme and Oise, and also forced a passage across the Somme at Ham. The Third Army still fought splendidly, but the retirement of the Fifth Army had uncovered its right flank and it too was forced to retire.

On March 24th the Third Army fell back half-way across the old Somme battlefield, while the remnants of the Fifth Army were struggling to hold the crossings of the Somme farther south. Owing to the course of the river, it was difficult to prevent the enemy from outflanking the British on each bank alternately. On account of the retirement of the Fifth Army, the Third Army fell back almost to Albert, to the north of the bend in the Somme; so that the Fifth Army, its flank in turn uncovered, had to abandon the river line and retire towards Roye.

The Strategy of Ludendorff

The object of the German High Command was now becoming obvious. By striking at the weak British right flank, Ludendorff was aiming at the separation of the British from the French. There was no unified Allied command—the first attempt had collapsed with Nivelle's downfall—and, just as Sir Douglas Haig must defend the road to the Channel ports at all costs, so Pétain considered the defence of Paris of supreme importance. The farther the wedge was driven in, the more (according to Ludendorff's calculation) would the Allied Commanders-in-Chief tend to draw apart, each striving to protect what he considered most vital. Only two things could stop the success of the plan—the subordination of the individual aims of the Allies to the common necessity and the exhaustion of the German troops.

Closing the Breach

Haig was now doing all he could to help the troops struggling to hold the gap. Divisions from the First and Second Armies were coming into the line, and " scratch " units of all kinds, raked together wherever they could be got, were employed to fill the gaps. South of Somme the Third French Army was gradually detraining

but the French divisions came very slowly into action without their artillery, and the brunt of the fighting was still being borne by the exhausted remnants of the Fifth Army. Now, at the critical moment, the pace of the German advance began to slacken. Their troops had suffered enormous casualties in the advance and were as exhausted as the British. North of the Somme they had to advance across the old devastated region, and they had reached the British " back-areas," a region plentifully stocked with all kinds of good things to which, owing to the blockade, German troops had long been strangers, and their officers found it increasingly difficult to get them forward. Nevertheless, on March 27th, Albert was captured and the French lost Montdidier, but the impetus of the German attack was dying away and the enemy showed a tendency to take up defensive positions when counter-attacked. Another deliberately staged attack in a fresh sector was accordingly undertaken.

This was attempted on March 28th against the left of the Third Army and the right of the First Army in front of Arras; twenty German divisions against eight British. This time there was no fog and the attack broke down with heavy slaughter. The offensive was again renewed in the Somme area, but an attack on the French between Noyon and Montdidier failed on March 30th and another on the British in front of Amiens on April 4th. Amiens, which at any rate Ludendorff had hoped to take, was still out of reach and the breach had been closed at last. As to the balance of success very varying opinions have been held. On the one hand, the British Fifth Army had been practically destroyed, and the losses—particularly in prisoners, since in the retreat everyone wounded or cut off was automatically captured—were enormous. Estimated in casualties alone it was beyond measure the greatest British defeat ever sustained. On the other hand, it probably lost Germany the War. In the March offensive Ludendorff squandered Germany's last substantial resources. The Germans were constantly attacking and presented easy targets. Even allowing for the prisoners, the Germans lost far more heavily on the balance than their opponents, and with American troops now beginning to appear in France they had no men to spare. They could still attack but never on such a scale again.

An Allied Commander-in-Chief

On March 26th, while the War was still within an ace of being lost, an Allied conference met at Doullens. Ludendorff's blow had shown where the Allied weakness lay. So long as there was no unified command, the Germans would always be able to make their profit out of the conflicting needs of their opponents. Already

Pétain, clamorous in asking for help by the extension of the British line which had so largely accounted for the British disaster and tardy in rendering help when it was bitterly needed, was talking of withdrawing troops from the southern flank of Ludendorff's great salient to cover Paris. Only a French commander whose authority extended over the whole front and whose prestige depended equally on success everywhere could check this deadly tendency. He must, moreover, be a man imbued with the offensive spirit, a commander who believed that victory could be won because he meant to win it. One name stood out pre-eminently—that of Ferdinand Foch, the champion of carefully-co-ordinated successive attacks.

It was not easy for the British Army in France to be placed—no matter how tactfully it was expressed—under a foreign generalissimo, but without it French aid could not be relied on when needed. Nor was Foch an easy choice for the French. Successful as an army commander in 1914, he had subsequently lost his command and been relegated to minor employments. In addition, he was a devout Catholic and that in the service of a republican government which from choice selected its generals from those whose purity of belief in believing nothing was beyond suspicion. Even Joffre had not dared to eat fish, even by chance, on Friday. Only Clemenceau, the tough old " Tiger," now at the head of the French Government, had stood by Foch. The man who shouted in the Chamber : " I will fight before Paris, in Paris, and behind Paris ! " recognized in the Catholic general a kindred spirit. When Lord Milner and Haig suggested that Foch should be given command " from the Alps to the North Sea," Clemenceau agreed. Foch was charged with the general co-ordination of the Allied effort, and to this America, the first of whose troops had recently been in action, also agreed.

An important change affecting the British took place on April 1st, 1918 : the amalgamation of the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service into the Royal Air Force. The necessary legislation had previously been passed and this union with the establishment of an Air Ministry and Air Council was carried out largely as a result of the enormous increase of the air services and the desire for a unified staff of air experts, which, it was considered, would make for both economy and efficiency. The heavy casualties caused by two daylight aeroplane raids on London in the summer of 1917 had stirred public opinion on the matter of air defence.

Ludendorff's Offensive on the Lys

The first days of the unified command were not fortunate to the Allies. Though Ludendorff's resources had been sapped at the Somme, he still had sufficient troops to deliver heavy blows, even if

not on such an extensive scale. Another offensive had for some time been in preparation against the British front from south of Ypres to opposite Bethune, an area in which the British troops had been heavily reduced in order to close the breach farther south. The British divisions in line there were very thinly spread, and in order to eke out their numbers a division supplied by our oldest ally, Portugal, was holding the Neuve Chapelle front, since the spring of 1915 the quietest sector of the British line.

At 8.45 a.m. on April 9th, after a preliminary gas-bombardment, seven German divisions fell upon the unfortunate Portuguese, the survivors of whom beat a rapid retreat. Through the gap so formed the Germans poured, and the British divisions to right and left were in a perilous position. To the south, in front of Festubert and Givenchy, the British held firm, but away to the north, on a ten-mile front, the positions were overwhelmed and by the evening the sixteen German divisions attacking had penetrated to a depth of five miles, approaching, and at one point crossing, the River Lys. The remains of three British divisions on the flanks and two British divisions from reserve on the Lys were struggling to hold them back. The next day the Germans crossed the Lys, reached Armentières, and considerably enlarged their salient; but the British were now counter-attacking heavily and progress was not as rapid as on April 9th. Nevertheless, the British had lost much valuable ground in a sector where they had none to spare.

The Threat to the Ypres Salient

On April 10th the Germans launched another big attack south of Ypres and gained ground at the cost of desperate fighting. Messines fell; and with the enemy pressing in on both flanks, Armentières had to be evacuated. By April 11th the German gains had been somewhat extended to the north, and southwards the enemy largely increased their salient by the capture of Merville. The only encouraging feature, from the British point of view, was that the flanks of the enlarged German salient still held. At Givenchy and Festubert the Germans could make no impression, and the British troops facing south from the Ypres salient only gave ground very gradually. By April 12th, however, the Germans increased their gains between Merville and Bailleul, and were throwing in their reserves towards Hazebrouck and Kemmel. Foch's appointment had brought as yet no aid to the hard-pressed British. Our losses since March 21st approached 300,000.

At this moment the undemonstrative Haig issued his famous order to all ranks of the British Force in France. "There is no other course open to us but to fight it out. Every position must be

held to the last man. There must be no retirement. With our backs to the wall and believing in the justice of our cause, each one of us must fight to the end." The appeal was nobly responded to, and during the next four days the enemy were held on the southern face of their salient and only gained ground very slowly from before Hazebrouck to Hollebeke on the northern face.

Another German assault was now meditated in the northern front of the Ypres salient, and to frustrate this Haig gave up all the gains of the Passchendaele offensive. The new line barely covered Ypres, and from thence ran along the hilly ground to the south-west, thus forming a far stronger position with a less dangerous salient. An attack by eight German divisions on Kemmel Hill failed on April 17th and for a week after this the Germans ceased their efforts. The southern front of the Ypres salient, as far as Bailleul, was now taken over by French divisions reluctantly surrendered by Foch from his reserve. On April 25th they were attacked by seven German divisions and driven from Kemmel Hill. This exposed the flank of the British on their left and the Wytschaete ridge was lost. Further ground had consequently to be given up in front of Ypres and by April 27th the Germans were within a mile of the city. On April 28th the enemy attacked the Scherpenberg and were repulsed by a British counter-attack. This was Ludendorff's last effort on the Lys front, and early in May Kemmel Hill was recaptured.

On April 24th the Germans attacked Villers-Bretonneux in front of Amiens with four divisions. On this occasion the enemy for the first time brought a few tanks into action, of a heavier type and much more cumbrous than the British. A tank battle ensued in which the Germans were defeated, and by the following day the enemy lost their small gains and were driven back. On both the Amiens and the Ypres fronts the tide was beginning to turn and Ludendorff's great offensive against the British had definitely failed. In the opinion of General von Hoffman : " On the very day when General Headquarters gave the order to cease the attack on Amiens, it was their duty to apprise the Government that the time had arrived to proceed to peace negotiations, and that there was no longer any prospect of finishing the War with a decided victory on the Western Front." In the spirit of a desperate gambler Ludendorff decided otherwise.

St. George's Day. Zeebrugge and Ostend

Owing to the failure of the Passchendaele offensive to reach its objectives, the German submarine nest at Zeebrugge (the sea end of the Bruges Canal) was still intact, and there was also an alternative

route by canal from Bruges to Ostend. The British Navy had for months been planning to block the entrances to Zeebrugge with three old cruisers and Ostend with two.[1] The Japanese had attempted a similar enterprise at Port Arthur in 1904, but with only partial success. The Germans had fortified the forty miles of Belgian coast with no fewer than 153 guns, ranging up to 15-inch calibre; but it was believed that under cover of darkness the attempt could be carried out. On the afternoon before St. George's Day (April 23rd) the British expedition set forth, its leader, Captain Carpenter, making the signal: "We will give the dragon's tail a d—d good twist!"

Just after midnight the old cruiser, *Vindictive*, loomed out of the darkness, supplemented by smoke-screens, and drew up alongside the mole of Zeebrugge. At the same time an old submarine laden with explosives was run under the viaduct connecting the mole with the shore and blown up, thus cutting off reinforcements. The *Vindictive's* stormers poured across the gangways on to the mole and desperate hand-to-hand fighting with the Germans took place. Meanwhile, the block-ships, *Thetis*, *Intrepid* and *Iphigenia*, approached the entrance to the harbour and were sunk as nearly as possible in their designed positions. Their crews were heroically brought off in small craft; and the *Vindictive*, which had remained alongside the mole for over an hour to distract attention from the block-ships under the point-blank fire of every German gun that would bear, staggered away into the darkness. The attempt at Ostend failed, the two block-ships running ashore owing to a shifted buoy, and being blown up there.

None the less, another attempt to block Ostend was made on May 9-10th by the *Vindictive* and *Sappho*. The latter broke down, but the *Vindictive* made straight for the entrance and was sunk close to it.

The net result of these operations was that Zeebrugge was blocked for submarines for about a month, and the exit from Ostend rendered more difficult. Though only partially successful, the enterprise was a most heroic endeavour and well deserved the nine V.C.'s awarded.

Nor was this the only endeavour made to bottle up the U-boats. The Dover barrage of mines, search-lights, flares and patrols with depth-charges, was becoming horribly effective, and few U-boats would now face it. Instead, the Flanders flotillas of small submarines confined themselves to the North Sea, while the larger long-range U-boats continued to run the gauntlet north of Scotland, seeking to avert the new peril which was threatening Germany.

[1] The plan and organization were due to Sir Roger Keyes who commanded the Dover Patrol.

The Coming of the Americans

For a year the great armies raised by the United States had been undergoing training. They were short of guns; they had no aeroplanes or tanks of their own, and they lacked shipping for transport to Europe. But they did represent an inexhaustible reservoir of man-power; the man-power which Britain and France after their enormous losses in 1916, 1917 and the spring of 1918 were beginning to lack. If only the Americans would send the men, Britain and France would provide the guns, tanks and aeroplanes, and Britain would provide the shipping and escorts to bring them across. Actually two-thirds of the transports and the convoying vessels were so provided. From April 1918 American troops began to pour across in ever-increasing numbers. One convoy carried over 30,000 men. Ludendorff's calculation that the U-boats could stay the influx was disastrously wrong, for very slight losses were inflicted. And his second calculation—that it would not matter if the Americans did come—was destined to be proved wrong also.

The Capture of the Chemin des Dames

The appointment of Foch as allied generalissimo had failed to prevent a second great bulge being driven into the British front; he was now to have equal difficulty in stemming a similar onslaught on the French.

For months past the strong position north of the Aisne along the "Chemin des Dames" (constructed originally for the daughters of Louis XV) had been utilized as a rest for heavily-tried Allied divisions. It was held at the end of May 1918 by four French divisions with four in reserve, and three British divisions with one in reserve, which had been lent to the French in exchange for the troops sent to the Ypres salient.

On May 27th these were surprised by nearly thirty German divisions. The British commanders had for some time suspected that a German attack was impending, but the chief of the Sixth French Army, General Duchêne, would pay no attention and took no measures at all till the day before the assault. The result was that on May 27th the Allied positions were overrun on a front of thirty-five miles. The British divisions were borne back, struggling desperately, and only the arrival of a reserve Division from Châlons enabled any kind of line to be maintained. On the left of the British the French were swept back even farther; they lost Soissons, and by the beginning of June the Germans had reached the Marne at Château-Thierry. They had gained ground far more rapidly than was expected, but the result had been to force their divisions into a great bulge, the flanks of which rested on the high wooded country

south of Rheims away to the east, and the forests south-east of Noyon on the west. Unless the Germans could sweep away the hinges of their salient the position might become untenable, as the Allies were holding fast on the Marne, supported by the first American divisions to come into action at Château-Thierry.

On June 9th the Germans attacked the Noyon-Montdidier front, and in the following days gained ground towards Compiègne, but not enough to render their Marne salient secure. On June 15th they attacked to right and left of Rheims, but with even less success. The hinges of the salient still held firm and the German flanks were exposed to the risk of dangerous attacks to right and left.

Foch's Counterstroke. The Second Battle of the Marne

On July 15th Ludendorff made a last frenzied effort. The Germans crossed the Marne and gained ground to east and west of Rheims, but with enormous loss, as the French artillery forestalled the German attack and an elastic system of defence brought the enemy up against the real French positions when their rush was already exhausted. This was the last German offensive on the West, and Ludendorff decided to withdraw the German troops who had penetrated south of the Marne.

Before he could do so, however, on July 18th, Mangin's Tenth Army, hidden in the forest of Villers Cotterets, rushed eastward on the German right flank, preceded by 130 Renault tanks and supported by the Sixth Army on its right. In succession the Fifth and Ninth French Armies burst in from the east and south, and by August 4th the Germans were back again along the line of the Vesle River from Rheims to Soissons. Almost the whole of their gains since May 27th were gone and they had suffered terrific losses. This second battle of the Marne may fairly be described as the turning-point of the War, and Foch, who had begun in failure, had triumphantly vindicated himself.

Battle of Amiens: August 8th, 1918

The operations on the Marne, by destroying Ludendorff's last substantial reserves, had opened the way for a deadly British stroke farther north. General Rawlinson's Fourth Army in front of Amiens had been largely reinforced, and was preparing for a decisive blow in conjunction with the First French Army on its right. Its strength amounted to thirteen infantry divisions, three cavalry divisions, 456 tanks (of which 96 were of the new light "whippet" type), over 2,000 guns and seventeen air squadrons. The same tactics as Ludendorff had used in March were employed, a large part of the force only being brought into the line just before the actual

assault. This was a great contrast to the tactics adopted at the Somme in 1916. The organization of the British Army had so developed that, despite its previous losses, it was now an admirable tactical instrument. At 4.20 a.m. on August 8th the infantry, preceded by the tanks and a hurricane bombardment, advanced on a fourteen-miles front north and south of the Somme. The six German divisions in line were completely overrun, and with the French on their right similarly advancing, by nightfall the enemy's territory had been penetrated to an average depth of between six and seven miles. Seventeen thousand prisoners had been taken and 373 guns. Ludendorff subsequently described it as " the black day of the German Army in the War. It was the worst experience I had to go through. It marked the decline of our fighting strength and destroyed our hopes of a strategic improvement. To continue would be a gamble. The War would have to be ended." It was, in short, the most brilliant British victory of the War, and from henceforward the Germans were merely fighting to postpone the inevitable.

On the following days the advance was relentlessly continued. By August 13th the British had penetrated to a depth of twelve miles and the toll of prisoners taken had increased to 22,000. Our total losses were less than this figure. It was impossible for the Germans to remain in the Montdidier salient for fear of being cut off, and they hurriedly fell back to a line from Bray on the Somme through Roye to Noyon. Even so they were not safe, for a renewal of the British attack would involve further withdrawals from their positions on the Oise.

The Battle of Bapaume

The Germans had been thrown back on the Somme ; it was now designed to prolong the pressure farther north. On August 21st the Third Army advanced north of the Ancre and forced the enemy back. On August 22nd Albert was captured and on the 24th Thiepval. The Third and Fourth Armies continued to drive the enemy across the former battlefield of the Somme. On August 29th Combles and Bapaume were entered and the left bank of the Somme was occupied. The Australians captured Mont St. Quentin, which overlooks Peronne, by an amazing night-attack on August 30–31st. Peronne fell next day and the line of the Somme was turned. Since August 21st the Third Army had captured 11,000 prisoners and the Fourth Army over 23,000. More than half the territory gained by the Germans since March had been recovered and the failure of the enemy's resources and morale was every day becoming more evident. They were compelled to abandon the Lys salient to economize men and it was evident that only by taking

shelter behind the Hindenburg Line could they hope to stay the British advance.

The Battle of the Scarpe

Still continuing the extension of pressure to the north, the First Army attacked on August 26th east of Arras and carried the German positions on either side of the River Scarpe. Quéant, at the end of the Drocourt-Quéant switch, was captured on September 2nd, and farther south the Germans fell back from the line of the Somme. The enemy now tried to hold on to the former British trench systems west of the Hindenburg Line, but between September 12th and September 18th they were driven from these and now found themselves back again in the positions to which they had retreated in the spring of 1917. Once again they had retreated, but with a very different prospect. Then, they had held the Hindenburg Line and the trench systems of Artois and Flanders to gain time for their troops from the Russian front to arrive and give them the victory. Now, they had taken refuge with a shattered army and all those resources used up. Worse still, their allies, who had fought for years buoyed up by the legend of Germany's invincibility, were beginning to perceive that Germany could scarcely help herself and was quite unable to afford them aid in the straits into which they were falling. If they succumbed, Germany would be left alone in a world of justly-indignant enemies.

The First Collapse : Bulgaria (Salonika Front)

During 1917 and the first half of 1918 the Bulgars from their mountain-ridges had watched the assemblage of Allied troops which stretched across from the Aegean, covering Salonica, through to the Adriatic. They had lost Monastir to the Serbs in the autumn of 1916, but otherwise had held their ground very successfully. Now they were beginning to wonder if they had chosen the winning side after all. This was no brief triumphant campaign like that against the Turks in 1912, but a long-drawn-out contest in which they received little assistance from their allies. The stubborn Bulgars began to think of going home.

On September 1st the British attacked in the centre near the River Vardar, and the Greeks, since the temporary abdication of Constantine in 1917 on the Allied side, a week later attacked towards the Struma on the east. On September 15th the French and Serbs attacked to the west and broke the Bulgarian line. On September 18th the British and Greeks attacked again, losing heavily in order to divert attention from the deadly Franco-Serb thrust farther west. This was successful, and the French and Serbs

poured into central Macedonia. The French cavalry seized Uskub, thus severing the communications of the Austro-Hungarian-German-Bulgarian forces retiring northwards from those of the Bulgarians who had been facing the British and Greeks farther east, and who were now retiring north-east into their own country. The only thought of these latter now was to get away, and they plunged into the narrow defiles of the Struma, suffering heavy loss from the British bombing aeroplanes. Dreading the vengeance of the Serbs and Greeks, who had many atrocities to avenge, and to keep them out of Bulgaria, the Bulgars unconditionally accepted the armistice terms dictated by the Allies on September 30th. On October 4th King Ferdinand departed hurriedly, leaving his son Boris to reign in his stead and make the best of an exceedingly bad business. The Serbs rapidly regained their own country and by November 1st their troops were back again in Belgrade. Germany and Austria, if they continued the War, were faced by the necessity of forming a new front on the Danube.

Clearing German East Africa, 1917–18

In September 1917 Van Deventer (remarkable as a British Lieut.-General who could hardly speak a word of English) commenced his advance inland from Kilwa and Lindi. On October 15th began the four-days battle of Mahiwa in which the British sustained 2,700 casualties out of less than 5,000 infantry engaged. This was the hardest battle of the whole East African campaign. The Nigerians fought magnificently and suffered heavily, and the 25th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers (raised from the Legion of Frontiersmen) lost more than half of the remaining handful who went into action. Unsuccessful though the engagement was, it enabled the Belgians, advancing from the central railway, to capture Mahenge ; and the German force there under Tafel had to beat a retreat in the hope of joining Von Lettow. The latter's position was very critical, and as a last desperate attempt to provide him with supplies the Germans undertook what was probably the most amazing expedient of the War. A Zeppelin, L 59, left Jamboli in Bulgaria on November 21st, 1917, and reached the neighbourhood of Khartoum on November 23rd. Here, receiving a wireless message that East Africa was occupied, it turned back and reached Bulgaria in safety.

Von Lettow now decided on the desperate course of abandoning "German East" for Portuguese territory. On the night of November 25–26th, he crossed the Rovuma with 300 Europeans and less than 2,000 "askaris" who still remained staunch. Tafel attempted to follow suit, but was cut off with his smaller force and compelled to surrender on November 28th.

The Hunt for von Lettow

The German commander had in fact done a very clever thing. Portuguese Mozambique was large and fertile, and the local Portuguese troops not particularly warlike. Indeed, von Lettow was suspected of deliberately leaving them alone till their Allies had well-provided them with arms and munitions, when, by a sudden pounce with his veteran troops, he would appropriate these to himself. The British reinforced the Portuguese with battalions of the King's African Rifles and tried to cut von Lettow off by moving inland from the port of Mozambique. He advanced nearly to Quilimane, close to the mouth of the Zambesi, in July 1918, and then, abandoning a scheme for raiding the British Nyasaland settlements to the south of Lake Nyasa, he suddenly turned north again. Forcing the passage of the Rovuma on September 28th after ten months' stay in Portuguese territory, he marched round the northern end of Lake Nyasa and entered Northern Rhodesia. He occupied Kasama on November 9th, making for the Belgian Congo, and was already on the headstreams of that river when news reached him of the Armistice. He surrendered at Abercorn on November 23rd, with about 150 Europeans and 1,200 "askaris". No other German commander in the field showed such resource and determination. The conquest of "German East" involved the employment in all of over 100,000 troops of all kinds, of whom 18,000 were casualties, not counting a very much larger number of native carriers. As regards sickness and the nature of the country it was the most difficult of all the British campaigns in the War.

Battle of Megiddo. Palestine Campaign

On April 30th, 1918, the right flank of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force again raided Es Salt across the Jordan and captured nearly 1,000 Turks before recrossing the Jordan on May 4th. The effect of this second raid to the east was to convince the Turks that the British advance, when it did come, would be in the same direction, with the object of linking-up with the Hejaz Arabs, who, led and inspired by Colonel T. E. Lawrence, were already harassing the Turkish Fourth Army in Trans-Jordania. Allenby's plan, evolved during the summer, was far more ambitious. He was convinced that it was not beyond the power of his infantry divisions to break by a single violent assault the two Turkish defensive systems filling in the ten miles gap across the Plain of Sharon between the hills and the sea. Through this gap he meant to pour three out of his four mounted divisions with instructions to ride straight north for the passes of the Carmel range and emerge on to the Valley of Esdraelon, directly in the rear of the Turkish Seventh and Eighth Armies west

of the Jordan. During the summer an elaborate series of ruses were carried out to convince the enemy that the strength of the British right and centre was undiminished, and to mask the steady increase of the forces on the left in the Plain of Sharon. So successfully was this carried out that, by the middle of September 1918, 35,000 infantry, 9,000 cavalry and 383 guns were massed on a front of fifteen miles nearest to the coast. The whole of the remainder of the front was thinly held by 22,000 men and 157 guns. Owing to our aerial superiority hardly an enemy plane crossed our line, and the Turks remained unconscious of the blow about to fall upon them.

Early on the morning of September 19th violent aeroplane attacks paralysed the Turkish signal communications, and the German commander in Nazareth, Liman von Sanders, was cut off from his troops in the line. This aerial offensive was maintained throughout the day. At 4.30 a.m. the four divisions on the Sharon front, aided by an intense artillery bombardment, attacked, and by mid-day had swept right over the Turkish defences. The enemy's extreme right was bent back like a hinge to the foot of the hills, and through the gap so formed rode the three mounted divisions. Early next morning they were through the Carmel passes and had debouched on to the Plain of Esdraelon at Megiddo, thus exactly reproducing the risky manœuvre of the Egyptian warrior, Pharaoh Thothmes III, in 1479 B.C. A brigade raided Nazareth, from whence Liman von Sanders was compelled to beat a hasty and undignified retreat. The same evening the Jordan bridge at Jisr Mejamie was seized, and the faster the Turks surged northwards to escape, the more quickly they fell into the hands of the cavalry waiting for them in the Plain of Esdraelon. These were the fortunate ones; for the remainder, jammed in the narrow Wadi Farah, leading from Nablus to their only remaining avenue of escape at the Jordan-crossing at Jisr ed Damie, were relentlessly bombed from the air till the road was blocked. Eighty-seven guns were counted next day abandoned on this single stretch of road, and by September 24th the Turkish Seventh and Eighth Armies had practically ceased to exist. Only a handful escaped. Haifa was rushed by Indian cavalry on September 23rd, thus providing the British with their first harbour north of Port Said.

On September 22nd the Turkish Fourth Army, east of the Jordan began to retire on the railway junction at Deraa, round which the rails and bridges had already been broken by Lawrence's Arabs. "Chaytor's Force" was already in pursuit and the Arabs hanging on their flanks and rear. They lost over 5,000 prisoners and 28 guns. The Turkish II Corps, retreating from the Hejaz, was intercepted south of Amman and surrendered to avoid being massacred by the Arabs.

The cavalry now set out on their 120-mile ride to Damascus. The remnants of the Turkish Fourth Army, caught between the British and the Arabs north of Deraa, were practically wiped out and only a few reached Damascus. By September 30th the cavalry were in and around Damascus, and the Turkish garrison, striving to escape up the Barada gorge to Beirut, were machine-gunned from the hills above till the passage was blocked and over 4,000 survivors surrendered. The 7th Division occupied Beirut on October 8th, and the Desert Mounted Corps seized Homs on October 15th, Hama on October 20th and Aleppo on October 26th. In little more than a month the mounted troops had penetrated over three hundred miles behind the original front-line. It was the outstanding cavalry campaign of the War; though by the irony of fate not a single regular British cavalry regiment took part in it. The total British battle casualties since September 19th were less than five thousand.

The Second Collapse: Turkey

In Allenby's final advance the Turks had lost an uncounted number killed and over 72,000 prisoners, not including several thousand Germans and Austrians. Their Palestine force was practically wiped out. Three hundred and sixty guns had been captured.

A week's campaign sufficed General Marshall to deal the same fate to their troops south of Mosul. On October 30th the bulk of this remaining force surrendered—11,000 men with 51 guns. Mosul was occupied on November 3rd, just after the surrender of Turkey. For the Turks, abandoning resistance, on October 31st signed an armistice by which they agreed unconditionally to all the Allies' military terms. The Young Turk leaders fled and Turkey's only hope appeared to be in complete submission to the Allies' will.

The Third Collapse: Austria-Hungary

For some time past the situation of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, the majority of whose populations had always more to gain from their government's defeat than from its victory, had been becoming increasingly serious. Russia was no longer a menace, and the Italians had been driven back; but defeatism and hardships had destroyed the morale of the Austrian troops, the bulk of whom were only anxious to get home.

Under these circumstances the Italians, aided by British and French divisions, designed an offensive on the Piave which was to administer the final blow to the crumbling Dual Monarchy. The plan of General Diaz was to cross the Piave about half-way up its course and break through to the town of Vittorio Veneto, thus dividing the enemy army into two portions. Of the three armies

which were to strike the decisive blow one, the Tenth, was commanded by the Earl of Cavan and included the British XIV Corps. Opposite the British was the Grave di Papadopoli, an island about three miles long in the Piave, held by the Austrians.

On the night of October 23–24th, the 7th Division captured this island and were joined there by the 23rd Division on the night of 26–27th. On the morning of October 27th the two divisions attacked and struggled through the water to the farther shore. The Italians to right and left were held up, but the British pressed on and captured their objectives. More Italian troops now got across on the right and others on the left, making for Vittorio Veneto. The British crossed the rivers Monticano and Livenza and the Austrians fell back to Pordenone, ferociously bombed by the British airmen *en route*. By October 29th the Italians had captured Vittorio Veneto, and the position of the Austrians was hopeless. On October 20th negotiations for an armistice began and it was signed on November 3rd. By this time the Austrians had lost over half-a-million prisoners and the remainder scattered homeward, leaving 7,000 guns behind them. Measured by the captures alone it was the greatest victory of the War; but after the first shock the Austrians made no real resistance, and their commanders realized that it was hopeless to expect them to do so. To this spectacular triumph the British divisions in the centre and the 48th Division in the mountains towards Asiago made a powerful contribution.

The Strategy of Foch

In France the plans of Foch had been steadily developing, consisting in a steady extension of the fighting front and the launching of fresh attacks in succession, so that the Germans never knew on which sector the next blow would fall. The vast German salient in France was peculiarly susceptible to blows on its flanks, and it was there that the principal efforts were made. On September 12th the Americans, who had now 1,250,000 men all told in France, obliterated the St. Mihiel salient in conjunction with the French, and by September 26th all was in readiness for the final offensive. On that day the French and Americans attacked in the Argonne, making for the vital lateral railway line along the Belgian frontier on which the maintenance of the German troops in France depended. The British contribution was to be two-fold—an attack eastward towards Cambrai and St. Quentin, combined with a general advance on the Flanders front.

The Second Battle of Cambrai

On September 27th the First Army attacked the German positions along the Canal du Nord from Havrincourt northward to the River

Sensée. This was an extremely difficult operation, for the canal was about 100 feet across; it was half-full of water, and the Germans had machine-guns all along its east bank. Nevertheless, the attack was successful; the canal was crossed, and by the end of the day the Germans had been driven in to a depth of five miles on a twelve-mile front, with a loss of 4,000 prisoners and 100 guns. On September 28th the Marcoing line covering Cambrai was forced. On September 29th the outskirts of Cambrai were reached by the Third Army from the south-east, and on October 1st the First Army overlapped Cambrai to the north. The Germans had been driven through their defensive systems to the open country beyond, and the fall of Cambrai was now only a matter of days.

The Capture of the Hindenburg Line

The operations of the Third Army south of Cambrai had successfully breached the northern end of the Hindenburg Line on a front of nine miles, and the Fourth Army to the south, fighting hard from September 27th to September 30th, had cleared the Hindenburg Line on both banks of the Scheldt Canal and the reserve line east of it. The enemy had now only the Masnières-Beaurevoir line left to the north of St. Quentin. Preparations were made to assault this, and it was carried by the Fourth Army between October 3rd and October 5th. In nine days' fighting the Germans had been driven completely from the whole of their defences from the River Sensée to St. Quentin. They had lost 67,000 prisoners and 680 guns, and were faced with the problem of making a stand in the open country with shattered and disorganized troops and with triumphant opponents pressing closely at their heels.

The Final Advance in Flanders

The day after the Second Battle of Cambrai was opened the Allies attacked in the north. Here there were twelve Belgian infantry divisions and one of cavalry, three French divisions, and the ten divisions of the British Second Army under General Plumer. As a tribute to his heroic constancy, the King of the Belgians was designated Commander-in-Chief of the whole force. The principal attack of September 28th was launched on the front from St. Eloi (south of Ypres) to Dixmude (half-way between Ypres and the sea), and was extremely successful. By September 30th the Allies had captured 8,000 prisoners and their advance had carried them clear of the devastated area round Ypres and on to the higher ground of West Flanders. After a pause to re-establish communications, another general attack was launched and gained ground rapidly. By October 18th the Belgians reached Bruges and Zeebrugge, and the British held the line Harlebeke-Courtrai-Menin along the Lys.

This advance rendered the positions of the Germans to the south untenable and they hastily retired. The British Fifth Army seized Lille, Roubaix and Tourcoing, and farther south the First Army occupied Douai, which had been outflanked by an advance across the River Sensée from the south.

PURSUIT TO MONS 1918.

The Germans were out in the open country across which the British had retreated from Mons, and were exposed to the attacks of the Third and Fourth Armies who resumed their advance on October 8th. Cambrai fell that day, and the British pushed steadily forward after the retreating Germans. Since September 27th the prisoners numbered nearly 50,000 in all.

Every expedient the enemy could use to delay the pursuit was employed. Railways, roads and bridges were blown up, but the British organization was by now so good that the advance still continued. By October 20th the line of the River Selle, on which stands Le Cateau, had been forced. The Germans now fell back to the line of the Scheldt and the Oise, with the Forest of Mormal filling the gap between them. In this last series of actions the enemy lost 20,000 prisoners.

The morale of the Germans was now obviously beginning to crack. Their picked men manning the machine-guns resisted desperately to cover the retirement, but the bulk of the infantry had lost all heart and offered a very weak resistance. By November 1st the British were up to the line of the Scheldt and Oise. The Germans failed to hold the River Rhonelle, running from the Forest of Mormal into the Scheldt, and Valenciennes was captured. By this time the British had ninety-nine R.A.F. squadrons in France and the mastery of the air was definitely in their hands. This was in addition to 400 fighting planes at home—a force which at last had succeeded in overcoming the raids of German bombers.

On November 4th the British First, Third and Fourth Armies attacked on a thirty-mile front from Valenciennes to the River Samborx. The river was crossed at Landrecies on the right and the Forest of Mormal penetrated in the centre with 19,000 prisoners taken. This was the last blow, and after November 6th the German resistance collapsed. On November 9th the British crossed the Scheldt; Tournai was reached, and our troops were in the neighbourhood of Mons. On November 11th the last fighting of the War took place outside Mons, and the British were back again where they had begun. The whole of the vast German salient in France had been recovered and the Allied armies were in line stretching along the Franco-Belgian frontier with their left wing curving round through Ghent to the Dutch border.

For the first time since the Russian invasion of East Prussia in 1914 the Germans were beginning seriously to feel the direct results of war in their own country. An independent Air Force had been formed in June 1918, to carry out bombing raids into Germany and from thence till the end of the War 550 tons of bombs were dropped upon suitable objectives in Germany. The enemy, who had rejoiced over the bombing of London, now complained of the risk to which this exposed their own women and children.

The Final Collapse: Germany

Now revolution broke out in Germany. The weak Chancellors who had succeeded the clumsy but well-meaning Bethmann-Hollweg had allowed themselves to be dragged helplessly in the wake of the Great General Staff and its leader, Ludendorff. They had agreed to everything: the unrestricted submarine warfare, which had brought America in against them, the fomenting of revolution in Russia—anything in short which their military controllers told them would win the War. Now, having agreed to everything, the German Government were coolly informed by Ludendorff that the War was lost and that peace would have to be made. On October 4th, as a last desperate bluff, the new Chancellor, Prince Max of Baden, addressed a Note to President Wilson, informing him that Germany was prepared to make peace on the basis of Wilson's "Fourteen Points," a collection of commandments which the agnostic Clemenceau declared to surpass Jehovah's, since they were more numerous. Wilson replied that no terms could be made with the Kaiser and a lengthy correspondence ensued, during which the Allied armies rolled inexorably forward. The German people began to realize that their rulers had selected the moment for making war but could not select the moment to stop it.

At the beginning of November the German Fleet at Kiel, anticipating orders to commit suicide at a final battle in the North Sea with the British and American Fleets, broke into mutiny. Only a few submarine crews remained staunch, and the attempt to suppress the revolt failed. On November 8th revolution broke out in Munich and on the 9th throughout Germany. The Kaiser, after vainly quibbling for two days that he would renounce his position as German Emperor but not as King of Prussia, lost his nerve on November 10th and fled to Holland. By so doing he ruined himself irretrievably in the eyes of the Germans. It was not thus that the great Frederick had behaved in his desperate straits. The prestige of the Hohenzollerns was gone; and the Germans reviled the War-Lord who had in reality, once war was declared, sunk gradually into the position of a puppet very perfunctorily treated by the military leaders.

The Armistice

In the dining-car of Foch's train in the Forest of Compiègne the agreement for the cessation of hostilities was signed on November 10th to come into force at 11 a.m. the following day. Foch represented the military side of the negotiations for the Allies and Admiral Wemyss the naval side. No one could trust the Germans now; but a consideration of the terms made it clear that once the Germans complied with them—and they were in no condition to prevaricate—[It is an interesting commentary on the subsequent German claims that they were never defeated but made peace solely on the basis of President Wilson's Fourteen Points that, when they marched home, they left behind them over three-quarters of a million prisoners on the Western Front alone.]—they could not fight again. The surrender of 5,000 guns, 30,000 machine-guns, 2,000 aeroplanes and all their submarines—to name only a few items—would render them completely powerless. Once this condition was attained Foch refused to sacrifice a single additional life, and there is no doubt but that he was right to do so.

The Armistice was heralded in London by a wild outburst of enthusiasm which has probably never been paralleled. On the fighting fronts there was a heavy silence. The War was over and one was still alive. It seemed quite sufficient.

CHAPTER XXV

BACK TO NORMAL, 1919–1929

ON December 1st, 1918, the British advanced-guard crossed the Belgian frontier into Germany. The advance from the Armistice line had been slow ; partly in order to allow the vanquished enemy to get clear, and partly on account of the damage done by the Germans to the roads and railways over a broad zone across which communications had now to be re-established. The arrangement was that the French should cross the line at Mainz, the Americans at Coblenz, and the British at Cologne, establishing bridgeheads with a radius of about twelve miles on the farther side. On December 6th British cavalry entered Cologne and six days later four divisions of British infantry marched across the Rhine to occupy the area included in the Cologne bridgehead. The French and Americans completed a similar process further south, and western Germany was now firmly in the grip of the Allied and Associated Powers who could, if necessary, seize the great industrial area of the Ruhr to the north of Cologne. In these positions they were to remain, by the Armistice terms, pending the final settlement with Germany.

The Peace Conference at Paris lasted just a year, from January 18th, 1919, to January 21st, 1920. The draft of the German Peace Treaty (The Treaty of Versailles) was presented to the German representatives on May 7th, 1919, and after a period of unavailing objections on their part, unconditionally signed on June 28th. The former Austrian territories were divided up by the Treaty of St. Germain (September 10th, 1919) ; Bulgaria was dealt with by the Treaty of Neuilly (November 27th, 1919) ; Hungary was subsequently reduced to less than its racial limits by the Treaty of Trianon (June 4th, 1920); and on August 20th, 1920, the Sultan of Turkey signed the Treaty of Sèvres which was shortly afterwards disowned by the Turkish people and never came into force. By the Treaty of Versailles Germany lost to France, Alsace and Lorraine ; to Belgium, Eupen and Malmedy ; to Denmark part of Sleswig ; to Lithuania (eventually), Memel ; to Poland the province of Posen and later, after a plebiscite, one-third of Upper Silesia. The Saar Valley was placed for fifteen years under the League of Nations, at the end of which time its people would decide by a plebiscite whether they desired to revert to Germany. The coal mines there were given to France in compensation for French mines which had been put out

of action by the Germans and by war-time conditions. The city and port of Danzig was made a Free City State under the League. The effect of all this was to remove from German control practically all the non-German elements, and to reduce the population by over seven millions. It also involved incidentally the loss of many Germans and therefore created problems for the future.

The disarmament clauses were equally stringent. The German army was reduced to 100,000,—a long service (twelve years) professional army, in which no heavy guns or tanks were permitted. The Navy was reduced to little more than a coast defence force and could contain no submarines. The Air Force was abolished. Further, a demilitarized zone of fifty kilometres in width was established on the east bank of the Rhine. An Inter-Allied Commission was appointed to see that these terms and also the destruction of German reserves of arms and munition factories was carried out.

The Peace Conference, also, attempted to saddle Germany with the cost of the War and at first her liabilities were assessed at the astronomical figure of £20,000 millions, but it was quickly realized that this was absurd and the bill subsequently presented was for £6,600 millions, to pay in money and material for the cost of damage done, civil losses incurred, e.g., the cost of re-establishing the devastated areas, of compensating owners of property in the Allied countries, etc. Even this more modest figure for reparations was, however, quite impossible and, after various attempts to settle the question definitely, by Conferences, and by reductions of the total amount to about £2,000 millions, reparations were finally allowed to die in 1932. Abroad, all the German Colonies were transferred as " Mandates " to other Powers. Great Britain obtained most of German East Africa (Tanganyika), Belgium getting two small portions; Togoland and the Cameroons went mainly to France, thin strips in each case being " mandated " to Great Britain ; Japan received the German possessions in the Pacific north of the equator ; south of the equator Australia received German New Guinea ; New Zealand got Samoa, and the island of Nauru was mandated to the British Empire. Finally, the Union of South Africa received a mandate for German South-West Africa.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire disappeared entirely from the map. Austria and Hungary became separate States, each reduced to approximate racial boundaries. The southern subject provinces inhabited by Slav peoples were added to Serbia to form the kingdom of Jugo-Slavia ; Transylvania was given to Roumania ; Bohemia Moravia and Slovakia in the north were formed into Czecho-Slovakia Galicia went to a resuscitated Poland, the Trentino and the peninsula of Istria to Italy. In all these cases Austrian or Hungarian minorities were transferred to an alien rule. Bulgaria, another loser

had to cede territory to Greece, Roumania and Jugo-Slavia. Poland re-emerged out of territories taken from Germany, Austria and Soviet Russia. Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania separated themselves from Russia and became independent States. Turkey, though denouncing the Treaty of Sèvres, abandoned the Arab-speaking lands south of Aleppo and Mosul, which had been little but a source of weakness in the past; and these were mandated as follows: Syria and Lebanon to France; Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq to Great Britain.

Thus, the map of the world and particularly of Europe was redrawn. Seven new European countries had appeared to add to its military and economic frontiers. Minority questions still existed, but from new angles. Germany was disarmed, bankrupt and helpless—but could it be kept so? Was the settlement permanent? Would the losers be content? To these questions, many even in 1919 gave a pessimistic answer. But at least the military occupation of the Rhine was to continue until Germany had carried out the disarmament and reparation clauses, and the League of Nations might grow to a sufficient stature to safeguard the status quo.

This League or Association of Nations, whose Covenant was an integral part of the Treaty of Versailles and the other treaties, aimed at substituting an international conscience for a national one. The members undertook to respect and *preserve* the territory and independence of all fellow members. A permanent machinery was set up to settle disputes and to delay war. In cases of unprovoked aggression penalties might be exacted by the unanimous decision of the members. There were loopholes. War was not abolished, but it was made disreputable and, as was hoped, as unremunerative as possible. The League was given a further status by making those countries who received "Mandates" responsible to it for the proper carrying out of their trusts. The Powers which had lost in the War must first prove their change of heart and desire for peace before they could become members.

Demobilization

No sooner was the War over than the question of demobilization arose. There were over two million British citizens serving in the army in one or other of the various theatres abroad, and at home there were another 1,600,000. In addition, there were 250,000 in the Royal Air Force and 380,000 in the Navy. An urgent problem arose—in what order should these men be released? This was vital to individuals, since those who returned first to civil life would have the best chance of obtaining jobs. Was it to be those who had served longest or those whose occupations rendered them most necessary to the national economy? The latter course was at first

decided on and at once aroused discontent, since it was the same factor of indispensability which had in very many cases postponed the calling up of these men till the last possible moment. As a result the discipline which had never failed so long as there was fighting to be done began to show signs of weakening. There were a number of unfortunate incidents in France and at home, and accordingly it was decided in January 1919 that priority in demobilization should be given to the older men and those who had served longest abroad. This checked the discontent, though it did not increase the rate of demobilization which was proceeding as rapidly and smoothly as possible. The War had provided us, though at an immense cost, with a really good administrative system, and the arrangements for demobilizing the vast civilian army were in striking contrast to those necessary to raise it. By September 1920 the work was practically completed, and the war-time soldiers were back in civil life. Their memory remained in the work of the British Legion, led and inspired by Earl Haig; in the dignified memorials of the Imperial War Graves Commission, and " not only in their own country, but in foreign lands also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not in stone but in the hearts of men." By 1921, in spite of some delays cause by a coal strike at home, several small wars and the necessities of Imperial policing abroad, the Army had been reduced to little more than its pre-war strength of 240,000. There were a few additions: The Welsh Guards; the Tank Corps, which first came on the scene as the Heavy Section, Machine Gun Corps, in 1916 and which was to become the Royal Tank Corps in 1923, and the Signal Branch, R.E. which became the Royal Corps of Signals in 1922. During the same period the Royal Air Force was reduced from 263,000 men and 22,000 aircraft to 28,000 and 336 machines. No nation in history has ever given such a lead in disarmament.

Further Changes and Reductions in the Army

In 1920, it was assumed that we had got back to normal. Compulsory military service was abolished and recruiting for the Regular Army resumed. The Territorial Force was also re-opened for enlistment and was re-named the Territorial Army. Henceforward, it was to be not merely a second line for Home Defence, but also the basis of expansion in case of national need, liable for Imperial Service, though it could not be sent overseas without the passing of a special Act of Parliament. It was somewhat reduced in size and was to consist of fourteen Divisions and two cavalry brigades. Later its rôle was still further enlarged by receiving the responsibility for coast defences at home, as well as the burden of providing the ground part of the anti-aircraft defence of Great Britain. At the

same time the Special Reserve was suspended and its place taken, as far as the needs of certain technical corps are concerned, by a newly created Supplementary Reserve.

Another interesting result of the War followed in 1922. The Army was now costing the country much more than in pre-war days. Higher pay was necessary to attract a desirable and well educated type of recruit; the general level of prices had vastly increased, and this at a time when there was the inevitable British tendency after all wars to cut expenses on its fighting services. The result was a reduction of our standing army by about 40,000 men. Cavalry was reduced by amalgamations equivalent to one Regiment of Household Cavalry and eight Regiments of the Line. All the five regiments of Infantry which had four battalions were reduced to a two-battalion basis.[1] The formation of the Irish Free State enabled the garrison of that country to be withdrawn, and four regiments normally recruited there were disbanded while a fifth was amalgamated with a Northern Ireland regiment. In all, by this "Geddes axe," there was a reduction of twenty-one battalions; and the potential expeditionary force, made up of units at home and on the Rhine, was now one Cavalry Division and five Divisions, or one Division less than in pre-war days. The immense disproportion between the responsibilities and the size of the Army was therefore increased, and the need for the development of greater mobility and fire power to compensate for small numbers had become still more insistent.

Greater co-ordination between the three Fighting Services was also essential if their reduced numbers were to cope with their great responsibilities. A proposal for the establishment of a Ministry of Defence was made in 1923, with this object of increased co-ordination in view, but the Royal Commission which examined it reported unfavourably and recommended as an alternative the creation of a Standing Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence, to consist of the three Chiefs of Staff with the Prime Minister as Chairman; the function of this Sub-Committee, which was brought into existence, is to advise the Cabinet on defence policy from the combined standpoints of the naval, military and air experts.

This was followed in 1927 by the opening of the Imperial Defence College which trains selected officers and civilians in the broadest aspects of Imperial strategy.

The End of the Occupation

By the Treaty of Versailles, it had been provided that Cologne should be evacuated in January 1925 on condition that the Germans

[1] See Appendix I.

should pay reparations and disarm. They had begun to pay, but disarmament was more doubtful. Guns and munitions were still believed to be concealed in unoccupied Germany, despite the investigations of the Inter-Allied Commission and there were still unauthorized military formations. Cologne was therefore not evacuated at the date fixed. On October 16th, 1925, however, the Locarno Agreement was reached, by which Germany once more re-entered the " Concert of Europe," and the termination of the occupation drew nearer. The idea of this Locarno Pact was, in brief, that Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and Germany should mutually guarantee the German-Belgian and German-French frontiers as fixed by the Treaty of Versailles. In case of any violation of these frontiers, the Powers not directly concerned (i.e., Britain and Italy) should come to the aid of the party considered by the League of Nations to be attacked, or, if the need were urgent, should intervene at once without waiting for the League. The effect of this was really to present France and Belgium—or possibly Germany—with valuable insurances for which they paid no premiums, since no such guarantees were offered to Britain or Italy. It also implied the use, once again under certain circumstances, of British forces in a European war, but it is noteworthy that none of the British Self-Governing Dominions signed the Locarno Pact.

To minimize the danger of another war in Western Europe. Germany, France and Belgium undertook never to attack each other or wage war except in legitimate defence or as laid down by the League of Nations. They further promised to seek a settlement of any disputes by pacific means—an anticipation of the later more general Kellogg Pact of 1928. No guarantee was given as regards the Polish and Czecho-Slovakian frontiers with Germany, but the countries concerned undertook to sign arbitration treaties.

As a result of the " Locarno spirit " Germany entered the League in September 1926, but the full evacuation of the Rhineland was delayed by the suspicions of France, unwilling to abandon the security conferred by the fact that if the Germans did attack it would be German territory that would be devastated.

However, as a result of Locarno, it was decided that Cologne should be evacuated and that a British force, reduced from 15,000 to 9,000 should move to Wiesbaden formerly in the French zone. The new area was officially taken over on December 30th, 1925, and the last British troops left Cologne on January 30th, 1926, amid the rejoicings of the population who had forgotten how glad they had been to be under British control at one time instead of other alternatives.

Apart from patriotic sentiment, the inhabitants of Wiesbaden were not sorry to see the British arrive. It was a fashionable water-

ing-place which needed visitors, and the newcomers spent money more freely than the French had done. Also there were no African battalions. But the justification for retaining them there at all had largely been removed by the Locarno Pact, and on December 12th, 1929, the small British force at Wiesbaden, now reduced to not more than one brigade with attached troops, returned home, following the acceptance by Germany of the Young Plan for the payment of reparations. From a military point of view the British garrison in the Rhineland had for years been rather in a precarious position, isolated far from the sea and dependent on the chances of Continental politics for the means to maintain communications with Britain. With the forces returned from the Rhine it was at last possible to complete the 5th Regular Division at Catterick and York.

Military Operations, 1919–1929

In the meantime, between 1919 and 1929, British and Indian troops had been employed in a number of operations, which can be classified as follows :

(a) Campaigns which required fully armed forces of considerable size, viz.: The North Russian Expedition (1919). The 3rd Afghan War (1919). The Waziristan Campaign (1919). The Arab Insurrection in Iraq (1920).

(b) Demonstrations in force which did not lead to, but probably prevented, actual hostilities, viz.: The Chanak Affair (1922). The Shanghai Defence Force (1927).

(c) Military support of the Civil Power in re-establishing law and order, viz.: Amritsar 1919. Ireland (1918–1921). The Moplah rebellion (1922). Egypt (1921) and Khartoum (1924). Palestine 1929.

The circumstances of each of these can only be mentioned in outline. For details of most of those in (b) and (c) the reader should consult *Imperial Policing* by General Gwynn where they are fully discussed and valuable lessons deduced from them. Those in category (c) are particularly important, not merely because they are of a type which is frequent, but because they illustrate situations which may often confront junior officers in command of very small bodies of troops. On the prompt action taken may depend—not perhaps the ultimate outcome but—a great diminution in the losses incurred on both sides and hence on the amount of bitterness engendered. Further, they invariably illustrate the difficulties of collaboration between civil and military authorities and the necessity for quickly finding some method of co-ordination satisfactory to both.

POST-WAR CAMPAIGNS

(i) British Intervention in Russia, 1918–1919

Until 1918 no British units had served in Russia, with the exception of some armoured-car detachments. On June 23rd, 1918, a British Military Mission and a small expeditionary force of about 1,000 troops had landed at Murmansk close to the Norwegian border in the far north, where the recently-constructed railway from Petrograd reached the sea and which by a strange freak of currents is ice-free. Its immediate objects were to deny the Germans the use of the port as a submarine base and to guard the munitions landed there and at Archangel for Russian use prior to Russia's collapse. Its wider purpose was to endeavour to reconstitute some kind of a front in Russia which might retain at any rate a portion of the German troops in the East. This object was in some measure attained; and by the Armistice the British force had grown to nearly 7,000, beside Allied detachments and some local troops. It was retained there in the hope that its presence might enable the anti-Bolshevik elements to rally and form a stable government in North Russia; and in any case the troops at Archangel were frozen in, and could not be withdrawn through the White Sea till the spring. A wide front was held, covering the White Sea and stretching south to Lake Onega. The Bolsheviks were defeated in various small engagements, and had the anti-Bolshevik Russians possessed any real energy or organized administration, they might have overcome their enemies. Unfortunately, as in the case of the forces under Koltchak in Siberia and Denikin in South Russia, these were precisely the qualities they lacked; and there was also the consideration that the rule of the Bolsheviks in the centre of Russia, abominable as it then was, stood in Russian eyes for Russia and against foreign intervention. Having made peace elsewhere, we could not continue to fight our former allies in Russia, and so it was decided to withdraw our troops. A force of 8,000 officers and men, veterans who had volunteered from the demobilizing armies, was sent in May and June 1919 to cover this operation.

They arrived just in time to quell a mutiny of some of the local Russian troops, who knew the British were going and so sought to save themselves by changing sides. There was just a chance that the North Russian government might still maintain itself, and to give them this chance a southward advance was carried out and a wide area cleared of the Bolshevik forces. All was in vain. Shortly after the last British troops had been withdrawn in October 1919, the North Russian movement collapsed and its leaders were massacred by the Bolsheviks. Britain was therefore in the position of

having given aid to the enemies of the Soviets and, as far as North Russia was concerned, unsuccessfully. The same result occurred in the case of the assistance given to Admiral Koltchak in Siberia. His troops were just one degree more unsoldierly than the Bolsheviks, and the two British battalions sent were withdrawn with the other allied troops in the autumn of 1919. Koltchak's government fell to pieces, and he himself was executed in February 1920. Denikin's resistance in South Russia collapsed in July 1920, and a horde of starving fugitives cramming the ships available arrived at Constantinople, where they were fed as far as resources permitted by British troops and sailors. North, south and east the Bolsheviks were triumphant.

One British weapon, however, the Bolsheviks could not counter. In 1919 the British Navy dominated the Baltic and the Black Sea, and was thus able to render valuable aid to the small states struggling to maintain themselves on Russia's western frontier. Poland was strong enough to secure herself, as was demonstrated by Pilsudski's rout of the Bolsheviks outside Warsaw in August 1920; but Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Roumania had no naval forces to oppose to the Red Navy, inefficient as it was. Attacked by sea as well as by land, they would probably have succumbed; but this the presence of the British Navy prevented. On May 17th, 1919, and again on May 21st, British naval forces defeated Bolshevik warships in the Gulf of Finland near Kronstadt; and on August 18th, 1919, a flotilla of British motor-boats broke into the inner-basin at Kronstadt and torpedoed two Bolshevik battleships. This effectively paralysed any naval action by the Bolsheviks and made all the difference to the small states.

On land they held off the Bolsheviks, who were finally compelled to acknowledge their independence. The existence of Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to-day is a monument to their own courage and British naval power. The long land-frontier running south from Murmansk to Odessa, with only a narrow exit to the sea at the end of the Gulf of Finland, shuts Russia off from the west and frees from Bolshevik power the most energetic elements of the old Russian Empire. By amazing good fortune the Great War freed Europe from German domination without setting up Russia in her place, the deadly risk of the Russian alliance. Disastrous though it appeared at the time, the collapse of Russia and betrayal at Brest-Litovsk gave Britain security which would otherwise have been unobtainable. It freed us from the pledge that Constantinople should be Russian at the Peace, with all its attendant dangers to our sea-route in the Mediterranean, and that by the action of the Russians themselves.

(ii) The Third Afghan War, 1919

On February 20th, 1919, Habibulla Khan, Amir of Afghanistan, was murdered. During the war his friendly attitude to the British Government had been of the utmost service to Britain, and it at first appeared that his third son and successor, Amanulla Khan, would take the same line. But the latter, in order to secure the throne, had been compelled to make lavish promises to the Afghan army which he could not fulfil. Among them was a promise of Karachi as an Afghan port. In order to extricate himself from his difficulties he proclaimed a "Holy War" and on May 8th, 1919, launched his forces at the Indian frontier in the Khaibar, Khost and Baluchistan. Luckily there were plenty of troops in India at the close of the War, and the general revolt hoped for by Amanulla did not take place. His troops, who were on a semi-regular footing, had forfeited the advantages of irregulars without gaining real efficiency. The northern Afghan invaders were defeated in the Khaibar without delay, and the British forces advancing through the pass occupied Dakka in Afghan territory on May 13th, establishing permanent picquets on the route. Jalalabad was frequently bombed from the air. In the southern front Spin Baldak in Baluchistan, opposite New Chaman, was captured on May 28th. Both Kabul and Kandahar were in danger, and the frontier tribesmen, who had been watching events, now displayed a disconcerting tendency to seek for plunder in Afghanistan rather than in India, stimulated by the appearance of a British aeroplane over Kabul. Under these circumstances, Amanulla sought for peace with the same precipitancy as he had made war. The Indian Government would have been well-justified in exacting severe punishment for the unprovoked attack, but in 1919 all thoughts were set on peace, and Amanulla's request was granted. Afghan delegates were received and peace was signed at Rawalpindi on August 8th. Amanulla obtained one important "face-saving" concession. Though he forfeited an annual subsidy, he obtained the cancellation of the clause in previous treaties to the effect that the foreign affairs of Afghanistan were under British control. This had never been enforced since there was no means of doing so short of occupation, but Amanulla made the most of the concession and set up a "monument of victory" in Kabul in which the British Lion was shown heavily chained. He also adopted the title of "King" of Afghanistan instead of Amir.

(iii) The Waziristan Campaign

Though fighting against the Afghans ceased on June 3rd, 1919, the effect of the Afghan incursion from Khost was serious in the central

portion of the frontier. On May 23rd the Afghan Commander-in-Chief, Nadir Khan, had appeared in the Kurram Valley and threatened Thal. He was expelled by a British force under Brigadier Dyer on June 1st, but not before the Afghan invasion and the evacuation of the posts in northern Waziristan had called the tribesmen to arms. A tragic episode took place at the end of May. It was decided to withdraw the South Waziristan Militia from the isolated post of Wana near the Afghan frontier. As a result 1,100 men, mostly local Wazirs, deserted with their arms and only a loyal handful with one wounded British officer struggled into Fort Sandeman after a running fight for eighty miles. Jandola was invested on May 29th and relieved on June 9th. Fort Sandeman, which had also been besieged, was relieved by a column from Quetta.

Encouraged by the evacuation of numerous posts and the capture of many rifles the Mahsuds and Wazirs openly defied the Government, although the Afghans had, officially at any rate, withdrawn from the conflict. In November 1919 it was decided that a force of 8,500 troops should enter Waziristan by the Takki Zam Valley. The two infantry brigades contained no British units, and some of the battalions were without experience of frontier fighting and distinctly raw. As a result the first attempts to capture Mandanna Hill beyond Jandola failed on December 19th with 250 casualties. It was captured on December 20th, but the same evening the garrison was driven off it. An attack was made on Tarakai Hill on December 21st, but this again could not be held and over three hundred casualties were sustained. Tarakai was taken on December 22nd and Mandanna occupied on the 25th. The Mahsuds had shown great skill and fighting spirit, and it was necessary to send for additional units with experience of frontier warfare. The next obstacle was the Ahnai Tangi (ravine) farther up the Takki Zam. Attempts to force it failed on January 7th, 9th and 10th. It was taken by a daring night march on January 11th and a fight took place on the farther side on January 14th in which 4,000 Mahsuds and Wazirs were defeated with loss, our casualties amounting to 450.

The next obstacle was the Barari Tangi. This was captured on January 23rd and the Mahsud resistance began to weaken. By March 6th the column reached Kaniguram, the Mahsud "capital," having traversed a region unpenetrated since 1894. The total casualties in Waziristan in the winter of 1919–1920 amounted to 2,286 almost exactly the same figure as in the Mesopotamian revolt. This campaign against the independent tribesmen of Waziristan has been described as the most desperate and costly in the whole history of the Frontier. It had been made the more difficult by reason of demobilization, the necessity for furlough for Indian troops after the War, and a lack of young officers with experience of frontier warfare.

A new policy was now adopted. Since 1852 no fewer than seventeen campaigns had been necessary in Waziristan and each had terminated in a withdrawal, thereby encouraging the Mahsuds to fresh attacks. It was therefore decided to occupy central Waziristan. Fortified piquets were constructed along the Takki Zam Valley during the summer of 1920, and on December 16th Wana was reoccupied. In January 1923 a site for a fortified camp was selected at Razmak, which could be reached from the Tochi Valley to the north as well as from the Takki Zam Valley to the south. A motor-road was later constructed linking up the whole line from Tank to Idak; and Waziristan, though still not "administered," is now controlled by three strong brigades. The Waziristan operations had, however, made it clear that all units of the Indian Army were not of equal fighting value, and that a reorganization was necessary so as to obtain the maximum fighting value consistent with the sums available for purposes of defence.

The Reorganization of the Indian Army

Before the War the Army in India was comparatively cheaply run, the object of the Indian Government being to provide as large a personnel as possible at a low cost per head. War experience, particularly in Mesopotamia, and later in Waziristan, had shown the dangers of this policy, with the result that in 1922-23 the Defence budget was more than double what it had been in 1913-1914. The Army in India, British and Indian, was better paid, better provided and better equipped, and it was impossible to go back to the old system. The only alternative therefore was a reduction in numbers. The combatant troops of the British Service in India and of the Indian Army were accordingly reduced by about 18,000 in each case, leaving the British Army in India 58,000 strong, and the Indian Army with 132,000 troops in service and 34,000 reservists. Later, eight R.A.F. squadrons were stationed in India with a personnel of 2,200 British officers and men and 1,200 Indians.

As a result of the experience gained in the War and these post-war campaigns, the Indian Army itself was reorganized into twenty-one regiments of cavalry, nineteen mountain batteries, three corps of Sappers and Miners, an Indian Signal Corps, ninety-eight battalions of Indian Infantry, twenty battalions of Gurkha Rifles, and ancillary services.

It was officially allocated to three spheres of activity, corresponding to the three different functions which have gradually become essential.

In the first place there are the Covering Troops on the Frontier, eight brigades forming a screen behind which mobilization can take place undisturbed. These take the place, for this purpose, of the

local militias which had proved untrustworthy in the third Afghan War and the Waziristan campaign.

Secondly, there is the Field Army of four infantry divisions and four cavalry brigades comprising India's striking force.

Lastly, there are the Internal Security Troops, organized in eleven brigade areas and with a majority of British troops, eight British to seven Indians. On these depend not only the maintenance of internal order, but the security of some 4,000 miles of strategic railway.

An important change was made in the direction of reducing the previous term of service with the colours so as to build up an effective reserve, the previous lack of which was severely felt during the Great War. The Army in India still remained the smallest armed force in the world in proportion to the population it defends and the responsibilities it could be called on to undertake. Its cost, though considerable, amounts to less than 2/6 per head of the population per annum, as compared with £1 in Britain.

In February 1923, a momentous innovation was introduced into the Indian Army. India's growth towards responsible self-government was recognized by the introduction of King's Commissioned Indian Officers, as part of a wider process of Indianization affecting all the services. The scope of the scheme at first was narrowed to eight units which were specified; the later developments will be narrated in the next chapter.

(iv) The Arab Revolt in Mesopotamia, 1920

The Mesopotamian campaign during the Great War had necessarily ignored the Arab tribes of Iraq except in so far as they tended, during the period of Turkish success, to harass our operations. The battlefields had provided them with a large assortment of arms, and at the conclusion of hostilities they were far more formidable than at the outset. The administration set up during 1919 was alleged to be too much on Indian lines, and, conscientious and efficient as it was, necessarily aroused the hostility of tribesmen who had usually been able to disregard the casual rule of the Turks. In May 1920 the British Government accepted a mandate for Iraq (literally "cliff," i.e., the declivity marking the passage from the higher desert to the lower ground of Mesopotamia). The prospect of direct British administration led to a revolt which, though fortunately not universal, was nevertheless for a period distinctly critical.

On June 4th, 1920, a section of armoured cars was entrapped at Tel Afar, west of Mosul, and the crews wiped out. The town was recovered by a mobile column on June 9th and it became necessary to prepare a striking force in case of eventualities. Though there were 7,200 British and 53,000 Indian troops in the country, such

large deductions had to be made to guard bridges and railways, 14,000 Turkish prisoners, 57,000 Armenian and Assyrian refugees and over 900 British women and children (the families of the garrison in camp at Karind in the Persian hills), that few mobile troops were available.

On July 4th about five hundred British and Indian troops were besieged by the Arabs at Rumaithah on the Middle Euphrates. A first attempt to relieve them failed on July 7th, but a second advance on July 20th succeeded, though Rumaithah had to be abandoned after the garrison had been withdrawn. The same day Kufah in the same neighbourhood was invested, and a column set out from Hillah towards Kifri for its relief. This force, the bulk of which was composed of three companies of the 2nd Battalion, Manchester Regiment, encamped on the night of July 24th in an angle between the road and the Rustumiyah canal. That evening large forces of the insurgents attacked, and it was unwisely decided to retreat towards Hillah. In the darkness the column was rushed. Two hundred men were killed and as many more wounded or taken prisoner. This was the signal for a general rising on the Middle Euphrates, though fortunately the great Muntafik tribe between the Euphrates and the Tigris remained neutral. The forces in arms against us now amounted to about 130,000 men with 60,000 rifles.

It was necessary to evacuate Diwaniyah on the Euphrates on July 30th and the force there fought its way northward, repairing as it went the railway line which had been torn up behind it. Hillah was reached on August 8th and a very difficult operation had been successfully carried out. On August 13th the great Hindiyah Barrage which controlled irrigation on the Euphrates was recovered. This made it possible to cut off the water-supply from the revolted city of Karbala which, owing to its sanctity in the eyes of Shia Muhammadans, could not be directly attacked. In the meantime, operations were successfully carried out on the Diala River north-east of Baghdad. The garrison of Kufah was relieved on October 17th after a gallant defence in which they were exposed to the fire of an 18-pounder gun lost in the disaster to the Manchester column. On October 18th the insurgents in the other " Holy City " of Najaf made their submission, handing over the prisoners captured on July 24th.

Samawah, farther down the Euphrates towards Basra, had been besieged in August and in the operations near there a river-steamer, S.9, was lost on August 26th and an armoured train rushed on September 3rd, half the crew being killed with two British officers, who sold their lives dearly.

There was now a danger that the Muntafik tribe might rise, and the British commander, Lieut.-General Sir Aylmer Haldane,

requested that two infantry divisions and two cavalry brigades might be sent as reinforcements. Another river-steamer, the *Greenfly*, was lost on October 3rd, having grounded on August 10th near Khidr on the Euphrates, and the crew starved into surrender before relief could arrive. On October 14th Samawah was relieved after two month's investment. This was the end of the main operations. Karbala was compelled to submit on November 8th by a blockade and lack of water, and fines were collected. Mobile columns, now available since reinforcements had arrived, swept the country, and by the end of January 1921 over 50,000 rifles had been handed in. In January also forces from Kut and Nasiriyah traversed the whole length of the Shatt-al-Hai, an operation never previously carried out. The tribes were decisively beaten at last. They had suffered about 8,500 casualties, the British casualties amounting to 2,269. Thus a task was accomplished without which an organized State of Iraq would have been impossible, and the way was paved for a permanent settlement.

The revolt had shown the necessity of establishing a government which, while friendly to Great Britain, should coincide as far as possible with the wishes of the Arab population. The Amir Faisal, brother of Abdulla, had been expelled from Syria by the French in July 1920, owing to the attitude of the Syrian Nationalists making it impossible for him to co-operate with the mandatory Power. His character and descent from the rulers of Mecca warranted the belief that he would make an efficient ruler of Iraq. In June 1921 he was brought to Iraq under British auspices; elected king in July, and crowned in August. After some preliminary difficulties, owing to Wahabi raids and Iraqi misunderstandings of the part which Britain proposed to play henceforward in the government of the country, a treaty of alliance was signed between Britain and Iraq in October 1922, and another which envisaged the future election of Iraq as a member of the League of Nations in April 1923. The British military forces were withdrawn and their place taken by five units of the Royal Air Force, which henceforward assumed control of the defence of British interests there and acted in support of the newly raised Iraq Army in the defence of the country from external attack and the maintenance of internal security. The air bases of these five squadrons were guarded by Assyrian Levies recruited on the Turkish-Iraq frontier. This transfer to "Air Control" as it was called, saved the Imperial Exchequer many millions and was followed in 1928 by the withdrawal of infantry units from Aden also and their replacement by a squadron of the R.A.F. Earlier, the military control of Palestine and Transjordan had been transferred to the Air Ministry. Thus, during these years, all British and Indian troops were withdrawn from the great area of the Middle East,

between Egypt and India, and this region came entirely under the Air Force for protection.

It is desirable, here, to outline some of the subsequent events in Iraq. In 1930, the British and Iraq governments concluded a Treaty, by which Iraq was to become independent and a member of the League in 1932. A defensive alliance by which Great Britain and Iraq would come to one another's assistance if attacked was one of the terms of the Treaty. By other terms, Britain was allowed to retain four Air bases until 1937 and two until 1957, with the necessary Air forces, in order to protect the vital British interests of oil and communications in the country.

DEMONSTRATIONS IN FORCE

(i) CHANAK, 1922

On August 20th, 1920, the Allies concluded with the Sultan's government the Treaty of Sèvres, by which the Greeks were to gain the whole of eastern Thrace with the exception of the region round Constantinople, and a wide area inland from Smyrna. Large "spheres of influence" were also allotted to France and Italy in Anatolia, and Armenia was to be constituted a "mandate," provided any Power could be found to undertake the responsibility. America was approached but modestly declined.

This treaty was not worth the paper it was written on. The Sultan's government had no power to enforce it, and the Nationalists under Mustapha Kemal were infuriated by the proposed partition of Turkish-speaking lands. Moreover, from the moment that they realized that the Allies had not the means to crush them by their own arms, owing to demobilization, but relied on the Greeks instead, they no longer feared them. Kemal's forces overran Armenia in December 1920 and divided Trans-Caucasia, from which the British troops had been withdrawn in the autumn of 1919, with the Bolsheviks. In this area the Turks actually extended their pre-war frontiers, regaining Kars, which had been ceded to Russia by the Treaty of Berlin in 1878.

Just after the signature of the Treaty of Sèvres, King Alexander of Greece died from the bite of a pet monkey, and the restoration of his father Constantine, expelled in 1917, was at once mooted. Venizelos was unpopular, as during his absence at the Peace Conferences his representatives had misgoverned Greece. The elections went heavily against him. He left Greece and Constantine returned in triumph. This restoration ruined the hopes of Greece. Italy had always been anti-Greek owing to rivalry in Anatolia and the French hated "Tino." Both Powers secretly transferred their support to

the Turkish Nationalists, and Mr. Lloyd George, owing to the situation at home, was no longer able to support the Greeks effectively, though the new Greek Government pretended he would do so.

Constantine, whose popularity depended mainly on his military successes during the Balkan wars of 1912–13, did not dare to abandon the possibilities of great territorial gains in Anatolia. The experienced Venezelist officers were replaced by royalists, whose main qualification for command was their adherence to Constantine ; and an offensive was launched in July 1921 against the Kemalists. Eski-Shehir, Kutahia and Afion-Kara-Hissar, on the railway running south from Ismid, were captured, but the Kemalist forces successfully effected their retreat. In August 1921 the Greeks launched another attack against the Kemalist capital Angora. They reached the line of the Sakaria river well into the interior of Anatolia, and then had to retreat after fierce fighting. They fell back to the line of the railway and remained immobile for a year, confronting the Turks.

The Greeks had obviously shot their bolt, and France and Italy hastened to make terms with the Kemalists. A French representative, M. Franklin-Bouillon, appeared in Angora, and soon French munitions and aeroplanes were at the disposal of Mustapha Kemal. Britain could not act effectively without France and Italy, and was obliged to concur in a declaration of neutrality as between Greece and Turkey on August 10th, 1922. This sealed the fate of Greek ambitions.

On August 26th Mustapha Kemal advanced. The war-weary Greek troops, left in the middle of Anatolia short of food, clothing and munitions, made no resistance. They hurriedly retreated, devastating the country as they retired, and piled themselves on to the shipping at Smyrna, seeking only to escape back to Europe. By September 9th the Turks were in the city, and on September 13th " infidel Smyrna " was burnt to the ground. The most the Greeks could do was to occupy the line of the River Maritza south from Adrianople covering western Thrace ; and the small British forces in Constantinople and the neutral zone of the Straits were faced by the possibility of an attack by the triumphant Turks.

The key positions were Chanak, covering the Dardanelles on the Asiatic side and the peninsula of Ismid opposite Constantinople. Chanak was the more direct route and was held by three thousand British infantry, with cavalry and artillery ; and without it the Turks could not cross the Straits. If they obtained it they controlled access to Constantinople from the Mediterranean. Now the French and Italians showed their hand. On September 22nd, 1922, they withdrew their detachments to the European side and left the British to face the Turks alone. Despite this gross betrayal, for

such it was, Mr. Lloyd George stood firm, though he must have known that another warlike crisis would mean the fatal weakening of his position as Premier. He ordered out troops from home and appealed to the Dominions for aid. Reinforcements were swiftly sent from Egypt, Malta and Gibraltar and England, and the narrow strip at Chanak was hurriedly strengthened.

Actually the Turks in the Chanak area consisted at first only of cavalry but were being rapidly reinforced by the advance guard of Kemal's army. They pushed across the neutral zone at Chanak till they literally had to be hustled back by the British, and on the Ismid side they advanced towards Constantinople. But they did not attack. They remembered their experiences in the Great War in which the British, though they failed on occasion to carry Turkish prepared positions, were never on one single occasion expelled from their own. In addition there was behind the British troops the Mediterranean Fleet, for whose heavy guns the Turks had a wholesome respect.

Undoubtedly the determining factor was the attitude of Mr. Lloyd George. In the last resort he would fight, and the Turks knew it. So on October 2nd they agreed to meet the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Harington, at Mudania on the Sea of Marmara. Thanks to the tact and patience of the British general, on October 11th, 1922, the Mudania Convention was signed. War was averted, though by a hairsbreadth, and Kemal's 100,000 Nationalist troops had in effect compelled the Powers to cancel the Treaty of Sèvres.

The Conference at Lausanne

On November 20th, 1922, the Turkish delegation, headed by Ismet Pasha, Mustapha Kemal's right-hand man, met the representatives of the Powers at Lausanne in Switzerland. Exactly one month previously Mr. Lloyd George had been driven from office and the strongest opponent of the Turks was powerless.

The Lausanne Conference was a humiliating affair. The Turks had everything to gain by dragging out the proceedings, and Ismet Pasha returned to Constantinople so frequently for consultation that he was jokingly alleged to have taken a season ticket. In the interval the Kemalists filtered across into eastern Thrace and took over the administration of Constantinople so effectively that they were able to inflict frequent humiliations on the British. On November 17th the Sultan fled on a British warship to Malta. A relative, Prince Abdul Majid, was allowed to act as Khalif only, till he too was ejected, and Mustapha Kemal Pasha, now dubbed "Ghazi" (the Victorious), became complete dictator. At last, on July 24th, 1923, the weary business at Lausanne came to an end. The Turks were persuaded to sign a treaty which gave them everything they

had demanded by the National Pact of July 1919, viz.: Eastern Thrace, Armenia and Smyrna, with the single exception of the Mosul vilayet—the possession of which—if it could not be settled by subsequent negotiations between Britain and Turkey, was to be referred to the League of Nations. On October 2nd, 1923, the British Army of Occupation was finally withdrawn.

The Mosul Boundary Dispute

The Lausanne Treaty of July 1923 had laid down that if Britain and Turkey were unable to come to an agreement as to the disposal of the Mosul vilayet (=province) the matter should be referred to the League of Nations. The Turks had no intention of agreeing, since if they regained Mosul, Iraq would be at their mercy. The Iraqi Army had only begun to be raised in 1921, and the only local troops immediately available consisted of a frontier force of Iraq Levies (mostly warlike Assyrian Christians) under British officers. It was therefore necessary for Britain to support King Faisal; and in April 1923 an intruding force of Turks were expelled from Iraqi Kurdistan by British troops and aeroplanes. Mosul was securely guarded along the mountainous frontier to the north, and in 1925 the Frontier Commission appointed by the League of Nations arrived on the scene, no Anglo-Turkish agreement having been reached.

Unfortunately for the Turks, they had omitted to postpone their periodic massacres of Assyrian Christians north of the occupied line to a more convenient season, and the appeals of the survivors completely disabused the League Commission of any illusions as to the nature of Turkish rule. The award went largely in favour of Britain and Iraq; and the Turks, finding themselves without support, were compelled to sign a treaty in June 1926 by which Iraq gained a secure frontier north of Mosul.

(ii) Shanghai, 1927

Another illustration of the use of a British force to bar the way against any attempt to infringe Treaty or other obligations was provided by China in 1927. In 1912 a revolution had deposed the boy Emperor, the last representative of the Manchu dynasty, and established a republic. The almost immediate result was civil war. The only real bond which united many diverse sections of that vast population had been destroyed and China almost ceased to be more than a geographical expression. By 1916 there were at least two governments claiming to speak for its peoples, one at Peking and the other at Canton, as well as innumerable War Lords waging their private vendettas in the various provinces. From 1922 onwards the southern or Canton government took a definitely

communist and anti-foreign tone, which was directed chiefly against the British as the largest foreign holders of property in China and the supposed representative of Imperialism.

This, in a few words, was the background in 1926. The civil war was being pursued and Cantonese and Northern Armies were approaching one another in the neighbourhood of the Yangtze-Kiang river. By the end of the year it was evident that Shanghai itself was in danger either of capture by one or other side or of being swamped by Chinese deserters from both armies. The International Settlement occupies nine square miles, and has a population of over one million Chinese as well as 36,000 Europeans. It is the wealthiest port in China, and though International, British interests there are greater than those of any other Power.

The anxiety with regard to the situation became more acute in January 1927, when it was learned that the British concession at Hankow had been invaded by a mob which included large numbers of Cantonese soldiers and that the British had to take refuge on a cruiser. It was possible that a similar fate might be suffered by the enormously more important and wealthy settlement of Shanghai in the near future unless measures were taken to prevent it. The only forces available in Shanghai were the Police, backed by a Voluntary Corps of approximately 1,500. These might be augmented by Marines and naval ratings from British and foreign warships to perhaps 4,000. Hong Kong might be able to lend temporarily one battalion from its already dangerously small garrison. Obviously the total was quite insufficient to provide a cordon twelve miles long round the International Settlement and to maintain internal security there at the same time. It was under these circumstances that the C.-in-C., China Station, asked the British Government to send one division to Shanghai to act in a purely protective rôle—to secure the safety of the Settlement, to protect British property and to show the Chinese that we could not be hustled out of China.

Three brigades and some armoured cars were sent very promptly, two brigades being composed of units from Home and Malta and a third being sent from India, the whole force being placed under Major-General Duncan. Henceforward the incident displayed well the qualities which are expected of the British soldier in such situations—firmness, good humour and imperturbability. An infantry cordon was established; armoured cars patrolled between the posts on the cordon line. The danger abated and finally disappeared without any serious fighting. The value of a small force sent in time had been amply demonstrated. It had saved great British and foreign interests; and had had a marked effect in raising British prestige in the Far East. Before the end of 1927 it was possible to withdraw most of the force, and the only permanent

result was that thenceforward a British battalion has been garrisoned in Shanghai.

MAINTENANCE OF INTERNAL SECURITY

(i) Amritsar 1919

In the meantime, Congress activities had produced great unrest in India. By April a civil disobedience campaign, initiated by Mr. Gandhi, had led to serious rioting in many parts and the lives and property of Europeans were in danger. Amritsar, the holy city of the Sikhs and an important trading centre in the Punjab, was specially affected; excited mobs armed with *lathis* paraded the streets and stoned police and soldiers. Three British bank officials were murdered and their bodies burnt in the street; attacks were made on European ladies. Under these circumstances the little garrison was reinforced by a small number of Indian troops, and Brigadier-General Dyer, of the Jullundur Brigade, arrived and took command. Proclamations were issued, forbidding all meetings and declaring that violence would be dealt with by martial law. Notwithstanding this, a crowd of some 6,000 gathered on April 13th in an open space between some houses where they listened to inflammatory speeches. They failed to disperse when ordered to do so, and General Dyer, who had placed fifty Gurkhas at the main approach to the enclosure, gave an order to fire, without any specific preliminary warning to the crowd. Some 400 were killed and many others wounded. His action was later severely criticized, particularly in view of the fact that it was difficult for the crowd to disperse quickly through the narrow exits—a fact which enormously increased the casualties—and also on the grounds that the action was unnecessarily drastic. In his defence, it was urged at the time that ample general warning had been given, and that the conditions throughout India, approaching a widespread revolt, necessitated strong measures being taken, and that General Dyer had, in fact, by timely severity prevented a great rising. This argument, however, assumed that he had the right to take action on matters which really fell within the province of the government—an assumption, which, in modern times, is not accepted—and make an example of the mob in Amritsar so as to produce peace in India.

(ii) Ireland, 1919–1922

From 1914 onwards the Sinn Fein movement in southern Ireland had gradually acquired an increasingly violent republican complexion. To the extremists holding these views, Great Britain's preoccupation with the War and then with the post-war difficulties was

an ideal opportunity. By January 1919 these extremists were in the majority and openly declared Ireland to be a republic, appointed a Ministry and reformed the Irish Volunteers augmented by still more desperate elements into what was called the Irish Republican Army. English law courts were boycotted; English law ceased to function in the greater part of the twenty-six counties; ordinary law-abiding citizens were terrorized into compliance with the will of the I.R.A.; the Irish Constabulary tried bravely to maintain some vestige of control, but their barracks were attacked, their rifles captured and they themselves were butchered. Several British officers were murdered; a party of twenty British soldiers were attacked while going to church at Fermoy, their rifles captured and one soldier shot dead. Incidents like these, regarded on one side as murder and on the other as legitimate acts of war, became increasingly numerous. An attempt in 1920 to reinforce the Police by an Auxiliary Force (the "Black and Tans") specially recruited from demobilized officers and men did not greatly improve the situation.

In the meantime, the rôle of the regular military garrison was peculiarly difficult. Its function was to support the civil power, but the civil power had ceased to exist. As a purely military problem the whole business could have been cleared up, given sufficient troops and a British government determined to employ them for this purpose. But there were political and foreign reactions to be considered. The attitude of the Opposition in Great Britain was strongly against determined measures. The United States, where the Irish vote is always important, held us in mortgage to the tune of £900 millions and the British government was striving to come to terms with her on this debt and to obtain also some settlement of the Naval disarmament question.

By the middle of 1921, however, a large section of the Republican party realized that southern Ireland was gradually dissolving into anarchy, and agreed to a truce in July. On December 6th, 1921, a Treaty was signed which gave to the twenty-six southern counties Dominion status under the name of the Irish Free State, and allowed the six North Eastern counties a measure of self-government within the United Kingdom. The British garrison was rapidly withdrawn from the Irish Free State, the only military stations retained being the small ones at Queenstown, Berehaven and Lough Swilly, which are essential to naval defence, and Northern Ireland became a Military District under the War Office.

One melancholy result was the disbanding of the five regiments recruited in the twenty-six counties—the 18th Royal Irish, the Connaught Rangers, the Leinsters, the Royal Munsters and the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Their names and numbers still appear in the Army List with their gallant record of battle honours; their colours

found an abiding home in the beautiful St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle.

One other important result was that a new training ground had to be found to replace the Curragh ; and Catterick in Yorkshire was finally selected for this purpose.

(iii) The Moplah Rebellion, 1921

The political agitator in India rarely stops to consider the ultimate results of his propaganda among uncivilized peoples. It therefore occasionally rebounds on himself. This was well illustrated in the Moplah revolt. The Moplahs are a backward people numbering about one million, of Arab-Indian descent, fanatically Mohammedan and notoriously unruly, who live on the Malabar coast of India, between the Nilgiris and the sea. Their country has a narrow coastal strip which rises quickly by successive jungle-covered steps to the great escarpment and forests of the western Ghats. The climate is hot ; the rainfall, particularly during the S.W. Monsoon, is very heavy ; there are few roads and the only railway is one which runs along the coast through Cannanore and Calicut and turns east at Tirur to cross the toe of India, through the Palghat gap, to Madras.

Congress agitation designed to inflame the Moplahs against the government of India was effective in its object, and serious trouble broke out in August 1921. Isolated bodies of police were cut off and killed ; some European planters and a subaltern of the Leinsters were murdered. There was only a detachment of 1½ companies of the Leinster Regiment at Calicut to meet the immediate situation. Very soon it was evident that strong reinforcements must be brought in, for the whole affair rapidly changed from a small unorganized revolt against the government into a campaign in which Hindus were being forcibly converted to Mohammedanism or butchered. Before it was brought to a close the original garrison had to be augmented by 1 British and 2 Indian battalions as well as by some Field Artillery and a battalion of Gurkhas and another of Chins and Kachins.

As an example of Imperial policing it deserves special study owing to the physical and climatic difficulties which had to be overcome and the quite numerous cases in which very junior officers were, by reason of a lack of communications, necessarily in positions of grave responsibility. Transport difficulties were very great and anything in the nature of a co-ordinated sweeping of the whole area practically impossible. Punitive columns of infantry eventually succeeded in re-establishing order. Artillery was little used owing to the nature of the country ; aircraft were not present, and much hand to hand fighting took place in which the Chin-Kachin battalion (Burma Rifles) displayed their aptitude for operations in a jungle country similar to their own.

(iv) EGYPT, 1921–1924

During the War Egypt had been the peaceful and immensely valuable base of British operations in the Near East. The moment hostilities were at an end, however, there arose a violent agitation for independence, fanned by the declarations of the Allies as to the liberation of the Arabs from the Turkish yoke and by grievances, for which Egyptian officials were really responsible, as to the levying of Labour Corps personnel and camels for the Palestine campaign. The leader of the agitation was Saad Pasha Zaghlul, a popular orator who, unlike the Sultan of Egypt and most of the notables, was of genuine Egyptian origin. The disorders provoked by the " Wafd " (= Nationalist) Party became so serious that on March 8th, 1919, Zaghlul was arrested and deported to Malta.

There was instantly a flare-up all over Egypt. Atrocities were committed and eight British officers and men travelling unarmed by train from Assiut to Cairo were intercepted at Deirut by a raging Egyptian mob and brutally battered to death. Railway and telegraph lines were severed, and for a time Cairo was within reasonable distance of being cut-off from food supplies. Fortunately Egypt was full of British, Australian and Indian troops. Mobile columns swept the Delta, and by letting out water from the Aswan Dam the Nile was made available in the dry season for British troops proceeding to Upper Egypt in river steamers owing to the damage done to the railways. Order was soon restored ; and Lord Allenby, returning from the Peace Conference, was appointed Special High Commissioner in Egypt. Seeking to conciliate the Nationalists, he arranged for Zaghlul to be released. This did very little good, and when in December 1919 a mission under Lord Milner arrived in Egypt to investigate the prospects of self-government, its members were greeted by unreasoning antagonism and boycott. The Milner Mission left Egypt in March 1920, and negotiations with Zaghlul continued during the year in London but without success. A period of disorder fomented by Zaghlul and his associates ensued, and Zaghlul was again deported, this time to the Seychelles.

The murder of isolated British officers and men could not shake the British hold on Egypt, any more than the tumultuous demonstrations of mobs of students and some rather ridiculous attempts at rendering administration impossible. On the other hand, so long as the British took what was in practice the sole responsibility for running the country, co-operation could not be expected from the more solid elements who resented the constant scenes of disorder created by crowds of excitable " students " who refrained from studying anything but politics.

The Declaration of February 1922

As a result of a visit of Lord Allenby to London, a declaration by the British Government was issued on February 28th, 1922. By this the British Government recognized Egypt as " an independent sovereign state," thus abolishing the protectorate proclaimed in December 1914. This was a wise move, since the word " protection " was generally applied to the privileged position under the " capitulations " of the scallywag Levantine Europeans who were a grave problem in Egypt. Sultan Fuad, who had succeeded his brother Hussein in 1917, took the title of King (Malik), thus substituting an Arabic for a Turkish word. His position, since he was of Albanian descent and had lived most of his life in Italy, was most difficult in view of the power of Zaghlul, who represented Egyptian nationalism in its crudest form, as Arabi Pasha had done in the days of the Khedive Tawfik.

At the same time as the protectorate was abolished, the British Government reserved to its absolute discretion, pending discussion, the following four points :

(a) The security of the communications of the British Empire in Egypt (i.e., Suez Canal, aviation and cables).

(b) The defence of Egypt against all foreign aggression or interference, direct or indirect.

(c) The protection of foreign residents in Egypt and the protection of minorities.

(d) The Sudan.

This was a purely British declaration. There was no bargaining, for the Egyptians undertook nothing in return for the very large concessions made. Murderous attacks on individual Britons still continued, and on Zaghlul's return from the Seychelles he again became Prime Minister. His attitude was as intractable as ever, and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, on entering office in 1924, was obliged to tell him plainly that there were limits to British concessions and that in particular there would be no question of handing over the Sudan to Egyptian control.

(v) The End of the " Condominium " in the Sudan

The loudest of the Egyptian students' slogans had been " Egypt and the Sudan are ours ! " They had no intention of going to the Sudan if they could help it, for they feared the Sudanese as much as most of the latter hated them. It was really a question of water-supply. The Egyptians professed to believe that any development of Sudanese irrigation would be at Egyptian expense ; on the other hand it was fairly certain that if the Egyptians got the chance they would quickly put an end to any rival irrigation threatening their own practical monopoly of the valuable long-staple cotton.

By 1924, Egyptian agitators, working in the Sudan, had succeeded in undermining the loyalty of certain sections. Some of the students of the Khartoum Military College and later an Egyptian Railway battalion at Atbara mutinied. At the time there was only one British battalion in the Sudan. Another was hastily summoned and by firm measures the situation was restored. But at that moment an event occurred which shocked the British people profoundly. Sir Lee Stack Pasha, who was both Governor-General of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and ex-officio Sirdar (Commander-in-Chief) of the Egyptian Army, was murdered while visiting Cairo, on November 19th. The new Conservative Government at once served an ultimatum on Egypt, the most painful clause of which was the payment of £500,000 for the construction of hospitals and dispensaries for the benefit of the dreaded Sudanese, as a memorial to Sir Lee Stack. It also announced that Egyptian civil servants, officers and the few Egyptian troops in the Sudan would be expelled forthwith. After a few face-saving heroics the latter meekly got into the trains and went home. The former units of the Egyptian Army which were composed of Sudanese were reconstituted as the Sudan Defence Force; and the civil and military administrations were separated. From this time forward the Sudan, though still nominally Anglo-Egyptian, was in practice under British control. There are no Egyptian civil servants or Egyptian troops there, and the British garrison was increased to two battalions (less one Company which is at Cyprus).

(vi) Palestine, 1929

It has already been pointed out that the military control of Palestine and Transjordan was handed over to the Air Ministry shortly after the War. In 1929 the forces stationed there were two squadrons R.A.F. with some armoured cars, together with the Palestinian Police, a small force of gendarmerie with British officers and N.C.O.'s. There was also the Transjordan Frontier Force, raised in 1926, whose special function was the defence of the desert frontier against Arab attack.

By 1929, the problems arising out of the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the subsequent post-war Jewish immigration from European countries had become acute. The Arab majority, who outnumbered the Jews by about four to one, felt that the Jewish immigration into Palestine was leading towards an eventual Jewish preponderance; Arab unemployment was being caused by the influx of subsidized Jewish settlers; landless Arabs who had sold their land to the Zionist organization were numerous and dissatisfied, and religious antagonism—always great between Jew and Mohammedan—had become particularly inflamed over the proxi-

mity of sacred sites, notably the Jewish "Wailing Wall" at Jerusalem which forms part of an enclosure owned by the Mohammedans.

In August 1929, a serious anti-Jewish outbreak took place. Large numbers of Jews were murdered in Jerusalem, Hebron and other towns. The small bodies of police were insufficient to deal with the situation. The Transjordan Frontier Force was still in process of formation and could not be moved from the frontier lest Arab incursions from Arabia should take place in support of the Palestinian Arabs. The Royal Air Force could not deal with street fighting; its armoured cars could not operate efficiently in the very narrow alleyways of Palestinian towns and villages.

The first necessity was to restore order, and for this purpose three British battalions were immediately brought in, two from Egypt (two platoons being sent on in advance by air)[1] and one from Malta as well as naval ratings from two cruisers at Haifa and Jaffa. The force had to be dispersed in small bodies throughout the country—a risk which was taken to restore order quickly. The danger of an Arab invasion by Arabian tribes fortunately did not materialize or the whole situation would have been much more serious.

A permanent result followed from the outbreak. In accordance with the recommendations of the Shaw Commission held the following year, the garrison of Palestine was augmented by two battalions of British infantry who in this case come under the control of the Air Officer Commanding.

[1] The first example of this.

CHAPTER XXVI

FROM 1930 ONWARDS

To future historians the economic blizzard which struck the world in 1929, which froze up the normal channels of international trade and brought about a fierce economic nationalism with all its attendant problems of sources of supply and markets will undoubtedly be taken to mark the beginning of a new period in world history. From an Imperial standpoint it may prove to have been, in the long run, more centripetal in its effects than disruptive, by drawing closer together most of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, but its effects on international relations have been far otherwise. The rapid rise to power between 1930 and 1933 of Nazism in Germany, the progressive expansion of Japan at the expense of China and the eager pursuit of colonial aggrandizement by Italy had one cause at least as well as their opportunity in the conditions created by the economic crisis. Even within the British Empire it was one of the subsidiary reasons for two serious outbreaks against law and order in Burma and Cyprus respectively. During the period 1930–35, the North-West Frontier of India provided its usual opportunities for active service. Only one of such, out of several, will be described, the one chosen being an episode which presented somewhat unusual features.

Peshawar, 1930

In 1929 and 1930 Congress agitation among the Pathans combined with the activities of a Moslem organization called "The Red Shirts" (formed by Abdul Gaffar, a son-in-law of the notorious Haji of Turungzai), had succeeded in spreading serious disaffection in the walled city of Peshawar and its surroundings. On April 23rd and 24th, following the arrest of some of the leading agitators, rioting broke out in the city. The police were insufficient to maintain order and one of four armoured cars (part of the detachment earmarked for internal security duties), which were used by the Deputy Commissioner to deter the crowds of rioters and to reconnoitre the situation, became disabled and was burned by the mob. A despatch rider of the Royal Tank Corps was murdered, and eventually the remainder of the detachment which had been earmarked had to be utilized to restore order. The natural hesitation of the Civil authorities, on whose shoulders the responsibility lay, to use force in the earlier stages entailed, without doubt, greater losses of life in the long run. It may also have had a considerable influence on the

course of the more serious events which followed. General unrest had been stirred up along the whole Frontier. Agitators had assured the tribesmen that the population in and around Peshawar would flock to their side if they advanced upon the city. The decay and downfall of British rule was widely prophesied and the events in the city were quoted to show our moral decadence and sluggishness.

As a result, lashkars of tribesmen collected on the Mohmand and Utmankhel borders, ready to invade British territory when the opportunity arose, and posts held in the Kurram and Waziristan were attacked and required considerable reinforcements. But the most serious aspect of the situation was in the Tirah, where bands of Afridis began to concentrate with the intention of attacking Peshawar. By June 5,000 of them were in the hills and caves west of the Kajuri Plain and only twelve miles from Peshawar.

The ensuing operations lasted from June until September. On two occasions parties of Afridis penetrated as far as the outskirts of Peshawar. A large supply depot was attacked and entered, but was saved by the prompt and courageous action of its guard of Indian troops. For a day or two in August, Peshawar itself was almost completely isolated by the cutting of telegraph wires and a temporary suspension of the train service. Fortunately, however, as has invariably happened on the frontier, there was no concerted rising by all the tribes at the same time. The smaller incidents in the Kurram and Waziristan were effectively dealt with ; the Mohmands waited to see which way the cat would jump, and the Afridis found themselves without the reinforcements which they expected.

Nevertheless the operations were comparatively protracted. This was due to a variety of factors. The enemy showed considerable skill in evading air attack, by moving at night or in very small parties. The country round Peshawar is intersected by nullahs and was covered during the summer months by tall crops of sugar-cane which gave excellent cover. They had willing and unwilling helpers outside and within the city. The Civil authorities were anxious to avoid any risk of casualties to friendly sections, and it was frequently impossible to distinguish between friend and foe. The bombing of Afridi villages was not permitted lest friendly tribes should be antagonized, and such air action as was allowed merely caused the dispersion of the enemy into small groups which were harder to detect and attack.

Eventually, however, continuous pressure led, as always, to discouragement and dissensions among the Afridis ; the more moderate councils of the older men prevailed, and the enterprise collapsed as quickly as it had begun.[1]

[1] One permanent result, however, accrued. Government forces remained in occupation of the Kajuri and Akakhel plains which are the principal winter grazing grounds of the Afridis.

THE BURMESE REBELLION, 1930–1932

A little later in the same year our forces were called on to deal with a serious rising in Burma. The southern part of Burma is notorious as a land of rebellions. Secret societies grow there with amazing profusion. The countryside swarms with Pongyes or priests who exert great power among the superstitious and gullible villagers, and are disseminators of intelligence and sedition. The people themselves are unstable, easily stirred and prone to dacoity as a profession. The country itself presents great natural difficulties to the forces responsible for law and order. Indeed the whole of southern Burma "is one vast military obstacle especially when travelling from east to west and vice versa. It is a country of mountain ranges running north and south, separated by broad plains through which the river valleys run. The plains are usually swampy and, for a large part of the year, except for the main roads, are impassable for wheeled transport, on account of large irrigated rice areas and extensive tracks of thick jungle." There was and still is a scarcity of motor roads, the only two of importance which traversed the area in 1930 being the main road from Rangoon to Mandalay and another from Rangoon through Prome to Allanmyo. Further, south of Prome, the wet season, which lasts from June to October, renders movement of any form of transport nearly impossible and it is extremely unhealthy.

No one definite origin can be pointed to as the cause of the trouble which broke out in Southern Burma in 1930. Congress activities, designed to hamper the British government were no doubt specially active at the time. The Round Table Conference in London was considering the separation of Burma from India, and this was opposed by Indian agitators, partly because Burma gives a livelihood to large numbers of Indian labourers and merchants, but mainly because any stick was good enough to use in castigating the British. Eventually, it may be noticed, these activities were fated to recoil on the heads of the Congress party, for the rebellion which it helped to start very easily took an anti-Indian as well as an anti-British turn.

The world economic crisis, which lowered the price of rice and created considerable hardship, was another cause. This agricultural depression produced an atmosphere favourable to sedition, of which many malcontents took advantage. An aim to get rid of British rule took shape, though fortunately there was no one leader and no one plan to put this into operation. The problem which ensued was therefore how to deal with a multitude of gangs under Bohs (leaders) between whom co-operation was not very close and whose activities were directed mainly against the local machinery of law and order. Armed in many cases with antique weapons and

using improvised (and often dangerous) firearms, they struck mainly at small police posts and villages over wide areas and if in danger retired to almost impenetrable jungles or hills. Of these gangs the most notorious was the " Galen Army," about 1,500 strong, led by Saya San, who combined some military skill with a reputed knowledge of the supernatural. The " Intelligence " of the gangs was good ; loyal villagers were terrorized into giving them information, and there were many willing helpers among telegraph, railway and postal employees, and even among the servants in Station Clubs.

Tharawaddy has always had the reputation of being a restless district, and it was there that the rebellion first broke out. Ineffective police measures to deal with the situation were followed by the spread of the trouble into the neighbouring districts and by May most of Burma south of Prome was involved. Nor was it unlikely that it might spread further north.

When the Rebellion occurred, the police force in Lower Burma consisted of the ordinary police and two battalions of the Burma Military Police, distributed in very small detachments throughout an enormous area, and with very meagre reserves at Rangoon and Mandalay. The military forces were two battalions of British Infantry, two Battalions Burma Rifles, one Battalion Indian Infantry, one Pioneer Battalion, some Sappers and Miners and one Mountain Battery. These military forces were soon called on to support and supplement the police and, as they were brought under the control of the civil authorities, while so acting, were used on purely police duties, divided into small detachments and distributed at a multitude of stations dispersed over an area of 25,000 square miles. Under these circumstances all that was possible was a purely static and defensive policy which encouraged the rebel bands and led to a deterioration in the situation so serious that the Government of India was asked, in May, for military assistance.

During the next two months, six battalions were sent from India and, now that there was a potential striking force, it was possible to consider a plan of offensive operations. The system of dual civil and military control was abolished and troops and military police were placed under military command ; a special Intelligence branch was formed, and a system of co-ordinated drives by mobile columns was initiated which penned the rebels to the jungles and hills and showed the waverers that law and order were still predominant. In July, Saya San was captured. Transport difficulties were great, but these were partly surmounted by the use of elephants, and the more inaccessible retreats were combed by " packs " of irregulars. Every effort was also made to prevent the rebels from obtaining food or arms.

By October 1931, the back of the rebellion had been broken,

though there was a small rising at Zigon in January 1932 which was immediately suppressed. Thereafter the surplus troops could be returned to India, except two Indian battalions which were temporarily retained.

Cyprus, 1931

Meanwhile, in October 1931, events had taken place in Cyprus which necessitated the use of British troops to deal with an unarmed rebellion. That island had been acquired from Turkey in 1878 in return for an annual payment and a guarantee to assist Turkey in the event of a Russian attack on Asia Minor. When Turkey entered the War against us in 1914 Cyprus was made a British Protectorate and in 1925 became a Crown Colony.

Of its 350,000 inhabitants some 75,000 were of Turkish descent while almost all the remainder were Cypriots who, though not Greeks, have strong affinities with Greece, speak Greek and belong to the Orthodox Church. For many years there has been a desire on the part of this section for union with Greece, a desire which was stimulated by post-war phrases such as "self determination." But this desire remained mainly academic until 1931. The economic crisis in that year, however, brought increased taxation and hardship in the island and prepared the way for agitation. In August 1931, an anti-British boycott was tried but was not a complete success, and the extremists, led by a Bishop of the Orthodox Church, intoxicated themselves and their listeners with oratorical fervour and finally issued a manifesto proclaiming union with Greece. On October 20th a mob of excited people rushed the house of the Governor, Sir Ronald Storrs, at Nicosia. Though they were beaten off by the local police, the house was destroyed by fire. In the meantime, it looked as if similar and even more serious outbreaks of rioting might occur in other parts of the island.

The only British military force in Cyprus at the time was one Company of British infantry[1] stationed at Troodos, the hill station in the south-west of the island. Troodos is eighteen miles from a railway and another forty-five miles by rail from Nicosia. As the immediate presence of British troops at the capital was necessary the Company Commander requisitioned all available motor cars in his neighbourhood and in this transport the Company reached Nicosia early the following morning. Small as the detachment was it had an immediate steadying effect on the situation. The following day two British cruisers and two destroyers arrived from Crete, and later a Company of British Infantry was brought by air from Cairo. This rapid and efficient handling of the situation brought the rioting

[1] Royal Welch Fusiliers.

to an end without the necessity for drastic measures, and prevented what might have attained the dignity of a rebellion from being more than a riot.

The Assyrian Levies, 1932

Iraq provided in the following summer another illustration of rapid reinforcement by means of air transport. Up to June 1932 the British Air bases at Mosul, Hinaidi, Baghdad, Basra and Shaibah had as guards two battalions of Levies, recruited mainly from the Assyrians, and paid and controlled by the British Air Ministry. As the time approached when the League would finally consider the Anglo-Iraq Treaty of 1930, preparatory to a termination of the Mandate, the Assyrians in Iraq, mindful of their past treatment by Turks and Arabs, grew increasingly anxious about their future. They considered, and indeed subsequent events justified their anxiety, that once the Mandate was terminated, the lives and property of their own people would not be secure, unless guaranteed specifically by the British Government. In order to emphasize their view they handed in an ultimatum, early in June, to the British officers, stating that they would cease to serve from July unless their political demands were met. Thus a situation was likely to result in which the Royal Air Force aerodromes would be left completely without guards, in which looting might take place or even more serious troubles.

To meet this emergency the 1st Battalion the Northamptonshire Regiment was carried by air from Ismailia to Baghdad and thence distributed to the various air bases. The battalion was carried at the rate of a company per day, and in five days (June 22nd to June 27th) it had been transferred from the Suez Canal to the centre of Mesopotamia. By the end of the month the Assyrian Levies had handed in their arms and equipment, and some of them at least were beginning to regret their hasty decision. What might have been an unpleasant and even dangerous situation was not allowed to develop much beyond the border of comedy. Early in July the Assyrians raised a cricket team to play against the Northamptonshire Regiment.

Subsequently, when the emergency had passed, the guard duties were entrusted to newly constituted Companies of Levies (five Assyrian, two Kurdish and one Iraqi Companies), and the British battalion was withdrawn. The episode will remain as the first illustration of a complete battalion being transported by air, and as a very pertinent example of the truth that a small force put in at the right place and the right moment may prevent the development of a situation which would require a much larger force.

THE SAAR, 1934–1935

The circumstances of the episodes described so far in this chapter were of a type normal to British military history. They were followed by one which, though not without precedent, was unusual and struck the public imagination.

In accordance with the Treaty of Versailles the Saar Valley had been placed under the control of the League of Nations for fifteen years, at the end of which period a plebiscite of the inhabitants was to be taken to determine whether they desired that it should revert to Germany, should be transferred to France or remain under the League. The coal mines of the territory were given outright to France as some compensation for the mines of Northern France which had been damaged by the Germans during their retreat, but if the inhabitants should vote for reunion with Germany, then the latter could purchase back these mines at an agreed and equitable price. This plebiscite was to be held on January 13th, 1935, and, though it was generally thought that there would be a majority in favour of reverting to Germany, there were some grounds for apprehending disturbances which might involve serious issues between the French and German governments. In the Saar there were Communist and Catholic parties who were anti-Nazi; there were considerable French financial interests associated with the mines, and the Nazi party there and in Germany were determined that, nevertheless, the plebiscite should prove to the world the solidarity and strength of the German people. It was, in fact, regarded by them as a vote of confidence in themselves and their regime. There was the danger, therefore, that the voting might be carried out under circumstances of intimidation which would have made the result open to challenge and created international tension.

Under these circumstances the British government took the initiative and offered to supply a British contingent to a small International Force under League control, to maintain order before, during and immediately after the plebiscite. This offer was accepted by both France and Germany and in December 1934 a force, consisting of 1,500 British,[1] 1,300 Italians, 250 Dutch and 250 Swedes, was sent to the Saar where each of the detachments was allotted to a special area. The Force Commander was British, (Major-General Brind), as was also the Headquarter Staff of the whole Force. It remained in the Saar from about the middle of December to February 26th, 1935, and to the tact, good humour and sound sense of all its personnel was due the happy result that no serious disturbances took place, in spite of an atmosphere supercharged with excitement. An overwhelming majority in favour of reversion

[1] 12th Lancers, 1st East Lancs., and 1st Essex.

to Germany resulted and the transfer of the territory to German control was put into effect without incident.

To argue from this success, however, that an International Force under League control could be utilized for maintaining the peace of the world would be absurd. The Saar Force was merely a small body of troops acting as armed police, stationed for a short period in a demilitarized area with no likelihood of being committed to active operations against an organized and fully armed opponent. Its staff was British and the British contingent formed nearly half of the whole. An International Force for the maintenance of peace would, on the other hand, necessarily have a Staff representative of several nations; the British element would very likely be only an inconsiderable fraction; a multitude of tongues and views would interfere with its cohesion; and it would have to make plans for operations against any Great Power which might challenge the authority of the League. Even if it could be mobilized it would be cumbrous in organization, divided in counsel, and slow in operation against an active united enemy.

The Modernization of the British Army, 1919–1935

Had the Great War continued into 1919, the British Army, at any rate in France, would, probably, have been put on a mechanized basis—that is to say, the main striking force would have been tanks, supported by infantry carried in cross-country motor vehicles; and the supply services in front of railheads would have been maintained by cross-country tractors with trailers.

But with the signing of the Peace Treaties, a halt was called. Another great war in the near future seemed most unlikely. It was felt that a disarmed Germany, the general war weariness, and the need for financial recuperation would succeed, even if the League was ineffective, in maintaining a period of peace for at least ten years and probably much longer. Hence, once again, as after all the great wars in our history, retrenchment on the Fighting Services of Great Britain was regarded as legitimate. The British Regular Army at home and abroad was reduced to a strength approximately two divisions less than its size in 1914, and the process of mechanisation, which had been envisaged, was greatly retarded. The normal peace time function of the Regular Army as an Imperial Police Force gained in emphasis, and it was felt that the degree of mechanization must be largely governed by the extent to which it was applicable to our forces abroad and particularly in India. Otherwise the balance of the Cardwell System would be upset. Also, it was evident that a policy of careful research was desirable to ascertain the best types of vehicles and

weapons as well as their proper tactical employment, before embarking on any radical scheme of complete mechanization.

Accordingly, the post-war years from 1919 to 1935 were mainly a period of cautious experiment. These experiments very quickly resulted in a policy of substituting the motor for the horse in the Supply services; and, soon after, it was agreed that Artillery, not forming an integral part of a division, should be tractor drawn. In 1927, an experimental Armoured Force was formed to study the tactical handling and composition of a completely mechanized mixed force based on the assault power of the tank. This was discontinued in 1929, and further experiments were then tried on the formation of mixed Tank Brigades. In 1934, the existing four Tank Battalions in Great Britain were formed into a Tank Brigade.

As regards cavalry, the main effort was at first directed towards increasing their mobility and power of long range reconnaissance by the introduction of wireless and motor inter-communication units and the reduction of the weight carried by the horse. In 1928, however, a more momentous innovation was approved. Two Cavalry Regiments—the 11th Hussars and the 12th Lancers—were transformed into Armoured Car Regiments.

Infantry Divisional organization was also the subject of continual experiment. At the end of the War the Machine Gun Corps had been disbanded and one Platoon of Machine Guns given to each Battalion Headquarters Wing. A Platoon of Mortars per battalion was also added but this was later withdrawn in view of the introduction of a Brigade of Close Support Light Artillery which was added to Divisional Artillery. This Light Artillery had for a time to perform the task of the Anti-Tank defence of Infantry, but a 3.7 inch Howitzer was unsuitable for this task, and, as soon as an efficient anti-tank weapon could be found, an anti-tank Platoon was given to each Battalion. In the meantime, the Mortar had come into favour again and, with the re-introduction of a Mortar Platoon per Battalion the Light Artillery Brigade was withdrawn from the Divisions.

It is obvious from the foregoing that the number of weapons made both the training and tactical handling of a Battalion unreasonably complex. To meet this difficulty, in 1934, the Infantry supporting weapons, heavy Machine Guns and Mortars, were put into one company of each Battalion, called "the Support Company." This, however, only partly solved the problem and, in 1935, an experiment was tried in which a Brigade of Infantry consisted of three Battalions armed with Rifles and Light Automatics only; and the supporting weapons, formerly distributed equally amongst all four Battalions, were concentrated in the one remaining Battalion ("the Support Battalion"). At the same time the whole of the transport of the Brigade was motorized.

Meanwhile Medium Artillery has been mechanized. Field and Horse (with the exception of a battery of Horse for ceremonial purposes) are to be mechanized, and Light Artillery transformed into extra Field Artillery. Anti-aircraft Brigades came into existence, and nearly all the Yeomanry regiments of the Territorial Army became Armoured Car units.

The New Model Army, 1936

By the end of 1935, it had become obvious that a period of assured peace could no longer be guaranteed, and that the phase of cautious experiment must, therefore, give way to one of adequate and immediate preparation. On December 23rd, 1935, a far-reaching reorganization of the British Army based on the data collected by experiment was announced which, when carried out, will revolutionize its form and training. The Cavalry Division at home, together with the Tank Brigade, will be converted into a Mechanized Mobile Division, consisting of two mechanized cavalry brigades (each with two motor cavalry regiments and one cavalry light tank regiment) the Tank Brigade and Divisional Troops. It will therefore have the speed, wide range of action and striking power required of mobile troops under modern conditions of war.

At the same time, the Cavalry Brigade in Egypt will be converted into a mechanized formation, consisting of one armoured car regiment, one motor cavalry regiment and one cavalry light tank regiment.

This will entail the complete mechanization of the following :

1st King's Dragoon Guards.
The Queen's Bays (2nd Dragoon Guards).
3rd The King's Own Hussars.
4th Queen's Own Hussars.
7th Queen's Own Hussars.
8th King's Royal Irish Hussars.
9th Queen's Royal Lancers.
10th Royal Hussars.

As regards Infantry, the principle of " the Support Battalion " has been finally adopted. Infantry brigades will consist of three rifle battalions armed with rifles and the new light machine-gun—the Bren, which takes the place of the Lewis Gun—(and including a mortar platoon) and one machine-gun battalion containing machine-gun, anti-tank gun and mechanized reconnaissance companies. The Regiments selected for conversion to machine-gun units are the following :

FOOT GUARDS

3rd Battalion, Grenadier Guards.
3rd Battalion, Coldstream Guards.

INFANTRY OF THE LINE

The Royal Scots.
The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers.
The Royal Fusiliers.
The Devonshire Regiment.
The West Yorkshire Regiment.
The Royal Scots Fusiliers.
The Cheshire Regiment.
The Royal Welch Fusiliers.
The Gloucestershire Regiment.
The East Surrey Regiment.
The Middlesex Regiment.
The Manchester Regiment.
The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.[1]

A "New Model" (as it has been described by Captain Liddell Hart in the *Times*) is therefore in process of formation, very different in externals from its predecessor which was formed and trained in Windsor Park, but in one essential similar—that its chief basis is mobility.

Meanwhile, it is obvious that the effects on other Corps and on Army training in general must be radical. The Royal Engineers and the Royal Corps of Signals must be developed to keep pace with a swifter moving army and the mechanical aids to the activities of these specialist Corps must be developed. Also, the care and maintenance of motor vehicles will become a more important part of the young officers' curriculum than equitation. Car-mastership will take the place of horse-mastership.

Other Changes, 1935

The years 1935 and 1936, also mark the beginning of other changes of great military importance within the Empire. The unsettled nature of the international situation has caused uneasiness with regard to our unpreparedness to meet an air attack on Great Britain.

The Royal Air Force had been kept at a low level since the War, not merely for motives of economy, but also in the hope that some

[1] The situation of the overseas Machine Gun battalions of these regiments will be 8 in India; 2 in Egypt; 1 in Malta; 1 in Singapore and 1 in Hong Kong.

general agreement to scale down foreign Air Forces to the British figure could be reached or perhaps to abolish military aircraft except for the limited purpose of police work in uncivilized territories. These hopes completely failed. No agreement could be reached even with regard to an Air Locarno and the British government was faced by the necessity for greatly increasing our air strength. We were only fifth among the Great Powers although our responsibilities are world wide and our air strength dispersed over an immense area. Even the very moderate proposals of the Salisbury Committee, which recommended in 1933 that a Home Defence Force of fifty-two Squadrons should be maintained had not been carried out. One important step forward was taken by the Army in the formation of a Regular Air Defence Brigade, for ground co-operation with the R.A.F., and as part of a potential Expeditionary Force. The ground Anti-aircraft organization for the defence of London was, however, still very inadequate, consisting as it did only of a few Territorial Air Defence Brigades.

In 1934, therefore, the Government announced that henceforward this country would maintain a One Power Air Standard, viz.: a force equal in strength to that of the greatest Air Power within striking distance of Great Britain, and in 1935 steps were taken to improve and increase the measures for ground anti-aircraft defence by beginning to transform several units of the Territorial Army into additional Air Defence battalions, for the Air defence of London and the south east counties.

Our naval strength, too, was at a low ebb as a result of the Washington and London Naval Treaties. Before the last war it was possible to assume that our Imperial naval bases and fuelling ports overseas would be secure from protracted attack by a large force and that their scale of defence could be calculated on the assumption that they would be liable only to raids by a few cruisers at most. To-day, with a greatly reduced Navy and with the increased danger of submarine and air attack, this can no longer be assumed. Our overseas ports and bases might indeed have to sustain much more varied forms of attack and must be capable of undergoing a protracted period of danger before the issue could be decided by naval action. This implies that they must be modernized and strengthened. The armaments and supplies must be brought up to date; and in the case of our two Imperial overseas bases, Malta and Singapore, some increase in the military garrisons appears to be inevitable, particularly as regards artillery and technical personnel.[1]

[1] Since this chapter was printed, a White Paper on Defence (Cmd. 5107) and the Navy, Army and Air Force Estimates have described in detail the steps which are being taken to increase our defences.

External pressure has been responsible for these changes and tendencies. A momentous alteration within the Empire is likely to cause other modifications of importance in the framework of Imperial Defence. The Government of India Act of 1935 has conferred Provincial autonomy on the Provinces of British India and has created a Federal framework embracing the Provinces and Indian States which will come into operation as soon as a stated quota of the latter are willing. In each Province law and order and the control of the police will be under an Indian Minister, as will also be all matters entrusted to the Provinces, though the governor will have special responsibilities and safeguarding powers to prevent or neutralize any danger to the peace and tranquillity of his Province. In the Federal Government, the Viceroy will have similar powers in regard to India as a whole and will himself be personally responsible for three Reserved Departments of Defence, External Relations and Ecclesiastical affairs. Burma will not be part of the Federation, but will receive a government of its own in which similar safeguards will be vested in the Governor.

It is yet too early to say what effects these changes will have on the responsibilities of the British forces in India. Nevertheless, certain possibilities can be indicated. The separation of Burma from India will involve the removal of the troops in Burma from the control of Army Headquarters, India. It is probable that the British garrison in Burma will remain unchanged in numbers and responsibilities, but it seems possible that eventually the Indian element will be replaced by locally raised units.

The transfer of control of the Police in the Provinces to Indian Ministers may affect the matter of Internal Security. It is clear from a study of past history that any hesitation in dealing promptly with disturbances of the peace in India has always led to an aggravation of the trouble, and it may happen that the transfer of these important powers, despite the ultimate authority of the Governors, may impose in certain cases increased duties on the Internal Security troops of which the British part, by its impartiality in all communal matters, bears by far the heaviest responsibilities.

Again, there is some reason to expect concerted and continuous pressure from Indian circles to speed up the process of Indianization of the Indian Army. At present the scheme of Indianization, greatly enlarged since that of 1923, provides for the gradual Indianizing of the equivalent of one Division and one Cavalry Brigade, together with ancillary troops and arms; and the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun, opened in 1933, is the source of the necessary officers who are given Commissions in the Indian Land Forces. Attempts to accelerate the process or widen its scope could only be carried out at a further sacrifice of military efficiency

in the Indian Army and would thereby increase the strain thrown on the British force in India.[1]

It is desirable to notice one further point. The passage of this Act does not preclude the use of Indian troops outside India if the defence of India in its widest sense is involved. The importance of this needs no emphasis. Indian troops have on many occasions in the past borne proudly their share in the burden of Imperial defence. If this is denied to them in the future the responsibilities of the British Army will be greatly increased.[2]

* * *

It is appropriate that this narrative should close with the beginning of 1936, for that date marks the beginning of a new epoch in the organization and training of the British Army as a whole. In many ways the changes are revolutionary, and the New Model of 1936, when fully established, will differ more greatly from the Army of a few years ago than that differed from the New Model of 1644. After an interval of 300 years the struggle between armour and missile has been resumed with much fiercer intensity. Immensely greater mobility and speed have become possible, provided that petrol is available and that the terrain is suitable for mechanical vehicles. The division of Infantry into rifle and support battalions, whose officers and men will not be easily interchangeable is a revolutionary one, for it creates two separate kinds of infantry, even more distinct than pikeman and musketeer. But most important of all, it remains to be seen how far the new organization will be adaptable to the needs of India, Egypt and elsewhere. If there is a wide divergence, will the Cardwell and short service systems be elastic enough to meet the variety of requirements, or will special forces for special needs in different parts of the Empire be necessary ? Should the latter be the case the changes necessary will indeed be radical.

[1] British officers from Sandhurst for both British and Indian Armies are given Commissions in His Majesty's Land Forces.

[2] The Governor-General " shall bear in mind the desirability of ascertaining the views of his Ministers when he shall have occasion to consider matters relating to the general policy of appointing Indian officers to Our Indian Forces, or the employment of Our Indian Forces on service outside India " (Instrument of Instructions to the Governor-General and Governors).

APPENDIX I

Lists giving the date each Regiment of the Regular Army was taken on to the English establishment, with its present-day title, and old number. Regiments are shown in order of priority as in the Army List.

CAVALRY

Household Cavalry

1661. 1st Life Guards. } Now amalgamated into one regiment and known as
1788. 2nd Life Guards. } "The Life Guards."
1661. Royal Horse Guards. (The Blues.)

Cavalry of the Line

1685. 1st King's Dragoon Guards.
1685. The Queen's Bays (2nd Dragoon Guards).
1685. 3rd Carabiniers (Prince of Wales's Dragoon Guards).
1685. 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards (now amalgamated with the 7th Dragoon Guards and known as the 4th/7th Dragoon Guards).
1685. 5th Dragoon Guards (Princess Charlotte of Wales's).
1685. 6th Dragoon Guards (now amalgamated with the 3rd Carabiniers and known as—3rd Carabiniers (Prince of Wales's Dragoon Guards).
1688. 7th Dragoon Guards (Princess Royal's) (now amalgamated with the 4th Dragoon Guards and known as the 4th/7th Dragoon Guards).
1662. 1st The Royal Dragoons.
1681. The Royal Scots Greys (2nd Dragoons).
1685. 3rd The King's Own Hussars.
1685. 4th Queen's Own Hussars.
1689. 5th Royal Irish Lancers (now amalgamated with the 16th Lancers and known as the 16th/5th Lancers).
1689. The Inniskillings (6th Dragoons) (now amalgamated with the 5th Dragoon Guards and known as the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards).
1689. 7th Queen's Own Hussars.
1692. 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars.
1715. 9th Queen's Royal Lancers.
1715. 10th Royal Hussars (Prince of Wales's Own).
1715. 11th Hussars (Prince Albert's Own).
1715. 12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's).
1715. 13th Hussars.
1715. 14th King's Hussars.
1759. 15th The King's Hussars.
1759. 16th The Queen's Lancers.
1759. 17th Lancers (Duke of Cambridge's Own).
1759; disbanded 1821 Revived 1858. } 18th Royal Hussars (Queen Mary's Own) (now amalgamated with 13th Hussars and known as 13th/18th Hussars).
1781; disbanded 1821 Revived 1860. } 19th Royal Hussars (Queen Alexandra's Own) (now amalgamated with 15th Hussars and known as 15th/19th The King's Royal Hussars).
1791; disbanded 1819 Revived 1860. } 20th Hussars (now amalgamated with the 14th Hussars and known as the 14th/20th Hussars).

CAVALRY OF THE LINE—*Continued*

1794; disbanded 1819 Revived 1860. { 21st Lancers (Empress of India's) (now amalgamated with the 17th Lancers, and known as the 17th/21st Lancers).

1727. Royal Regiment of Artillery.
1793. Royal Horse Artillery.

1788. Corps of Royal Engineers.

1922. Royal Corps of Signals.

INFANTRY

FOOTGUARDS

1660. Grenadier Guards.
1660. Coldstream Guards.
1685. Scots Guards.
1901. Irish Guards.
1915. Welsh Guards.

LINE REGIMENTS

	Numbers up to 1881
1662. The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment).	1
1662. The Queen's Royal Regiment (West Surrey).	2
1665. The Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment).	3
1680. The King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster).	4
1685. The Royal Northumberland Fusiliers.	5
1685. The Royal Warwickshire Regiment.	6
1685. The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment).	7
1685. The King's Regiment (Liverpool).	8
1685. The Royal Norfolk Regiment.	9
1685. The Lincolnshire Regiment.	10
1685. The Devonshire Regiment.	11
1685. The Suffolk Regiment.	12
1685. The Somerset Light Infantry (Prince Albert's).	13
1685. The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own).	14
1685. The East Yorkshire Regiment (The Duke of York's Own).	15
1688. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment.	16
1688. The Leicestershire Regiment.	17
1689. The Royal Irish Regiment (now disbanded).	18
1689. The Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment).	19
1689. The Lancashire Fusiliers.	20
1689. The Royal Scots Fusiliers.	21
1689. The Cheshire Regiment.	22
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1689. The South Wales Borderers.	24
1689. The King's Own Scottish Borderers.	25
1689. The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).	26 and 90
1689. The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers (linked with the Royal Irish Fusiliers).	27
1701. The Gloucestershire Regiment.	28 and 61
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1701. The East Lancashire Regiment.	30 and 59
1701. The East Surrey Regiment.	31 and 70
1701. The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.	32 and 46
1701. The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding).	33 and 76
1701. The Border Regiment.	34 and 55
1701. The Royal Sussex Regiment.	35 and 107
1701. The Hampshire Regiment.	37 and 67

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1701. The South Staffordshire Regiment. 38 and 80
1701. The Dorsetshire Regiment. 39 and 54
1717. The Prince of Wales's Volunteers (South Lancashire). 40 and 82
1719. The Welch Regiment. 41 and 69
1739. The Black Watch (Royal Highland Regiment). 42 and 73
1741. The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. 43 and 52
1741. The Essex Regiment. 44 and 56
1741. The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment). 45 and 95
1741. The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire). 47 and 81
1741. The Northamptonshire Regiment. 48 and 58
1744. The Royal Berkshire Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's). 49 and 66
1756. The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. 50 and 97
1756. The King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry. 51 and 105
1756. The King's Shropshire Light Infantry. 53 and 85
1756. The Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge's Own). 57 and 77
1757. The King's Royal Rifle Corps. 60
1757. The Wiltshire Regiment (Duke of Edinburgh's). 62 and 99
1757. The Manchester Regiment. 63 and 96
1757. The North Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's). 64 and 98
1757. The York and Lancaster Regiment. 65 and 84
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1787. The Gordon Highlanders. 75 and 92
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1793. The Connaught Rangers (now disbanded). 88 and 94
1794. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's). 91 and 93
1800. The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own).
1860. *Transferred from East India Company*:
- The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians) (now disbanded). 100 and 109
- The Royal Munster Fusiliers (now disbanded). 101 and 104
- The Royal Dublin Fusiliers (now disbanded). 102 and 103

OTHER CORPS AND DEPARTMENTS

1923. Royal Tank Corps. Developed from Heavy Section, Machine Gun Corps (1916).
1796. Royal Army Chaplains' Department.—No date can be fixed for origin. The date given is the year when a Chaplain-General was originally appointed.
1888. Royal Army Service Corps. Developed out of Commissariat.
1898. Royal Army Medical Corps. Developed out of Army Medical Department.
1918. Royal Army Ordnance Corps. Developed out of Military Stores Department.
1893. Royal Army Pay Corps. Formed out of Army Pay Department.
1903. Royal Army Veterinary Corps.
1920. Army Educational Corps. Developed out of Corps of Army Schoolmasters.
1921. Army Dental Corps.

APPENDIX II

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ARMS

GUNPOWDER was probably discovered by Friar Roger Bacon, and was recorded by him in 1248. Its application to firearms seems to have taken place in Germany, where it was applied first to primitive cannon or mortars by a monk. At the end of the fourteenth century the earliest type of hand gun made its appearance, and was simply an iron tube, closed at one end with a touch hole. By 1400 a wooden stock was added. It then developed into the "matchlock" or "arquebus," in which a trigger mechanism brought the match—a cord soaked in saltpetre —into contact with some fine or "priming" powder in a pan which, in turn, ignited the charge. Early in the sixteenth century an attempt was made to dispense with the cord by substituting a wheel with a cogged edge, which rubbed against pyrites and produced sparks which ignited the priming powder; but this "wheel lock" was expensive and generally used only for pistols. About 1600 the "flint lock" or "fusil" appeared, which was simpler and more effective. Some "fusils" were issued to the New Model Army in 1644, but it was not until about 1675 that they came into general use. Thenceforward for over 150 years there was no important change in the musket. In 1670 the "plug" bayonet, which fitted into the muzzle of the musket, came into use in the British Army; in 1693, after Killiecrankee and Steenkirk, the socket bayonet, which was screwed on to the barrel, was substituted for the plug bayonet.

The value of rifling appears to have been known from about 1500 onwards, but the practical difficulties in applying it were very great. Fouling quickly took place, and the rifled muzzle-loading barrel was more difficult to load than the smooth bore if the bullet was to fit fairly tightly; if it did not, then the value of the rifling was lost. The bullet therefore had to be rammed home with a mallet applied to a ramrod. In 1758, however, 16 rifles (muzzle-loaders, of course) were issued to the Royal Americans (60th Rifles); and in 1794 one complete battalion of the same regiment was armed with rifles made on the continent.

In 1800, the Rifle Brigade was raised and armed with the muzzle-loading Baker rifle, made by a Whitechapel gunmaker; but the remainder of the army (except light infantry) continued to use the smooth bore flintlock, called the Brown Bess, of .753 calibre, which fired a bullet weighing about 1¼ ounces, and was sighted up to 200 yards.

In 1805 a Scottish clergyman, Rev. Alexander Forsyth, applied the detonator principle, using a copper cap filled with a fulminate consisting of chlorate of potash, sulphur and charcoal, to explode the charge, but his discovery was ignored by the British authorities until 1838, when it was applied to the Brunswick muzzle-loading rifle (a development of the Baker rifle) without success, and then to the smooth bore—Brown Bess. The Brunswick was said to be fairly accurate at "the prodigious distance of 700 yards."

In 1851, the Minié Rifle, using a heavy and expansible bullet, and invented by Captain Minié of the French Army, was introduced into British units and was used in the Kaffir War and Crimea. It was sighted up to 1,000 yards. Another rifle on the Minié principle, but with a reduced bore, was manufactured at the new Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield in 1855,[1] and was known as the Enfield Rifle. Between 1855 and 1859, the Royal Small Arms Factory took over the entire manufacture of small arms, most of which had previously been obtained by contract. At the same time the parts of the rifle were standardized. The Enfield was used in the latter part of the Crimea and in the Indian Mutiny. It was sighted up to 1,000 yards, and was fairly accurate up to about 600 yards.

[1] Opened in 1804; modernized and greatly expanded in 1855.

1864 was an important date, for in that year the first breech-loading rifle, the Snider (invented by Jacob Snider, a Dutch-American wine-merchant) was introduced, and by 1867 a large number of units were armed with it. In 1871 the Martini-Henry hammerless was adopted, a steel barrelled rifle with a somewhat flatter trajectory than the Snider. It, also, was sighted up to 1,000 yards.

The Lee Metford .303, the first magazine rifle, was brought into use instead of the Martini-Henry in 1888. (Lee was a Canadian watchmaker and Metford a railway engineer). This appeared in an improved form as the Lee Enfield in 1895, was five inches shorter and had multiple magazine loading, and was sighted up to 1,900 yards. About the same time, smokeless powder was introduced, enabling more shots to be aimed than was possible with the vision obscured by smoke. The new rifle was successful in the South African War, though the reduction in the length of the barrel was criticized on the score of reduced reach in bayonet fighting. To overcome this difficulty five inches were added to the bayonet in 1907.

No further important alterations were made until the post-war period, when some minor improvements were introduced in the S.M.L.E. and a lighter and shorter bayonet was adopted. In 1936, an anti-tank rifle was added to the equipment of Infantry.

Machine Guns

The necessity for economically produced fire power resulted at a very early stage in primitive forms of multiple firing guns, such as " organ gun " in the fifteenth century, which consisted of a number of muskets mounted together on a wheeled carriage. Many quaint variations of the same idea followed such as a gun comprising 6 to 10 barrels, in France, fired by a single flint through a common touch-hole. The French developed various modifications of this idea and in 1705 we captured a French quick-firing gun, and sent it to England to be copied. But no practical machine gun was invented until 1862, when Dr. Gatling, of Chicago, arranged the barrels round a revolving central axis and arranged a feeding and firing mechanism which was worked by turning a handle. The Gatling was tried out in the British Navy and Army from 1874, and some samples of it were used in the second Afghan War. It was a better weapon than the clumsy Mitrailleuse, from which the French expected so much in 1870, and which was worked on somewhat similar principles. The Nordenfeldt was also tried out from 1878–82 and was issued to a few units. It had five barrels mounted side by side and fed from vertical slides by hoppers.

In 1883, Hiram Maxim, an American engineer, introduced a radical change. He made use of the recoil and later of the expansion of the gases to work the mechanism of loading and ejection in a machine gun with a single barrel. This Maxim gun was introduced into the British Army in 1891 and was used with great success in the Sudan War, on the North-West Frontier, and in the Boer War, though it had a tendency to jam. The Hotchkiss and Colt of the same time were worked on similar principles, as was also the " Pom-pom," a small field gun firing an explosive shell weighing one pound.

In the Russo-Japanese War large numbers of machine guns (Maxim and Hotchkiss) were used by both sides, and Germany studied their use and value with great care. The result was the great preponderance possessed by the Germans in these weapons in 1914, and the necessity hurriedly to increase the numbers of these in the British forces. The lighter and more portable Lewis gun (invented by a Canadian) was introduced on a large scale as an Infantry weapon in 1915, in addition to the heavier Vickers (as the Maxim was later called).

After the war, experiments were unremitting to find something still lighter, more portable, accurate and reliable, which could be used by Infantry, and in 1935 the Bren was accepted as the light machine gun of the future. By 1937, it is anticipated, all units will be in possession of it. It is lighter and more reliable than the Lewis gun and can be used for anti-aircraft purposes.

APPENDIX III

A SHORT NOTE ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE INDIAN ARMY

FROM about 1640, officials of the East India Company enrolled small bodies of guards, consisting of a few Europeans and some natives to protect the walls and property of the Company's factories at Surat and elsewhere. They were, however, badly armed, and their duties were chiefly those of chowkidars and chuprassis. When Bombay came to Charles II, as part of his wife's dowry in 1662, a small detachment of King's troops was sent out as its garrison; and, when in 1668, it was rented to the Company, these King's troops were offered and accepted service under the Company. During ensuing years small increases were made in the forces of the three Presidencies of Bombay, Madras and Bengal, and by the beginning of the War of the Austrian Succession each Presidency had its own little army composed partly of Europeans recruited in England and partly of half-caste Goanese and Sepoys.

In 1748, Major Stringer Lawrence was appointed the Commander-in-Chief of all the Company's forces in India, a step which made for some degree of co-ordination between the forces of the three Presidencies, and justifies the date as the birthday of the Indian Army. During the succeeding Seven Years War the forces of the three Presidencies came to one another's assistance on several occasions. In 1754, a momentous innovation took place when a King's Regiment, the 39th Foot, was lent to the Company and despatched to Madras. From that date the forces in India consisted of three categories—King's troops, Company's European troops and Company's native troops.

Robert Clive, who was Commander-in-Chief from 1756–60, organized the Indian troops into battalions, armed and dressed on the European model, and with a small complement of British officers and N.C.O.'s. (Previously they had only had native officers.) The constant wars of the next half century necessitated constant increases, and by 1796 there were 13,000 British soldiers (King's and Company's) and 57,000 Indian troops. In 1857, just before the outbreak of the Mutiny, this had increased to 24,000 King's troops; 19,000 European troops of the Company, and 226,000 native troops, including 7,000 native gunners and drivers of the Artillery.

The transfer of India to the Crown in 1858 led to the transfer of the Company's European troops to the British Army. Thus, the European Artillery of the three Presidencies were merged in the Royal Artillery, and a cavalry regiment and several infantry regiments were similarly transferred to the British Service. At the same time the lessons of the Mutiny led to the proportion of British to Indian troops being raised (the proportion fixed being 1 : 3 in Southern India and 1 : 2 in Northern India) and to the abolition of all Indian artillery except some mountain batteries. All the Indian troops were transferred to the control of the Crown.

In 1888, the Indian infantry regiments were grouped in threes with a group centre and a system of reserves was introduced by Lord Napier of Magdala.

In 1896, the separate Presidency Armies were abolished and the forces reorganized as "The Army of India," which was divided into four commands. Lord Kitchener, who was Commander-in-Chief in 1903–4, inaugurated a radical reorganization of this force. He found that the troops were scattered over a very large number of small military stations throughout these commands, could not easily be gathered for training or operations, and that its peace time distribution and formations bore very little relation to the requirements of war. He accordingly started to concentrate the troops in a smaller number of stations (thirty-four were to be abandoned), and divided the Army in India into three corps, each of three divisions, each of which was to be complete in every respect. He made Burma an independent command; started the Staff College at Quetta; abolished the

Indian Staff Corps (which had been started in 1861), and opened all staff appointments in India to officers of the British Service. Though Lord Kitchener's proposed reforms were subsequently altered in details, their essentials were carried out, and the Indian Army was organized on a fighting basis, though it was still weak in respect of ancillary services, a weakness which displayed itself particularly when it was called later on to operate outside India. There was also an undue measure of centralization, Army Headquarters dealing direct in all administrative matters with divisions.

After the War, the whole organization of the Army in India was reviewed, in the light of experience gained between 1914 and 1920, outside India, on its frontiers and with regard to its Internal Security duties. A regimental system was introduced for Indian infantry (except the Gurkha Regiments), in order to simplify recruiting and training, by which battalions were linked into groups of four, each group having a common Training Battalion which was fixed permanently at a suitable recruiting centre. Similarly, the twenty-one regiments of Indian cavalry were organized in seven groups of three regiments each, one of the regiments of each group being stationed at a permanent regimental centre. The Higher Command was reorganized, and India was divided into four commands,[1] each under a General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, and great administrative powers were transferred to these commands in order to relieve the pressure on Army Headquarters which had previously existed. The functions of the Army itself were divided into three roles—the Field Army, the Covering Troops and Internal Security Troops, and a specific allotment of units made for each role, though the constituent elements were to be trained and organized on a uniform basis in order to permit of interchangeability. Previously the duties of a covering force had been almost entirely entrusted to the Frontier Militia and Irregulars, who had broken down during the operations of the third Afghan and Waziristan Campaign.

Another important stage in the evolution of the Indian Army was reached in 1923, when a limited degree of Indianization as regards King's Commissioned Officers was introduced. Eight infantry units were selected for this process and Indian cadets were allotted vacancies at Sandhurst. A committee under the chairmanship of Sir Andrew Skeen recommended in 1926 that the scheme should be widely extended, and as a result of their recommendations it was decided that up to one cavalry brigade and one division of the Indian Army should be gradually Indianized, with artillery and all ancillary units. In 1933 the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun was opened in order to supply the flow of necessary officers, and Indian cadets no longer came to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

[1] Kitchener had redivided the Army into three Army Corps; in 1905 it was divided into three commands; and in 1908, into two Armies—a Northern Army and a Southern Army.

APPENDIX IV

A NOTE ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE WAR OFFICE

PRIOR to the birth of the standing army in 1660 there was very little permanent organization for the raising, maintenance or control of military forces in England. Forces were raised by the King from time to time for special needs and disbanded when those needs had ceased to exist. In 1483, however, one permanent official was appointed, a Master of " Ordonnance " responsible to the King for the supply and issue of Artillery and engineer equipment. About 1620 a " Council of War," which was probably a committee of the Privy Council (and a sort of early counterpart of the Committee of Imperial Defence) first made its appearance. The secretary of this committee seems to have been the prototype of an official called the " Secretary-at-War," who is first mentioned in 1642. During the Civil War both sides had Secretaries-at-War who were, in effect, merely private secretaries to the King and to the Parliamentary Commander-in-Chief respectively, and whose duties were chiefly financial and administrative.

After the Restoration the post of Secretary-at-War was retained, with the same duties, and he remained responsible only to the King. This was natural as the existence of a standing army was still merely tolerated by Parliament for the purpose of providing guards for the King's person and garrisons for fortresses ; and no attempt was made to give it a constitutional status based on Parliamentary statute.

With the disappearance of the Stuart dynasty, in 1689, however, a new era was introduced. The Bill of Rights and Mutiny Act (1689) made Parliament the judge not merely of the existence of an army, but also of its size ; and its cost and the regulations for its discipline were henceforward voted annually. The " sole supreme government, command and disposition of the militia and of all forces by sea and land " still remained under the control of the King ; the routine, financial and administrative matters connected with the army were still performed for him by the civilian Secretary-at-War who was not in Parliament, but the size, cost and discipline of the Army depended on annual votes. It was obvious that this situation, by which Parliament voted the cost but had no control over the method of expenditure could not continue, and the thin edge of the wedge was introduced in 1704 when the Secretaryship-at-War became a political post and the holder could be questioned in Parliament. He nevertheless was still, however, purely the servant of the King and though available for questions could not be compelled to render an account to Parliament.

By this time it should be understood there were many other officials, each independent of one another, each responsible for some branch of military activity, and presenting a picture of inextricable confusion. A civilian Board of Ordnance provided stores ; a Commissariat dealt with the purchase and supply of provisions ; two Paymasters-General distributed pay. Some degree of centralization and of Parliamentary control were introduced in 1783 when the Secretary-at-War was made responsible for all the finances of the Army, and could be called on to render to Parliament an account of how the money voted had been expended. But the command, government and disposition of the forces were still entirely under the King's control.

In 1785, the younger Pitt introduced an important innovation. He ended the system by which the colonels of regiments were responsible for the recruiting, feeding and equipping of their men and transferred these functions to the War Department.

In 1793, the office of Commander-in-Chief, which had been in abeyance from 1670, was restored, and on him devolved the exercise of the Royal powers in due responsibility to the King. In the following year, however, the disgraceful mismanagement which was displayed in the war with Revolutionary France, led to a

further step in the evolution of Parliamentary control. A Secretary of State for War was appointed, who was to be responsible to Parliament for the control of military policy and the general conduct of operations; the Secretary-at-War remained paramount in the financial field, and the Commander-in-Chief was still the head of the army at home, the representative of the King and in charge of recruiting, and command of the home forces. The Secretary of State for War was encumbered by the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies and could give little attention to his military responsibilities; the Commander-in-Chief and Secretary-at-War could pursue unchecked a long drawn out and indecisive struggle for supremacy.

In this struggle the Duke of York who was Commander-in-Chief from 1795 to 1822 took an important part and incidentally introduced measures of organization which were of great value. He fought hard to wrest as much control as possible from the Secretary of State and succeeded in getting the administration of discipline transferred to himself. He created the Adjutant-General's branch to deal with this. He also started the Military Secretary's department, and formed a "Deposit of Military Knowledge," which was the origin of the present Directorate of Operations and Intelligence. He created a headquarters staff—the germ of our General Staff. Nevertheless, the pernicious system of multiple control continued.

It was little wonder, therefore, that the Crimean War brought to light the most glaring inefficiency and led to further alterations in control. Thus, in 1854, the Secretary of State for War was relieved of the Colonial Office, and in 1855 he took over the duties of Secretary-at-War (though this office was not formally abolished until 1863). The result of this change was to concentrate in the hands of the Secretary of State for War all the financial and administrative functions, leaving however to the Commander-in-Chief the functions of command and discipline of the cavalry and infantry at home. All the various branches of the War Department which had been previously scattered over London, were housed in a building, called the War Office, in Pall Mall (now the R.A.C. Club). The Commander-in-Chief, however, was still quite separate and had his office at Horse Guards, a state of affairs which led to friction and to a multiplication of correspondence.

In 1870, the situation was ameliorated by the passage of the War Office Act (one of Mr. Cardwell's Acts). This laid down definitely and finally that the Secretary of State for War should administer "the Royal Authority and Prerogative in respect of the Army"; in other words, the Secretary of State was henceforward to be the final authority on all Army matters, responsible to the Monarch and also responsible to Parliament. The Commander-in-Chief was to be his chief military adviser; he was also to be assisted by a Permanent Under-Secretary of State for War, a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State and a Financial Secretary.

As a natural result of this Act, the objections of the Commander-in-Chief (the Duke of Cambridge) were—after a long struggle—overridden and he was constrained to move his office under the roof of the War Office. Thus ended the two hundred years struggle for complete Parliamentary control over the Army.

After the South African War and as a result of the Esher report, the office of Commander-in-Chief was abolished, in 1904, and the Army Council established, of which the Secretary of State was henceforward President. This Army Council comprised the Permanent Under Secretary of State, the Parliamentary Secretary of State, the Financial Secretary and four military members—the Chief of the General Staff, the Adjutant General, the Quartermaster-General and the Master-General of Ordnance. To act as the "eyes and ears" of the Council an Inspector-General of the Forces was appointed (this office lapsed in 1914).

At the first Imperial Conference held in 1907, the Dominions agreed to establish General Staffs on the same lines as and in close liaison with the British General Staff, and in 1909 the Chief of the General Staff became known as the Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

Meantime, in 1906, the War Office was moved from Pall Mall to the present building which was built specially for the purpose.

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